



Child Care Works

A Child Care Workforce Initiative

childcareworksnorthiowa.com



CHILD CARE WORKS

History of Child Care Works

In 2023, CG Public Health received a grant from the de Beaumont Foundation to tackle the problem of accessible, affordable child care in Cerro Gordo County. This grant allowed partners to take a deep-dive into the issue, investigate the root causes, and come to a solution.

Finding a Solution

Affordable, accessible child care for all families is not a simple issue, and there is no one strategy that will solve the problem. That's why Child Care Works is approaching this in two directions - a short-term solution to improve the situation now, and a long-term approach to creating systematic change.

Wage Supplement Program

In Cerro Gordo County, the child care centers have the physical capacity to add hundreds of additional children, however, they do not have the workforce to care for them. It comes down to wages. That's why Child Care Works started with raising worker pay. All child care center workers in the county are now making an additional \$2/hour. This supplement has increased staffing significantly, resulting in dependable care and increased access to care.

“

The Child Care Works program has made it so I can afford diapers and food for my family.”

Center Staff Member ”



Child Care Ready Class

Workforce Pipeline

Thanks to the efforts of Child Care Works partners, a new course called Child Care Ready aims to prepare students and adults for employment in the industry. Participants are able to complete all prerequisites to employment - including background checks, mandatory reporting and CPR training, and more. Upon graduation, they are ready to go directly into caring for children. Mason City High School had its second class complete the program in 2025. A course for adults will launch in Fall 2025. Other communities are in the process of replicating the program.

Advocacy

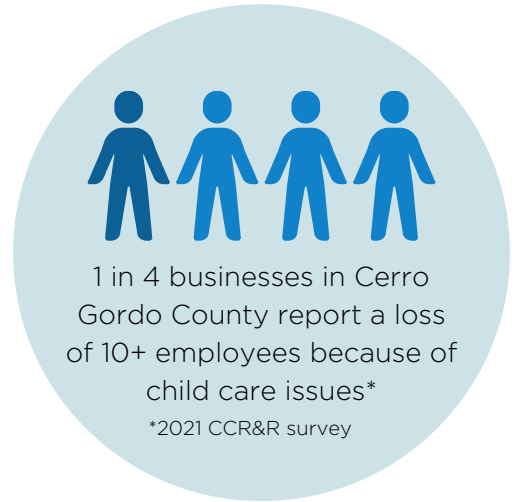
Child Care Works partners are advocating on the local, state, and federal level to improve benefits (including access to health insurance for small businesses), increase pay, and remove barriers to employment for people interested in entering the industry.

WAGE SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

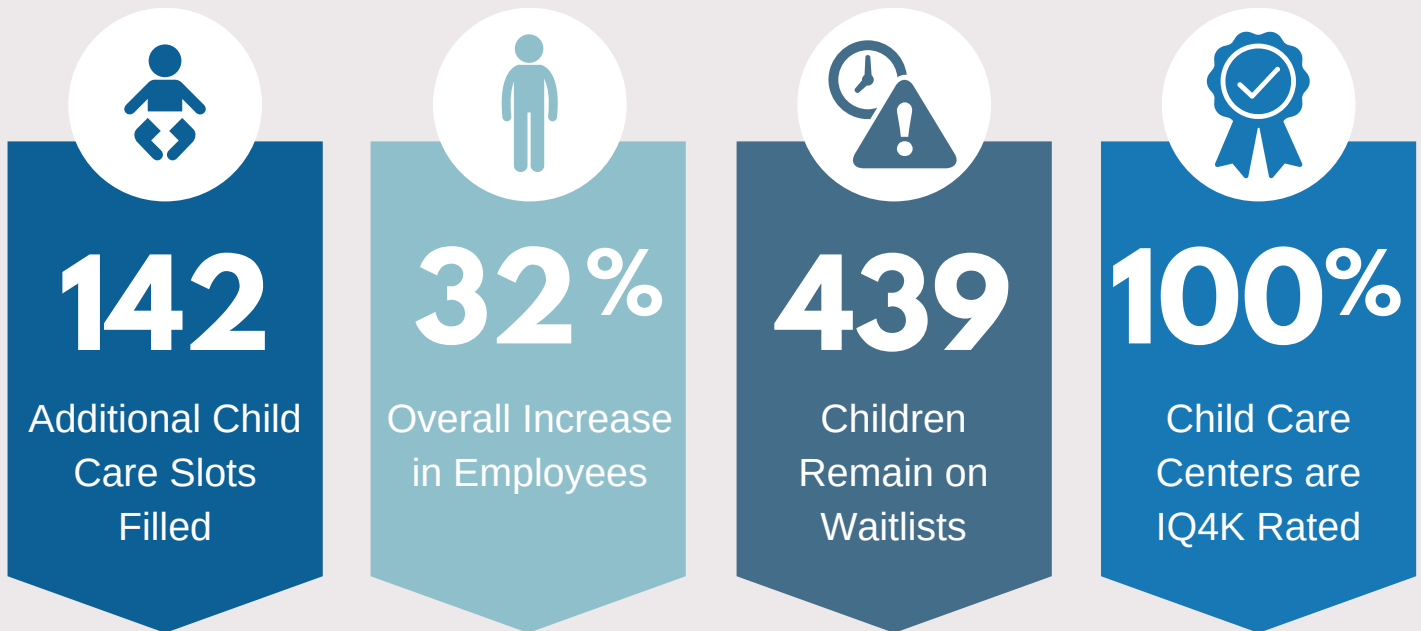
Modeled after existing programs in Hamilton & Johnson Counties, 1 of 12 community programs launched in 2024 in Iowa

Investment from grants, businesses, private donors, and state funds support wage increases of \$2/hour for all Cerro Gordo County child care center employees working 20+ hours weekly

Businesses investing have access to a child care slot bank and priority placement for employees



CHILD CARE WORKS IMPACT JANUARY 2024 – JUNE 2025



“

Not only does it help me with my monthly living expenses, it motivates me to stay in child care as a career.

Center Staff Member

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CHILD CARE WORKS INVESTORS

CHILD CARE WORKS CHAMPIONS (\$50,000+ ANNUAL INVESTMENT*)



CHILD CARE WORKS SUPPORTERS (\$10-\$25,000 ANNUAL INVESTMENT*)



CHILD CARE WORKS FRIENDS (\$1000-\$9,999 ANNUAL INVESTMENT*)



Tierney Properties
J&J Machining



*Three year capital campaign



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Mason City Chamber of Commerce Foundation

“ I am able to seek out better qualified candidates to hire, as the pay rate brings in more quality from the hiring pool. ”
Center Director