

2026



**First Children's Finance**

# **Celebration of Success Grant County**



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# Rural Child Care Innovation Program (RCCIP)

## Sunsetting Goals & Project Updates

### Celebration of Success

Through the RCCIP, Grant County's Core Team has identified five (5) goals to address child care challenges. Below is a list of goals that the team focused efforts on within the implementation phase, along with project updates as provided by the core team lead upon the sunset of this process.

## GOALS

*\*To ensure the community's goals remain authentic, little to no content edits were made in the creation of this summary.*

### SMART Goal:



**Goal 1:** Within 12 months research, develop and implement up to 3 supports for childcare.

**Project Team Members:** Lucy Anderson, Jill Amundson, Dawn Block, Katie Hauglie, Ashley Kellen, Kari Kreft

**Goal Update:** These supports have been communicated with providers by email and at the appreciation event and will continue to be shared.

### SMART Goal:



**Goal 2:** Within 12 months, develop a local provider network.

**Project Team Members:** Kari Kreft, Jen Gehrke, Julie Lindgren, Steph Riehm, Michelle St. Martin, Karen Strobel

**Goal Update:** All providers still in business since our start with one new provider taking over a previous provider's space so that provide could now operate out of her home.

### SMART Goal:



**Goal 3:** Within 6 months research options for a local EC Fund.

**Project Team Members:** Marsha Erickson, Alena Combs, Mike Thormodson, Karla Wagner

**Goal Update:** The goal is to have a fund that provides access for needs. This will make being a provider more attractive and sustainable. We will be able to replicate other similar funds at West Central Initiative once we establish a committee.

### SMART Goal:



**Goal 4:** In 12-18 months, plan and schedule an annual child care check-in event with updated information for further planning.

**Project Team Members:** Molly Pauly, Lucy Anderson, Kari Kreft, Julie Lindgren

**Goal Update:** Bring an awareness of the importance of child care to community members. The numbers were lower than hoped but well received by those in attendance.

### SMART Goal:



**Goal 5:** Within 18 months, establish and expand child care slots within the county by optimizing available space, ensuring regulatory compliance, and supporting the needs of working families through accessible, safe, and high-quality child care environments.

**Project Team Members:** Kari Kreft, Dawn Block, Molly Pauly, Tami Weigel

**Goal Update:** Advertising slots and spaces. Had some very initial talk with an area nursing home but were told there is not currently space. Also talked very informally to two different churches. One possibility of an additional space in Hoffman.

# PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Grant County is a rural area with a long history of community partnership in bringing needed services to the area. Grant County has a committed Core Team of individuals who are heavily invested in the child care landscape of their community. First Children's Finance recommends that the Core Team engage in the following activities:

1

Always run financials before committing to a project – look for a broad base of support. Having an accurate understanding of enrolment numbers, staffing needs, and tuition rates are needed to create sustainability in the current child care climate.

First Children's Finance offers financial modelling and financial analysis consultations.

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2

Continue to engage the community in this project.

Community investment to support new and existing child care businesses are critical to maintaining quality programs.

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3

Continue to involve and support existing providers.

Ongoing support to all types of existing child care in the area should be considered to retain the existing providers. Efforts should be made to ensure current child care providers continue to feel supported and have access to resources they need to stay in the field.

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4

Remain committed to this process and flexible to adjust your plan.

Roadblocks will happen. This does not mean that SMART goals need to be rewritten. Regroup to identify any new action steps that need to be created to keep your ideas and solutions moving forward. As long as you are able and have committed taskforce members, keep building, supporting, and growing child care in your local area.

## For More Information:

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Grant County CSAP

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