



Rural Child Care Innovation Program

Quad Cities, MN

Initial Progress Update – July 24, 2019

The Quad Cities of Virginia, Mountain Iron, Eveleth and Gilbert, located in northeastern Minnesota, joined the Rural Child Care Innovation Program (RCCIP) in 2018.

The Quad Cities have completed the initial phases of the RCCIP including a deep community investigation, a town hall meeting, and development of a Community Solution Action Plan.

The core team continues to work diligently on implementing new and innovative ideas that came from the RCCIP process. The core team continues to meet monthly. While work has just begun to implement the solutions developed through this process, initial successes have already been realized. Below is a list of the Quad Cities' activities to date:

- A Child Care Business Leadership Cohort has been completed with six child care centers. The directors continue to meet on a monthly basis to share ideas and information.
- Family child care providers and child care center directors are now in contact with each other on a regular basis and have formed a positive relationship to support one another.
- A child care newsletter for families featuring all of the programs, community events and child development information has been created in coordination with Community Education.
- Research was done on potential church locations.
- Exploring a child care center in the hospital which would include overnight care.
- Exploring relocation of a current center to a new community building being built to increase slots.
- Potential of a center being put into a new academy school being built.
- Communication with the fire department regarding potentially providing CPR/First Aid training.
- A local drop-in center has increased its hours of operation to meet more night needs.
- Communication with state representatives and center directors to discuss DHS regulations, practices and legislation.
- Collaborating with Laurentian Chamber of Commerce to recognize child care providers and centers as business owners in the community.
- Local workforce center is developing an informational sheet for employers to increase awareness of child care regulations and practices.
- The Mesabi Range College early childhood program was awarded a grant for \$42,392 from the Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) to provide innovative solutions to grow educators in our most rural and remote areas by providing opportunities for high school students to experience a pragmatic view and explore various careers in education while earning college credit. Students with a passion for working with young children will be able to earn the Child Development Associate degree.

- Additional funds from the IRRRB will allow Mesabi Range to provide CDA Training for a number of area child care providers.
- IRRRB, Cleveland Cliffs Mining Company, Northland Foundation and other resources gave large grants to a developing child care center in Eveleth that will provide 144 child care slots.