

# **Routt County Early Childhood Community Plan**

## **Executive Summary**

Over the past five months, a diverse group of community members has come together to work on a plan for early childhood in Routt County. The purpose of this process, facilitated by the First Impressions Early Childhood Council, is to create a comprehensive early childhood community plan to identify needs and work on solutions for early childhood in Routt County.

This is not a plan created by a group of outside consultants, but a plan that reflects the people of Routt County. Through this process, we received input from more than 300 community members and compiled their thoughts into meaningful documentation of the challenges and opportunities related to early childhood in Routt County. Look for the final version of this document soon.

### **The challenges**

Several challenges emerged as the following themes.

- We have a significant shortage of child care capacity for children from birth to age 2.
- Cost is a barrier for families.
- Families do not have options for a non-standard work schedule or children with significant medical or behavioral needs.
- Child care is a barrier for employers in recruiting and retaining employees.
- Maintaining a high-quality, early childhood workforce is a significant barrier to increasing capacity.
- Many factors related to a healthy community are intertwined with early childhood — mental health, poverty, housing needs, health care, legal services, food insecurity, etc.

### **Indicators of success**

This planning process is just the beginning. The challenges identified are big and complex, and we are committed to tackling them. We have identified several indicators of success — specific metrics related to these indicators will be created over the next several months.

- Increased supply of infant and toddler care for children from birth to age 3.
- Pipeline and set of strategies for recruiting and retaining a high-quality, early childhood workforce.
- Children are ready for school by the time they enter kindergarten — and we have a shared definition of what this means.
- Increased level of service for gap groups — those who do not qualify for services under current definitions but still have demonstrated needs.
- Families have access to community health and human services, especially early in a child's life.
- Community understands the important impacts of early childhood care and education.
- Employers support early childhood care and education for their employees and community-wide.
- Families have affordable options that fit their needs.
- Access to services is equitable for all members of the community.

## **The path forward**

Early childhood education providers, elected officials, business representatives, parents, specialized service providers, immigrant services representatives, public school representatives, funders and other community leaders are involved in this work and committed to moving it forward.

We are moving forward with action steps for the following priority solutions.

- Increase slots available for infant and toddler care in Routt County.
- Recruit and retain a high-quality, early childhood workforce.
- Increase access to specialized service providers.
- Engage with the community to increase understanding of the critical roles of early childhood education and care.
- Partner with employers to support early childhood education and care.

This early childhood community plan is not the end. It is the beginning. And we look forward to updating and engaging with the community on this work as we move forward.

*Beth Melton is an executive board member of First Impressions.*

**Routt County  
Early Childhood Community Plan**

**October 24, 2018**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Routt County's Early Childhood Council, First Impressions, facilitated the Early Childhood Community Plan Kickoff Event on May 30, 2018, introducing the process for developing Working Groups to study early care and education needs and resources for children ages birth to 8 in Routt County. The Yampa Valley Housing Authority's Community Housing Steering Committee led the way for First Impressions to follow their format. The following Co-Chairs volunteered to lead the four Working Groups:

- Elisha Colson, Colorado Mountain College
- Irene Avitia, Integrated Community
- Stephany Traylor, Ski Butlers and United Way Board Member
- Tami Havener, Family Development Center
- Alexis Wolf, City of Steamboat Springs Parks and Recreation
- Kelly Keith, Routt County Department of Human Services
- Kate Nowak, Routt County United Way
- Kara Stoller, Steamboat Springs Chamber
- Tim Corrigan, Routt County Commissioner and First Impressions Co-Chair
- Jason Lacy, Steamboat Springs City Council and First Impressions Co-Chair

The Working Group Co-Chairs, First Impressions Executive Committee Members and First Impressions Council adopted the following Problem Statement and Mission/Intended Outcome:

### **Problem Statement**

The role of First Impressions, Routt County's Early Childhood Council, is to facilitate the identification and analysis of solutions and provide advocacy for mitigating the obstacles to early childhood resources. The role of the Working Groups is to analyze early childhood demand sectors through a supply and demand lens and make recommendations to the Early Childhood Council. Together, the Early Childhood Council and Working Groups will advocate and identify opportunities to create solutions for early childhood resources in Routt County.

### **Mission/Intended Outcome**

The First Impressions Council seeks to create a comprehensive early childhood community plan that identifies the needs for early childhood resources across Routt County and outlines potential solutions. The goal of the Council is to produce the first version of this plan by fall of 2018.

First Impressions Executive Committee Members:

- Tim Corrigan, Routt County Commissioner and First Impressions Co-Chair
- Jason Lacy, Steamboat Springs City Council and First Impressions Co-Chair
- Beth Melton, Young Professionals Network
- Torey Wodnik, Parent Representative and Business Owner

- Tami Havener, Family Development Center
- Kelly Keith, Routt County Department of Human Services
- Kate Nowak, Routt County United Way
- Sheila Henderson, Integrated Community

## METHODOLOGY

The Working Groups approached their study of early care and education needs and resources for children ages birth to 8 in Routt County by looking at four distinct segments defined below:

- **Families** – parents, grandparents, family members, and children.
- **Employers** – a person or organization that employs people.
- **Service Providers** – individuals and programs providing services for children ages birth to eight.
- **Community Groups** – existing groups throughout Routt County and includes second homeowners, retired people, or anyone in the community who would like to give their opinion.

These four groups all analyzed early care and education needs and resources for children ages birth to 8 based on the criteria listed below:

- **Demographics** – statistical and anecdotal data relating to the early childhood population and the particular groups within it.
- **Demand** – need for early childhood resources.
- **Supply** – availability of early childhood resources.
- **Obstacles** – something that impedes progress or achievement; ability to purchase early childhood resources or services.
- **Consequences** – a result or effect of an action or condition; a conclusion derived through logic such as what could happen by not taking action.
- **Solutions/Opportunities** – an answer to a problem; a favorable juncture of circumstances.
- **Define Success** – favorable or desired outcome.

Each market segment was studied and analyzed by a Working Group, led by the identified Co-Chairs and populated by community members with interest in identifying potential solutions to address the early care and education needs in Routt County. The Working Groups met four times over the summer and compiled their findings for their area focusing on the seven criteria listed above. The following is a list of the Working Group Co-Chairs and community participants:

- **Families** led by Irene Avitia, Elisha Colson, and Stephany Traylor, with participation from: Beth Melton, Tom Valand, Milena Munar, Sarah Cherry, Beth Lambe, Lily Lewis, Sharon Butler, Emily Beyers, Shawndra Winters, Nikki Durkan, Brianna Green, Dilia Rios, Lupita Puertas, Norma Gutierrez, Liza Masters, Alejandra Segovia (translator) and Amy Johnson (20)
- **Service Providers** led by Tami Havener and Alexis Wolf with participation from: Alicia Bermudez, Bonnie Espinoza, Dana Duran, Gail Smith, Hillary Werner, Jane Toothaker, Jay Hamric, Jenn Creagan, Jenny Brey, Joyce Delancey, Kathy Gibbs, Kerri Ann Crocker, Kim Martin, Leslie Weinheimer, Lindsey Garey, Meg Murphy, Megan Robertson, Meghan Holpuch, Melanie Stewart, Samantha Coyne Donnel, Sarah Valentino, Susie Clark, Tami Foth, and Jenny Krentz (26)

- **Community Groups** led by Kelly Keith and Kate Nowak with participation from: Sara Craig-Scheckman, Kris Andersen, Angie Plesche, Michelle Petix, Mark Rydberg, and Human Resource Coalition membership (27)
- **Employers** led by Tim Corrigan, Jason Lacy, and Kara Stoller with participation from: Wendy Frieden, Rebecca Gould, Michelle Malder, Adam Alspach, Randi Owens, Torey Wodnik, Leslie Arnold, Cheryl Renfroe, Natalie Grover, Brad Meeks, Stephanie Einfeld, Sue Fegelein, Addona Allen and Mark Rydberg (17)

Fifty-four participants attended the May 31<sup>st</sup> Kick-off event introducing this process. Two Listening Tours were held – one in Oak Creek with 13 participants and one in Hayden with 9 participants. Three online survey opportunities took place – Family Survey (64 responses), Community Survey (4 responses), Employer Survey (55 responses). What follows is a cumulative report of the Working Groups’ analyses.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

- Estimated child population for children ages birth to 8 based on average birth rate of 220/year = 1760
- Families with children under the age of 6 in the workforce (KIDS COUNT Data Center, 2012-2016) = 77%
  - Colorado = 63%
- Children under 6 by ratio of income to poverty (Kids Count Data Center, 2012-2016)
  - Routt County families need income more than three and a half times of the federal poverty level (FPL) to make ends meet

Under 50% FPL	Between 50% - 99% FPL	Between 100% - 199% FPL	Between 200%-299% FPL	Total below 300% FPL
50 (4%)	111 (8%)	173 (13%)	196 (15%)	530 (40%)

### SUPPLY

- 2018 licensed capacity for children ages birth to 8 = 1,346 slots
  - Birth to School Age (0-5) = 691 slots
    - Includes 94 licensed slots for children less than 24 months of age (actual available slots can be as low as 50% of the licensed number due to programs and providers serving less children to provide a higher quality environment)
  - School Age Care = 434 slots
    - Does not include Boys and Girls Club (served 353 children ages 6-8 in 2017)
    - Includes Ski Corps summer camps
  - Residential Camps = 221
    - Ex. Perry Mansfield, Book Trails, Mt Elm
- Existing 0-8 resources – Family Connections - <http://online.fliphtml5.com/mptf/okys/?1538600141454>

## DEMAND

The following four needs were identified by each segment:

1. Increase child care capacity for children ages birth to 2
2. Affordable access to early care and education resources for children ages birth to 8
3. Access to resources to meet the needs of all children including medical/behavioral needs as well as family work schedules
4. Recruitment, retention, and a fairly compensated early childhood workforce

- Routt County Population Projection for children ages birth to 8 (State Demographer) – average increase equals 36%

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Projected Increase
0	226	243	221	224	255	291	29%
1	228	256	223	235	261	296	30%
2	220	256	224	248	269	303	38%
3	229	275	243	262	279	310	35%
4	229	261	256	287	287	318	39%
5	262	262	272	264	292	329	26%
6	247	274	285	267	305	337	36%
7	222	265	285	269	318	346	56%
8	255	288	302	287	330	354	39%

- Population under 5 by municipality (US Census Bureau American Fact Finder, 2012-2016 Average)

Steamboat Springs	479
Hayden	105
Oak Creek	42
Yampa	17
Phippsburg	0

## OBSTACLES

Obstacles to providing early care and learning resources by each segment are categorized by affordability, availability, quality. All three of these areas overlap in addressing the need for early care and education resources for:

- Children ages 0-3
- Before and after school; school days off
- Evenings and weekends
- Shift work with shifts changing

<b>Affordability</b>	<b>Availability</b>	<b>Quality</b>
High cost of care is keeping families from accessing resources – cost of care can outweigh a parent/family’s income	Low number of child care slots available for children ages birth to 3	Paying staff a living wage including benefits – low wages for the early childhood workforce makes it more difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff
Cliff Effect – low income families lose public assistance due to wage increase and can’t afford the full cost of care	Lack of funding to fully staff programs including having aides to provide one on one assistance with children who need it and substitutes to cover time off/teacher’s out sick	Lack of professionalism for the early childhood field keeps wages low and early childhood teachers are categorized as hourly employees
High cost of care is keeping families from accessing resources – cost of care can outweigh a parent/family’s income	Sustaining resources for families – meeting needs of children with special needs, care provided for alternative hours, universal access to home visitation programs (Parents as Teachers, Safe Care, etc.), foster families available when needed, access to legal services	Unfunded licensing mandates – it is a challenge to make a profit and pay staff a living wage. Educators struggle with finding time to keep up with mandated paperwork and trainings.
Working poor – it takes three and a half times the poverty rate to make ends meet	Retention and recruitment of employees entering/staying in the workforce – turnover due to not having access to child care	Increased communication needed between Kindergarten and Preschool teachers requires resources
	Families are dealing with adult mental health and substance abuse issues, homelessness, isolation, and generational poverty	Lack of effective communication skills between educators and parents
	Transportation/time commuting adds stress to the family dynamics	Reaching and engaging all families due to time constraints and communication barriers
	Lack of awareness of resources and accessing them when needed	

Obstacles to the development of child care programming identified:

- Planning/Zoning Process
- Building Code restrictions
- Cost to build new child care facilities
  - Cost of Land
  - Cost of Construction
  - Building Department Fees/Taxes
  - Cost of meeting licensing rules and regulations and quality standards
  - Cost of recruiting and retaining qualified, fairly compensated staff
  - Difficult for child care programs to balance their budgets and make a profit

Note: Refer to Appendix A for additional details from each early care and learning segment.

### CONSEQUENCES

Consequences identified in all segments:

- Families with young children leave Routt County or do not move here – losing more professionals
- Employers providing less services due to employee turnover
- Early childhood teacher turnover continues to happen due to low wages and being understaffed
- Low quality/no early care and learning resources available will impact development/performance of children as they get older resulting in more at-risk children and teens which leads to – low school performance, higher dropout rates, increased suicide rates and mental health needs, increase in drug/alcohol use, increased legal involvement and crime, and higher incarceration rates
- Children are potentially in unsafe environments/uncomfortable situations due to parents being in desperate situations
- Routt County has a high level of depression; are the financial strains on people in the community causing this?
- Community loses diversity if only single people, couples without children, and retirees can live here

Note: Refer to Appendix B for additional details from each early care and learning segment.

## **SOLUTIONS/OPPORTUNITIES**

- Increase availability and access for all to quality and flexible early care and learning resources – eliminating income restrictions will remove stigma attached to applying for services
- Make resources available for children staying at home with their family to increase school readiness (ex., Gus the Bus)
- Connect teen parents with Colorado Mountain College for Early Childhood Education classes for professional/personal reasons
- Increase early care and education workforce compensation
- Have the Steamboat Springs School District Preschool Program located within the Elementary Schools
- More access to aides for all children of all ages
- Shared services through Early Learning Ventures as a cost saving measure for early childhood businesses
- Partner with Franchise to create new early care and learning program
- Partner early childhood programs with universities to offer employment guarantees
- Promote transition meetings between Kindergarten and Early Childhood Teachers
- Work with Housing Authority and employers to offer housing for service providers, or have centers built into housing development itself as a requirement
- Revise and expand currently underutilized City of Steamboat \$30,000/year incentive program beyond family child care providers
- Establish/Incentivize Emergency/Back-up child care providers as well as centers with expanded/flexible hours
- Create a “Family Resource Center”/one stop place for families to access resources along with existing satellite offices for Department of Human Services and LiftUp
- Provide an Early Childhood Expo in all communities bringing together all resources to familiarize parents and potential parents with available services
- Promote Colorado Child Care Contribution Tax Credit
- Advocate to community groups such as Rotary, Yampa Valley Community Foundation, etc... for donations on land and building costs for new early care and learning centers
- Promote concurrent enrollment for high school students to enroll in college-level early childhood education classes
- Apply for CMC Entrepreneur grant to fund a position. Work space provided if you win. Have to create a business plan.
- Market Family-friendly business practices adopted by employers
- Develop one or more new large early care and learning programs in Steamboat while incentivizing smaller (including family child care) operations in outlying parts of the County
- Work with employers to establish a coalition to establish 1 or more new early care and learning centers in Steamboat
- Partner with Steamboat Springs School District to establish/expand early care and learning facilities at 7th Street school property
- As Steamboat Springs School District works on their expansion plan, include employee infant/toddler care
- Work with Routt County to explore partnership with Human Services Department in purchase/lease of vacated Steamboat Pilot & Today facility in West Steamboat
- Bring this issue to the Economic Summit and/or Economic Development Council

## DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS

Definitions of Success identified in all early care and learning segments:

- High quality, affordable care available giving all families a choice in care
- Focus on quality, affordability, and availability
- Adequate qualified staff and substitutes
- Space available for care as needed, especially for infants and toddlers
- Teaching and the early childhood profession are elevated in the public eye
- Livable wages for early childhood and school district staff with a competitive benefits package
- Mental health services on site for families, children, and staff
- Access to Health and Human Services – Mental health, Dental, Physician, Legal services, Nutrition – eliminate food insecurity
- Affordable safe and stable housing
- Access to reliable transportation
- Affordable recreation for children and families including transportation to/for outlying areas
- Philosophy of “No Wrong Door” – no matter where a family goes for resources they are connected to the right person for what they need, This could be through a Family Support Specialist housed in the public libraries
- Open communication among all schools – early childhood through high school with all Health and Human Services integrated
- Have a hired person to manage building capacity
- Web of support
- Paid parental leave

Definitions of Success by early care and learning segments:

	<b><u>Families</u></b>	<b><u>Service Providers</u></b>	<b><u>Community Groups</u></b>	<b><u>Employers</u></b>
<i><u>2022 Goals</u></i>	# slots	# professionals % of employee retention	increased access to resources	% of employee retention

The goal is to produce supply that will catch up with demand and begin to provide early care and learning supply that matches demand in all segments.

	<b><u>Families</u></b>	<b><u>Service Providers</u></b>	<b><u>Community Groups</u></b>	<b><u>Employers</u></b>
<i><u>2030 Goals (cumulative)</u></i>	# slots	# professionals % of employee retention	increased access to resources	% of employee retention

The goal is to establish an environment where early care and learning supply matches demand in all segments. 2030 goals will be reevaluated and adjusted based on actual trends in the local early childhood field.

Note: Refer to Appendix D for additional details from each early care and learning segment.

### **CONCLUSION, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Summary of need and potential solutions
- Tasks and responsibilities flushed out at 10/24/18 Work Session

#### **Conclusion**

Early care and learning resources for children ages birth to eight are not keeping up with demand, leading to families leaving the workforce and/or Routt County or potentially not moving to the area. An environment of limited and expensive early care and learning options will force out families and employees from our communities leading to a loss of community character and economic competitiveness. It is the recommendation of the Routt County Early Childhood Community Plan Committee that the City of Steamboat Springs, Routt County, businesses, funders, and community members in Routt County establish policies and take significant action to increase the availability of early care and learning resources. Through the tasks and responsibilities listed below and by achieving the targets set forth in this report, our community can maintain adequate resources and quality early care and learning programs to retain a talented, diverse local workforce and the preservation of Routt County's community character.

#### **City of Steamboat Springs**

- Participate in Funding Committee to determine a dedicated funding source(s) to support development of additional early care and learning programming
- Facilitate the implementation of the funding committee recommendations.

#### **Routt County**

- Participate in Funding Committee to determine a dedicated funding source(s) to support development of additional early care and learning programming
- Facilitate the implementation of the funding committee recommendations.

#### **First Impressions of Routt County**

- Provide annual updates on the measurements of success and key early care and learning benchmarks (availability, quality, access, early care and education workforce development)
- Monitor the percentage of Routt County households with access to early care and education resources as an indicator of community character

- Update First Impressions/Early Childhood Community Plan Strategic Plan to include development of additional resources in all reported needed areas
- If and when appropriate, coordinate a professional scientific survey to understand community values and support for community early care and learning initiatives
- Identify projects and policies that impact the development of early care and learning resources and communicate those impacts to interested parties.

### **Businesses**

- Work collaboratively with the Chamber, City, County, First Impressions and other stakeholders to facilitate the development of early care and learning resources for your workforce
- Advocate that our public institutions take action to meet our early care and learning goals
- Advocate on behalf of family friendly policies and procedures in partnership with the Chamber

### **Funders**

- Sustainable private/public investments to support current level of programming available while increasing supply

### **Community Members**

- Get involved and advocate that our public institutions take action to meet our early care and learning goals

### **First Impressions/Working Group Participants**

- Continue involvement with Community Plan
- Participate in creating Strategic Plan
- Advocate to support new developments in increasing the availability of early care and learning resources

# APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX A: OBSTACLES**

### **Families**

- Lack of continuity of care for kids leading up to Kindergarten
- Child care programs that follow the school schedule even though parents schedules don't follow that
- School age care before 8 AM
- Family friendly practices for businesses do not exist
- HR departments need to talk to new families about the reality of childcare obstacles when new people are hired
- Lack of on-site employee care in this community
- Very limited options for kids with disabilities and chronic illnesses
- Lack of options for care when your child is sick, parents losing work due to sick kids and lack of care
- Most families don't have a plan B if something happens to their home child care provider
- A lot of parents don't have set schedule at work so getting set child care/scheduling days is difficult to manage
- Regulation barriers for home child care providers and centers, renters being restricted due to liability through HOA to open, own car
- Care for alternative hours for weekend and restaurant workers not available
- Lack of care options for 0-12 months, loss of 0-12 spaces due to regulations
- Scholarship/Finance gap
- Lack of mental health services in the EC classes
- Cost for working families in Routt County
- Distances families have to travel to find work
- Families have to put kids in care that they are not 100% with because they don't want to lose the space (parent may not ready to be gone from infant but will take if open, paying for summer care slots for teachers)

### **Service Providers**

- Professional development opportunities for early childhood teachers are limited
  - Currently online options only for college level early childhood classes through CMC
  - That misses out on building a “Learning Community” within the professional EC world
  - Lack of sites for practicum was one comment/other comment was several sites available
  - There isn't a “Lab School” to help high school or college students apply knowledge learned

### **Community Groups**

- Money \*\*
- Time \*\*
- Funding

- Accessibility
- Cliff effect – family receiving subsidies receives a bonus/more hours at work and is no longer eligible for subsidies. Family cannot pay the full cost of care/services with small income increase
- Geography/rural
- Sustainability
- Community norms/perceptions
  - socially acceptable
  - socially frowned upon
- Transportation
- Qualified child care providers to fill vacancies, low pay, childcare desert in Oak Creek
- Slots for infants/newborns
- Language barrier
- Adult mental health
- Addictions (parents)
- Understating priorities
- Homelessness
- Isolation
- Generational poverty, not being aware of resources, the desire to succeed
- Lack of compassion
- Access to drugs and alcohol
- Working parents - 2 jobs can't provide enough support

### **Employees**

- Gaps in childcare – week school closes, week of 4th of July, week school starts – obstacle that LiftUp addresses by allowing kids to come to work or working from home those weeks
- Infant to 2-3-year-old is a challenge; limited spaces; employees with kids on waitlist for a year or more
- In home child care providers have been taking off Fridays so getting coverage on Fridays is a challenge; employees have to shift to part time work to make it happen
- Cost is a big challenge especially when there are two kids
- Significant issues with shift workers with timing of daycare
- There is no incentive for providers to take infants which equates to less spaces for infants
- Quality vs quantity – parents/employees can't be picky in regard to the provider they can get a spot with
- Employees have to do a lot of juggling which equates to employers being unsure about coverage and productivity
- The cost of childcare is a huge obstacle – one staff member recently left because of cost of daycare – moved east (family with 2 kids)

- Employees are asking for changes in schedules to do a handoff; has impacts on employees
- Employees have a hard time simply finding childcare
- Dual income of \$120,000 with two kids could barely get by in town let alone saving money; if a high cost expense came up that would be a huge issue (SEE BELOW)
  - Cost Analysis for living in Steamboat Springs with 2 young kids (provided by Adam Alspach)

Total Family Income			<b>\$120,000.00</b>	
		Monthly	Annually	
Basic Expenses	Child care	2600		(2 kids @ \$65/day @20 days a month)
	Health insurance	300		
	Car insurance	150		
	Food	400		
	Retirement/ Savings	0		
	Gas	200		
	total	<b>\$3,650.00</b>	43800	
	Taxes state		6000	
	Taxes Federal		36000	
			\$34,200.00	
If a home is purchased				
		P&I	\$24,678.70	(Assumes 80% mortgage on 500K home or \$380K condo with \$400 HOA)

		taxes and ins	9024	
		Utilities	3000	
		Maintenance	0	
			(\$2,502.70)	

### Employers

- Salaries; employees with kids are asking for more money – because they need it, they ask, not because of the work they do; “if you don’t pay me more then I will need to leave”
- There is some flexibility in private sector but only to the extent that the budget allows
- Seasonality of workers
- Retention is an issue
- Recruitment is an issue as well; can’t relocate someone if they can’t find child care
- Consistency is an issue with work/ productivity; try to be very flexible and supportive – still a challenge due to childcare shifts/needs of kids, not necessarily the providers
- Shift workers don’t have much flexibility, so it is hard to allow them that which they need if you have kids.
- Coverage of shift employees when they have no choice but to leave to take care of kids is a challenge
- Limited flexibility lowers employee satisfaction; group circled back on this and it is something to note – employee moral
- City hasn’t evaluated internal daycare program recently
- Ski Corp doesn’t have the need to create an internal childcare program; employees get discount for camps
- 20 kids are on the wait list for employees’ kids for Grand Kids; probably more that have figured something else out
- All levels of employees are challenged with finding care
- YVMC subsidizes costs of childcare but YVMC actually loses money on Grandkids
- Wages can be an issue; being able to pay enough to cover childcare along with the environment for finding employees; LiftUp is paying for insurance and premiums and have heard that some still can’t make it work because childcare is so expensive
- The attitude of those in the community who have “already figured it out” will be a challenge - data points will be helpful to counter their arguments
- Laws that are in place restrict the ability for growth/ increase in childcare facilities/spots
- Grandkids is not making money because of the infant care costs/ requirements – again, little incentives for providers to take infants

### **South Routt Listening Tour:**

- Transportation
  - Distance to child care
  - Distance between parent's work and kid's school and care
  - Split services for care with multiple children
- No options (quality)/choices
- Funding
  - Employee salaries
  - Program funding
  - Parent tuition
- Employees
  - Child care workforce (low pay), etc...
  - Finding qualified staff and retaining and training
- Limited space
  - Buildings
  - Preschool classes full
  - Staff (limit # of kids served)
- Hours of operation paired with work time, travel
- Sick kids, medical issues, disabilities – who is there to help with these?
- Perception of community and level of service and ability to education (this leads to South Routt families signing kids up for Steamboat Springs School District)
- State regulations for programming
- All tuition funding is geared towards low income families, not families with 2 incomes/multiple kids
- Not enough staff to provide care for the hours needed
- No home care providers – need more options

### **Hayden Listening Tour**

- Finances
  - Cost for families
  - Wages of workers
- Finding Certified Providers
- Transition from preschool to child care (and back and forth between the two) (Bus?)
- Transition in program support and focus – school readiness – transition from structured program to unstructured. For example, kids transitioning between two programs in 1 day results in lots of transitions for the child
- Location and space for programs in homes
- Lack of a place for parents to meet each other/network

- Lack of newspaper coverage
- Included or free-breakfast for early drop off – this is happening at the school district and family child care homes
- Safe and easy drop-off/pick-up
- Go west for child care and work to go east for work and home – looking at where families are commuting to and from – for example, Craig vs. Steamboat

## **APPENDIX B: CONSEQUENCES**

### **Families**

- Families moving away from Steamboat
- Lack of care quality due to supply/demand
- Parents have to make professional sacrifices due to lack of care options
- Employers face issues with retention of trained employees
- Retention of both mother and father employees
- Women leave the workforce more frequently
- Kids are potentially in unsafe environments or more uncomfortable situations for parents due to desperate situations
- Parents have a lack of choice to the type of program they would prefer their child be a part of
- Children with chronic illnesses and various disabilities have VERY limited options- discriminatory practices could happen in town due to supply/demand
- Families make choices that they are not comfortable with

### **Service Providers**

### **Community Groups**

- At risk kids/teens
- Increased suicide and mental health needs
- Increase in drug/alcohol use
- Low school performance, higher high school dropout rates
- Lack of direction
- No people to fill jobs
- Financial struggle
- Losing of the middle class \*
- Increased legal involvement and crime

- People leaving the community
- People not feeling included in the community
- Inability to improve or move out of poverty systems suppression
- Hopelessness
- Isolation-lack of extra eyes on the children
- Higher incarceration rates
- Families will fall between the cracks
- Children need to be proficient in school by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Statistically, prisons (by size) are built via standardized testing scores. These children are more likely to live in poverty which will affect all facets of survival.

### **Employers**

- Turnover will continue – expensive and less productivity – vicious cycle
- Losing more professional people
- How can we support outlying communities; people are moving to smaller communities to be able to purchase a home and as they are looking ahead to childcare costs when they decide to have kids
- People will go to outlying communities but even further away
- How far away will people have to go to be able to still live here with cost of living increasing in the outlying communities
- Service levels are decreasing because of the inability for people to live here
- If we can't keep people here, less services will be available to provide at the hospital, for example
- Town will change from the way it is to mainly retirees who are the only ones who can make it work here
- Less dependable employees if there aren't families here that need the work vs single people who can potentially walk away from a job
- What kind of community will we live in if young families are no longer able to live here? Intangible consequences
- Will working families still be able to make it work/ live here? Not just independently wealthy families
- Steamboat has a high level of depression; are the financial strains on people in the community causing this?
- Low quality childcare will affect performance of kids as they get older; consequences of this show up down the road
- A decent number of kids who grew up here, came back; if that continues and low quality childcare is what people have to use, what are those consequences?
- Concerns of the quality of care; if we can't attract and retain quality employees then what will come of our community?
- YVMC is competing with City Market and other companies in the community to hire quality employees
- These consequences will change the fabric of our community

### **South Routt Listening Tour**

- We run the risk of having a community of retirees and single people
- Entire paycheck goes to child care
- Family size decisions

- Decision not move/go to school here or have to leave South Routt
- Loss of people in workforce
- Loss of South Routt students to Steamboat School District and loss of community identity
- Kids are not prepared to enter Kindergarten
- Care is not high quality

### **Hayden Listening Tour**

- Transient families (move in; move out; cost)
- Is the Hayden community “good enough” for our needs?
- Impact on schools – moving to higher expectations
- Impacts on jobs – when, where, who can work?
- Employees taking time off if kids’ child care isn’t available
- Parent/kids friend groups transition when kids go to school
- Kid behind when entering formal school

## **APPENDIX C: SOLUTIONS/OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Families**

- Have the Chamber create Family Friendly Workplace training and incentives ([Great Family Friendly Patagonia video](http://www.coloradoepic.org/initiatives/fftoolkit); <http://www.coloradoepic.org/initiatives/fftoolkit>)
- Research more on-site and new housing complex childcare options
- Hire a case manager to run a centralized waitlist
- Mom-sharing
- Co-op type model (This has been tried, but difficult due to lack of time parents can commit)
- Create a Lab school @ CMC
- More business attached care centers
- More scholarship opportunities
- Systematic business practice changes that foster more in work care and extended maternity and paternity leave (such as Sweden)
- Check into business models in town that provide paid leave for mothers and fathers
- Resource page for new moms. Guides on questions to ask providers to ensure that the home care is safe. Educate parents on safety
- An incentive to make unlicensed providers have background checks and fingerprints (market would need to drive this)
- Create some type of Safe Care program for In-Home providers so they can access CPR classes, outlet covers, and other safety type items
- The hospital could increase safety talks with new parents
- We need more Young Tracks type facilities (in SR and Hayden as well)

- BARRIERS to this--> Staff, unemployment rate, pay scale, building cost
- OPTIONS to this--> Find land to be donated for tax write off, check USDA loans, increase CMC ECE program with incentives to go through the program, live in dorms, live in town afterward and commit to working for x amount of years. We would need CMCs buy in to bring the program back to Steamboat.
- Commit to raising teachers wages to gain retention
- Utilize Newspaper building to create more capacity
- Reach out to the developer for Young Tracks
- When new businesses build, they need to be encouraged to build childcare- example- YVEA, City, School District
- Check into Childcare Contribution Tax Credit
- Donations on land, and builders, laborers to build- we need to start asking and speaking at community events and groups- Rotary, YVCF, etc.
- Full-time person committed to the cost (replicating YVHA position). We have a lack of employee infrastructure to make this happen currently
- MyVyllage is a community of high-quality in-home childcare programs (<https://www.myvillage.com/>) (Interested in Steamboat Springs cohort) - Emily Beyers
- There is a business (or nonprofit?) opportunity for someone to match families and high quality providers for long term full time nanny sharing and provide the back business end
- Finding funding for students with medical and developmental needs. Be able to provide 1:1 support so they can participate in daycare and after school and summer programs (First Impressions money, HRC?) Can insurance help with this?
- Identify trainings that would provide more support to providers around medical and developmental disabilities. (First Impressions could fund training)
- Identify foundations that could support kids with disabilities
- Bring back ECE 101 to high school OR start teaching and promoting program
- It needs to be a community initiative to change business practices
- Business need to be able to see a return on investment if they buy in to ECE fund
- Co-directing Centers
- Shared Service- has gained a lot of momentum in the past decade; there are now even annual shared services conferences. The concept encompasses a diverse range of centers working together to economically provide top-notch administrative services...
- Contracted management
- Uber Outsourcing- When centers join Early Learning Ventures (<http://earlylearningventures.org>) in Colorado, they have access to a wide range of administrative tools including bulk purchasing...fiscal services. They can elect to participate in any of the 'tiers' of services: enrollment, registration and wait list, staff demographics, certification and training, child attendance, staff-child ratios, billing, child development tracking.
- Franchising- A child care 'franchiser' licenses its trademarks and proven business methods to others (often husband and wife teams) in exchange for a recurring payment, a percentage of gross sales, or a fixed fee. For example, Primrose Schools, one of the longest standing child care franchisors...maintains quality control by monitoring compliance on an ongoing basis and by providing continuous learning opportunities for franchisees.

- Municipal stake to run a center
- Gus the Bus through Aspen Foundation- check in with United Way about that. Interested funder in this project? Resource for at home kids to increase preschool readiness and improve quality care, rural areas?
- Apply for CMC entrepreneur grant to fund a spear heading position. If we win the annual contest we could have free work space. We would need a business plan
- We need to create a business plan to sell this to community members and employers
- Could we get buy in from employers and they would contribute yearly to have staff trainings and have a resource at hand for families (if we had a position)
- Bring this issue to the Economic Summit or Economic Development Council

### **Service Providers**

- Work on a concurrent enrollment program at the High School so that young adults could graduate with EC qualifications
- Connect Teen parents with CMC for EC classes, for professional or personal reasons.
- Expand the City of Steamboat Springs Licensed Family Child Care Provider reimbursement program to include reimbursement for Foster Families
- Universal Screenings for all children. Get the Pediatricians on board to ask an additional set of questions surrounding whole family health
- Marketing the idea that “It is OK to ask for help”
- Get the medical profession more involved in general
- Create a “Family Resource Center” or a one–stop place for families to get all of their questions answered and the resources that they need. Specifically get the related organizations all housed in one building. Currently Lift-up is the closest thing that we have, so it could be expanded or bolstered so that it could become the Family Resource Center.
- Create Satellite offices for Department of Human Services or Lift-up. Libraries were suggested as a possible location for these offices, including Oak Creek, Hayden, and North Routt
- We have lots of services for Low income, but the Middle income families do not necessarily qualify. Eliminating Income restrictions for families could not only get more families the services that they need, but could help take away the stigma attached to applying for the services in the first place. Rebrand the services as simply “because you have a child, you might need this”.
- Create an Early Childhood Expo, or an event gathering all EC providers, pediatricians, service providers, etc... in one place so that parents or potential parents can become familiar with all of it. This expo could also happen in Hayden, South Routt, and North Routt
- Create more continuity between Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) to Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- More access to aides for all children 0-18. Early childhood centers typically cannot provide the services themselves, and the School district is mandated to provide the services but there is no funding given, taking away resources for other programs and staff.
- Trainings for all teachers for kids on the Autism spectrum
- Expansion of services for kids who still need help but do not qualify under current guidelines or standards
- Discuss the resort opening an employee Childcare Center
- Encourage employers in general to collaborate to open employee center. Groups of employers can work together to help fund new centers

- As the school district works on their expansion plan, include employee infant/toddler care in the proposal
- Have transition meetings between EC centers and Kindergarten teachers - This would require substitutes for both sides
- Revisit school district rules surrounding teacher requirements. The Steamboat Springs School District has several early childhood certified teachers. It is difficult to have flexibility in the K-5 setting with only 0-8 early childhood certification.
- Expanding that pool will get more and better qualified professionals working with the appropriate age groups
- Partner EC centers with universities to offer employment guarantees
- Working with Housing Authority or employers to offer housing for service providers, or to have the centers built into the housing development itself as a requirement.
- Get the SSSD pre-school into one or both of the schools
- Funding – by far the is the largest obstacle, and with additional funding, many of the problems could help get solved
  - Professional wages
  - Facilities
  - Cost of care
  - Family support – Private and public
  - Substitute teachers
  - Legal Services
  - Aides in schools, both Early childhood and Elementary
- Information Dissemination
  - Families are too busy to engage
  - How do you reach the “unreachable” (families that do not want to be reached)
  - Majority of the info is in writing, inaccessible to some families
  - Poor communication skills – educators need training on how to effectively communicate with parents
- Communication breakdown between Early Childhood and Elementary
  - Requires time and funding
  - Many don’t receive an invitation to share information
  - A lot of the children who need services have shared providers, causing burdens on families with multiple meetings
  - Parents need some information prior to the meetings, they show up uninformed
- Substitutes are lacking for both Elementary and Early Childhood
  - Many of the proposed solutions pull staff from classrooms, so substitutes are needed
  - Funding for the substitutes would be required

### **Community Groups**

- Child Care funding – on site child care and housing authority projects and large employers \*
- Parent support
- Affordable training programs for providers

- Scholarships
- Flexible family friendly employment \*\*
- Housing (affordable)
- Transportation
- Preschool Bus - Gus the bus
- More space for Boys and Girls Club and City's After School Action
- Incentivized parenting classes
- Dedicated sustainable funding
- Parent choice
- Middle class support systems
- Flexible standards for preschool provider requirements
- Attracting qualified preschool and childcare educators
- Steps, helping parents climb out of poverty, giving them the tools they need to survive and thrive which will trickle down to their children. Assistance but not reliance, educational programs that welcome suspicious or cautious parents who have come to fear government and authority. Helping them feel like they can succeed, so much is learned by children watching their parents.

### **Employers**

- Establish/Incentivize Emergency/Back-up Childcare providers as well as centers with expanded/flexible hours.
- Work with employers to establish a coalition to establish 1 or more new centers in Steamboat. They would have to work out details around funding and establishing a system of how slots are assigned.
- Potentially partner with SSSD to establish/expand ELC facilities at 7<sup>th</sup> Street School Property.
- Potentially work with Routt County to explore partnership with Human Services Department in purchase/lease of recently vacated Pilot facility in West Steamboat.
- Revise and expand currently underutilized City of Steamboat \$30,000/year incentive program beyond family childcare providers.
- Review what the "big number" is and work back from that
- What public/ private partnerships are available to help this?
- Need to address views of those who say, "I did it, why can't they?"
- Pilot office is still being assessed by County Commissioners. Potential of DOLA money.
- Restructure City's \$30,000 funding for childcare providers to be more attainable
- Need to determine square footage number per kid
- Retention messaging/ benefits needs to be spelled out (review Patagonia's info)

### **South Routt Listening Tour**

- State licensed childcare centers need to be close to places of employment and schooling

- Quality options
- Age birth to 3 child care facility – separate locations – Oak Creek and Yampa; Less specific types of locations needed
- Preschool – more rooms or ability to grow – maybe in Oak Creek
- Affordability – Scholarships
- Stable funding to support needs
- Recruit and retain quality staff (increase salary, set-up education classes, incentives)
- Rec program on Fridays – how do we get more people to attend?
- State policy changes/Advocacy for early childhood
- South Routt (parents) representation at First Impressions
- Concurrent enrollment for high school students taking early childhood education classes through CNCC
- Get high school students signed up for CNCC online babysitting class

### **Hayden Listening Tour**

- After school program to provide additional care after Preschool Extended Day
- More certified sitters and respite choices for kids with high needs
- A child care center accommodating shift work/commuter times
- Have 2-3 quality child care homes with great programs and openings
- Opportunity to capture Moffat/Craig needs on way to and from work (families are closer to kids, later drop off and earlier pick up)
- Opportunity to provide smaller size groups – don't have to “live up” to Steamboat pressure/expectations
- Provide information to realtors, Chamber, and libraries to keep families informed of resources available

## **APPENDIX D: DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS**

### **Families:**

- Recruiting and retaining qualified staff
- A new center
- Parents having a CHOICE in care
- Have a hired person to manage this push
- Focus on: quality, affordability, and ACCESS
- Increase capacity to access piece
- We need the community to rally around this cause
- Kids with chronic illnesses and varied disabilities having CHOICE in programs too

## **Service Providers:**

- “Every child feeling fully supported, whatever that looks like for them”
- High Quality Care
- Affordable care
- Space available as needed, especially for Infants & Toddlers
- Having qualified staff
- Having enough staff and substitutes
- Enough money to fund all of this
- Elevating the Teaching and Early Childhood profession in the public eye
- Eliminating/reducing student loans for early childhood teachers
- Livable wages for EC and School District teachers
- Staff retention, early childhood teachers stay in the field
  - They have a meaningful career ladder
  - Competitive benefit package
- Affordable housing
- Access to transportation
- Access to Health & Human Services
  - Mental Health
  - Dentist
  - Physician
  - Legal services
  - Nutrition – eliminate food insecurity
- Affordable Recreation
  - For both kids and families
  - Transportation to outlying areas
  - Families having access to activities
- Philosophy of “No Wrong Door” for connecting families to resources
  - When a family shows up, whoever they are speaking with can help them navigate to the right person as opposed to “That’s not my area”
  - Family Support Specialist available – Could be housed in the Public Libraries
- Open Communication between EC and School Districts
  - Early Childhood through High School all with Health and Human Services integrated

## **Community Groups**

## **Employers**

- It would be ideal to have a childcare location with health and human services right next to it in order to conduct screenings
- Potential for Steamboat Springs School District to partner?
  - Facilities on the ground
  - What is the number of kids that need space and what percent do we want?
    - 220 birth rate – 75%
    - 0-2: 440 kids (93 currently licensed slots)
    - 2-5: 415 slots
- Centers need to be fully staffed with living wages
- Centers need to be in Steamboat due to majority of families working in Steamboat
- GOAL: Affordable, high-quality slots available for 75% of the kids birth to 5.
- FOCUS: on more spaces/ facilities for 0-2
- Some facilities with extended hours
- Address the affordability piece –nationally recommendation is 7% of family’s income goes to child care; subsidies available for up to 15% of family’s income in Routt County but not fully funded – waitlists, partial scholarships.

## **South Routt Listening Tour**

- Works for the family so they can move on to other concerns
- Provide early care and learning opportunities for 75% of all birth to 8 children
- Kid focused (non-school) care and activity space built and operational and centrally located
- More options so families can find what’s right for them
- Quality, affordable, sustainable programming available
- Happy providers and parents
- Include preschool programs in half cents sales tax that goes to school districts

## **Hayden Listening Tour**

- Full spectrum of services serving birth to 8
- High performing child care – preschool – elementary and beyond
- Parents/families being supported and successful
- Integration and smooth transition from program into school system
- Full day coverage available
- Affordable!

## APPENDIX I: EMPLOYERS' SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

### 1. How many employees do you have, including yourself?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
1-5	13	23.6%
6-10	10	18.1%
11-20	12	21.8%
21-30	6	10.9%
31-40	3	5.4%
41-50	1	1.8%
51-75	2	3.6%
76-100	4	7.2%
more than 100	4	7.2%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 2. What percent of your employees are part-time and/ or seasonal?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0%	7	12.7%
1-20%	25	45.4%
20-40%	5	9.0%
40-60%	4	7.2%
60-80%	6	10.9%
80-100%	8	14.5%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Comments

4%

the employees are year round, but some are part-time

About 5%

Part-time, not seasonal

If you are looking for including Seasonal staff into Question #1, I increased my headcount to include seasonal and FT staff.

While we are not considered "seasonal", in the school district around 80-85% of our education staff work only 9 months, mid-August to early June and have the summer off. We do have some staff that are year round, generally in the district office, and facilities.

I sometimes take on student / high school students in the summers.

### 3. How many employees currently have kids 8 years old and younger?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0	4	7.2%
1-5	34	61.8%
6-10	8	14.5%
11-20	5	9.0%
21-30	0	0.0%
31-40	0	0.0%
41-50	0	0.0%
51 or more	1	1.8%
Unsure	3	5.4%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Comments

I'm counting 12, but probably a few more.

This is an unsure number, but would guess that at least 51 have younger children.

My seasonal employees tend to be young, unmarried adults.

1

Many with dogs, and the new doggie daycare is important. Peace Love Pet care.

### 4. How often do childcare issues impact your employees' productivity?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Never	4	7%
A few times a year	21	38.1%
A few times a month	23	41.8%
A few times a week	6	10.9%
N/A - I have no employees with children under 8	0	0.0%
Other	1	1.8%
No Responses	0	0.0%

**Total**

55

100%

<b>Comments</b>
Employees bring their kids to work and they have to wait, they can't find affordable childcare
Maybe once a month
Late drop off times at some places, for example the Montessori school in Steamboat accepts kids at 8:00am earliest. That means you have to be all the way out at Heritage Park at 8:00am. Hard for working parents.
The other issue we see (less often) is a parent unable to find day care and having to temporarily juggle kids and work schedules with their spouse.
Depends on the time of year. Variations in childcare schedules affects everything. We need more dependable quality care in South Routt!!
Since our employee with the youngest child age 3 got her daughter in preschool it is only a few times a month. Before she got her daughter into preschool she would have to bring her to work or have a co-worker watch her so there were daily issues at that point.

**5. In the last three years, how many employees have you lost or not been able to hire due to challenges related to childcare?**

	<b>Number of Response(s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
0 - no issues with childcare for hiring or keeping employees	26	47.2%
1-5	25	45.4%
6-10	4	7.2%
11-15	0	0.0%
16-20	0	0.0%
more than 20	0	0.0%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Comments</b>
It's my husband and I whom are the owners that have children.
This is because I am the sole owner and operator of my business but I have lost money from having to close my business early due to challenges related to childcare.
I can't think of a time where child care was the specific issue that led to a loss of an employee or job candidate.
I don't recall that we have had these issues in hiring. We do have some leave opportunities for current staff to take time off after FMLA or more. We have had 1-2 staff make a choice not to return to stay at home with children and while may not have stated it is due to child care, but a desire to be at home for the 1st 1-2 yrs. We have also have 3-5 staff request to move to a Part time status to be able to be home some of the time of the school year, then return to FT as opportunity arises.
We may lose one employee in the coming months due to lack of infant care.
My few employees with children have been able to work out solutions.
I am unaware of any but maybe I just don't know.
It's usually an issue brought up during the interview/hiring process
I think a lot of people don't apply for a full time job if they have small children due to no reliable 0-3 child care in South Routt.

**6. What are the top challenges your employees face related to childcare? Choose all that apply, use the Other option, and/or expand further in the comment section to provide more information.**

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Availability	42	76.3%
Hours of operation	27	49.0%
Cost	45	81.8%
Quality of care	17	30.9%
N/A - no employees have childcare needs	4	7.2%
Other	1	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Comments
Childcare in Steamboat is extremely expensive.
Not a shock that child care is part of parenting
Infant care
One employee actually had their mother move in with them to assist in day care.
All of the above...the greatest challenge is 1) availability and 2) Cost
mostly in the infant care area as most are able to get in preschool needs
Cost and Availability are the key factors!
At \$12,000 per year per child, it is simply unrealistic and keeps many low and mid-level workers from working at all or working only to send a child to day care or preschool.
The preschool in Yampa has shortened their hours. Making it almost impossible for those who don't work close by. Employees stress about being on time for pick up every day. In turn losing their focus on their jobs and end of day duties. The Yampa preschool always seems to want to take more time off.
Childcare is expensive and sometimes, this fact prevents prospective employees from seeking employment. It doesn't make sense for both parents to work just to pay for childcare. Infant care is extremely difficult to find.
None- they are responsible parents and find child care.
It is very hard to find reliable childcare for children under 3.

**7. What, if anything, have you been able to do in order to support your employees with children? Please write "N/A" if you do have no employees with children.**

54 Response(s)
Flexible schedule
We adapt to their schedules if possible and understand occasional emergencies occur.
Allow billing to be done from home.
We make annual donations to the child day care facilities our employees use. We allow our staff to bring their children to work if needed when childcare is not available or after school.

Many of our parents will take approved FMLA or benefitted leave
Allow employees to work from home or remotely
I have given them names and numbers of sitters, connected them to various Facebook groups, connected them with the child development center. On occasion I have even offered to watch their children at no cost so that they can work when they can't find a sitter or something happened to their sitter
Be more flexible.
Flexible hours around the unpredictable nature of childcare and children's schedules.
Flexible scheduling, allow employees to bring children to work when they don't have coverage, work from home (position dependent) when they have sick kids,
pay them more
Allow the employees to bring their kids to work
Employees can defer up to \$5000.00 pretax into a savings account and submit for reimbursement.
Flexible schedules, children welcome in the office
OFFERING A FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE, AND ADDITIONAL TIME OFF
We try to work around their schedules but then we are not doing what is best for the business. We need weekend help and sometimes they can't get childcare on the weekends only during the week.
I am flexible with schedule changes due to parenting responsibilities.
We have modified work schedules to allow for parents to leave early or arrive late due to day care. We also allow employees to come and go throughout the day due to challenges, moving kids, etc.
We have to be extremely flexible with time off and bringing children to the office.
I haven't done anything
At times we can offer to pay Childcare expenses through a Cafeteria Plan (pre-tax). We always offer Flex Time for people to accommodate sick children and child events.
Flexible work schedules, working with employees to manage time for their children when needed. Board and committee members have taken their children with them to meetings.
Play Garden, drop in day care
I own my business and am a single parent. It is very difficult finding affordable childcare evenings or weekends.
We allow babies to come to work until they are mobile/crawling and provide space for breastfeeding or expressing.
n/a
N/A
The schedule for much of our staff allows them to work the same school schedule as their children from k-12. With the summers off, the care most need is during the school year and most preschools offer good options. The challenge is in the early years/infant care availability.
A flexible work environment
Be understanding, flexible, provide PTO, allow them to make up hours or bring kids in to work when necessary
Allowing them to leave early because of pick up times. Also allowing their children to come at the end of the day and wait for mom to get off of her shift.
Provide flexibility when needed
Allow flexibility in work schedule when childcare issue arise

Employees can bring children to work and get time off for sickness, doctors' appointments etc, no questions asked.
We have on-site child care which many employees depend on. Unfortunately, it is open based upon the times that are important to our customers not necessarily our employees. Additionally, a temporary closure this summer has caused us to lose several long time employees with young children.
Flexibility on schedule
Provide flexible schedules to work with childcare availability limits.
Hire responsible people that know when they have kids, child care is part of their responsibility.
flexible scheduling
We can be flexible for some positions. On occasion (not regularly), employees bring young children to work.
Try and work around her needs and that's doable.
Try and be flexible with the shift work.
Allow them to bring their children to the office when they don't have childcare
We are able to offer a flexible schedule, but that is about it.
N/A
Flexible with schedule. Understanding of the situation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Put her on later shifts so she can get her kids off to school</li> <li>- Accommodate any absences she needs to care for them or attend school events</li> <li>- Accommodate with holidays off as possible</li> </ul>
We try to be a flexible as possible knowing that family comes first.
Create exceptions for flexible scheduling. Changed employees work days to meet that of daycare availability
flexible hours
Flexible schedules.
Cover shifts
We offer two hours at our drop in day care, but there is a two hour limit.

<b>8. If you could create the ideal circumstances for your employees with children, what would that look like? I.e., more childcare facilities/ spaces, more flexible hours, onsite childcare, etc.</b>
<b>45 Response(s)</b>
More availability and lower cost.
More Childcare facilities in order to drive cost down.
There is a definite need for lower cost child care for infants to 5 years old. An ideal situation would be an on-site child care facility at our office but that is not an affordable option. Second best is truly a facility rather than home day care as hours are consistent as well as staff and policies.
7am - 6pm facility that can accommodate infant and toddler care
More affordable childcare options
More childcare facilities! I personally have a 1 year old child who I can't find an opening for at a facility in town. If I have problems and I can create my own hours, how much harder is it for employees who don't have flexibility? The cost is getting crazy too, if they happen to find a spot, it is unaffordable.
Onsite childcare would be very ideal but not a likely possibility due to the liability and space, etc that it takes to have childcare provided.

Onsite childcare would be ideal, something on the West end of town, something affordable - it is often more cost effective to have an employee leave the workforce than pay for childcare and barely have any take home pay after that bill is paid
Affordable and flexible child care
All of the above. More availability, lower prices, higher quality teachers.
More child care especially for infant care. Lower cost childcare
ONSITE CARE WOULD BE IDEAL BUT NOT REALISTIC. MORE SPACES, MORE FLEXIBLE HOURS
More childcare facilities including weekends. A lot of our business is based on tourism and we do not work M-F, 9-5 so we need childcare to support these types of businesses.
??? Not every employee is interested in the same solution. Single parents have very different needs than two parent households.
A "go to" spot in town. More spaces and a competitive price.....
More facilities with reduced cost to the families while somehow miraculously paying the workers a livable wage.
More child care facilities
Flexible Childcare open from 7am-7pm
More space, in home care with less children in each person's care, ability to work 2-3 days a week from home. Exciting after school programs for school age children giving them access to arts, music, and learning.
more child care facilities
Onsite childcare, more facilities with affordable, flexible hours.
I feel that we do pretty well. I guess a dream would be a family type room for those that need it.
Additional infant care availability.
All of the above are important! But I think more availability - especially for under 1 year/infant is the most stressful factor we see as well as cost. The city needs to address this issue with support and funding! Our population continues to grow. We see very little support from our government of this crucial issue.
More facilities that are grant and government funded so that costs for quality care are much lower and more availability. We wait listed before birth to ensure a spot in our ideal preschool.
All of the above. More flexible hours, more facilities and also the care providers we do have to not close. This past summer/Christmas/spring break we were without care because of facilities closing to allow their employees to take vacations. Therefore putting everyone else without care!
High quality and flexible are key. Prefer programs affiliated with school district, BOCES or similar.
More facilities
Varied hours (most childcare centers only operate Mon-Fri 7-530) A lot of parents in this town don't work "usual" business hours.
More affordable childcare options 7 days a week in Steamboat.
More available hours and capacity for existing onsite child care.
More facilities with more flexible hours.
more facilities at a good rate
More options that are affordable.
We really are able to work with it, luckily.

Childcare run by the hospital always seems to be popular. Free for employees of the hospital and charged for members of the community.
Onsite childcare, but our office is not big enough to offer such services.
more facilities with more flexible hours
N/A
More childcare facilities that offer younger ages and better hours. Some locations provide 8am-5pm...that's hard when you normally are supposed to be to work by 8am and then you have to leave 15 minutes early at the end of the day also.
- More flexible hours - Nearby childcare - Affordable childcare
More child care facilities, longer childcare hours for commuters,
more childcare facilities that accept infants. more childcare facilities open on Fridays
Childcare costs are HIGH, \$15 is the minimum you pay an hour for ONE kid, and some people charge closer to \$20/ hour. This makes babysitters expensive and difficult to afford. One you add in paying for sick days, and the time driving to and from work, it is difficult for some people to actually make any money at all when using a baby sitter.
more availability and flexible hours
more childcare facilities/ spaces, more flexible hours

<b>9. Please share anything else related to your employees and childcare challenges that hasn't already been addressed.</b>
17 Response(s)
More spots for children under 2 or 3 yrs old need to be created. There are very few opportunities for care for infants and children who aren't potty trained. And when I say very few I mean pretty much no opportunities.
Gaps in coverage during the summer/holidays
It's also hard to pay a decent wage for our employees when they are having to pay childcare. For the people that are not in that situation, we pay decent wages.
Don't forget the older kids. Transportation for children from 8 to 18 is also a big challenge. Parents often must leave in order to shuttle older kids around from school to extra-curricular activities. Solutions to that problem are needed as well.
It is stressful and widely known that we have the most expensive day care in the state. Its a tough one that certainly impacts productivity.
n/a
Subsidized childcare, on a sliding scale, or access to free child care for working families.
conveniently located facility
Wages, especially in nonprofits, cannot keep up with the cost of child care. People are choosing not to have children, or only one, due to costs.
The cost is overwhelming. It almost doesn't pay to work at all. What are parents left to do.. I personally barely make enough to cover it.
Currently our challenges with employees for childcare fall on school age children and the amount of days they don't have school and the kids have no where to go. With our employees that have children in daycare, the challenge is having enough paid time for all the days the kids get sick and parents must stay home.
N/A

At home daycare can be a great option however they always seem really full and I believe the requirements to get certified are challenging at first. And costly. Promoting that as you have in the past is a good idea.

- I'm working with my board to push for maternity/paternity/adoption leave! There's only one other nonprofit I could find that provides that and it's only 6 weeks of paid time.

**SOUTH ROUTT NEEDS MORE CHILDCARE OPTIONS!!!!**

Several employees have struggled finding childcare for their infants (under 2)

I do not know a solution, but it is a problem. I feel the resort atmosphere drives up prices and availability.