



CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE

Support a Quality Early Childhood System

2021 | ANNUAL REPORT



850 Hwy. 153, Ste F | Mosinee | WI 54455 | 1.800.628.8534 | www.childcaring.org

(Across from Central WI Airport, Baymen Professional Building)





Lori



Carrie



Micki



Kristine



Rachele



Gayle



Tracy



Mary



Kelly



Tara



Audrey



Linda



Kao



Andrea



Shelley

“Children are the Future - Support A Quality Early Childhood System”

Childcaring designed t-shirts with the message that a quality early childhood system, where early childhood professionals are supported, provides lasting benefits to children, our economy, and society.

Thank you to the “workforce behind the workforce” – Early Childhood Professionals!

We are grateful for all the wonderful early care professionals helping children and families every day. The lingering impacts of COVID-19 present many challenges to the early childhood field and have increased the need for even more Early Childhood Professionals. Childcaring is dedicated to serving as a resource to potential and existing regulated child care providers.

Quality early care benefits us all! Childcaring continues to provide quality child care information, and partner with parents, care providers, business leaders, and community organizations to make quality care available to families.

The 2021 Childcaring stakeholder's survey indicated these top 5 early care and education concerns from providers and community stakeholders:

- Availability of child care slots
- Shortage of qualified staff
- Cost of child care
- Low wages/availability of benefits for child care staff
- Quality of programs

We invite you to review the highlights of our work during a year that presented both challenges and opportunities to address many important concerns, like those identified in the stakeholder survey.

We appreciate all the hard work of child care providers who work tirelessly to provide children with safe and nurturing environments where they can learn and thrive.

Thank you for your support!

Service to Families

Providing Resources that Strengthen and Support Children & Their Families

Childcaring assists families in locating child care that meets their needs and provides tools to help choose a quality child care program. Families can call or meet with a referral specialist or enter their information online. A computer-generated list of regulated child care programs is then emailed or mailed to the family along with a variety of resources.

"We were very happy with your knowledgeable staff and did, after an extensive search, find a daycare spot. Great service/resource, highly recommend!"
-Parent Searching for Child Care

770

families

956

children

received child care referrals

Marquette & Adams County Café

8

virtual
sessions

3

in-person
sessions

49

attendees



Parent Café

Parent Café's help build strong families using The Five Protective Factors. At a parent café you will be able to connect with other local parents, learn strategies to strengthen relationships with your children and receive concrete support for your family.

Childcaring worked throughout the summer to plan and discuss how to safely provide Parent Café in person for rural Marquette and Adams County families. Knowing that families would have some barriers to attend in person due to our restrictions, we also offered virtual sessions so more families could attend. Parent Café themes included: Choosing Joy; Seeing the Beauty Through the Blizzard; Refuel, Recharge, Keep Going!; and Not All Super Heroes Wear Capes!

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board Family Support Emergency Funds Grant

Childcaring received this \$12,000 grant which allowed us to continue offering cafes and provide additional concrete supports to 11 families in attendance at the (December) café.



Enhanced Referral Services

Childcaring contracts with organizations to provide Enhanced Referrals for their employees. Based on the referral intake, the referral specialist works to locate child care providers with openings. The families are responsible for calling the providers to discuss details and schedule interviews.

"I was at a complete loss in finding child care for my infant. Thankfully I remembered that Childcaring was a way to help look for childcare in my area; with the option for an enhanced referral due to my employer. It was a great experience and without it I would not have been able to find child care, especially due to my hectic schedule as a parent of three."
- Parent Who Used Enhanced Referral Services



Scholarship Aid

funded through Marshfield Area United Way, United Way of South Wood & Adams Counties, and Joe Ancel (Private Donation) helps families who are struggling to pay the high cost of child care.

18 families 27 Children
Received Scholarship Aid

7 Child Care Programs rated 3 Stars or higher in YoungStar are serving these children and families.

Good Start Grants (GSG)

provide financial assistance for eligible families to ensure they have access to quality, affordable child care.

2021 GSG funders:

COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE FUND
(Community Foundation of North Central WI and United Way of Marathon County)



United Way
of Marathon County

**COVID-19 Impact Catalog AND
Preschool Development Grant (PDG)**



Dudley Foundation



Childcaring Awarded Community Innovation Grant (CIG)

Childcaring, Inc. was one of eight organizations across the state awarded the Community Innovation Grants (CIG) from the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Childcaring received \$150,000 to expand available early care and education opportunities for young children ages birth to five and their families.

With the award of the PDG grant, Childcaring assisted families in gaining access to high-quality, affordable early care and education by expanding the Good Start Grants program to our entire service delivery area. Good Start Grants provide financial assistance to eligible families to help pay for quality child care. Additionally, stipends were provided to local child care programs to help achieve or maintain a YoungStar rating. #wipdg



Families Receive Referrals to Other Services

As part of Childcaring's PDG Community Innovation Grant, providers were encouraged to refer families that may require financial or other assistance. The Referral Specialist acting as a family navigator then completed a brief needs assessment with the family to see what resources may be available in their county. Once completed, the resources were gathered and sent to the family. The Referral Specialist shared a variety of resources this with families including but not limited to: clothing, food, health, and energy assistance.

194
families

283
children

received
GSG

21

Child Care Programs rated 3 Stars or higher in YoungStar are serving these children and families.



Service to Provider Virtual Child Care Huddles

Initially developed to support providers through the pandemic, virtual child care huddles continue to be a source of rich interaction with providers. Every huddle begins with Good News and Hot Topics, allowing the participants to lead the conversation. Huddles are full of conversation and sharing around various topics like: Child Care Counts, taxes/record keeping, and staffing challenges. Childcaring staff facilitate the group discussion and search for or provide information to support their conversations. When the child care providers were asked about their interest to continue the huddles in 2022, there was an overwhelmingly positive response.



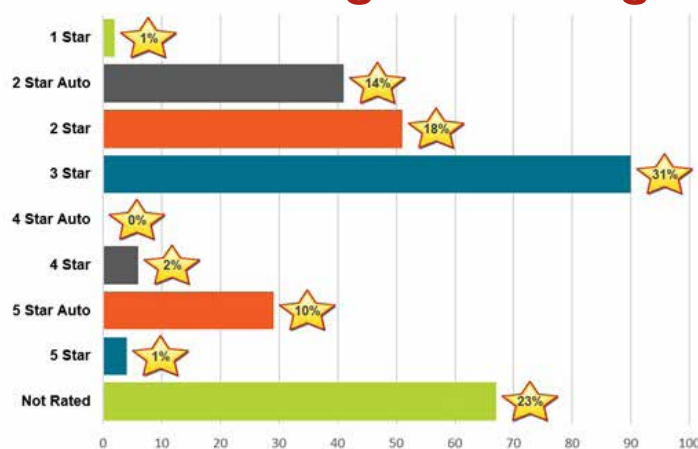
Preschool Development Grant - Social Emotional Development Project

Childcaring purchased and created materials to help programs support social emotional development in children. Childcaring staff worked with a local printer to create "indestructible" copies of the Tucker Turtle book (with puppet) and turtle technique materials as well as the Problem-Solving book and supporting materials. These include items that can be posted in classrooms and hands on materials such as feeling face cards and problem-solving wrist cards that the children can use hands on. We also purchased some additional materials from our vendors for children to use such as emotion tiles, body yoga cards and emotion mirrors. The materials were used to support one of our Pyramid Model trainings and also used on a "see a need, fill a need" basis as we returned to in person visits.



YoungStar is a program of the Department of Children and Families created to improve the quality of child care for children in Wisconsin. Childcaring is the Regional YoungStar office for central Wisconsin. YoungStar rated child care providers are evaluated using a block system and must meet the required items for each star level, plus additional high quality practices for 4 and 5 Star programs.

2021 YoungStar Ratings



77%

In our **10** county service area **223** out of **290** regulated child care providers participated in YoungStar

YoungStar Success Story

Quality Coaches Support Providers to Prepare for the Formal Rating Process

A provider has talked about pursuing a four-star formal rating in the past, but has never felt the timing was right. This year, however, being the provider's second off-year, she decided that she would like to work towards that four-star rating. The Quality Coach (QC) and the provider reviewed the additional requirements needed to earn four stars, as well as discussed the high quality practices that the program already utilizes.

Together, the QC and provider reviewed the YoungStar Evaluation/Rating Criteria during scheduled visits. The provider already met the Strengthening Families and the Pyramid Model Equivalent practices. They also reviewed her lesson plans and made small adjustments to help align them with the WMELS domains. Further, they planned how to incorporate developmental screening into her program.

Additional funding from the Child Care Counts program helped the provider incorporate high quality practices in her program. She is thankful for the additional funding so that she can purchase the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) tool. The provider also completed an Exploring the Third Edition of the Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (FCCERS) online training to become more familiar with the tool that will be used to complete her rating. Before the rating, the QC and provider reviewed the FCCERS book.

The extra off-year has allowed the time for the provider to confidently go for a formal rating, something she has not done in the past. Working together, the Quality Coach helped the provider review the formal rating eligibility requirements. Congratulations to this provider as she continues toward her goal of a higher YoungStar rating!

Free PPE Distribution to Child Care Providers



Childcaring was pleased to partner with DCF for child care programs to receive their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). 60 child care programs in our service delivery area requested PPE. The Childcaring office was a pick-up site (with evening and weekend hours) and many of our staff also delivered PPE to providers unable to pick up the supplies.

Childcaring Helped Providers Apply for Programs

Announced in April and funded by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) of 2021, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) launched two new programs to provide financial incentives to the child care workforce and access to technology. DCF partnered with Wisconsin Early Childhood Association and Supporting Families Together Association to ensure all eligible providers and educators can apply for these programs: Technology Access Program and Workforce Retention and Recognition Stipend Program. Childcaring provided communication about program details and eligibility requirements. Staff also assisted providers with questions and worked with providers to access and order the materials for the DCF Technology Access Program.

Childcaring provides training to retain existing child care providers and improve program quality. We offer over 20 different, high quality training topics. Supporting Families Together Association, along with the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies in WI, offer online learning opportunities.



Scan the QR code for upcoming training offerings.

Teacher as Shelter: Trauma-Informed Care (for children AND care providers) in the Age of COVID-19.

In collaboration, Childcaring and Northcentral Technical College worked to provide a virtual, ECE Conference on Saturday, February 27. Over 60 providers registered to hear Michelle Salcedo help participants to: recognize the impact of trauma on children's behaviors, understand the components of a trauma-informed environments, affirm the essential need of self-care, and develop practices that support children's social-emotional needs. Feedback from participants included:

"Perfect time for this presentation, right on target."

"It was very eye-opening, I have a family of five children in my care that have been removed from their parents care because of drug abuse and the conference really helped me understand some of the children's behavior."

"She was a wonderful presenter. She has encouraged me to look at things differently."



2021-22 Childcaring Director Cohort reunion session.
The session included directors from past years.

10 directors throughout our service area participated in the 2021-22 professional director cohort. The cohort is a group of individuals who lead and gather with a commonality. They graciously gift themselves this time away from their programs to participate. The first question directors are always asked when entering the cohort is "what do you want to get out of this cohort?" The answers included: reflective practices, coaching/mentoring, staff evaluations, learning environment, staff expectations, communication/listening skills, building relationships, and self-care. Ultimately, directors come to the cohort year after year seeking answers to their questions and faced with challenges from the pandemic like: on-going cycles of sickness, staffing shortages, closures, and financial burdens. Directors from entry level to experienced veterans shared their knowledge with one another. So, when we think about the "why" or the "answers" that people seek in a Director Cohort, it is ultimately to be supported.

Professional Director Cohort

Service to Providers

42

trainings

498

participants

168

hours of training



New Training: Classrooms as the Root of Challenging Behavior

Childcaring trainers offered this new training to look at ways to make changes in the classroom, promote quality improvement, and reduce challenging behaviors. Participants created goals in three main areas: having appropriate expectations for the children, allowing for developmental needs and being intentional about classroom management. 23 participants completed the training and made quality improvements in their classrooms to better serve each child in their care.

DCF Launches Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) launched a **Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program.- Payment Program A – Increasing Access to High-Quality Care and Payment Program B – Funding Workforce Recruitment and Retention** starting in November 2021. Regulated child care providers were eligible to receive monthly payments, providing the financial stability they needed to stay open, to recruit and retain qualified staff, and to continue providing high-quality care for children. Childcaring emailed out communication about the programs and helped answer questions from providers. Programs who had not applied in November also received a phone call from Childcaring staff.



Childcaring Can Guide You Through the Process of Starting a Child Care Business

Childcaring provides the support and resources needed to start a regulated child care program. In 2021, Childcaring provided 76 potential provider packets and offered technical assistance 234 times to potential providers. Start Up sessions also offer potential providers the opportunity to ask questions and learn about regulated child care and available start up grants.

FREE Virtual Information Sessions on Child Care Start Up

Childcaring offered 5 virtual start up sessions. 55 individuals registered for the virtual sessions and received information about Childcaring and the services we provide. Information about the various types of child care regulation in WI, the process of becoming regulated, various resources including startup grant information, Youngstar, and benefits of regulation was also shared.

Start Up Grants Are Available

Since 2017, over \$23,000 in Start Up Grants has been allocated to child care providers in our service delivery area. Eligible providers have used the funding to pay for classes required to obtain regulation, and buy equipment and materials like: fencing, safety gates, developmentally appropriate materials for a variety of age groups, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, etc. Being able to support new programs and help increase regulated child care capacity is the purpose of the grants.

A start up grant recipient shared,

"The funds will help with purchasing required education."

2021 Start Up Grants

7

grants

\$3500

grant
money

64

new child
care slots

Free Training Offerings to Help Recruit or Retain Child Care Providers

With funding from UW-Extension WI Child Care Business Initiative, Childcaring offered free educational opportunities to help recruit or retain child care providers between June and September, 2021. 7 total trainings were offered: virtual Abusive Head Trauma Prevention, in-person CPR with AED classes, and virtual Stewards of Children with Mandated Reporter classes with a total of 64 participants trained.

Community Connections

Childcaring continuously works to inform communities of the work we do to support potential and existing child care programs. Building relationships within communities allows for individuals to make referrals and helps connect people to the resources they are looking for in a timely manner. Childcaring shares information regarding the benefits and process of being regulated along with critical business planning tools such as local market rates and technical assistance regarding a wide range of early care topics.

CHILD CARE PROVIDERS NEEDED!

Connect with us for current Start Up Sessions and Grants.



Thank You Child Care Providers!



A parent submitted this quote for the Childcaring Provider Appreciation Day Facebook drawing in May:

"Laura is kind, patient, nurturing and treats my children as if they were her own. They are always excited to go there and I know they're in good hands while there. She communicates well and is easy to be in contact with during the day if I have a question about my child. She always informs me if she thinks something isn't quite right with one of my kiddos. I love that they get outside play time and that she often plays music/sings with them. We couldn't ask for a better provider for our kids!"

Building Child Care Capacity

Here to Help

A child care certifier on staff provides services in Adams, Lincoln, Marquette, and Portage Counties. The certifier helps individuals through the process of applying to become certified. Childcaring also provides FREE pre-licensing technical assistance throughout our service area, such as: how to build appropriate program environments, policies, procedures, staffing strategies, and safety measures. Pre-Licensing is the base needed to prepare for the licensing process.

2021 Regulated Child Care Supply

County	Regulated Programs	Total Capacity
Adams	8	127
Clark	21	489
Langlade	11	256
Lincoln	16	420
Marathon	93	3,336
Marquette	6	168
Portage	49	1,906
Taylor	10	222
Waushara	15	397
North Wood	27	1,449
South Wood	34	1,029

Service to Community

Childcaring was involved in community planning and events throughout our service delivery area. Childcaring helped communities, school districts, employers, and others develop solutions to complex child care problems. Because of the pandemic, many in person events continued to be cancelled in 2021; however, staff was present at some events to provide take-and-go activities for the children and resource materials for caregivers. Childcaring is represented on several collaborating groups within 10 counties.

Represented at events and committees such as:

Adams County Child Care Project
 Advancing Healthier WI/LENA Grow
 Baby Business 4 – Marathon County
 Child Care Aware of America – Leadership Summit
 Clark County Interagency Coordinating Coalition
 Langlade County United Way
 Lincoln County Interagency Advisory Council
 Marathon County United Way Early Years Coalition & Planning Committee
 Marathon County United Way Board Member – Partner Program Representative
 Marshfield Area United Way Vision Council
 Merrill Children's Festival
 Merrill Child Care Coalition
 Mosinee Area Chamber of Commerce Member
 Mosinee Family Festival
 MSTC Early Childhood Advisory Committee
 NTC Conference Planning Committee
 Office of Children's Mental Health Infant Toddler Policy
 Parenting Support Network of Lincoln County
 Portage County COVID-19 Community Health Response
 Portage County Right from the Start Committee
 Taylor County Early Childhood Committee
 United Way of Portage County Born Learning Parent and Community Education Committee
 United Way of South Wood County Early Years Coalition
 United Way of South Wood County Financial Stability Coalition
 Waushara County Child & Family Partners
 Waushara Prevention Council
 Wood County Economic Development Roundtable

Executive Director Kelly Borchardt is part of the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) Infant Toddler Immediate Needs of COVID-19 Team

Recognizing that the pandemic has taken a toll on many parents, this team developed a series of informational flyers and short videos to provide helpful tips on parenting. There are 3 flyers and 4 short videos (one in Spanish). The videos feature a children's mental health professional and parent sharing their advice on the topic. These are located on the OCMH website at: <https://children.wi.gov/Pages/TrainingsVideos/Parenting.aspx>



Childcaring 2021 Finances

Income (000)		Expenses (000)	
YoungStar	\$679	Personnel	\$846
Indirect Public	\$457	Operational	\$152
Core Services	\$125	Travel	\$16
Other Direct Public	\$253	Good Start Grants	\$439
All Other	\$62	Scholarship Aid	\$15
		All Other	\$41
Total Income	\$1,576	Total Expenses	\$1,509
		Net Income	\$67

Income: Childcaring Financials in 2021 included funding for YoungStar training and technical assistance for child care providers; Good Start Grants (including, PDG-Community Innovation Grant) and Scholarship Aid supports for families and other United Way funding; core services like referrals and technical assistance; pre-licensing and child care certification services, enhanced referrals, Parent Cafes and on-site consultation; and private training and technical assistance contracts.

Expenses: Operating costs were fairly consistent with the previous year.



For Safe Sleep and SIDS Awareness Month, Childcaring held a Facebook drawing and gave away 21 sleep sacks throughout the month of October.

Communication Connection:

Childcaring uses various media channels to keep the public informed about the services we provide and early childhood issues. Radio and television interviews about issues like: the need for regulated child care providers, options to help parents pay for child care, and grants for child care providers are posted on the Childcaring website. Scan the QR code for the most updated news links.



Stay informed and connected through email listservs! Our listservs continue to grow and 123 new subscribers were added this year.

Funding Sources

- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families through the Supporting Families Together Association
- Marshfield Clinic Health System
- Adams, Marquette, Lincoln, and Portage County Human Services
- United Way
- Other special project funding



A Member of



www.supportingfamilies.together.org



www.childcareaware.org

2021 Childcaring Board of Directors

THANK YOU

to the hard working
Childcaring Board of
Directors.

We appreciate your time,
dedication, and the
guidance you give.

Brad Gast, President - Northcentral Technical College
Barry West, Vice President - Waushara County
Michelle Rantala, Treasurer - CoVantage Credit Union
Joan Krohn, Secretary - Retired (former Director of Head Start/Early Childhood/4K Merrill Area Public Schools)
Jane Brandt - Child Care Provider
Annett Mooney - Marquette County Human Services
Tammy Schreiber - Taylor County Human Services
Tina Smith - Adams County Health & Human Services Department
Nancy Vance - University of Wisconsin-Extension, Clark County
Jeffrey Raymond - Anderson O'Brien Law Firm
Ciara Schultz - Marshfield Clinic Health System

2021 Childcaring Staff

Tara Biebl ~ Resource & Referral Specialist
Audrey Bittner ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer
Kelly Borchardt ~ Executive Director
Linda Francis ~ Financial Manager
Rachele Johnson ~ Training/Program Coordinator
Kristine Joyce ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer
Micki Krueger ~ Assistant Director
Andrea Mueller ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer
Shelley Nelson ~ Referral & Communication Specialist
Mary Olson ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer
Gayle Schiszik ~ Certifier/Pre-licensing Consultant
Lori Shafranski ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer
Carrie Steinke ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer
Tracy Verjinsky ~ Program Coordinator
Kao L. Xiong ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer - Bilingual



Thank You Early Childhood Professionals Card Project



The card project is all about expressing our appreciation and thanking early childhood professionals for taking care of our youngest learners. Childcaring started this volunteer project in January. Children, parents, students, and friends in our community donated their time to make over 300 homemade thank you cards. The cards were mailed to every regulated child care provider in our service delivery area for Provider Appreciation Day. This volunteer project is ongoing and thank you cards continue to be collected throughout the year. Thank you Smile Makers!

Thank You for Your support!

Childcaring staff would like to **thank** all
of the **volunteers** who donated a combined
total of **74** volunteer service hours in **2021**.

We so appreciate your gift of time and project assistance.



Xav tau kev pab pes/txhais daim ntawv xovxwm
no thov hu tuaj rau
Kao Lai Xiong 715-841-9490
Hnub Monday-Friday 8:30 txog 4:30.

Impact Story: Good Start Grants

"I'm a full time single mom and I don't receive any support. It's just me, my kids and daycare. I have relied on daycare for almost 6 years now. The friendships and relationships we have built are incomparable. I use to stress about working and making enough money to support my kids. But then I was working all the time and didn't see my kids as much as I wanted. With the GSG, I was able to cut back in overtime to be there for my kids. We spend a lot of time together now. We're able to have dinner together every night at a decent time. Routines have become easier. It feels that things are finally starting to fall into place. Also, the Program Coordinator has been awesome to work with. She's very patient and empathetic. Thank you so much to everyone who has a hand in this!"



Help Childcaring Make An Impact:

- Support children by supporting those who care for and educate them – parents, families and child care providers.
- Stay Informed – Scan the QR code and sign up for Childcaring email list serves at: childcaring.org
- Make a donation – help us continue to help thousands of children, families and early childhood professionals. With your support, Childcaring's work benefits our entire community.
- Volunteer – Call us to learn about current volunteer opportunities.
- Please refer our services. Tell others about our services and ask them to tell others as well.