

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

On Childcare Resources in Crawford County, Wisconsin

8-25-2020 REPORT



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
CRAWFORD COUNTY

Jessica Jane Spayde, Community Development Educator
Amanda Griswold, Human Development & Relationships Educator
Carolyn Ihde, Agriculture Educator
Amy Mitchell, Positive Youth Development & 4H Educator
Kathy Lange, Foodwise Nutrition Educator

EXTENSION CRAWFORD COUNTY

September 13, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS (clickable)

OVERVIEW	2
ORGANIZATIONS PRESENT: RESOURCES & CONCERNS	3
Extension	3
The Parenting Place	4
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association	5
Stoddard School District	5
Childcare Provider	6
Prairie du Chien Police Department	6
Passages	6
3M	7
Opportunity Center	7
In the Beginning Child Care & Learning Center	7
City of Prairie du Chien	8
Extension Crawford County	8
Couleecap	8
Great Rivers United Way	8
Family Connections of SW WI	8
Crawford County Health and Human Services Children and Families Unit	9
Parent	9
Richland County Childcare Task Force	9
NEXT STEPS	10
Discussion During the Forum	10
Moving Forward after the Forum	11
Extension is Offering:	11
Resource for Parents	11
“Doing” Session for Local Businesses to Address Childcare	11
“Doing” Session for Local Community Groups to Address Childcare	11
Other Possible Steps Forward	11
Organizations Who are Ready to Help Address Childcare Needs	11

OVERVIEW

Extension Crawford County educators identified childcare resources as a need in Crawford County, and organized a Community Connections forum on Childcare. We invited a wide variety of local community members, including civic organizations, churches, schools, childcare professionals, childcare support organizations, government representatives, local businesses, afterschool program organizations, parents, and residents.

We asked participants to come prepared to answer two questions:

- What services are you offering right now?
- How have your services changed due to Covid-19?

We also asked every participant to introduce themselves and answer the question:

- What do you see as the biggest need?

We had a good turnout for the meeting. Of the 41 people who registered, 35 attended the meeting. We collected information from participants, and this report lists the resources that were shared on August 25, 2020.

Extension Educators discussed and developed recommendations and resources to help move the community toward addressing childcare needs in our community, as listed in the final section of this report.

ORGANIZATIONS PRESENT: RESOURCES & CONCERNS

Extension

Jessica Jane Spoyde (facilitator), Community Development Educator, Extension Crawford County

- **Biggest need/Concern** - trying to connect people across the county who care about childcare.
- **Discussion:**
 - I'm here to help you all address this need, by building your capacity to address this issue. (If you all are interested in moving into more actionable items, I'm happy to provide a structure, process, and content to help move you forward.)
 - I Could lead you through a variety of processes as a group:
 - Collaborative leadership training
 - Business model training
 - Nonprofit training
 - Anyone who is starting a business or wanting to improve their existing business, you are welcome to attend my COSTARTERS business training program that starts Sept 16th.

Kathy Lange, Foodwise Nutrition Educator, Extension Crawford County

- **Biggest need/Concern** - People aren't aware of the resources available in the county.

Carolyn Ihde, Agriculture Educator for Crawford/Richland County

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Here to learn about the needs.

Amanda Griswold, Human Development and Relationships Educator, Extension Crawford County

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Serve families, how can I help families through this transition and provide assistance; find out what their needs are.
- **Discussion:**
 - Presented a survey to childcare providers to determine their needs based on capacity (number of openings for varied ages), Needs of the clients (have clients asked childcare providers to change services), If a change in service was requested, what weren't they able to accommodate, and, what support (supplies, etc.) does their business need.
 - From that survey Amanda is able to determine what needs can be met.
 - Submitted HDRI Programming Crawford County PDF PowerPoint (in Documents - 8 25 folder)

Amy Mitchell, Positive Youth & 4H Educator, Extension Crawford County

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Here to learn about the needs.
- **Discussion:**
 - 4-H is trying to continue positive youth development through other means besides in person. Although now we can do small groups. Throughout the summer and when virtual learning in March - provided programs for youth to continue to learn and enrich their lives when all these other opportunities were shut down/turned off for a while.
 - We've been doing STEM kits, Science Kits, other project based kits. 4-H is all about project based learning; where they learn something that may spark a lifeline hobby or maybe even a career.,

- On the days where there isn't school, we're looking at ways where we can do some of these project based formal learning opportunities to the children/youth at our county administration building or outside. Realizing transportation may be an issue. Trying to figure out these details. If anyone knows how to overcome those obstacles, I'd be willing to listen to or partner with you.

The Parenting Place

Audra Wieser, Early Care and Education Director

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Availability of child care and to bump up availability and financial supports that need to be in place. A bigger need now
- **Discussion:**
 - Child career service referral agency serving Crawford county. Within this role there is so much to meet the needs identified by the childcare providers through Amanda's survey. From the data community childcare reports to the Parenting Place.- number of providers, how many openings, etc.
 - They can provide business planning information, childcare data. Related to some of specific needs around PPE and cleaning supplies, they do larger state level work to try and obtain those items.. Cleaning supplies were impossible to get, however, they were able to provide face masks, PPE supplies, some gloves that survey providers got out to the daycare providers.
 - Behind the scenes work - providing economic development and increasing the supply of childcare that relates to the pre-licensing and precertification program. Also, we serve parents in Crawford County who are looking for childcare - connect them with childcare information; advice and information on how to find the best possible child care situation for their children.
 - If there's a question about childcare w/in Crawford County and looking for day care data, looking for connecting someone to a resource, we are probably it or we can connect them with the resource that would be appropriate.

Claire Anderson, The Parenting Place, La Crosse, WI - Child Care Resource and Referral Specialist

- **Biggest need/Concern** - many, child care providers accommodating and caring for school aged children and the connection between child care providers and school districts.
- **Discussion:**
 - The Parenting Place of La Crosse offers child care resources and referral services to aid families in finding regulated child care in Crawford County. Referral Specialists are able to provide a list of regulated child care providers in Crawford County based on a family's needs and preferences. The Parenting Place also services families in Richland, Vernon, La Crosse, Monroe, and Juneau Counties. A parent or guardian may visit The Parenting Place Child Care Resource and Referral website [here](#) to submit a referral request or may call 608-784-8125 or 800-873-1768 to speak to a referral specialist.
 - Please let me know if you would like any additional information!

Jan Burns-Fuchs, The Parenting Place, Certification Specialist/Pre-Licensing Consultant

- **Biggest need/Concern** - availability of child care providers
- **Discussion:**
 - Providing certification and pre licensing services. The two requirements for childcare providers. Currently serve providers in Crawford County, providing support and guidance to meet the standards. We are also the regulators. We make sure providers are meeting standards and

following the rules. Since COVID been very active to make sure they are up-to-date with all the information coming out regarding keeping their childcare safe. We work with people who want to start a childcare; whether it's a certified family, licensed family or licensed group center. We work with them through the process. If uncertain, we can provide orientations to discuss various options available and the regulations to then help them through that process. With pre-licensing, get them to the point where they are ready to become licensed. We then hand them off to the licenser.

- Providing support groups for our providers, including Crawford County. There are two groups, family providers and one for center directors. There's been a lot of discussion regarding their needs during this COVID crisis. Also during COVID, we are not able to do in-person training; we have developed virtual trainings, which has been very beneficial to providers looking for the training.

Rachel Siegersma, The Parenting Place, Certification and Pre-Licensing

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Availability - not enough childcare providers.

Wisconsin Early Childhood Association

Kelly Matthews, Shared Services Co-director

- Submitted WESSN One-Page SouthWest Document (In Documents - 8 25 folder)
- **Biggest need/Concern** - helping child care providers through COVID and helping them get to the other side of this.
- **Discussion:**
 - Newly in Crawford County as a program support for childcare programs, not a regulatory service, but providing service in conjunction with many of the other groups and agencies that support child care every way they can.
 - Operate with 4 buckets of shared things that help childcare programs work more effectively.
 - Shared staffing - host release squad, help with planned absences in childcare programs. Ex. enrolled - access to release squad (currently on hold due to COVID), shared bookkeepers - for childcare programs. They can unload that part of their work to use their time and money in their programs.
 - Shared Professional Development for our cohorts; early educators can meet their educational requirements, get support, and they have a say in what sort of training they need customized for them.
 - Shared Purchasing; negotiated pricing, coordinating bringing in food and farm fresh products to the childcare in SW.
 - Shared Resources - expert staff help across the board - financial counseling, personnel, HR, marketing. We have a digital platform providing 1600 resources that can be customized for CCH programs. This is offered free through DCF.

Stoddard School District

Derek Fuglsang, Stoddard, Principal

- **Biggest need/Concern** - after-school surround care.
- **Discussion:**

- Having trouble finding a surround care person for after school programs. Trying to create social distancing; schools are really struggling with these specific things they have to do in school. We've put up barriers and are making sure kids don't have shared items.
- One thing to help in the long run is we created a daycare for our teachers' kids. If the school goes remote, those teachers will be able to bring their kids to school and then figure out a way to service them with our own teachers.
- We think it's the employers job to find a way to help these parents to keep them safe

Childcare Provider

Deb Walz - Childcare Provider

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Cleaning products, with school starting, internet may be a problem. Would like to see if the state would let us take on older children to help out and not enough childcare providers.

Prairie du Chien Police Department

Kyle Teynor, Chief of Police Pdc

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Potential for neglect/children being left home unsupervised; school being out and not having contact with mandatory reporters. Seeing many young children at home because the parents can't pay for childcare, etc..
- **Discussion:**
 - Based on their biggest concern, we don't have a lot of resources re: openings to find room to place their children when they go to work. We'll continue our connection with Human Services. In-house, with schools letting out, we have children who belong to staff members in our office, we are trying to work through those issues, through grandparents and other family members.

Passages

Shannon Roberts - Passages; Sexual Assault Services Advocate

- **Biggest need/Concern** - New to the area; learning what services are available and needed and to help with that.

Rebecca Salmon, Passages, Inc., Crawford County Domestic Violence Advocate

- **Discussion:**
 - Passages core services have not changed and we never shut any of our services down this whole time.
 - We still offer:
 - 24 hour crisis line (1-800-236-4325 or 608-647-3616)
 - Emergency shelter for survivors of domestic or sexual violence with a "Never Full" policy
 - Advocacy for survivors - domestic abuse, sexual assault, legal, medical and children's advocacy
 - Accompaniment and/or a ride to a SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Exam) exam
 - Provide transportation for a survivor and family to Passages shelter
 - Provide transportation to and from court hearings and medical appointments

- Passages apartment manager helps with transitional housing for survivors
 - Help survivors find local resources for what their needs may be at the time
 - Provide emergency food to survivors
- What has changed during Covid:
 - A lot of advocacy services are not done in person at the moment
 - Quite a few of us are still working from home
 - A lot of our services have been done over the phone or email
 - Some survivor groups are not done in person
 - I personally set up a private chat fb group for survivors because we couldn't have our group in person
 - have done personal safety plans over the phone and email
 - Some court proceedings have been done via zoom
 - No in person community education or outreach
 - The local county fairs were shut down and that was a huge education/outreach for Passages
- So far we are unsure if we will be doing anything in the schools as far as student services like we have done previous years

3M

David Bell - HR Manager at 3M

- **Biggest need/Concern** - What services/childcare options are available to parents doing the remote schooling/ kids not entirely in the school for the day. Schools are doing different agendas and trying to find something to deal with that

Lynn Deweese - 3M Site Manager

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Just trying to understand resources available to help employees through the difficulties they are facing as they are working through the back-to-school process.

Opportunity Center

Stacey Hannah, Opportunity Center, Marketing Manager - Not present

In the Beginning Child Care & Learning Center

Beth Mikrut-Gilles, Owner/Administrator

- **Biggest need/Concern** - finding qualified staff-
- We are a certified group child care center in Prairie du Chien and one in Boscobel. We provide care from infant through 12 years. We are looking for qualified staff that would give enough staff to accommodate any extra kids coming in. Diligently working on that.

City of Prairie du Chien

Chad Abram - City Administrator, Prairie du Chien

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Many concerns city wide. Communicating with Andy Bonosic at the school. Want to see what we can do for the older kids after school and on off-days regarding providing remote access to these children for their education.

Extension Crawford County

Brita Prew, HR Manager - Bass Pro/Cabela's Distribution Center

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Child care for shifts and parents who are working when the kids are virtual.

Couleecap

Arron Reimler - Coulee Cap, LaCrosse (Covers 4 counties) Oversee Economic Development Programming

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Echo others. Stagnant wages present a pretty restricted price ceiling for child care providers, which is a pretty significant concern.

Great Rivers United Way

Julie Nelson, Great Rivers United Way, Community Engagement Coordinator

- **Discussion:**
 - Great Rivers United Way is sponsoring the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Prairie du Chien, Gays and now Boscobel. Encourage people to sign up for the program; it's for children, ages birth-5.
 - Thanks to the donors in Crawford County who contribute to United Way, children in Prairie du Chien, Gays Mills, Bell Center, Boscobel, Stueben, Woodman and Wauzeka can have quality, hard cover books mailed to them once a month. To register for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, go to www.gruw.org/dpil
 - Submitted 2 PDF's - Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (Documents in 8 25 2020 folder)

Family Connections of SW WI

Ellen Volgarino, Family Connections of SW WI, Office Manager

- **Discussion:**
 - We are available to tell families of resources available around the state of Wisconsin. We share information about everything from grief counseling for children to parenting classes.
 - We are a resource for diapers and wipes. Since COVID hit, we have focused on giving diapers more to groups who give diapers to families, then just giving them directly to families since our building is on lockdown.

- We received a grant from the state of Wisconsin, so we can do Car Seat Safety Checks and Installations in person.
- Our Resource Room is open. We have a laminator, hundreds of die cuts, book binding equipment, etc. We no longer charge a membership fee; we only charge for materials.
- On a side note, we are looking for an Executive Director. If you know of anyone who would like to lead a Family Resource Center, please have them call me at 608-348-2846 or email ellen.familyconnections@gmail.com

Crawford County Health and Human Services Children and Families Unit

Cassie Hubanks: Crawford County Health and Human Services Children and Families Unit - Crawford County Health and HS - Youth Justice Social Worker

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Learn options for youth they work with that don't have child care or natural support.

Parent

Traci Konichek, Parent

- **Biggest need/Concern** - looking for childcare for our 8 year old daughter on her virtual learning days for school. We're willing to have someone trustworthy come into our home, or to send her to a daycare..

Richland County Childcare Task Force

Becky Dahl, Richland County Childcare Task Force, involved with WEESN, the shared services network

- **Biggest need/Concern** - Just here to see what Crawford County is doing.

NEXT STEPS

Discussion During the Forum

Amanda Griswold - going to start with trying to provide cleaning supplies to childcare providers by scheduling a meeting with Jim Hackett regarding what we can offer.

Kelly Matthews - Shared Staffing bucket of resources is seeing if they can write grants to help with basic COVID cleaning and hiring a Shared cleaning team to help minimize childcare providers burden. Not done with this yet.

Parenting Place - Has some funding sources, funding streams set aside to help with the building capacity with the childcare. Whether it's with building children numbers or serving the needs within the childcare for them to remain viable and stable to remain open. We are open to suggestions to make that work in the community. We're providing offerings through zoom meetings. Thinking about the cleaning supplies, if anyone knows of a resource, obtaining supplies has been the biggest barrier. We will be looking for that information from the group if anyone has it.

What kind of cleaning supplies are needed?

Clorox wipes, Lysol spray, paper towels, toilet paper, disposable gloves. Amanda will be talking to Emergency Management Officer in Crawford County.

Gretta - Cabela's Bass Pro -

For parents, we're trying to work with employees. More about part-time than full time. Reached out to the school district.

Offering parents and those looking for employment

Sun-Tues or Thur-Sat schedules. Works well with the school hybrid schedule as it stands now.

Local Stores- Do they offer an opportunity to order the supplies they need and additional supplies for childcare providers.

Police Dept. has reached out to the local, town stores/suppliers for help - these stores have responded to the request with their policy is 1st come 1st served.

Kwik Trip is one organization that has been cooperative with this provision.

Chat question - Finding funding to purchase laptops, i pads, etc. and also internet services.

- Some providers will get access/help from WECA.
- PdC Library is working on getting hotspots to rent out to people in need in the PdC area.
- PdC School just posted elementary school kids will get a chrome book and each family would get a hotspot. 1 chrome book per student.

Moving Forward after the Forum

Extension is Offering:

Resource for Parents

- **Workplace Flexibilities** PDF

“Doing” Session for Local Businesses to Address Childcare

- October 22nd, 2020, 1:00 - 3:00 pm. [Register for the Session](#) Link

“Doing” Session for Local Community Groups to Address Childcare

- October 20th, 2020, 1:00 - 3:00 pm. [Register for the Session](#) Link

Other Possible Steps Forward

Organizations Who are Ready to Help Address Childcare Needs

- Extension can host a strategic planning and implementation process to address childcare needs. Contact Jessica Jane Spayde, spayde@wisc.edu or 608-326-0223
- If organizations and individuals want to Advocate for childcare centers regulation changes, Extension can help coordinate public conversations and educate community members on government processes, but please note that Extension cannot advocate or lobby for specific legislation changes. Contact Jessica Jane Spayde, spayde@wisc.edu or 608-326-0223
- The Wisconsin Early Childhood Association regularly facilitates advocacy action to support early educators and young children. Read more and get involved here: <https://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/get-involved/forward-for-kids/>