



Iowa Newsletter

December 2024

You're on the Map, but Are Your Openings Visible?

During one-on-one meetings with child care providers, First Children's Finance team members often receive questions about the new Iowa Child Care Connect system. To provide clarity, we reached out to Tami Foley, Program Manager at the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to learn more about the system and what child care providers need to know.



Child Care Connect (C3) is Iowa's child care data system that integrates data from Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), HHS, and other data sources. C3 powers the Child Care Search and Child Care Data Dashboard, online interactive tools that help families find child care, child care programs advertise and fill openings quicker, and local stakeholders understand the current supply and demand for child care in their community. Because C3 provides access to quickly search for child care openings, it is a valuable resource for parents, child care programs, and employers in Iowa.

If your program's openings are not currently displaying, there are two ways you can update your information:

- Complete the monthly Data Collection Form to indicate or confirm your program's current openings and desired/staffed capacity by child age categories. Programs receive an email from HHS on the first Monday of the month at approximately 9 a.m. with a link to the Data Collection Form. The form is quick and easy to complete, taking less than five minutes. Within approximately two days, your openings are displayed in the Child Care Search.
- Log into your program's profile in the CCR&R Database and update your current openings. You can update your program's openings as frequently as needed.

If you haven't explored the Child Care Search and Data Dashboards yet, take a few minutes to explore child care availability in your community. C3 offers a valuable, free marketing tool for Iowa child care businesses. If you need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to your CCR&R Child Care Consultant.

[Login to the CCR&R Database](#)

First Children's Finance Staff on the Go!

First Children's Finance staff were busy this fall. Heidi Schlueter and Angie Duncan attended the **Professional Developers of Iowa Fall Conference** in Marshalltown in September. The conference was a chance to connect with many of the communities that FCF has assisted in addressing their childcare supply. Buchanan County Development Corporation Executive Director Lisa Kremer stopped by the FCF booth to say hi and give an update on implementing the *Strategic Plan for Child Care* for the City of Independence.



First Children's Finance was also an exhibitor at the **2024 Early Learning Fall Institute** on October 4-5 in Altoona. This annual event united over 700 early childhood professionals and partners across Iowa. The FCF Iowa team enjoyed meeting many child care professionals and sharing services and training available to them as home providers and center administrators. During the event, Dana Miller,

an FCF Business Development Specialist, presented a breakout session titled "How Do I Know If I'm Charging Enough?," which focused on factors to consider when determining childcare tuition rates.

Rural Child Care Planning Grant Awards Announced

Earlier this fall, Governor Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Economic Development Authority announced four additional Rural Child Care Planning Grant recipients. The awards support the use of data, analysis, and planning to determine the specific needs and solutions for each of the recipient's areas. First Children's Finance is excited for the opportunity to provide child care planning services to the following recipients:

- City of Holy Cross
- City of Spencer
- Harding County Conservation
- Rock Rapids Kids Club

Read the Governor's press release below.

[Governor's Press Release](#)

Upcoming Trainings

January

7

**Business & Financial Fundamentals© for Child Care Centers
(Online Series Start)**

January

28

**Business & Financial Fundamentals© for Child Care Homes
(Online Series Start)**

March

4

**Business & Financial Fundamentals© for Child Care Centers
(Online Series Start)**

March

25

**Business & Financial Fundamentals© for Child Care Homes
(Online Series Start)**


Additional 2025 dates will be scheduled for Child Care Homes and Centers. Series dates and times can be found on i-Power Professional Workforce Registry.

All training sessions are online via Zoom. Each series provides 12 HHS credit hours and is offered 5 times a year.

Business & Financial Fundamentals® training and coaching are FREE for child development homes, child care homes, and child care center administrators thanks to funding from Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.

i-PoweR Professional Workforce
Registry

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