

# BUILDING CHILD CARE CAPACITY



**From community to community**, the conversations on how to build child care capacity varies. Conversations may center on the number of children who need child care, changes in the birth rate, fluctuations in unemployment, or shifts in business and industry. When communities come together more can be done to move towards a solution.

Conversations, coalitions, meetings...it takes intentional effort and focus for communities to support working families and improve access to high-quality child care.

Below are ideas on where to start with community conversations.

## Evaluate Community Needs

*What are some positive results related to child care in the community?*

Community leaders can help evaluate local child care needs and resources. Complete a community needs assessment.

## Enhancing Early Learning

*What are ways a community can help children thrive in early childhood?*

Children who have access to high-quality early childhood opportunities, that promote social and cognitive skills, are more likely to enter kindergarten ready to learn. Ensure summer activities are available – such as reading programs at the local library.

## Establish Early Childhood as a Priority

*How can your community generate support for early childhood?*

Cultivate relationships that help to make early childhood a priority in your community. Bring key stakeholders together to create an early childhood coalition.

## Expand Access to Child Care

*How can a community ensure child care options are available to working parents?*

If parents have difficulties finding and paying for high-quality child care, it hinders their ability to work. Develop a general fund for families needing extra financial assistance.

For more ideas on continuing the conversations about building child care capacity in your community check out the **Child Care Supply Demand Action Plan Making Child Care a Priority in Your Community** at [www.ks.childcareaware.org](http://www.ks.childcareaware.org), under the Business and Community tab.