

# Child Care...An Integral Part of Iowa's Infrastructure

## Shared Services Update



On March 10, 2021, Governor Reynolds launched the Child Care Task Force to develop a comprehensive strategy to address the child care shortage and barrier to work in Iowa. A wide array of stakeholders representing child care providers, business, economic development, city government, Child Care Resource & Referral and the Iowa Women's Foundation served on the Task Force. On November 3, 2021, the Task Force released [final recommendations](#).

One Task Force recommendation is to “develop a shared services model that allows child care providers access to a statewide, web-based partnership platform for support on various business operations.” The Task Force recognized that business training and financial management coaching, automation and shared services are promising practice strategies to ensure cost-effective administration to maximize resources and ensure sustainability of child care businesses.

Early Childhood Iowa, in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Human Services and with technical assistance from Opportunities Exchange, is launching a multi-phase project with proven success in other states. The *Business Supports to Create Sustainable Outcomes for the Child Care Industry* will implement strategies to increase profitability, sustainability, and quality of child care businesses throughout Iowa.

### Phase I, the project will:

- Support child care businesses, build the skills needed for lasting change, and increase profitability through business training that is fully integrated with the technology tools to automate the day-to-day operations of a child care business. Two strategies to accomplish these outcomes will be through the implementation of a child care management system and financial management consultants to help child care businesses monitor and manage key business metrics to be successful.
- Engage a co-design team of stakeholders in the child care industry to develop an implementation plan for shared services. Shared services is a framework or management structure that allows child care businesses to pay attention to providing high quality teaching and learning, while simultaneously making sure that business and administrative tasks are performed well.

**We are excited to move forward with a project that will provide sustainable change for the child care industry and increase parents' access to affordable, quality child care. Early Childhood Iowa will continue to provide progress updates to stakeholders that are part of or impacted by the child care industry as this project moves forward.**