

# CHILD CARE STUDY REPORT SUMMARY

## Study Purpose

To assess the current local child care landscape in Story County and develop practical, implementation-focused strategies to strengthen:

- Access and affordability
- Workforce stability
- Long-term economic vitality

## PHASE 1: CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

### WORKFORCE CAPACITY

15%

is the primary challenge – not physical space – combined with growing affordability pressures for working families

of income spent on infant care by median income Story County families compared to the federal benchmark of 7%

15%

gap between supply and potential need statewide due to teacher shortage

4,374

licensed child care total spaces in Story County

The most critical gaps exist in infant and toddler care

## PHASE 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT & DEMAND FINDINGS

4,130 : 5,360

Total Spaces listed with CCR&R

Children ages 0-5

1.3

children for every open spot

62%

of ISU respondents considered reducing work hours due to child care challenges

Primary challenges are workforce shortage, limited capacity, and affordability pressure

## PHASE 3: STRATEGY, FUNDING, & ROADMAP

### THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

#### Workforce Stabilization

- Strengthen workforce pipeline partnerships
- Develop substitute staffing supports
- Expand professional development opportunities
- Support participation in state wage enhancement programs: WAGE\$ and T.E.A.C.H.

#### Capacity Expansion

- Prioritize expansion within existing programs
- Align expansion with commute corridors

### COORDINATED PATH FORWARD

Establish Child Care Leadership Collaborative

Align funding, employer, and community partnership strategies

Launch workforce stabilization and capacity-building initiatives

#### Affordability & Funding

- Public and State Funding: CCA, WAGE\$, T.E.A.C.H., CCDF and stabilization grants, local government partnerships
- Philanthropic/Community: ASSET, Iowa Women’s Foundation, community groups and foundations
- Employer & Workforce Partnerships: Tri-share-style affordability pilots, recruitment and retention partnerships, regional cost-sharing initiatives

### STUDY PARTNERS

United Way of Story County, Ames Regional Economic Alliance, Iowa State University, City of Ames, Story County, Story County Medical Center, Nevada Economic Development Council