



New Home Child Care Provider Incentive Program for Jefferson County

Fairfield, Iowa (October 12th, 2018) The [Iowa/Jefferson/Keokuk Early Childhood Iowa](#) Board is collaborating with the Jefferson County Child Care Steering Committee to offer a new incentive program to anyone wishing to start a new child care program in their home or to become a registered child care home provider if they are already caring for children in their home. Participants in the program can receive up to \$3,500 in incentives.

Home-based child care businesses enrolled in the incentive program, will need to work with [Child Care Resource and Referral](#) and the [Jefferson County Child Care Nurse Consultant](#) to begin an application. The new incentive program will provide the following tiered-incentives:

Requirement:	Incentive:
Become a DHS Registered Provider	\$500.00
Remain a DHS Registered Provider 6 months	\$500.00
Remain a DHS Registered Provider 12 months	\$500.00
Remain a DHS Registered Provider 18 months	\$500.00
Remain a DHS Registered Provider 24 months	\$500.00
Become A Level 1 on Quality Rating System	\$500.00
Become A Level 2 on Quality Rating System	\$500.00
	\$3,500.00 Total Incentive

“Our goal is to recruit five new home-based child care businesses in the Fairfield community by July 1, 2019. Home-based child care businesses will be eligible for incentive payment once they complete the quality and longevity requirements,” said Tammy Wetjen-Kesterson, Director for Iowa/Keokuk/Jefferson Early Childhood Iowa.

This new incentive program is in response to the committee’s three-tiered approach to addressing the child care shortage in the Fairfield Community:

- Assist Existing Child Care Business to Expand Services
- Recruit and Retain New Home-Based Child Care Businesses
- Open a New Child Care Facility in Fairfield

Joshua Laraby, Executive Director for [Fairfield Economic Development Association](#) said, “The work the steering committee has completed in the last few months has created a notable awareness in the community around the need for additional, quality and affordable child care spaces. We are not the only community in Iowa with a shortage of child care spaces, though in conversations on the state level, we are essentially forging the road in Fairfield with our strategic process. This new incentive is a helpful and measurable step towards closing the gap.”

The opportunity to create a thriving community by retaining, attracting and engaging families in the area depends on the availability of high quality, affordable, childcare. In an April 2018 survey in Jefferson County, 438 current and future parents articulated their challenges and desires regarding childcare. One take away from this survey is that, if a family can find affordable, high quality child care, when they need it, they will stay in the school district, buy a home in the area, seek employment, patronize local businesses, and participate in community events. Child care is an important part of a community’s infrastructure; it is as critical as the built infrastructure.

In the first quarter of 2018, the Jefferson County Child Care Steering Committee, the Fairfield Economic Development Association, and the Iowa/Jefferson/Keokuk Early Childhood Area Board commissioned First



Children's Finance of Des Moines to complete a Child Care Market Analysis to better understand the child care market in Jefferson County. The Child Care Market Analysis showed there are shortages in the number of child care slots for two-year old's, and for full-day, full-year preschool for three and four-year old's. Parents that participated in the market study identified a licensed center or a registered child care development homes as their most preferred options for providing care to their children.

There will be incentive information forthcoming for existing Registered Home-Based Providers.

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