



# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686

## Meeting Agenda

### City Council

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Tuesday, January 23, 2024

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

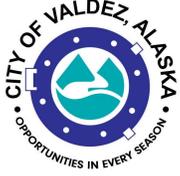
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#### Work Session: Child Care Crisis Task Force Final Report

#### WORK SESSION AGENDA - 6:00 pm

*Transcribed minutes are not taken for Work Sessions. Audio is available upon request.*

1. [Child Care Crisis Task Force Final Report: Presentation and Discussion](#)



Legislation Text

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**File #:** 24-0033, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Child Care Crisis Task Force Final Report: Presentation and Discussion

**SUBMITTED BY:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

n/a

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

CCCTF Chair Susan Love will provide City Council with an overview of the task force's final recommendations.

The work session will also be an opportunity for Council to discuss options outlined in the recommendations with task force members and possible next steps.

The final recommendations document is attached for review.

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VALDEZ CHILD CARE CRISIS TASK FORCE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO  
THE VALDEZ CITY COUNCIL

Presented January 23, 2024

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## COVER LETTER

Enclosed are the Valdez Child Care Crisis Task Force’s (CCCTF) Recommendations to the Valdez City Council. The task force focused primarily on the logistics of creating an initial licensed child care facility in the community, but also researched various avenues that would help create a diverse mixed delivery system for child care and early education in Valdez. We have developed a strong foundation and vision for the future, answered many questions about what is and is not feasible, and identified where additional information is needed for responsible decision-making. Additionally, this group has helped to secure resources for the next phase of this project.

The \$880,000 Community INNOVATION Grant that the City of Valdez has secured from thread was written with extensive input from the CCCTF and provides the means to pilot some short-term approaches, as well as providing funding to conduct the necessary analysis to advance final site selection and establish community supports. Thanks to the efforts of Senator Murkowski, there is also potential for an additional \$3 million federal earmark to fund building renovations for a child care center, though this funding is contingent on the still uncertain FY 2024 federal appropriations process.

Recognizing that a single center may not solve the child care crisis in Valdez, we developed strategies that support a healthy ecosystem of child care in the community. Additionally, we believe that the plan we have outlined creates other pathways to increase the availability of all kinds of licensed child care in the community, which would contribute to parents’ choices and increase the overall stability of the sector. It was also important to many members of the group that we bring attention to the structural challenges contributing to the child care crisis, outside the scope of this task force and the power of local government. It was also the desire of certain task force members to make clear that the City of Valdez should not take on the role of directly owning and operating a child care facility but rather be a facilitator in the process of creating robust licensed care in Valdez. We recognize that creating resilient child care programming is a process that must involve the full community.

The care and education of our youngest citizens is precious and essential work. A healthy, forward-looking community should lift up those carrying out the work, be it parents and other family members, or paid caregivers. This plan is an expression of that commitment and a roadmap to stronger support; it is our belief that the jewels of progress will extend beyond young children and families. Private industry, schools, healthcare, homeland security, and others will reap benefits from a stable and successful child care sector in Valdez.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached Child Care Crisis Task Force plan includes five priorities, with short, middle and long-term actions needed to establish and maintain licensed care in Valdez. Below are key recommendations for each priority:

- » *Key Recommendations for Priority 1: Sustainable Child Care Workforce Pipeline*
  - Recruit and provide monetary support to train an initial cohort of early educators and work toward making Prince William Sound College into a training hub for the profession.
  - Assess the minimum pay and benefits needed to retain a professional workforce and determine how to make these needs a reality.\*\*
- » *Key Recommendations for Priority 2: Site Selection*
  - Select top choice for child care center location using the CCCTF's analysis of facilities as a baseline.
  - Contract with an architect to assess top facility (or facilities) and establish a timeline for financing and renovation of the space.
  - Create a cooperative space for in-home child care providers to use.
- » *Key Recommendations for Priority 3: Management Structure and Licensing<sup>1</sup>*
  - Use the CCCTF's analysis to guide the decision on a management structure for an initial licensed care facility based on who owns and operates the facility, potentially in a public-private partnership.
  - Create a community support system to help caregivers and educators who wish to operate independently to navigate the licensing process and gain access to other existing financial and professional development supports.
- » *Key Recommendations for Priority 4: Sustainable Funding*
  - Create a Child Care Endowment to fund grant programs aimed at supporting the child care and early childhood education sector and build community partnerships with local stakeholders to maintain funding.
  - Establish a discretionary sales tax on alcohol, tobacco and/or marijuana to directly provide revenue to the fund in perpetuity.
- » *Key Recommendations for Priority 5: Communications and Advocacy*
  - Develop communication tools that connect families to quality care and advocate at the State and Federal levels for support of local child care efforts.

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While the group's work has concluded, members are happy to remain as resources to those who will carry on this important work. We look forward to seeing our vision of a community-supported child care center that:

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<sup>1</sup> Management Structure decisions will depend heavily on the ultimate outcome of site selection and facility ownership.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

- » Provides high-quality care and early learning opportunities for children, contributing to increasing school readiness.
- » Ensures employers in Valdez can attract and retain the workforce they need.
- » Creates jobs and contributes to the community's economic vitality.
- » Preserves the City's family-friendly status with the Coast Guard.

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## BACKGROUND ON THE TASK FORCE

Established by Resolution 23-07 (see Appendix A) on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, the primary purpose of the Child Care Crisis Task Force (CCCTF) was to create and submit to City Council for approval a strategic plan outlining short, middle, and long-term actions recommended to address the child care crisis and other recommendations to strengthen Valdez's early childhood system. The strategic plan was to include recommendations to City Council on each of the following factors relating to the logistics of establishing an initial licensed child care facility:

- » Analysis of existing buildings in the community capable of serving as a physical location for a child care facility, including a summary of renovations or adjustments that would be needed prior to use.
- » Desirable management structures and licensing avenues for establishment of initial child care facility.
- » Potential funding mechanisms to create and sustain a licensed child care facility in Valdez.
- » Methods for attracting, retaining, and training a high-quality child care workforce.

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## MEMBERSHIP

The Resolution outlined nine specific organizations that were to make up the membership of the CCCTF. The individual members and their organizations were:

1. Susan Love, Valdez Zero to Three with Families Alliance
2. Lori Plaster, Early Childhood Workforce Profession
3. Ana Stroup, City of Valdez
4. Tim Bauer, Valdez City Schools
5. Melanee Tiura, Providence Valdez Medical Center
6. Dennis Humphrey, Prince William Sound College
7. Kate Dugan, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company
8. Tim Mason, United States Coast Guard
9. Anna Bateman, Valdez Native Tribe (this seat was later filled by Ashley Christensen, Chugach Alaska Corporation, after Anna Bateman's resignation as tribal administrator).

Members of the Valdez City Council served as ex officio task force members, Council Member Olivia Foster actively participated throughout the process.

Staff support was provided by Elise Sorum-Birk, with the City Clerk's office.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

## MEETING SCHEDULE

The CCCTF met every two weeks from March 30, 2023 through October 5, 2023 with an additional full-day strategic planning session on April 29, 2023. The City Council extended the sunset of the taskforce to January 2024 and changed the meeting frequency to as needed to allow the group to complete their work. All meetings were open to the public.

## INITIAL RESEARCH AND BRAINSTORMING

The initial meetings of the CCCTF focused on gathering information about licensing requirements, existing child care funding streams and brainstorming about community needs and potential solutions generally. The strong connection between licensing and providers accessing funding streams came to the forefront in these discussions.

The task force also conducted a survey of individuals who had previously been involved in the local child care sector to learn about challenges and opportunities to providing care in Valdez from their perspectives (Appendix B).

## SUBCOMMITTEES

Members of the CCCTF broke into four subcommittees that conducted more detailed research and assessment of options and brought their findings and recommendations back to the CCCTF for inclusion in the plan.

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### **Facility Review Subcommittee: Susan Love, Tim Mason, and Tim Bauer**

The CCCTF provided an initial list of buildings, both public and privately owned, to be reviewed as potential childcare sites. COV Capital Facilities Director and Interim City Manager Nathan Duval drafted a rubric for analyzing those facilities, the CCCTF provided edits, and a final draft was completed. The rubric included the following categories: Community Support/Vision, Property Features, Site Compatibility, Purchase Cost/Terms, Potential Renovation Costs, and Natural/Physical Environment.

### **Management Subcommittee: Lori Plaster, Melanee Tiura, Susan Love**

The Management Subcommittee reviewed licensing requirements related to staffing for different levels and explored the barriers and opportunities with different child care business models.

### **Sustainable Funding Subcommittee: Ashley Christensen, Kate Dugan, Olivia Foster, Melanee Tiura, Ana Stroup**

The Sustainable Funding Subcommittee reviewed a variety of models for providing long-term funding for early childhood programming, including models in other Alaskan communities.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

## Workforce Subcommittee: Dennis Humphrey, Tim Bauer, Lori Plaster, Olivia Foster

The Workforce Subcommittee explored questions related to recruitment, training, and retention of workforce in the community.

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### CHILD CARE CRISIS TASK FORCE ACTION PLAN

#### PRIORITY 1: SUSTAINABLE CHILD CARE WORKFORCE

A well-trained and qualified early childhood education workforce is essential to offering high-quality early learning opportunities in the community. There are specific education and staffing ratios that must be met and sustained daily for licensing. An inability to sustain the workforce with the necessary qualifications to meet state licensing guidelines contributed to the closure of the last early learning center in the community and keeping a qualified administrator was cited as one of the biggest challenges by the local experts surveyed. The difficulty of attracting and retaining the workforce at all levels within early childhood education is an ongoing state and national challenge, primarily due to low wages and lack of benefits. The high costs of health care, and restrictions on pooling workers for insurance makes it nearly impossible for small businesses to provide these critical benefits for valued employees.

The Workforce Subcommittee explored ideas related to recruitment and retention, as well as the training requirements and availability of training to meet those requirements (Appendix C). The exact workforce needed to support an early learning center is not yet known and will depend on the size. However, some of the training needed for leadership positions requires time and resources to achieve, which means that investment is needed prior to the opening of any center. Both Valdez High School and Prince William Sound College (PWSC) were identified as significant assets and partners in developing the early childhood education workforce. New early childhood education programs at the University of Alaska Anchorage can be leveraged by PWSC to meet local needs and develop a homegrown early education workforce.

#### *Potential Resources*

The INNOVATION Grant has two funding avenues to support workforce development. There is \$30,000 to fund a cohort of six to ten early childhood educators with tuition and fees necessary to receive their child care associate (CCA), which can be earned with 12 college credits. There is also \$500,000 to support sustainability and quality of programming, including costs for workforce recruitment, development, and retention.

#### SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

##### **1. Cover all preliminary education costs for an initial cohort of aspiring early education professionals using INNOVATION Grant Funds.**

The City should work with PWSC to recruit future professionals into the field and to ensure that students will meet minimum state administrator requirements in a relatively short period of time.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

To incentivize an initial cohort, INNOVATION grant funds should be used directly to pay tuition and a living expense stipend\*\* for up to 10 individuals to complete the 12 college credits needed to obtain a CCA.

These initial credits may provide scaffolding to students, who will have the option to further their professional education by going on to earn an associate degree or bachelor's degree from UAA. In-home providers also must meet minimum requirements, but they are not the same as in center-based care. If in-home providers are interested in continuing their professional development and becoming licensed, they may also access the same tuition assistance opportunities.

## **2. Develop an ECE Workforce Recruitment Plan.**

The capacity of the early learning center and ages served will determine what the number of staff required will be, and what training requirements must be met. However, a single center may not meet all the community's needs, so it is also imperative to support those wishing to enter the profession independently as well. A recruitment plan to attract workers of all levels will be needed.

The CCCTF recommends a balanced approach to recruitment that recognizes that long-term employees, particularly in leadership positions, will be essential for ensuring the continuity of operations for an early learning center while also drawing from a short-term pool that includes Coast Guard spouses, and those who may be proceeding through a larger ECE workforce pipeline, such as high school students earning dual credits in early childhood education or college students working part-time in a center while finishing their teaching degree.

The recruitment plan will also need to include options for funding attractive pay\*\*, benefits\*\*, and ongoing training and professional development, as well as avenues and outlets for advertising vacancies. Some possible mechanisms for augmenting pay and benefits are discussed in *Priority 4: Sustainable Funding*.

## **3. Create a scholarship program to support ongoing training and professional development opportunities for those already in the field as well as future early educators.**

It is essential that those already in the profession be able to advance in their level of education and understanding of child development. Ongoing scholarships should also be available for those who want to enter the workforce at any level.

The CCCTF recommends establishing an ongoing ECE scholarship program to support the professionalization of the child care sector in Valdez and to build a robust pool of professionals to draw on. The scholarship program could be funded by the Child Care Endowment Fund described in *Priority 4: Sustainable Funding*.

## **MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM ACTIONS**

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

#### **4. Establish Prince William Sound College as a hub of training / professional development for the early childhood education workforce in Valdez.**

An established and functioning pipeline for workforce development that provides initial and continuing education and training that meets the needs of the existing child care center consistently will be important for maintaining licensing and quality standards and attracting other people into the field. Priorities identified by the CCCTF include:

- » Faculty and curriculum are in place, funded, and stable.
- » Student tuition support identified and made known to prospective students.
- » Established training cycles and relationships coordinated with providers.
- » Education relationships are well-established and responsive to shifts in needs.
- » Internships with child care entities.
- » Dual credit options established with Valdez High School.

Strong partnerships between PWSC, Valdez High School, and System for Early Education Development (SEED) will be needed to provide training in accessible, timely packages and take advantage of existing funding opportunities that may exist. Additional resources may be needed to support some of these initiatives.

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#### **5. Minimum salary and benefits needed to maintain stable staffing of a facility.**

The management structure of a facility will influence exactly what salary and benefits are available. The CCCTF's preliminary research indicated that an external entity would not be able to leverage the benefits package available to other City of Valdez or school district employees, which means other methods of providing competitive salaries and benefits will need to be pursued by the managing entity. However, the lack of adequate pay and benefits, especially health insurance, was also identified as a key barrier to retaining workers in the field.

The salaries and benefits offered will also affect the financing needed to sustain the early learning center, although the CCCTF's research has pointed to the stabilizing effect that attractive salaries and benefits also have, so the costs are offset in both the reduced turnover and higher quality of care that results.

#### **6. Address affordable housing needs\*\***

Recruitment and retention depend on the availability of affordable housing. One potential benefit or incentive in Valdez for those in the ECE workforce could also be a housing-related benefit. In other communities, specific tax incentives have been created, and there are also other examples of child care providers receiving free or subsidized housing, including homeownership for operating licensed care under specific terms (Appendix G). Options to

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

increase affordable housing that align with the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Plan Valdez, should be explored.

**7. Establish ongoing incentive programs to support workforce needs.**

In addition to an ongoing scholarship fund, the creation of other compensation-related initiatives can help ensure that the pay and benefits offered remain competitive without making the operation cost-prohibitive. The CCCTF recommends that any wage and compensation models adopted incentivize ECE professionals to move up the pipeline, which contributes to higher quality care, and ensure that higher levels of education/training lead to higher wages. *Priority 4: Sustainable Funding* expands on this concept further.

**8. Monitor the impacts and results of workforce investments.**

The CCCTF recommends developing a mechanism to assess progress towards broader goals and to ensure that any incentives offered are responsive to the needs of both child care professionals and families.

**PRIORITY 2: FACILITIES**

The Facilities Subcommittee identified more than 20 potential facilities in the community, with a mix of public and private ownership. The facilities on this list were scored by two members of the CCCTF. The rubric included the following categories: Community Support/Vision, Property Features, Site Compatibility, Purchase Cost/Terms, Potential Renovation Costs, and Natural/Physical Environment. One federally-owned building and one state-owned building were removed from the list due to limitations, and a subsequent SWOT analysis of the top four facilities was conducted. The complete list of facilities included in the initial assessment is in Appendix D.

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The top-ranked facilities of interest are:

1. Hermon Hutchens Elementary School
2. City of Valdez Recreation Center
3. Prince William Sound College
4. Royal Center Building

It is important to note that significant barriers exist to establishing licensed child care in any of these four selected facilities and shifting to a child care use would lead to displacement of other uses. Challenges and opportunities for each space were carefully outlined in the subcommittee’s SWOT analysis (Appendix E).

However, the real estate market is dynamic, and there may be additional facilities that are becoming available and should be included. The CCCTF advises the City not to limit future discussions to only the buildings on this initial list if other options become available.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

Professional services are also necessary to complete the review, along with conversations with building owners, to determine the true feasibility of these and other potential locations.

### *Potential Resources*

The thread INNOVATION grant has \$75,000 for an architect’s assessment of buildings and \$200,000 for fixtures, furniture, and equipment for a child care facility. Construction costs are not covered. The City of Valdez has also requested an earmark from Senator Murkowski of \$3 million for building renovations to support a child care facility.

## SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

### **1. Select the top choice for child care center location.**

Use the criteria established by the CCCTF to select the best location, informed by the architect’s assessment of site compatibility and potential renovation costs. Part of the decision-making process will need to include securing the rights to use the selected facility, and whether the potential site is to be purchased, or simply leased, or repurposed, if it is already City owned. If none of the sites can satisfactorily meet the need, it may need to be determined if new construction is a better option.

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### **2. Complete the architect’s assessment of the top selected facility.**

The architect’s assessment should include the potential capacity of each space if developed. The anticipated costs of renovations, building life expectancy, and timeline for renovations should also be included. The CCCTF anticipates that the thread INNOVATION Grant funds will be available for this task.

Additionally, the City should consider putting out a Request for Information to ensure that any other potential locations, particularly those in private ownership, have the opportunity to be considered prior to initiating the architect’s assessment and to consider if there are any new building projects where it could be viable to include a child care center in construction plans.

### **3. Develop a financing plan (to support renovation, purchase, and construction).**

Once the location has been finalized, a plan for financing the start-up costs will need to be developed. While the CCCTF anticipates that the thread INNOVATION Grant and federal earmark will both be available, it is possible that additional funding will be needed. These start-up costs are distinct from ongoing operational costs.

## MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM ACTIONS

### **4. Implement the decision (to purchase, lease, renovate, build).**

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

The City of Valdez will, by necessity, play a key role in administering initial grant funds for the development of the location and needs to responsibly utilize the funding to manage the grants/next steps. Ideally, these plans should be made in a private-public partnership so that the needs and desires of the future operator are captured in the development of the space. The final building selection and potential operator will determine the scope of the City's involvement.

#### **5. Engage in long-term sustainability planning.**

To ensure that the facility does not fall into disrepair and the investment is maintained over time, long-term sustainability planning should be conducted by the operator to ensure that there is ongoing compliance with Valdez Municipal Code and child care licensing requirements and ongoing maintenance and repair costs can be planned for. This will be important for the ongoing sustainability of the facility. This is linked to sustainability planning for the management structure as well.

### OTHER IDEAS WORTH CONSIDERING

While not an immediate priority, there were some other innovative ideas that came out of the research that are consistent with the City's goals and priorities. As plans progress and other partnerships and funding becomes available, the CCCTF recommends keeping these alternatives in mind for development when the time is right.

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#### **6. Establish a cooperative space for in-home child care providers.**

While the community has been clear in its desire for a high-quality childcare center, there are also other ways to support and incentivize smaller providers to become licensed. One idea that has been successful in other communities is to provide a cooperative space that multiple in-home providers can utilize (Appendix I). Having suitable space, especially in a community with a tight housing market and limited services for repair and renovation, is often a barrier to in-home providers becoming licensed. The CCCTF recommends continuing to explore whether this is a viable option to increase both supply and parent choice.

### **PRIORITY 3: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS**

A subcommittee of the CCCTF met and explored several potential structures for management of a child care facility: A SWOT Analysis was conducted of the following six ideas:

1. Shared space for multiple providers
2. Employer-sponsored model

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

3. Individually owned for-profit child care center
4. Non-profit child care facility
5. Head Start/Early Head Start
6. Shared Service Alliance

A few other ideas were also considered. The subcommittee also compiled the staffing requirements for licensing, including qualifications and ratios, for various scenarios. The results of the SWOT Analysis are in Appendix F. However, without having information on the facility size and capacity or ownership structure, the subcommittee did not have enough information to make a concrete recommendation. Additionally, ongoing City and other supports are anticipated to be needed for the ongoing operations, and there may need to be a separate mechanism to administer those.\*\* The management structure may also influence the financing/funding plan, as the administration of potential supports will need to be considered.

### SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

1. **Determine who will own/operate an ELC and what will be required to tap into possible supports (funding, facility, other supports/benefits).**

As a result of the SWOT analysis (Appendix F), the CCCTF has determined that the management structures most likely to be viable are:

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- » Management by a nonprofit for administration/management of an ELC
  - Newly formed for this purpose
  - Expanding an existing local nonprofit to fill the role
- » Management by with a for-profit entity
  - National ECE model
  - Expansion of facility from another community
- » Co-operative model or Shared Services Alliance

However, the ownership of the facility itself, as well as the financial support available, may influence which model is best. For example, a nonprofit or public organization may be eligible for grants and contributions that for-profit models would not be able to access. Depending on the building selected, a for-profit entity might eventually have the capacity to take over ownership of the facility and become a taxpayer for the City.\*\* Potential contracted entities may have requirements of their own that must be met, such as minimum contributions or facility size.

2. **Determine who will administer the ongoing operational support on an ongoing basis and oversee operating contracts (if needed).**

Beyond the operational support for a child care center, the CCCTF has recommended several other potential supports that should be offered to bolster the workforce and encourage additional providers in the community. These are detailed in *Priority 4: Sustainable Funding*.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

Ownership of a facility will drive how contracts are entered into and administered for the management of the facility.

## MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM ACTIONS

### **3. Support the development of an operations plan.**

To ensure that the Early Learning Center is financially stable, long-term business planning is needed. This includes supporting the operator in the development and execution of an Operations Plan and a Strategic Plan. The work to develop sustainable funding is intertwined. Small business support through an agency like the Alaska Small Development Center can provide needed expertise, and the City can potentially provide financial support for costs associated with those services\*\*.

### **4. Develop a mechanism to assess progress towards broader goals.**

If a contracted model is decided upon, there will need to be a mechanism for the City of Valdez to assess whether the investments are meeting their intended goals of contributing to the availability and accessibility of high-quality child care in the community and living wages\*\* provided to the workforce.

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## OTHER IDEAS WORTH CONSIDERING

### **5. Increase availability of out-of-school time programming (potentially at elementary school)**

While not an immediate priority, the CCCTF recognizes that there is also a need for out-of-school time programming, both after school and in the summer months. It is possible that the facility developed will have this capacity or be able to expand to provide at a future time. However, if not, the CCCTF recommends that future work be done to better understand the current need for more regularly available out-of-school-time programming. Suggested steps include a review of existing programs for school-age children to identify gaps. Potential partners include the City of Valdez Parks and Recreation Department, Advocates for Victims of Violence, faith-based organizations, and sports-focused nonprofits and community groups.

### **6. Creation of a Municipal Corporation or Economic Development Authority**

In Alaska, municipal governments have the ability under state law to incorporate municipal corporations or economic development authorities that can operate independently from the City government. Currently, the Valdez Museum and Historical Archive, Inc. is the only example

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

of this model locally, but in many communities across the nation, public corporations exist to focus on specific economic development issues like urban renewal, housing, or child care. Public corporations can often access grants and financing options not directly available to municipal governments.

#### **PRIORITY 4: SUSTAINABLE FUNDING**

To support a healthy ecosystem of options for child care within the community, ongoing public support will be needed. While providing ongoing operational support for a child care center is one need, the Sustainable Funding Subcommittee also found many examples of local grant funds that provide funding for start-up costs for in-home providers, scholarships to build a quality workforce, wage and benefit supplements for the workforce, and supplies and equipment that contribute to safety and quality of care in the community (Appendix G). Support for out-of-school time programming could also be provided. While the initial focus will be on encouraging new care, on an ongoing basis the needs may shift to retaining the providers in the community and encouraging quality.

Discretionary taxes are used in many communities to fund early learning goals, including start-up grants for new centers, workforce development, and out-of-schooltime programming. Additionally, many child care centers also have direct support from one or more employers in the community.

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##### *Potential Resources*

There is \$500,000 in the thread INNOVATION Grant that can be used as seed funding for initiatives to support and stabilize the early childhood workforce and ensure quality programming while other resources are secured.

#### **SHORT-TERM ACTIONS**

##### **1. Establish a Child Care Endowment Fund**

The CCCTF recommends that the City of Valdez establish a Child Care Endowment with the thread INNOVATION grant funds. The purpose of the endowment is to create self-sustaining grant programs that support a robust array of quality early learning and care options in the community, encourage smaller providers to become licensed, and build a well-trained workforce through offering scholarships.

Any new initiative will need support to get the word out to the community, answer potential questions from community members and organizations interested in applying, and provide ongoing administration of grant funds, including developing an application process and a procedure to make awards and disburse funds.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

The CCCTF believes that an endowment fund could potentially be managed by a third-party fiscal agent (like the Prince William Sound Economic Development Authority) or could be managed in tandem with the City's permanent fund (as the Museum endowment fund currently is). The CCCTF recommends that the City of Valdez Economic Diversification Commission be tasked with the initial development of grant programs that support child care professionals and offset the cost of providing care.

Long-term infrastructure and financial goals for the Grant Fund are discussed below. Additional communication needs are also discussed.

## **2. Pass an ordinance for a discretionary sales tax (sin tax).**

Options for the discretionary sales tax include alcohol, marijuana, or tobacco. The purpose of the discretionary tax is to provide funds for ongoing financial support for licensed child care and early learning in Valdez by contributing to the Child Care Endowment. In light of long-term priorities around increasing the availability of out-of-school programming, being expansive in enabling legislation language to fund out-of-school time, as well as early care and learning, with funds generated should be considered. The CCCTF found similar models in communities outside and inside of Alaska (Appendix H).

## **3. Determine needed ongoing financial contributions.**

The exact amount of start-up costs and annual revenue needed to sustain the initial early learning center is not yet determined. As noted earlier, the facility choices and management structure will be components of assessing these needs. However, ongoing financial supports are anticipated to be necessary due to the reality of child care sector economics. Contributions from other employers in the community are another potential revenue stream, in addition to ongoing incentive programs supported by the Child Care Endowment Fund. A facility maintaining licensure will also be key to families receiving Child Care Assistance and the center receiving the formulaic State Child Care Program Office's Child Care Grant. Soft money, such as discretionary grants, may be useful but should not be part of the ongoing sustainability plan.

## **4. Build funding partnerships with local employers.**

Several of the largest employers in the community have expressed interest in supporting a child care center, but not a willingness to directly operate a center. As the budget and ongoing operational support needs of the proposed child care center become clearer, these employers should be engaged to explore the potential for ongoing contributions, as well as other potential benefits that may contribute to sustainability, such as guaranteeing slots for employees. If employers purchase slots in the early learning center, this will have a two-fold effect of increasing the sustainability of the center's business model while guaranteeing employees access to quality care for their children. Employers, including the City of Valdez, may also choose to subsidize child care costs as a benefit to employees.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

## MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM ACTIONS

### **5. Finalize long-term administration of the Child Care Endowment grant programs.**

Determine if the City is willing and able to continue to serve as the administrative home for grant programs or if other options would better serve the community and meet the goals for the grant funds. For example, having a nonprofit intermediary administer grant programs, similar to the HEARTS model adopted in Juneau (Appendix G).

### **6. Sustain at least one high-quality child care center in Valdez.**

The ultimate purpose of the sustainability planning process is to sustain at least one high-quality child care center in Valdez. This will require ongoing communication and coordination between the City of Valdez, its partners, and the administration of the Early Learning Center. As the facility comes into operation, it is likely adjustments will have to be made to its operations and sustainability planning.

### **7. Ensure accountability through regular reporting on donations/usage of funding.**

To ensure continued public support, it is important to promote transparency and accountability in the use of City of Valdez funds. Ensuring that there is ongoing accountability through reporting back on the use and impact of the grant funds will be important for both recipients of grant funds and the child care center. Communication strategies are further discussed within in *Priority 5: Communications and Advocacy*. The model should also be re-evaluated at set intervals to determine if it is cost-effective and meets its stated goals.

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## OTHER IDEAS WORTH CONSIDERING

### **8. Embed child care sector supports in existing local organizations.**

The CCCTF noted that community support for licensed care need not all stem from a single organization and need not be expressly monetary. Additional supports could include a modest expansion of services already provided by organizations (for example food and nutrition or janitorial services) or having embedded personnel in another organization play an additional role in supporting the child care facility or sector (for example a PWSC faculty also playing the role of administrator for the early learning center).

Specifically, the CCCTF's research found that the child care licensing process can be very difficult to navigate, and dedicated staff who can assist interested community members with navigating this process, while also connecting them to grants to fund start-up costs, could be very helpful. The CCCTF recommends that the current grant-funded position in the Public Health Nurse's office, the Healthy & Equitable Communities Coordinator, be considered to take on this role in the short term during this pilot phase.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

## 9. Explore universal pre-k in Valdez.

The CCCTF found that some communities are moving towards offering universal pre-k for all children in the community. In the long-term, the City should continue to explore and encourage other organizations to explore what it would take to make child care and preschool universally available in the community at no cost to families. This vision could serve as a model for other communities in the state.

### PRIORITY 5: COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

The issue of access to child care is a complex one that affects the entire community - not just parents. For example, the CCCTF found that lack of child care threatens the communities' Family Friendly Status with the U.S. Coast Guard. State and national data reviewed also shows that access to high-quality early learning opportunities promotes kindergarten readiness for students, and the economy improves when parents have reliable child care and can go to work. The CCCTF strongly believes that education and ongoing communication are integral to sustaining public support for City of Valdez leadership on this issue, as well as ensuring that the actions taken are transparent and the public has opportunities to provide input as plans are developed.

The CCCTF also sees opportunities to share the successes and challenges that Valdez is facing with both state and federal policymakers and other stakeholders and weigh in on policy and programmatic decisions that may affect the availability of high-quality early learning and care options in the community.

### SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

#### 1. Develop a communications plan.

The City of Valdez needs to develop a communications plan to support this work and encourage robust public engagement throughout the process, communicate about policy choices being made as a result of the recommendations, and increase understanding of the centrality of child care access to the economic health of the community.

#### 2. Encourage innovation in the grant funds through deliberate language choices.

As grant funds and partnerships are created, the language used will either inhibit or increase opportunities for creative, community-driven approaches. The CCCTF strongly recommends that language be open enough to encourage creative problem solving while maintaining a focus on the core priority of expanding access to high quality early care and learning opportunities in the community.

#### 3. Promote the work of the CCCTF with state/federal representatives and continue to advocate for the community's needs.

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

The leadership that the City of Valdez and CCCTF have shown in addressing the community's needs should be celebrated and highlighted in ongoing communication with state and federal representatives to ensure that state and federal actions to address the child care crisis are consistent with the needs identified in the City of Valdez.

## MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM ACTIONS

### **4. Implement a media campaign.**

The CCCTF recognizes that community support is vital to ongoing sustainability. However, many people still do not fully understand how central access to quality child care is to family and community well-being, and many businesses do not see the connection between child care and their workforce. The CCCTF recommends an educational media campaign be created to foster support and increase understanding of the City's interest and investment in this sector.

### **5. Improve communication about community-based events and opportunities for young children and families.**

The CCCTF found that there is no central location for access to up-to-date information on community events and priorities and encourages the development of a community calendar of family/children's events or other similar platforms.

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## LIST OF APPENDICES

- » **Appendix A - Resolution 23-07**
- » **Appendix B - Local Child Care Expert Survey**
- » **Appendix C - Workforce Subcommittee Report**
- » **Appendix D - Facilities Assessment Rubric**
- » **Appendix E - Facilities SWOT Analysis**
- » **Appendix F - Management Structures SWOT Analysis**
- » **Appendix G - Sustainable Funding Models Research Summary**
- » **Appendix H - Sin Tax and Revenues Research Summary**
- » **Appendix I - Pod Model Research Brief**

\*\*Denotes a recommendation that was not unanimously supported by task force membership.

# ***Appendix A - Resolution 23-07***

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

RESOLUTION NO. 23-07

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA,  
FORMALLY ESTABLISHING THE VALDEZ CHILD CARE CRISIS TASKFORCE

WHEREAS, the lack of affordability, adequacy, and availability of child care or early childhood education options is an immense problem both in Valdez and throughout Alaska; and

WHEREAS, Valdez's only licensed childcare facility closed unexpectedly in 2022, leaving many working parents unable to find safe and reliable care for their children; and

WHEREAS, the City of Valdez contracted with the Stellar Group in 2022 to conduct an Early Childhood Needs Assessment with the goal of better understanding the effects of Valdez's child care crisis on families, businesses, and the community more broadly; and

WHEREAS, the needs assessment identified Valdez as a "childcare desert" noting that sixty percent of survey respondents were "looking for any, more, or different child care," four in ten respondents had considered moving away from Valdez due to a lack of child care and eighty-six percent of respondents identified safety as their top consideration when selecting a child care provider; and

WHEREAS, section XIII.D of Council Policies and Procedures, specifically outlines the procedures for establishment of temporary citizen advisory groups (task forces); and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that no existing city board or commission has the capacity or expertise to engage on this issue and that a need exists for a dedicated group to actively address the lack of child care in the community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Valdez recognizes the necessity for collaboration between varied local stakeholder groups in addressing the ongoing child care crisis and acknowledges the value of considering the widest variety of outlooks and leveraging existing community resources wisely.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA, that:

Section 1: The Child Care Crisis Task Force is hereby established on a temporary, short-term basis and shall meet at least twice monthly.

Section 2: The scope of the Child Care Crisis Task Force will consist of the following task:

1. With the assistance of the Stellar Group, create and submit to City Council for approval a strategic plan outlining short, middle and long-term actions recommended to address the child care crisis and other recommendations to strengthen Valdez's early childhood system. The strategic plan shall include recommendations to City Council on each of the following factors relating to the logistics of establishing an initial licensed child care facility:
  - a. Analysis of existing buildings in the community capable of serving as a physical location for a child care facility, including a summary of renovations or adjustments that would be needed prior to use.

- b. Desirable management structures and licensing avenues for establishment of initial child care facility.
- c. Potential funding mechanisms to create and sustain a licensed child care facility in Valdez.
- d. Methods for attracting, retaining and training of a high-quality child care workforce.

Section 3. The Child Care Crisis Task Force will be comprised of nine members total representing each of the following groups. Members will be selected by the City Manager in consultation with each group.

1. One Member representing the Valdez Zero to Three with Families Alliance.
2. One Member representing the Early Childhood Workforce Profession.
3. One Member representing the City of Valdez.
4. One Member representing Valdez City Schools.
5. One Member representing Providence Valdez Medical Center.
6. One Member representing Prince William Sound College.
7. One Member representing Alyeska Pipeline Service Company.
8. One Member representing the United States Coast Guard.
9. One Member representing the Valdez Native Tribe.

Section 4. Terms of the members shall expire in September 30, 2023 or until the Child Care Task Force completes the tasks outlined in Section 2, whichever occurs first. Resignations, vacancies, and new member appointment processes shall be handled using the same methods as standing citizen advisory groups.

Section 5. All City Council Members shall serve as ex-officio members of the Child Care Crisis Task Force.

Section 6. The City Clerk's Office shall be designated to provide staff and administrative support to the Child Care Crisis Task Force.

Section 7. City task forces are intended to be temporary in time and scope.

No additional tasks may be added to the scope of the Child Care Crisis Task Force without documented, formal agreeance of the City Council.

Section 8. The Child Care Crisis Task Force is directed to complete the task outlined in Section 2 of this resolution by September 30, 2023. City Council may extend the sunset date of the Child Care Task.

Once the Child Care Crisis Task Force has completed the task outlined in Section 2 of this resolution, they shall forward a final report to City Council prior to dissolution of the task force.

Section 9. In accordance with XIII.D. of the City Council Policies and Procedures, the Child Care Task Force shall be subject to the same standard policies and procedures established for other citizen advisory groups.

These standard policies and procedures include election of a chair and chair pro tempore during the first task force meeting following establishment; adherence to attendance, quorum, and remote participation policies; proper meeting noticing and adherence to the Alaska Open Meetings Act; use of proper parliamentary procedure and meeting decorum; recording of meeting minutes; and use of the full city legislative management software system.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA, this 21<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2023.

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

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Sharon Scheidt, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sheri Pierce, MMC, City Clerk

***Appendix B -  
Local Child Care  
Expert Survey***

How would you describe your role (now or previous) in the field?

8 responses

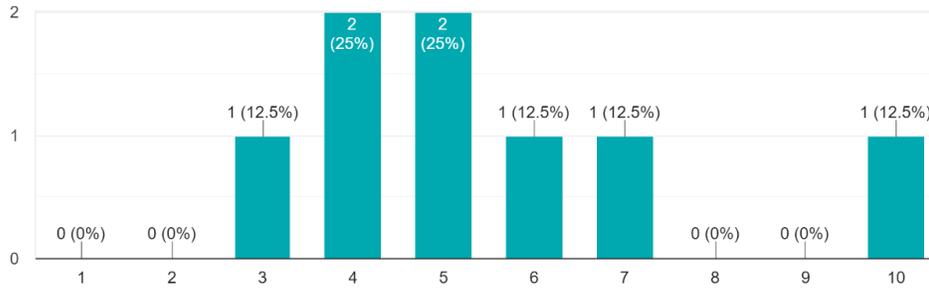


Based on your personal experience, please rate the following potential barriers to staying in the profession/ operating a sustainable program on a scale of 1 to 10.

1= not a barrier and 10= very large barrier

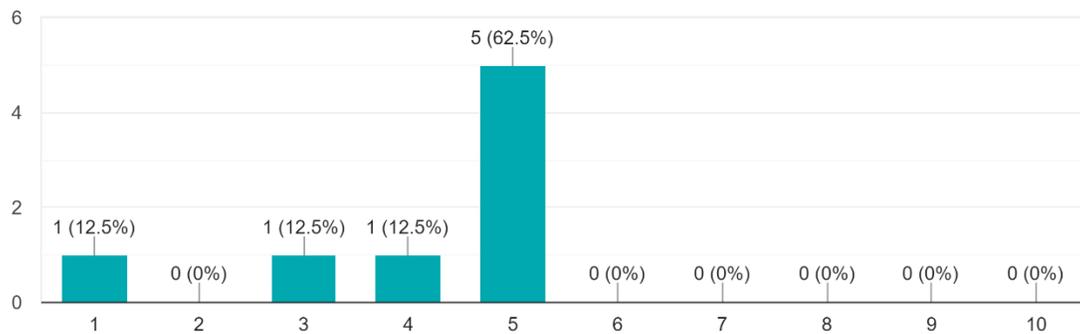
Cost of Training and Professional Development

8 responses



Availability of Training and Professional Development

8 responses



## Any additional feedback on cost or availability of training and professional development?

6 responses

Stepping Stones looked into coordinating with PWSC for Early Childhood Development courses but we were unable to find any courses specifically geared towards it. That could be that we just didn't find it but in that case it would be great to have more advertising or general public knowledge of it. We fully paid for new employees to get First Aid and CPR certified along with a couple others and it became difficult to pay for. So, we tried to coordinate with Providence for CPR training. We reached out and were told they would look into it. I tried reaching out again after not hearing from them to see how it was going. I did not hear back. For longer retention of staff, we tried a reimbursement policy instead where they pay for those trainings and then we reimburse after 3 months of working at the daycare. I'd also recommend that, if there will be a Board, that there be more training for board members and how a board is to function. I was able to provide the training for free because I have a father who is a trainer specifically for Organizational Leadership and he was willing to come in pro bono. But it was only months before we officially closed so we were unsuccessfully in fully implementing what he had provided.

I was able to retain a Certificate (12 credit hours) in Early Childhood Education through Ashworth College. Cost was about \$1k and was reimbursed by Thread so I could assume my admin role.

There are numerous agencies in Alaska that provide training online & in person.

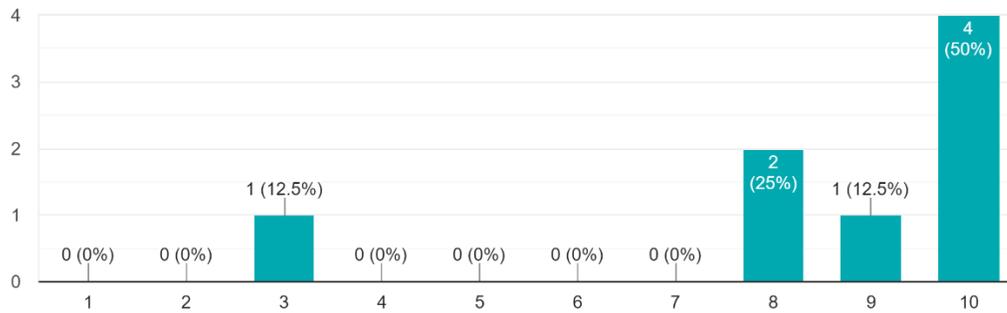
Low-level/refresher online training was easy to come by but finding/hiring/retaining those with a degree in education was more difficult as the school district is able to offer benefits Stepping Stones could not.

Training was easy to find using Alaska SEED but the availability of said training and the schedule/staffing shortage made it extremely hard to participate in the trainings.

From my understanding, there are grants that can cover the cost of training. The biggest issue is finding time to train properly and effectively while also providing full-time care.

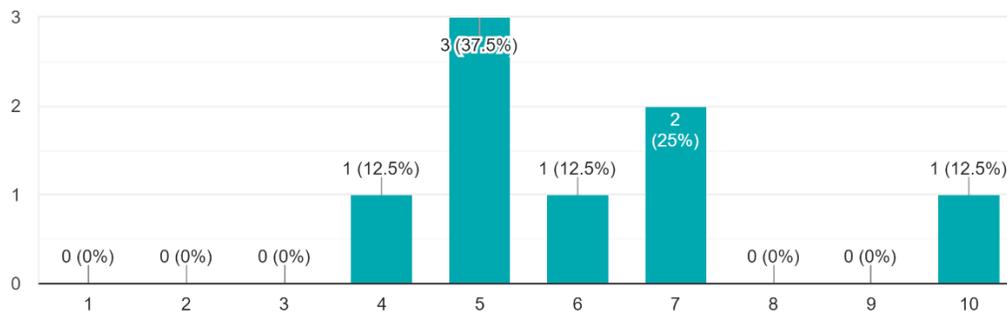
### Staffing levels/ staff availability

8 responses



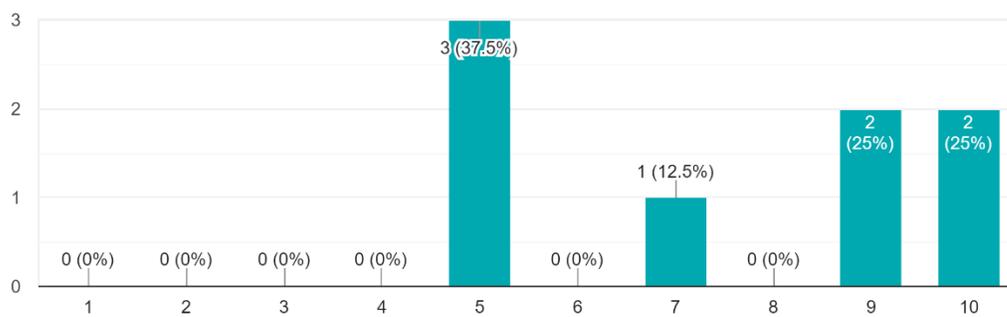
### Time commitment/ personal of family needs

8 responses



### Stress/ burnout

8 responses



Any other comments on personal or stress related barriers? Any barriers not listed above?

8 responses

The time commitment would fully depend on the amount of staff we have. We were on minimal staff so the burnout and time commitment was much more for those individuals, unfortunately. Being president of the board, I was also providing more time than was required of a president to do. Commitment to the board was difficult to receive from some board members so the board members who were willing and able took on those extra duties by default.

I think lack of qualified staff is a huge stress in this field

This is my opinion formed from when things did run relatively well. It always starts at the top. If you have directors who know how to run a daycare and have the proper education on it, you might cycle through staff but your staff retention will always be better. When you have directors who don't have an education on early childhood, it puts a lot more stress on classrooms as working with small children is difficult. Having predictable classroom schedules, a structured handbook, and goals for each classroom is imperative. This is what I have witnessed.

As an administrator/owner, the difficult times were when staffing was not available

None

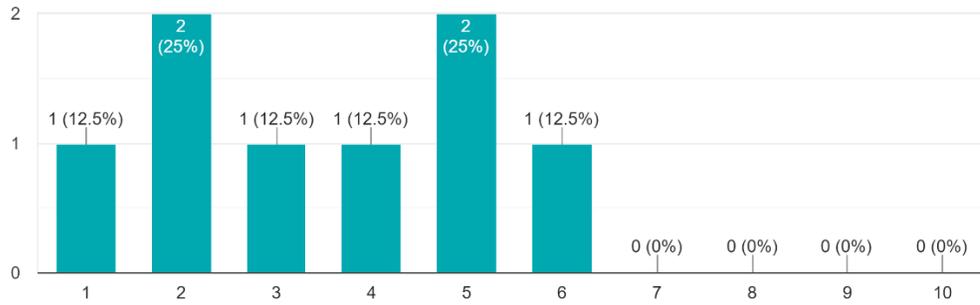
COVID presented a significant barrier to staffing levels; also, employees with children who fell with anything was a major impact to staffing availability.

N/a

From my personal experience, the lack of training received at Stepping Stones created more stress on the overall work environment. We wanted more training but we're so short staffed that it was nearly impossible to find a safe way to do that within our nonprofit budget.

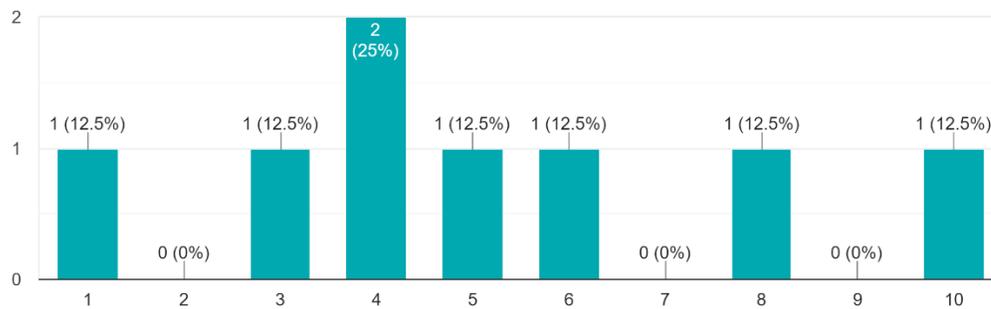
### Navigating Licensing and Legal Requirements

8 responses



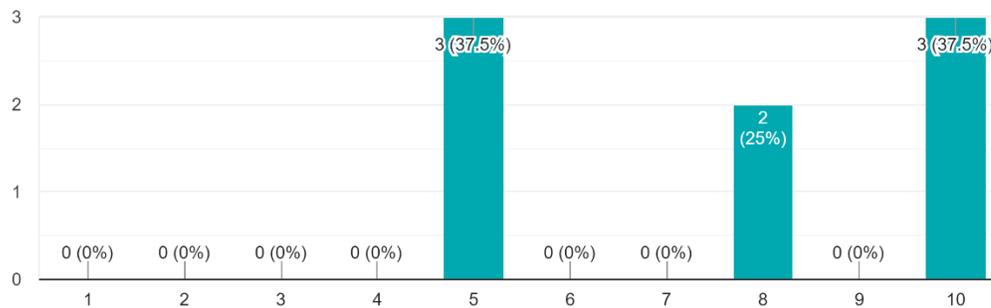
### Physical Space Limitations

8 responses



### Pay and benefits

8 responses



## Any other comments on structural barriers? Any barriers not listed?

8 responses

Stepping Stones had issues with pay and benefits. We did increase our pay significantly to try to lure more staff but we were unable to afford benefits. Due to COVID, benefits was what people were looking for when it came to a job and we were told by potential employees that they chose a different job due to benefits available. I would say that benefits would definitely need to be implemented for the providers of the childcare.

Lack of available affordable space to rent or purchase is a problem

Valdez needs a proper childcare building. I think benefits like being able to have your children in care for free or reduced is a bonus. It was for me. Being competitive with pay is important, but once again, having top notch leadership will always affect employee retention more than pay, in my opinion.

Having a nice space is key to good childcare

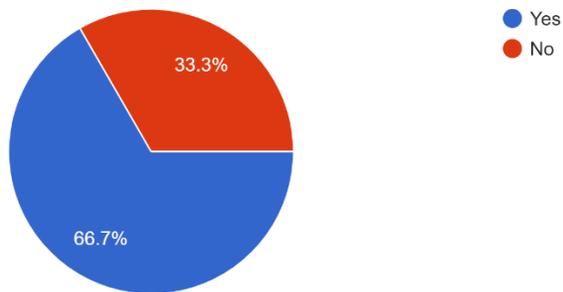
Outdoor space and transportation for school age children

Understandably, people want (and deserve) health insurance among other benefits!!!  
Pay and burnout were two of the highest barriers with stepping stones followed by lack of trainings to get more people licensed to become a CCA which was needed on the premises at all times while the doors were open.

One barrier that comes to mind is the hours of operation. For those that work at Alyeska or work 12 hour days, there hasn't been someone to provide care during those hours. Staffing has been a huge barrier but could be rectified with a livable wage and benefits.

Have you (did you ever) considered becoming a licensed in-home care provider?

6 responses



What do (did) you like most about providing small scale unlicensed care in your home? 4 responses

I have only provided licensed in home care

I never did it, just considered it.

Easier to manage

N/A

What do (did) you dislike most about providing small scale unlicensed care in your home?

2 responses

Giving up space in my home

N/A

## What supports would you need (or have needed) to consider becoming licensed?

4 responses

I understand the licensing process I would love start up stipends or grants

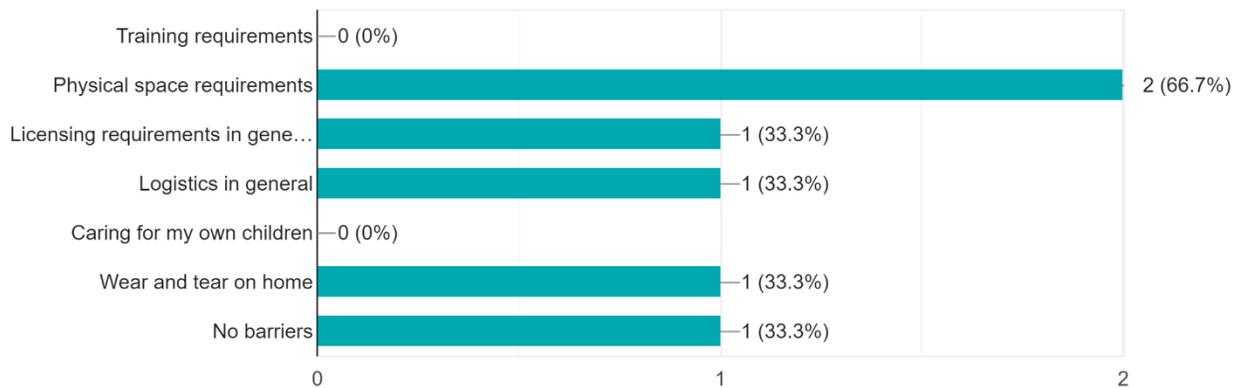
I know there is a ton of hoops to jump through to do licensed in your home, not to mention the wear and tear on your home, or the no days off really. I don't think Valdez will ever see an uptick on licensed in home care. I've never known of a single one in my 11 years. My opinion again, I'd like to see a center.

Was not required in the 1990's in CG housing at that time

N/A

## Which of the following are (or were) barriers to you providing licensed care in your home?

3 responses



What was (or is) the reason you worked in (or helped with) early education or child care? What were the parts of the work you liked best?

8 responses

I went to college with a degree that emphasized on behavior modification and development. I worked at a licensed in-home daycare while in college. I also have 2 small children who both need childcare because my husband and I both work full time and have to. I was presented the idea to join the board from a past Executive Director of Stepping Stones. On the first board meeting, they were looking for new officers. I accidentally accepted the president position.

It's my field of study I love teaching and helping children and I was raising my own family so it was perfect for me.

I like kids! At the time, my kids were small as well. It gave me the opportunity to work but still be with/be near my kids and involved. When I first started, I was also working at the elementary school, but quit that to be full time and admin for the daycare. I loved making a curriculum and learning about what made a good classroom and how to help my own kids as well. I loved running the preschool room! We had a ton of fun and it was absolutely rewarding.

The love of children. Best parts were always the kids! Helping out the community with subsidized daycare costs. Supplying the town with job opportunities. And again the kids!!  
Ability to be with my young children

When Stepping Stones' location on Chenega experienced the fire, it became obvious that those not impacted by the potential loss of childcare were unaware (or not concerned) with it, so I wanted to do what I could to help the daycare.

I wanted to help a town I loved and they needed childcare when we were stationed here.

Watching children grow and develop is so fun and fulfilling.

What worked well in the care setting(s) you were in? Please give examples...

8 responses

The physical indoor space was actually great. The Royal Center really had the room and amenities to provide what we needed. The structure of the pipes and the mold were not awesome. But the general physical space and rooms and kitchen all were very useful and helpful. The location of the building was great also as it was in town and close to parks and Ruth Pond respectively. I feel like our pay range was very reasonable for what we were able to provide without going bankrupt. It was \$14-\$24/hour depend on experience. Most people were \$18+ for pay.

Providing a loving family environment

Clear communication with parents

Flexible hours Treating the children in my care like my own children and establishing a life long relationship with the families

We had a schedule, rules, and predictable days. We had a routine and a staff that had been around for a bit.

Our building arrangement that we did ourselves was perfect. A room for each age group, nicely decorated, neat and clean. Outside play area. Having a good everyday preschool program included in the price of daycare. Having 2 associates was ideal.

I had Chris Kupczyk work at my center, everyone should have someone like her.

Having a clear process/plan for business operations

Having a board that helped with the overall well-being of the daycare was amazing because it took some of the stress off me running the place by myself.

The most efficient part of Stepping Stones while I was there was the paperwork/business side of things was dealt by someone separate from the kids day to day teacher.

Describe your vision for child care or early education in Valdez- What would your ideal system look like?

8 responses

Ideal system is universal childcare for small children until they are old enough to go to public school. Public school is free (somewhat, except lunch or extra curricular accessories) but not daycare? But that's a federal situation (or state?). Outside of that dream world, childcare vision:

Liveable wages

Full benefits

Employee support

Random drug testing

Coordination with a college/high school/hospital for those CPR/First Aid trainings and staff with college/high school students (18+ is the requirement to be able to count towards ratios but 16+ can be support staff) to do maybe a work program for school or internship.

Community involvement/support - this doesn't happen in larger places necessarily, I know, but we are a small town where everybody likes to be in everybody's business. The one licensed daycare in town received 0 support from the community. I feel that had we had more community support at least, we would have gotten better word of mouth at the very least. We received a lot of flack from the community a lot of times. We weren't perfect but we did try very hard and had the community had more involvement they would have seen that we had reasons behind the process, such as closing for COVID exposures. We had a lot of flack for that when we were required to follow State protocols and when dealing with children we weren't about to cut corners. But all the community saw was that we closed for COVID.

It would look like a licensed program in my home or a licensed center in town. I would love to be hands on and involved with the children in our community

A building that's an appropriate size with a green outdoor space! PLEASE outdoor space. I would love some of our larger companies in Valdez to get involved and have a stake in providing care for younger families. I think something like a Boys and Girls Club would be fantastic. Even now that my kids are school age, my family still struggles for care in the summer. It would be great to see this rolled into one solution. I think space and strong leadership in directors are the two main problems.

A dedicated entrepreneur that loves children. Center based childcare facility with quality staff. To be licensed for 75 children the need is for 2 staff members that have the right education level all other staff can learn on the job with classes that the center can supply.

A early learning center that is NOT funded or operated by the City of Valdez.

Employee-subsidized childcare that offers business hours which accommodate the majority of employers. Ex: many Alyeska employees found Stepping Stones to not be a good fit b/c its shift last 12 hours and SS was only open ~11 hours max at its peak operating hours.

Honestly I don't know. I think without a lot of funding to pay employees a livable wage it is going to be pointless.

A big playground that is safe and fenced for kids to run and play. A kitchen that provides meals and has hot meals for those kids who might not have one at home. Classrooms full of smiles and laughter. Special guest of Molly Walker from the library story time often. Staff that are happy and not stressing about where their next paycheck is coming from.

What would make you want to stay in the early education/ child care profession?

8 responses

I personally do not have a passion for it so due to only that reason I will not be in childcare anymore. However, if it was, I would want support and appreciation, and a liveable wage with benefits.

On going training opportunities, grants, stipends

I am no longer in the profession and will not return. For no other reason than it was a time and place for me. I took some years off my career and changed paths to benefit my children.

Ohhh to be younger!! I sold to a younger couple mostly because of health and age!

I am not interested working in this field.

N/A

Nothing, I will not be returning to childcare.

Livable wage and benefits, training

## Anything else you want to share?

8 responses

Feel free to reach out any time.

Thank you for including me in this survey There is definitely a need for licensed child care in Valdez

Although, I am no longer involved in childcare I am still passionate about it. It is so important for Valdez to have a quality provider in an appropriate space. I am always available for any other questions. Thanks to the Task Force!

With the right building and the right person with a background in early childhood education, a quality program could be achieved in Valdez. It has been done (by me) but it takes a dedicated paid staff, & a qualified administrator & associate that will stay on.

No

I strongly believe childcare continues to be viewed as a "woman's problem" which negatively impacts its prioritization. Everyone (men, those who are not parents, those whose children have aged out, and those who have a stay-at-home spouse/partner) needs to recognize that this is a COMMUNITY issue which affects ALL of us in one way or another.

N/a

Thank you for putting this together!

***Appendix C -  
Workforce  
Subcommittee  
Report***

# Child Care Crisis Task Force

Workforce Development

# Key Questions for Developing a Sustainable Child Care Workforce

## 1. Workforce Recruiting

How do we attract people to the workforce in the first place?

## 2. Workforce Training

What training do they need to start?

What training do they need to continue and/or advance?

## 3. Workforce Retention

How do we keep enough people to sustain a viable workforce?

# Workforce Recruiting

## 1. **Identify Sources** (who do we recruit and where do we find them?)

- a. High School/College dual credit
- b. Other existing community members
- c. Recruitment outside Valdez
- d. Funding for recruitment marketing
- e. Shared workforce

## 2. **Recruiting Issues/Complications**

- a. Traditionally low wages
- b. Background checks
- c. Tight labor market with other opportunities
- d. Training required to start and to remain in workforce
- e. Housing limitations for those recruited from outside
- f. Caregiver/child ratios drive staffing minimums
- g. Limited career advancement available, especially locally
- h. Community understanding of need (lunch & learn)

# Workforce Training

## 1. State Minimums

- a. Low Bar (list of items in [7 AAC 57.350](#))
- b. Multiple avenues available ([SEED training](#)), but those avenues are complicated
- c. Programs not articulated or packaged for ease of completion

## 2. Postsecondary training/education

- a. [UAA Early Childhood program](#) has nested certificate, associates, and bachelors programs
  - i. Certificate: 18 credits
  - ii. AAS: 60 credits
  - iii. BA: 120 credits (also qualifies for PK-3 state licensure)

## 3. Continuing Education and Prerequisites

- a. Certifications in CPR, 1st Aid, Food Handling must be obtained and kept current
- b. Annual Training requirements (24 clock hours full-time/12 part-time, not to include items in 3a)

# Workforce Retention

1. **Pay** (lower than fast food or grocery clerk)
  - a. How can this be increased or subsidized without making care unaffordable?
  - b. How can this be scaled to reward longevity?
  - c. What other incentives besides pay may be available?
    - i. Housing assistance/subsidy? Dual-use facilities?
    - ii. Education access?
2. **Benefits**
  - a. Types (health, retirement, vacation)?
  - b. Sources? (City? Schools? Hospital?)
3. **Cost & Opportunities for Professional Development**
  - a. Initial training and certifications (CPR, 1st Aid, food handling, state minimums)
  - b. College credits (for advancement to associate, administrator, or PK-3 teacher)
  - c. Funding sources
    - i. City pays for dual credit. Could similar programs be built for others?
    - ii. Federal Financial Aid
    - iii. Grants/Sponsorships
    - iv. Shared services alliances?

# Recommendations

1. **Recruitment:** Develop balanced approaches to recruit short-term help (dual credit, summer interns) where we anticipate turn over and long term help to ensure continuity of operations. Identifying means to fund an attractive package of pay/benefits/opportunities will be key, as will funds and outlets for advertising vacancies.
2. **Training:** Coordinate agreements with PWSC, VHS, and SEED to provide training in accessible packages. Funding that training may require multiple means and sources. Identify existing sources and develop additional sources to fill gaps.
3. **Retention:** Mainly funding to make and keep pay, benefits, and professional development competitive without making the operation cost-prohibitive. Identify sources for augmenting funding beyond what the center's own revenue can sustain (city, local industry partners, grants, etc.)

***Appendix D -  
Facilities  
Assessment Rubric***

City of Valdez Museum Site Selection Criteria Matrix

Updated 1/06/18

Potential Sites	Weight	Priority	A	B	C	O	T	L	H	K	D	U	P	G	J	Q	N	E	F	S	I	R	M	V
Common Name/ Description		Updated 5/15/23	Old Alyeska Building (by Man Camp)	Airport Whitney Museum Space	Armory	Old Pizza Shop	Old Plumbing Shop	Mountain Sky	Halibut House	Royal Center Building	Glen Mills Building	Library Basement	Masons Building	Blue (Yellow) Building	Ferry Building	Civic Center (Ball room / Conference Room)	R Bell Building	Available HHES Space	District Office Building	Coast Guard Community Center	City Rec Center	PWSC	New Construction Hospital Campus (Masterplan)	
<b>Community Support/Vision</b>	20	1																						
Positive impact on local community			Med (use vacant property)	Low	Med (use mostly vacant property)	Med	Med	Low (displacement)	Med (use vacant property)	High (use vacant property)	Med	Med	Low	Med (use mostly vacant property)	Low/ Med	Low (displacement)	Low (displacement)	High	Low (displacement)	Med	Low	Low/Med	High	
Supports COV comprehensive plan			Med/Low	Low	Med/Low	Low/Med	Low/Med	Low/ Med	Med/High	High	Med/High	Low	Med	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Med	Med	Med	Low/Med	Med	
<b>Property Features</b>	20	1																						
Lot size			1.8-2 acres	>1 acre	10 acres	.25 acres	.33 Acres	1.33 acres	.33 Acres	> .25 acres	.15 Acres	.5 acres	.75 acres	.25 acres	> .5 acres	>1 acre	>1 Acre	>2 acres	>2 acres	>1 acre	1 acre	>1 acre	> .25 acres	
Lot configuration			Large Rectangle, flat	Large Rectangle, flat	Large Rectangle, flat	Odd shape, flat, gravel	Odd shape, flat, gravel	Odd Shape, Flat, Paved	Small Rectangle, paved	Large Rectangle, flat	Small Rectangle, paved	rectangle, paved/ lawn	Odd shape, large, flat, gravel	Odd Shape, Flat, Paved	Odd Shape, Flat, Paved	narrow grassy areas, hillside, paved parking	Odd shape, flat, gravel	Odd Shape, Flat, Paved/lawn	Square Paved/ lawn	rectangle, paved/ lawn	rectangle, paved/ lawn	Odd Shape, Flat, Paved	Flat grassy	
Adequate parking			Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Adequate outdoor space (75sf/child)			Yes	No	Yes	No (needs improvement)	Yes (needs improvement)	Yes	Yes (needs improvement)	No (needs improvement)	No	Yes	Yes (needs improvement)	Yes	Yes (needs improvement)	Yes	Yes (needs improvement)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (needs improvement)	Yes	
Existing Kitchen			Unknown	Yes (no oven/Stove top)	Yes	unknown	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	unknown	No	unknown	No	unknown	Yes	unknown	Yes	Yes (no oven/Stove top)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Snow storage			Yes	Yes	Yes	yes, cut off by snow storage	Yes (needs improvement)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
ADA Compliance			1st floor - Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No (needs improvement)	No (needs improvement)	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No (needs improvement)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Additional property amenities (existing)			potential for housing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	close to City facilities	N/A	Library	N/A	Ruth Pond	waterfront and parks	close to parks	N/A	Playground	Playground	Playground	lawn, close to schools	close to parks	N/A	
<b>Site Compatibility</b>	20	1																						
Adjacent to outdoor or offsite programs			Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low/Med	High	High	High	Low	Low/ Med	Med	Med	Low	Med	Med	Med	High	High	Med	
Compatible with adjacent uses			Medium	Low	Med	Low	Low	Low	Medium/High	High	High	Med	Low	Med	Low	Med	Low	High	High	Med	High	Med	Med	
Safe pedestrian access / routes			Low	Low	Med	Low	Low	Low	High	Med	High	High	Med	High	High	Med	Med	High	High	Med	High	High	High	
Conformance with COV zoning			No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<b>Purchase Cost/Terms</b>	15	2																						
Probability of Availability			High	Med	Low	Med	Med	Low/Med	Med/ High	High	Med	Low	Low/Med	Med/ High	Low	Low	Low	High	Low (displacement)	Low	Med (displacement)	Low	High	
COV Tax Assessment of Property or Published \$\$			\$500k (2020)	N/A	N/A	Unknown	Unknown	\$ 1,900,400	\$ 240,700.00	\$ 950,000	unknown	N/A	\$ 137,700	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 228,300	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Purchase / Rent Cost			High	Low	Unknown	unknown	unknown	Very High	Low/Med	High	Med	Low	unknown	Low	unknown	Low	Med	Low	Low	unknown	Low	unknown	High (construction)	
Operational costs			High	Low	High	Low	Low	High	Med	Med	Med	Low	Med	High	High	Med	Med	Low	Med	Med/Low	Med	Low	Med	
City-owned			No	Yes	No, State	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No, State	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No, Fed	Yes	No, State	Yes	
<b>Potential Renovation Costs</b>	13	3																						
Site / Civil			Low	Low	Low	Med	Med	Low/Med	Low/Med	Low	Low	Low	Med	Med	Med	Low	Med	N/A	N/A	Low	Low	Low	High (construction)	
Interior Renovation potential costs			Low/Med	Low	Low	Med	Med	High	Low/Med	Med	Low/Med	Low	Med	High	Low	Low	Med	Low/Med	High (Relocation)	Low	Low	Low	High (construction)	
Hazmat Remediation			No	No	No	Possibly	Possibly	No	Possibly	Possibly	Possibly	No	Possibly	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	
<b>Natural/ Physical Environment</b>	12	3																						
Natural Daylight			Med	Low	High	Med	Med	High	High	Med	Low	High	Low	Low	High	High/Low	Med	Med	High	High	High	High	High	
Tsunami/ Avalanche			Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Med	Med	Med	Med	Med	High	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	
Surface water			Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Med	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Med	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<p><b>Site Purchase Cost Category:</b>                  Low: &lt;\$250,000                  Med: \$250,000-\$500,000                  High: \$500,000-\$1,000,000                  Very High: &gt;\$1,000,000</p>	<p><b>Site Preparation Cost Category:</b>                  Low: Minimal clearing, unsuitable material or fill                  Med: Partial clearing, some unsuitable material and fill, no bedrock removal                  High: All clearing, extensive unsuitable material and fill, bedrock blasting/ripping and removal</p>	<p><b>Site Probability of Availability</b>                  Low: Current use unlikely to change, not for sale, not highest use of property                  Med: For sale, potentially for sale, child care is use improvement                  High: For sale and vacant, no competing uses</p>
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Priority	A	B	C	O	T	L	H	K	D	U	P	G	J	Q	N	E	F	S	I	R	M	V
	Old Alyeska Building (by Man Camp)	Airport Whitney Museum	Armory	Old Pizza Shop	Old Plumbing Shop	Mountain Sky	Halibut House	Royal Center Building	Glen Mills Building	Library Basement	Masons Building	Blue (Yellow) Building	Ferry Building	Civic Center (Ball room / Conference)	R Bell Building	Available HHES Space	District Office Building	Coast Guard Community Center	City Rec Center	PWSC	New Construction Hospital	
AVERAGE	68	68.5	67.5	58.5	58.5	59	73	77	64.5	73.5	63.5	62	64	75	61.5	92	81	79	86	77.5	74	
							8	4		7				5		1			2	3	6	

1	Available HHES Space
2	City Rec Center
3	District Office Building
4	Coast Guard Community Center
5	PWSC
6	Royal Center Building
7	Civic Center (Ball room / Conference Room)
8	New Construction Hospital Campus (Masterplan)
9	Library Basement
10	Halibut House

# ***Appendix E - Facilities SWOT Analysis***

## City of Valdez Child Care Crisis Task Force

### Facilities Review, as outlined in Resolution No. 23-07:

*“The strategic plan shall include recommendations to City Council on each of the following factors relating to the logistics of establishing an initial licensed child care facility:*

- a. Analysis of existing buildings in the community capable of serving as a physical location for a child care facility, including a summary of renovations or adjustments that would be needed prior to use.”*

The CCTF provided an initial list of buildings, both public and privately owned, to be reviewed as potential childcare sites. COV Capital Facilities Director Nathan Duval drafted a rubric for analyzing those facilities, the CCTF provided edits, and a final draft was completed (attached). The rubric included the following categories: Community Support/Vision, Property Features, Site Compatibility, Purchase Cost/Terms, Potential Renovation Costs, and Natural/Physical Environment.

Three CCTF members were appointed to the Facilities Review Subcommittee: Susan Love, Tim Mason, and Tim Bauer. Susan Love and Tim Mason completed the rubric independently and compiled their scores for a final list, and met as a group to review. While Tim Bauer did not complete the rubric, he ranked HHES as the top choice.

The top ten facilities are:

1. Hermon Hutchens Elementary School
2. City of Valdez Recreation Center
3. VCS District Office Building\*
4. USCG Community Center\*
5. PWSC
6. Royal Center Building
7. City of Valdez Civic Center
8. New Construction Providence Hospital Campus
9. City of Valdez Library Basement
10. Former Halibut House

\*Tim Mason, who represents the USCG, said that the number 4 building was a non-starter due to the unlikelihood that the USCG/Dept of Defense would release a building for this type of use that was not under USCG management. Tim Bauer, VCS Superintendent, stated that the number 3 building was also unavailable due to organizational purposes and recent renovation tailored to current use.

What follows is a SWOT analysis of the top four ranked facilities (after removing 3 and 4), with some additional notes on the consideration of constructing a new building.

## Facilities Review – SWOT Analysis

- **Herman Hutchens Elementary School**

- **Strength**

- Potential available space within building
- City owned – lease may be potentially low cost
- Low overhead costs as maintenance, utilities are already provided to some extent
- Commercial kitchen
- Convenient for families with elementary-age kids
- Potential selling point for HHES workforce to have their children in childcare on-site
- Parking and snow removal provided
- Building is ADA compliant
- Library space

- **Weakness**

- Extensive renovation may be required
- Food service could not be provided through VCS Food Service program
- Sharing playground/facility space may be logistically challenging
- Point of entry – if daycare/HHES and parents cannot comingle, another entrance must be designated
- Drop off traffic routes are already problematic – this will add volume and additional challenges

- **Opportunity**

- VCS programs like Child Find may have access to daycare attendees and identify useful early interventions even sooner
- Being located in a school could provide work/learn opportunities for high school students interested in the profession.

- **Threat**

- Capital projects for building maintenance occur during summer, some may be extensive
- Jobs in the childcare center must be competitive with VCS jobs, especially if qualification level is equivalent to a benefited paraprofessional position within VCS
- Depending on management structure- there is liability to consider for shared space

- **COV Recreation Center**

- **Strength**

- Current lay out could work for child care center
  - ADA Compliant
  - City owned – lease may be potentially low cost
  - Low overhead costs as maintenance, utilities are already provided to some extent
  - Proximity to park and high school/ middle school
  - o **Weakness**
    - Displacement – Building is currently occupied and used for Parks and Rec daytime programming, including Mighty Mites, Beginner Pickleball, Open Rec hours as a place for youth/general public to hang out
    - Displacement of Parks & Rec office staff
    - If the space was no longer shared with P&R, utilities may not be covered
    - No commercial kitchen
    - Used as polling location
  - o **Opportunity**
    - Shorter hours for daycare (7:30am-3pm) could allow for continued use of Open Rec after-school hours
    - Creative shared use of space could preserve Parks & Rec office space for current use
  - o **Threat**
    - Renovation may be more extensive than anticipated to meet state licensing requirements
    - Depending on management structure- there is liability to consider for shared space
    - Parking lot can be tight, especially during winter
- **Prince William Sound College – Whitney Museum**
    - o **Strength**
      - Relatively newer building
      - Adjacent to park space (summer only)
      - Centrally located in town
      - ADA Compliant
      - Low overhead costs as maintenance, utilities, snow removal are already provided
      - Parking space available
    - o **Weakness**
      - Space is currently used and unlikely to change – Whitney Collection is currently held in the space
      - Displacement of office space and elimination of workload for one staff member

- No commercial kitchen
- No other space on campus is available year-round for childcare
- No park space available during winter months
- Renovation needed to effectively use space for childcare –
  - Additional bathrooms
  - Additional egress points
- o **Opportunity**
  - Childcare would be a year-round use and source of revenue, current usage is limited to summer months
  - Could result in new tuition revenue for PWSC through early childhood educator program
  - Utilities for museum-grade HVAC systems is expensive, potential cost-savings if those systems were no longer needed
  - Potential tie-in with workforce development opportunities, onsite training for providers
  - University of Alaska has existing models of onsite childcare centers ([UAF Bunnell House](#))
  - Potential workforce incentive for PWSC employees with children
  - Administrative staff on same campus can assist with administrative needs
- o **Threat**
  - Facility has no windows in main area
  - Increase of traffic on residential street (Lowe St)
  - Long-term funding for UA facilities maintenance has been underfunded for years
  - Depending on management structure- there is liability to consider for shared space. Vetting through UA risk analysis and legal office can be a lengthy process.
  - Change of use could include a lengthy approval process through UA administrative levels
- **Royal Center**
  - o **Strength**
    - Layout for childcare center already exists within building
    - Centrally located
    - Building is available for lease or purchase
    - Natural light in all classrooms
    - Adequate onsite parking
  - o **Weakness**
    - Lease costs are high

- Outdoor space is limited (I would be interested in identifying specifically where the property line is located)
- Located within tsunami inundation zone
- Building requires extensive renovation
- o **Opportunity**
  - Extensive renovation of building could include mixed-use (apartments above, commercial space below)
  -
- o **Threat**
  - If the building was purchased by COV, cost to renovate is very high – very rough estimates for low end is \$500K and roughly \$3M on the high end
  - Ongoing maintenance and utility costs are very high
  - Adjacent lot is owned by a different individual and used for snow storage purposes. Heavy equipment operates in area. This lot could make a great outdoor environment/ community green space were it to be purchased as well – but snow storage would be an issue.

### **New Construction Providence Hospital Campus**

Initial conversations within the Child Care Task Force and Facilities Subcommittee indicate the desire to find an existing facility before considering a ‘new build’, and only if the costs to renovate begin to approximate the cost of constructing a new building should it be considered.

Providence Valdez Medical Center (PVMC) recently completed a 10-year Hospital Master Plan, and within different proposed sections of that plan there is the potential for a recreation/multi-use space that could be used or designed as a childcare center. At this time, that portion of the Hospital Master Plan is not listed as a high priority and no funds have been allocated towards it. However, if a new build were to occur, the PVMC campus is one of the top locations to consider.

### **Other COV Facilities- Civic Center Conference Room & Library Downstairs**

The Civic Center conference room (not in the top 4 but in the top 10) has significant potential as a site as well and while it would displace certain business meetings, existing ballrooms have similar a/v capabilities. The conference room side has a separate entrance with a handicap accessible ramp and existing bathroom facilities in this portion of the building (would need remodel). There is unused land near this entrance where an outdoor environment could be put. The current layout, with dividing walls, would allow for a classroom area and a gross motor area

that could double as a nap space. Large windows in the space bring in natural light. There is an existing commercial kitchen (underutilized) and lawn in summer.

This room did have major tech upgrades recently so the cost of those might figure into whether the space is viable. There would be a need for additional fencing for an outdoor space due to the location on the hill. Drop off logistics would need to be considered in design.

The downstairs of the library has existing bathroom facilities (just remodeled but not with children in mind) and an elevator for handicap access if needed. The space itself would be conducive to setting up an ECE environment- large and open with small side rooms and conference rooms that could potentially serve as office space or separate napping areas.

The space does not have natural light and is currently used frequently for internal library programs and for community meetings so has similar shortcomings to the recreation center relating to potential displacement of existing youth activities.

***Appendix F -  
Management  
Structures SWOT  
Analysis***

# City of Valdez Child Care Crisis Task Force

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MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE – SWOT ANALYSIS

## Sections taken from the City of Valdez Comprehensive Plan (page 34):

***Healthy Living - A healthy Valdez also means access to health care, childcare, education, and overall public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens.***

### **Goal 5.1 Provide community services**

*Provide safe, equitable, and convenient access to healthcare, education, childcare, wellness, and social support services.*

Quality of life is directly linked to a community's ability to provide safe, convenient and equitable access to facilities and services related to childcare and education, healthcare, wellness and social services support. When one or more of these are missing, the community becomes less desirable at retaining and attracting new families and creates economic impacts.

In the Community Survey, the top three improvements to improve the quality of life in Valdez are increased childcare/preschool options, community self-sufficiency, and support services for lower-income residents. Increased access to health care, improved K-12 education and mental health care support were prioritized by 24% or more of community members. The Survey also found that providing childcare and pre-K education was a top three priority to support economic growth. The top City facilities to be expanded or renovated included the senior center, school renovations, and hospital expansion.

# Shared facility space for multiple childcare providers (POD Model)\*

\*Information provide in the Service Planning Brief presented by Stellar Group

## ○ **Strength**

- Each business is still separately owned, but some resources are held in common, such as administration and facility space.
- Reduction in licensing burden by allowing multiple providers access to a shared facility up-to-par with licensing requirements.
- Shared administrative overhead that can be subsidized at a variety of levels.
- Encourages a variety of ECE options and approaches for parents to choose from.
- Creates a network of providers, enabling shared resources, trainings, and ideas.

## ○ **Weakness**

- This approach involves a sponsoring entity, securing and maintaining a suitable facility.
- Securing a contract administrator to oversee partnered childcare providers utilizing the shared space.
- Requires interest among informal provers and other potential providers in becoming licensed.
- Coordination required for scheduling use of the space.
- Difficulty in preparing a learning environment appropriate to multiple age groups or pedagogies.

## ○ **Opportunity**

- Additional supports that can be offered include providing grants for supplies, grant writing support, and equipment and/or offering wage subsidies.
- Large employers can also financially support individual providers such as by paying for (in whole or part) a set number of slots for employees; this helps increase financial stability and ensures the employees of sponsoring employers benefit.
- Technical assistance and professional development opportunities offered by thread Alaska are also available to providers in this model.
- Locations could include churches or a city-owned building for lower/no cost rent.
- Potential for developing a unique and flexible local economy for early childhood educators.

## ○ **Threat**

- Multiple businesses involved – who is ultimately the responsible entity?
- Decrease workforce availability – many Valdez employers continue to struggle to hire employees.
- There may be little oversight in terms of ensuring that providers meet insurance requirements and or adhere to terms of use - would need to be monitored in some way.

# Employer-Sponsored Childcare Facility\*

\*Information provided in the Service Planning Brief presented by Stellar Group

## ○ **Strength**

- There are many models of employer-sponsored childcare centers, including managing the childcare center in-house or contracting out the operations to a nonprofit or for-profit provider.
- Employers may subsidize the cost of care, or ask employees to pay full price.
- Employer-sponsored childcare can be located on-site or at a separate facility location.

## ○ **Weakness**

- Management of the facility would also have to be determined (example: employee of employer-sponsored facility or an independent contractor).
- Staffing may be less challenging due to the benefits/wages that can be offered but is still likely to be a challenge.
- Employer may select to only offer services to infants and children of employees.

## ○ **Opportunity**

- Employers may also be eligible for tax benefits for some of the expenses incurred and there are myriad benefits to providing this service for employees.

## ○ **Threat**

- This would entail a long-term commitment by one or more employers in Valdez of space and/or operating funds to sustain the program.
- Decrease workforce availability – many Valdez employers continue to struggle to hire employees.

# Individually Owned For-Profit Childcare Facility

(vs. a KinderCare or affiliating with a Multicenter Agency such as Tundra Tykes in Anchorage)

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## ○ **Strength**

- Provides a creative aspect for the owner who is able to develop the early childhood curriculum used.
- Allows for small scale/ individual entrepreneurial opportunities.

## ○ **Weakness**

- Start-up cost can be exorbitant.
- Unforeseen maintenance cost if the building is owned and not part of a lease agreement.
- Tuition/fees high enough to cover costs may outprice potential families if grants/subsidies are unavailable to private entities.

## ○ **Opportunity**

- Potential for growth.

## ○ **Threat**

- Decrease workforce availability – many Valdez employers continue to struggle to hire employees.
- Depending on how the business is structured (sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, or LLC) there are different legal and financial liabilities to consider either for owners or families of children.
- Potential for financial instability if owner is unfamiliar with business/ accounting practices or lacks administrative resources.

# Not-For-Profit Childcare Facility

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## ○ **Strength**

- Tax exempt status
- Strong continuity and structure provided by articles of incorporation and bylaws.

## ○ **Weakness**

- Governed by a Board of Directors, can have an impact on the management style and day-to-day operations, but depending on the board composition it can also be a strength.
- BOD composition – if the BOD consist of parents of enrolled children, it can result in lack of continuity of leadership over time.

## ○ **Opportunity**

- Donation sources: increased access to grant funding.
- Can receive Alaska charitable gaming funds directly.
- Create a strong message that inspires organizations, companies and individuals to help.
- Potential for growth.

## ○ **Threat**

- Funding needs, lack of knowledge in preparing grant proposals and its administrative component.
- Decrease workforce availability – many Valdez employers continue to struggle to hire employees.

# Head Start / Early Head Start Program\*

\*Information provided in the Service Planning Brief presented by Stellar Group

## ○ **Strength**

- Head Start is a federally funded preschool program that offers services to low-income families at no cost.

## ○ **Weakness**

- Limits age of provided care: available for infants and toddlers under the age of three from low-income families.
- Most Head Start programs are run by non-profit organizations, though other entities are eligible such as city and Tribal governments, for-profit businesses, school districts, and higher education institutions.
- Grants for Head Start programs are awarded on a competitive basis.
- Not a weakness but a challenge, providers must demonstrate that they are able to provide scientifically based and age-appropriate educational material, have adequate facility, and meet administrative and financial management standards.
- According to the Head Start Act (Section 640(b)), the federal share of the total costs of a Head Start program cannot exceed 80% of the total budget unless a waiver has been requested and granted.
- Head Start class maximum capacity is 20 children.

## ○ **Opportunity**

- Supports pregnant women. Offering EHS also provides opportunity to offer families care for infants and toddlers.
- Head Start can be either full-day or half-day. Therefore, half-day services could potentially serve 40 children, though for fewer hours each day.

## ○ **Threat**

- In a center-based EHS program, the staff to child ratio in EHS is one teacher to four children, with a maximum of nine children and three teachers.
- Decrease workforce availability – many Valdez employers continue to struggle to hire employees.

# Additional Information

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- Valdez City School District- Expanded programming for 4 and 5 year olds - 60 slots available this coming school year
- Decentralized Model - In Home Childcare Provider Expansion
  - This model could benefit from shared services and/or shared administrator similar to POD model.
- Expansion of City - Managed Programming for After School/Summer Programming
- Cooperative Childcare Model - Participating families provide support for coverage (Book: Bringing Families Together)

# Shared Services Alliance

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- Through the State of Alaska or regionally (something like the PWS Economic Development District) an alliance is created to assist licensed childcare facilities to provide:
  - Program Coordination
  - HR Services
  - Grant oversight/administration
  - Enrollment Services
  - Payroll
  - Training
  - Quality Assessment
  - IT
- Ownership – TBD
- Desired Location: HHES
  - Capacity (35 square ft. of usable indoor space per child): TBD

# Shared Services Alliance

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- Desired Workforce:
  - 1 Administrator
  - 2 Associates
  - TBD: ELC employees
  
- Possible other shared services:
  - XX amount of slots reserved for PWSCC employees in exchange for yearly free Wellness Center membership for the employee only of the ELC.
  - XX amount of slots reserved for VCS employees in exchange for maintenance, janitorial, snow removal and utilities services.
  - XX amount of slots reserved for COV employees in exchange for financial support to PWSCC for dual credit courses relating to Early Childhood Education.
  - XX amount of slots reserved for Alyeska TAPS employees in exchange for financial support to cover cost of food program when VCS is in session.
  - XX amount of slots reserved for Providence Valdez employees in exchange for food program over-sight & delivery during school closure.
  - Local employers could purchase set amount of slots regardless of demand in order to ensure revenue.

# Caregiver to Child Ratios

0 to 1.5 years – 5:1

1.5 to 3 years – 6:1

3 to 4 years – 10:1

5 to 6 years – 14:1

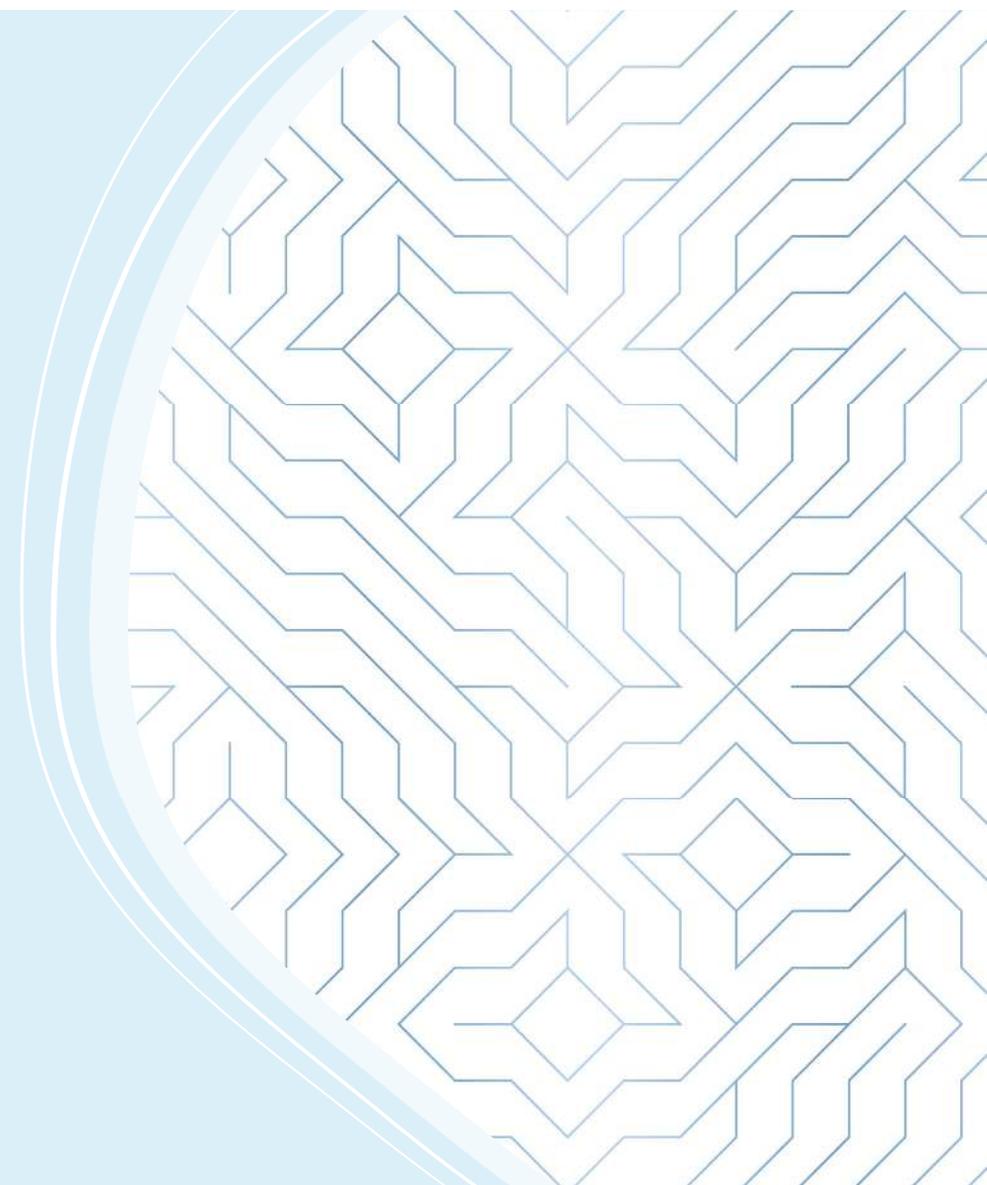
- 7 AAC 57.210 – Administrator
  - May be the same individual as the owner.
  - Must have at least 12 semester hours of college credit in childhood related courses, or hold a CDA credential from the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition or a Montessori certificate issued by an accredited program.
  - **Must be on-site during daytime operations at least 20 hours per week.**
  - Per 7 AAC 57.330 – An on-site administrator can serve the role of a child care associate for the first 30 children who are present at the center.
  
- 7 AAC 57.330 – Child Care Associate
  - Must have at least 12 semester hours of college credit in childhood related courses, or hold a CDA credential from the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition or a Montessori certificate issued by an accredited program.
  - **Must be on-site & available for each 30 children present.**
  - Per 7 AAC 57.210 – When the Administrator is absent from the facility the child care associate can be designated for that role.

***Appendix G -  
Sustainable  
Funding Models  
Research  
Summary***

# Findings and Recommendations

*Valdez CCTF Sustainable Funding subcommittee*

Members: Ashley Christensen, Kate Dugan, Olivia Foster, Melanee Tiura, Ana Stroup



# **Finding 1: Funding will depend on management structure**

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Appropriate funding sources will depend the entity, e.g. private business, non-profit, public/government-driven or tribal.

See management structure presentation for more information.

## **Finding 2: Other Alaska communities have enacted specific taxes to fund childcare**

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Examples: Juneau – 1% sales tax for special projects, and a tax on marijuana in Anchorage. In Juneau, this is supplemented with general fund dollars.

## **Finding 3: Municipality and non-profit funding partnerships**

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For grant funding, the mechanism must be flexible; able to accept funds from the largest variety of sources and have authority to give funds to public/private entities and individuals.

Other communities, like Juneau, have leveraged agreements with a local non-profit to fund incentive and education grants to entities and individuals

## **Recommendation #1: Establish nonprofit fund for incentive grants**

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Similar to the CBJ and AEYC, the city could work with a nonprofit like the Prince William Sound Economic Development District would be able to hold funds and act as a fiscal agent with an MOA in place.

The fund could start small and grow in size and complexity with community efforts and capacity.

## Recommendation #2: Consider local sin tax

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A city tax on alcohol, marijuana and tobacco is estimated to produce \$180-300K/per year and could provide a stable, regular source of income for childcare efforts.

Research on this topic specific to Valdez is limited, so it should be more thoroughly explored.

***Appendix H -  
Sin Tax and  
Revenues  
Research  
Summary***

## Sin Taxes and Other Revenues Directed to Child Care

### Alaska Specific Examples

- Anchorage: Passage of Proposition 14 in April of 2023 redirected the existing 5% sales tax on marijuana purchase to be dedicated to child care. The specific ways in which the funds from Proposition 14 will be used to benefit young children will be decided in 2024. The revenue from this tax is roughly \$6 million each year. (<https://www.careforkidsanchorage.com/>)
- Juneau: Voters extended Juneau's temporary 1% sales tax in October of 2022 and \$2.5 million of the \$60 million in annual revenue from this tax is earmarked for Child Care Assistance and specifically go toward will fund the new The Juneau Child Care Expansion and Start-up Program as well as the existing HEARTS initiative. (<https://www.ktoo.org/2021/11/03/local-governments-steer-money-to-juneau-child-care-centers-struggling-to-find-workers/>)
- Petersburg: The Borough Assembly established an Education Incentive Program funded at \$40,000 per year to incentivize those working in the ECE field.
- Sitka: The Sitka Assembly earmarked roughly \$500,000 of its COVID relief funds to bolster child care in the community. They have directed one of their commissions to explore the problem further.
- Seward: A non-profit organization, Happy Youth Programs & Educational Resources (HYPER), was initially funded with a \$500,000 pass through grant from the City of Seward (part \$1 million in COVID relief funds the city received from Norwegian Cruise Lines) and has a Childcare Provider Startup Assistance Program and now has a program to provide additional funding to parents to offset cost of child care as well. ([https://www.sewardjournal.com/news/local/hyper-announces-childcare-provider-startup-assistance-program/article\\_e0fefbc6-a506-11ec-a778-6fa6b1e8bf1d.html](https://www.sewardjournal.com/news/local/hyper-announces-childcare-provider-startup-assistance-program/article_e0fefbc6-a506-11ec-a778-6fa6b1e8bf1d.html))
- State of Alaska: Included \$7.5 million in the FY24 Alaska State budget to increase wages for child care professionals and stabilize child care operations in the state- this funding will be distributed as part of the SEED ROOTS award through thread.

The federal Child Care Technical Assistance Network provides examples of ECE funding mechanisms in other jurisdictions. These include taxes, tax credits, lotteries, gambling revenue and private/public partnership. (<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/systemsbuilding/systems-guides/financing-strategically/revenue-generation-strategies/local-taxes>)

### Other potential cost defrayment options for communities:

- Charitable gaming activities authorized under AS 5.15
- Creation of an endowment fund that private industry, employers and philanthropic organizations can pay into.

***Appendix I-***  
***Pod Model***  
***Research Brief***

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## SERVICE PLANNING BRIEF: POD MODEL FOR MULTIPLE PROVIDERS

### BACKGROUND

#### NEED

Individuals interested in becoming licensed for in-home care must meet certain infrastructure requirements that can require costly and time-consuming renovations, potentially posing a barrier to achieving licensure. Those who desire to open a center-based child care business also face significant overhead costs and obligations to become licensed. The recent needs assessment revealed a desire among parents and caregivers for not only more availability of care, but also a variety of options and approaches.

#### SOLUTION

A shared facility space for multiple childcare providers, or pod model, is one potential solution to the above concerns.<sup>1</sup> In a pod model, each business is still separately owned, but some resources are held in common, such as administration and facility space. This can reduce the licensing burden by allowing multiple providers access to a shared facility up-to-par with licensing requirements and shared administrative overhead that can be subsidized at a variety of levels. Additionally, a pod model could encourage a variety of ECE options and approaches for parents to choose from. This model also creates a network of providers, enabling shared resources, trainings, and ideas.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

This approach involves a sponsoring entity, such as the City of Valdez or another organization, securing and maintaining a suitable facility and securing a contract administrator to oversee partnered child care providers utilizing the shared space. It also requires interest among informal provers and other potential providers in becoming licensed.

Additional supports that can be offered include providing grants for supplies and equipment and/or offering wage subsidies. Large employers can also financially support individual providers such as by paying for (in whole or part) a set number of slots for employees; this helps increase financial stability and ensures the employees of sponsoring employers benefit. Technical assistance and professional development opportunities offered by thread Alaska are also available to providers in this model.

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<sup>1</sup> State of Minnesota, Family Child Care Task Force. (n.d.) *Existing MN child care delivery models & other state examples*. [https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/Duty-5%20work-group-examples-child-care-models\\_tcm1053-450175.pdf](https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/Duty-5%20work-group-examples-child-care-models_tcm1053-450175.pdf)

## REQUIRED PARTNERS

- » *Potential child care providers*

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- » *Local religious organizations/houses of worship*
- » *Large employers*

## TIMELINE

Below is a tentative timeline for implementation of a pod-model child care facility.

- » **2023**
  - *Develop partnerships with current/potential licensed and unlicensed providers*
  - *Discuss and research facility options*
  - *Secure facility*
  - *Develop and finalize business plan with partners and identify necessary facility renovations*
  - *Complete facility renovations*
  - *Draft and finalize business provider licensing assistance materials and templated business plans*
- » **2024**
  - *Recruit current and potential providers, provide assistance with licensure and business planning as needed*
  - *Conduct community outreach to recruit families for enrollment*
  - *Maintain facility and provide ongoing support for quality child care services*