



Testimony for the
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
February 24, 2020

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

It is my pleasure to offer testimony today in my role as the Executive Director of the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund (KCCTF) in support of SB 440.

Kansas was a pioneer in establishing a comprehensive system to support children's needs – as both the first state in the nation to establish a Children's Trust Fund in 1980, and the first state in the nation to devote our state share of the Master Tobacco Settlement funds towards meeting the needs of children and families with the statutory establishment of the Kansas Children's Cabinet & Trust Fund in 1999 (K.S.A. 38-1901 and 38-2101 through 38-2105). The Kansas Children's Cabinet is comprised of 15 members – 9 voting members appointed by legislative leadership (4 of 9 members) and the governor (5 of 9 members – no more than 3 of 5 from any one political party), and 6 Ex Officio members representing KSDE, DCF, KDHE, KBOR, Juvenile Justice and the Kansas Supreme Court.

- Our statutory framework directs us to:
 - Assist the governor in implementing a coordinated, comprehensive service delivery system to serve the children & families of Kansas
 - Identify barriers to service and gaps in service due to strict definitions of boundaries between departments and agencies
 - Facilitate inter-agency and interdepartmental cooperation toward the common goal of serving children & families
 - Investigate & identify methodologies for combining funds across agency & departmental boundaries
 - Propose action to achieve coordination of funding & services across those lines
 - Encourage & facilitate joint planning & coordination between public & private sectors
 - **Review, assess, & evaluate all uses of money in the CIF**
 - Advise the governor & the legislature regarding the uses of moneys credited to the CIF
 - Support the prevention of child abuse & neglect through the Children's Initiative Fund (CIF)

The statutes also established the Kansas Endowment for Youth (KEY Fund) and the CIF. Since the outset, strict accountability has been part of the plan for CIF. An annual evaluation process offers a complete look at how programs impact the children and families served across the state. **Today, the accountability framework, the Common Measures Initiative (CMI) is required of all recipients of CIF funds.** In 2014, the Cabinet debuted the "Blueprint for Early Childhood" which we continue to follow today. The Blueprint focuses on three key categories – Healthy Development, Strong Families, and

Early Learning. Cabinet decisions align with the core principles outlined in the Blueprint, and are evidence-based and data-driven thanks to our accountability process.

Our Common Measures Initiative includes two tools for evaluating the home visiting programs we fund. The **HOME Inventory** is an observational and caregiver interview assessment used to measure change generated in the quality of parental interactions through home visiting programs. Home visiting programs are also evaluated using **Keys to Interactive Parenting (KIPS)** which assesses the changes associated with participation in parent education, more intensive home visiting programs and case management. Data indicates that the strongest gains are made in families with the highest risk factors. The improvement translates to more positive developmental outcomes for young children.

Currently, the Cabinet is involved in a collaborative project in partnership with KSDE, DCF, KDHE funded by a federal grant, the Preschool Development Grant Birth-5. The \$4.4 million one-year planning grant supported work on a comprehensive statewide Needs Assessment and will culminate later this spring in a new state Strategic Plan for the early childhood care and education system in Kansas.

Our Needs Assessment organizes our findings around two central messages and eight key themes.

Central Messages:

1. The experiences of families with young children in Kansas are shaped by where they live, both across the regions of the state and within their communities.
2. Young children are growing up in families where basic needs are not being met.

Key Themes:

- **Accessibility** – Families with young children experience inequitable access to high-quality programs and services across the broader early childhood system.
- **Availability** - Families with young children experience a gap between the services that are available and their actual needs, especially among vulnerable and underserved populations.
- **Navigation** - Families must adopt a “connect the dots” approach to navigate services across sectors; disruptors are frequent and common.
- **Collaboration and Integration** - Early childhood providers and stakeholders share a desire for collaboration and cooperation but these are often disconnected and uncoordinated.
- **Workforce** - Early childhood workforce needs at leadership and direct service levels include preparation, compensation/financial relief, ongoing training and support, recruitment, and retention.
- **Facilities** - Needs exist related to the physical conditions and environments of early childhood facilities across the state.
- **Systems Alignment** - Greater systems alignment is needed in order to fully realize an efficient and robust early childhood care and education infrastructure.
- **Bright Spots** - Efficient, innovative, responsive efforts are occurring amongst early care and education system partners in communities throughout the state.

The Needs Assessment report is available on the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund website for download and online viewing. <https://kschildrenscabinet.org/needs-assessment/> We have documented for single parents of infants and toddlers, child care costs 48% of income. In Kansas, infant care slots are hard to find, but average cost is \$10,955 per year in center-based care and \$6,749 per year in family child care settings. Child Care Aware Kansas has documented that 18 Kansas counties offer no openings for infants and toddlers at all. In 77% of Kansas counties, there are more than 10 children under age 3 needing care for each reported child care opening. You can view the Child Care Aware Kansas 2019 Child Care Supply Demand Report here: <https://www.ks.childcareaware.org/2019-child-care-supply-demand-report/>

With our Needs Assessment complete, we pivot to our Strategic Plan. This plan will build on the Children's Cabinet Blueprint for Early Childhood and its promotion of Healthy Development, Strong Families, and Early Learning, and will be responsive to the central messages and key findings identified in our Needs Assessment.

SB 440 brings an innovative approach to the issue of lack of infant care slots, and the high cost of the slots that do exist for this age group. It brings the idea of primary prevention – providing support to families long before a crisis develops – to the policy table. Allowing new parents to remain home with their baby for a longer period of time is a healthy choice. Adding parent education programs during that time helps strengthen families and will ensure our children are given their best possible start in life.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I will, of course, be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.



Early Childhood Block Grant Home Visiting: Benefits for children and families

Home visiting serves as effective prevention as well as early intervention.

Home visiting programs provide a short-term investment in positive long-term outcomes for mothers, children, and families. Heckman 2018¹

The HOME Inventory is a reliable and valid measure of the home environment. Significant improvements in HOME Inventory scores were found in many home visiting studies². The HOME measures the **quality, stimulation, and positive parenting** in the home environment. HOME scores have been found to be associated with **positive developmental outcomes** for young children³.



Kansas HOME data show home visiting works.

59%

of participating families improved their interactions and environment while in home visiting.

90%

of families provided environments that promote resilience after participating in home visiting.

1119

children at-risk for developmental delays were identified and referred for follow-up due to participation in ECBG Home Visiting.

86%

of children in home visiting were on track in social emotional development.

“Home visiting programs strengthen parenting skills and improve early health and development.” Heckman 2018¹

The Keys to Interactive Parenting (KIPS) provides a systematic observation of responsive and reciprocal interactions identified by the Harvard Center on the Developing Child as supporting overall **physical, mental, and emotional development** in early childhood⁴.



Kansas KIPS data show home visiting improves parenting.

85%

of participating families engaged in positive parenting interactions with their children.

Data drawn from ECBG Home Visiting 2016 through 2020. For questions? Contact Dr. Lynn Schrepferman at lynn.schrepferman@wichita.edu



References

¹ Heckman's Birth-to-Three Advocates Presentation:

https://heckmanequation.org/www/assets/2018/09/F_ROI-Webinar-Deck_birth-to-three_091818.pdf

² Kendrick, D., Elkan, R., Hewitt, M., Dewey, M., Blair, M., Robinson, J., ... & Brummell, K. (2000). Does home visiting improve parenting and the quality of the home environment? A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Archives of disease in childhood*, 82(6), 443-451.

³ Roggman LA, Peterson CA, Chazan-Cohen R, Ispa JB, Decker K, Hughes-Belding K, Vallotton CD. Preparing home visitors to partner with families of infants and toddlers. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*. 2016; 37:301–313. doi: 10.1080/10901027.2016.1241965.

⁴ National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2012). *The Science of Neglect: The Persistent Absence of Responsive Care Disrupts the Developing Brain: Working Paper 12*. <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

Child Care Capacity for Infants and Toddlers

With 70% of Kansas children living in households where all available parents are working, families in many communities are not only struggling to find child care programs with openings, they are also competing with other working families for the same openings, especially when searching for care for infants and toddlers.

In 77% of Kansas counties, there are more than 10 children, under 3 years of age, that potentially need care for each reported child care opening. This painful statistic, hurts even more when considering that families in these counties are not only left without child care options, but they lose the ability to select care that best meets the needs of their child(ren).

Number of Children Under 3 Years of Age Per ONE Child Care Opening						
Up to 10 children per ONE child care opening (24 counties)		11 - 20 children per ONE child care opening (35 counties)		21 - 30 children per ONE child care opening (14 counties)	31 - 40 children per ONE child care opening (8 counties)	40 or more children per ONE child care opening (6 counties)
Allen	Saline	Bourbon	Marion	Atchison	Barber	Anderson
Cheyenne	Sherman	Brown	Marshall	Barton	Ellsworth	Doniphan
Clark	Smith	Butler	McPherson	Cherokee	Finney	Ford
Cloud	Wabaunsee	Coffey	Miami	Clay	Hamilton	Seward
Douglas	Wallace	Crawford	Montgomery	Cowley	Leavenworth	Stevens
Ellis	Washington	Dickinson	Morris	Edwards	Osage	Thomas
Franklin		Geary	Ness	Gray	Riley	
Harvey		Grant	Ottawa	Labette	Wyandotte	
Hodgeman		Greenwood	Pawnee	Meade		
Kearny		Harper	Phillips	Nemaha		
Kingman		Haskell	Reno	Rawlins		
Logan		Jackson	Republic	Sumner		
Mitchell		Jefferson	Russell	Trego		
Neosho		Johnson	Scott	Wilson		
Pottawatomie		Kiowa	Sedgwick			
Pratt		Lane	Shawnee			
Rooks		Linn	Sheridan			
Rush		Lyon				

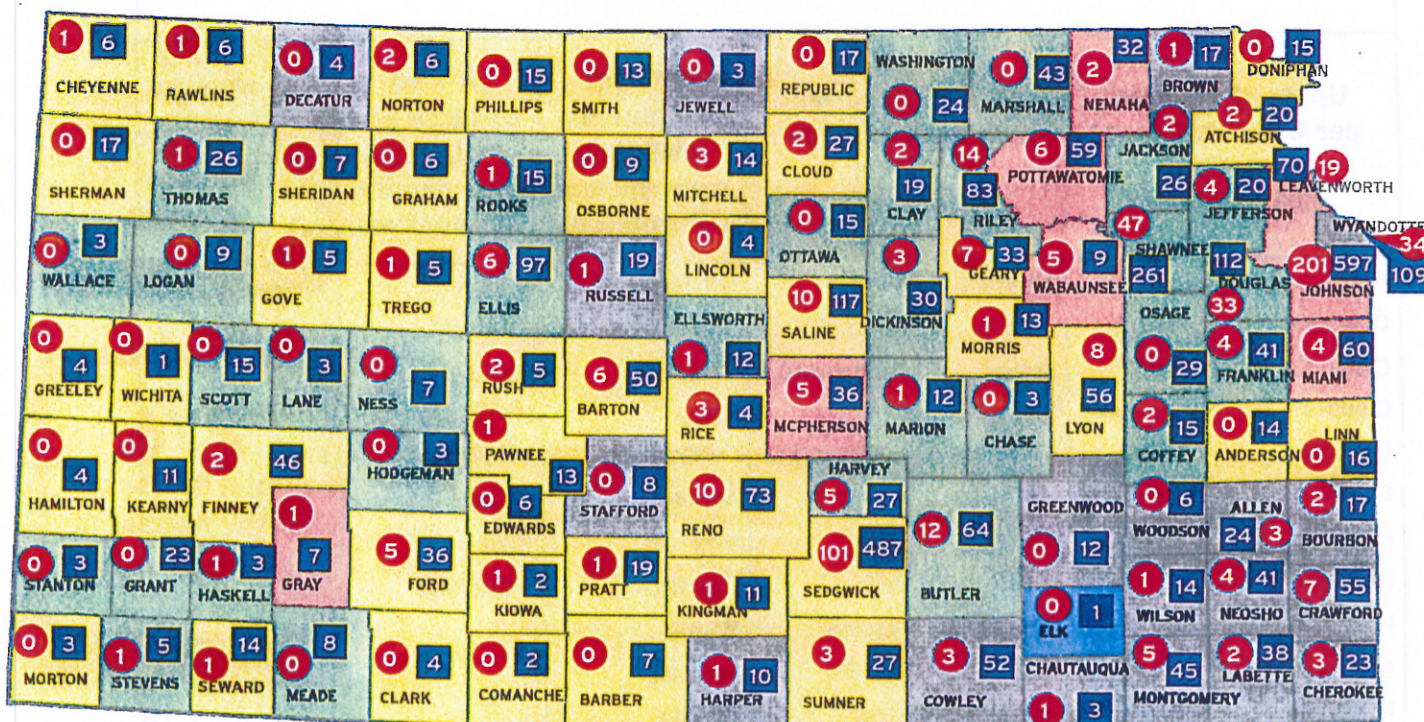
Counties in each category are listed alphabetically and do not represent a numerical order.

Kansas Families

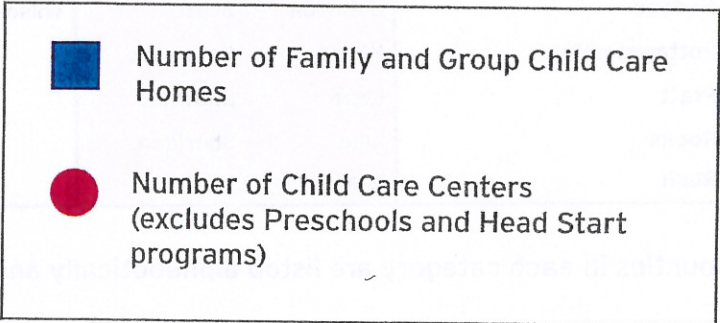
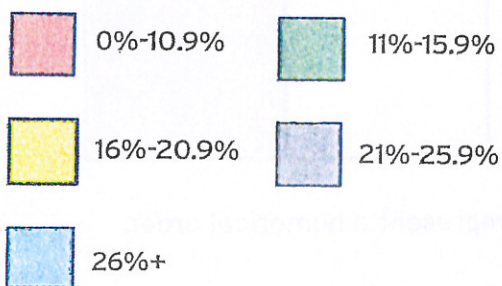
The limited number of child care openings in communities is not the only factor that may impact families' ability to access high-quality child care; high unemployment, high poverty, and out of home placement may also play a role. In addition to these factors, some Kansas families and young children may also be experiencing homelessness. Overwhelmed parents can more easily focus on meeting their goals toward stable housing, employment/training, and other services when their child is safe and receiving quality child care.

For more information about homelessness contact the Kansas Coordinator for Homeless Education and your local Homeless Education Liaison or contact the Kansas State Department of Education at 1-800-203-9462. For information about resources, including child care subsidies and other family wellbeing services, contact the Kansas Department for Children and Families at 1-888-369-4777.

The map below depicts the percentage of children age 0-17 years living in poverty and the number of Family and Group Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers.



Percentage of Children Age 0-17 Years Living in Poverty



Source: Child Care Aware of Kansas; WorkLife Systems, May 2019, US Census Bureau; 2017 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates <https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2017/demo/saipe/2017-state-and-county.html>