

Testimony for the
Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee
March 16, 2020

Madame Chair 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 485.

SB 485 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 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.

You may recall that in my presentation to this committee on February 11, 2020 I shared information about the work of the Children's Cabinet, the collaboration we are engaged in with the Kansas Department of Children and Families, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Department of Education with federal Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 funding, and the findings of our comprehensive statewide Needs Assessment.

The Needs Assessment report is available on the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund website for download and online viewing. <https://kschildrencabinet.org/needs-assessment/>

We have documented that 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 the age of 3 needing care for each reported child care opening. You can view the Child Care Aware Kansas 2019 Child Care Supply and Demand Report here:

<https://www.ks.childcareaware.org/2019-child-care-supply-demand-report/>

The Children's Cabinet, through the Children's Initiative Fund (CIF) supports a variety of home visiting programs. Through our accountability framework, the Common Measures Initiative, we conduct annual evaluations of the programs we fund. Two tools are used to evaluate home visiting programs. 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. We also use 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 the strongest gains are made in families with the highest risk factors. The improvement translates to more positive developmental outcomes for young children.

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

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				

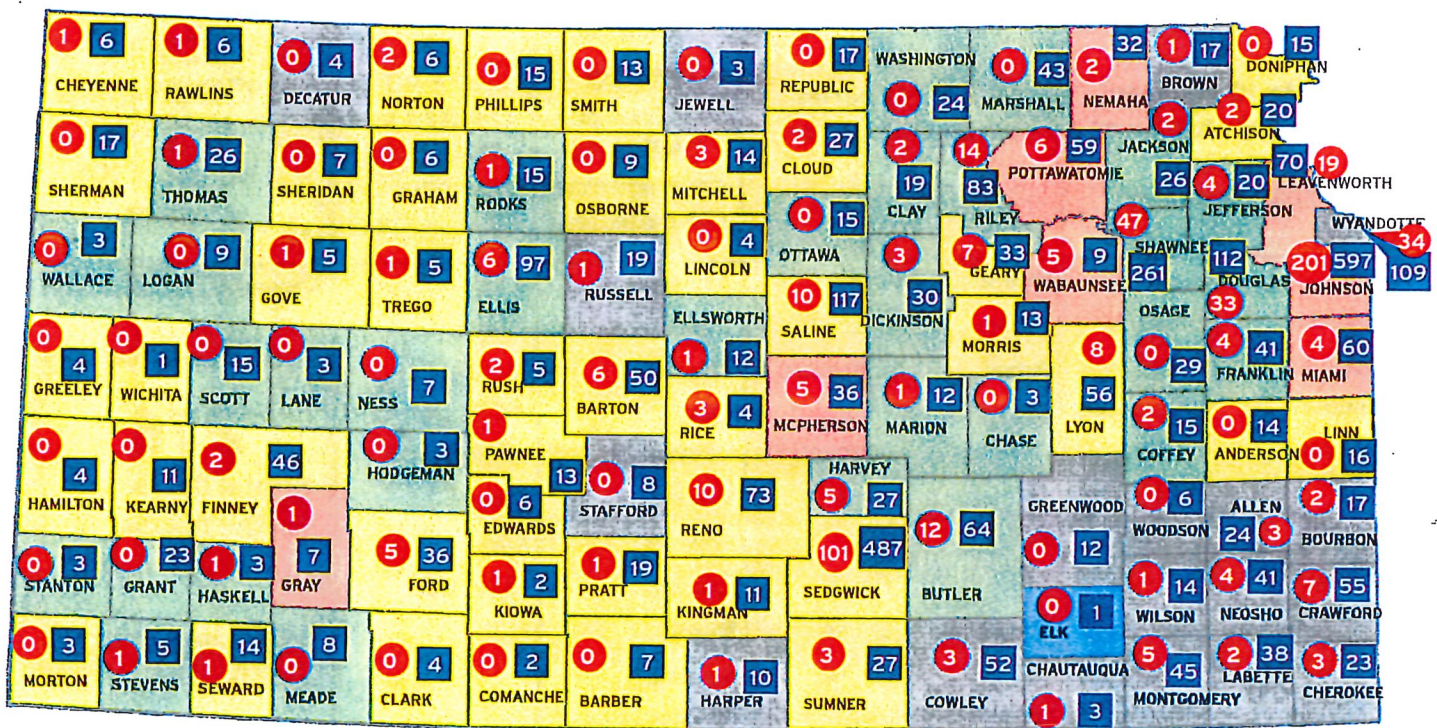
Counties in each category are listed alphabetically and do not represent a numerical order.

Kansas Families

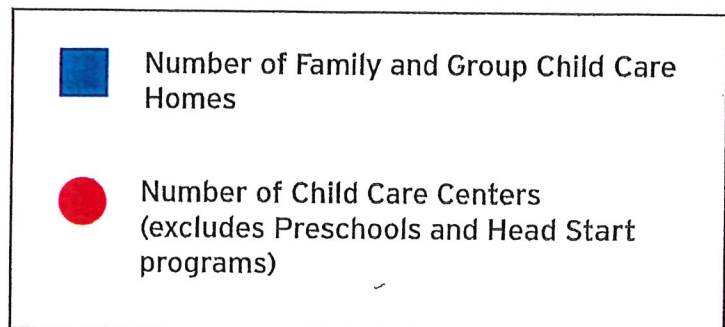
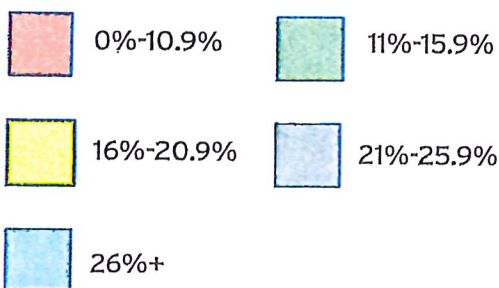
The limited number of child care openings in communities is not the only factor that may impact families' ability to access high-quality child care; high unemployment, high poverty, and out of home placement may also play a role. In addition to these factors, some Kansas families and young children may 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/saipa/2017-state-and-county.html>