

SOLUTIONS SUMMARY

Childcare providers:

- Opportunity Dubuque program offers an Early Childhood track that provides childcare skills, entrepreneurial training, certificate programs, and career track training for childcare providers.
- Expand professional development opportunities by investing in programs like T.E.A.C.H. which pay for childcare providers seeking additional education.
- Create Professional Employer Organizations (PEOs) to assist in-home providers with a menu of services (e.g. substitute pool to allow provider time out of the home, training, consultations, connection to peers, childcare subsidy administration, business and administrative support).
- Invest in programs like WAGE\$ that supplement the wages for childcare workers.
- Establish loan programs and entrepreneurial support for people investing in their current center or looking to start a new center.

Employers:

- Develop tools and educational materials to educate employers about the business case and investments in childcare for their employees.
- Invest in employer-led solutions that don't require opening an on-site facility like Dependent Care Spending Assistance plans, flex spending accounts, flexible schedules, childcare credits, reserve spots for employees at local centers, etc.
- Form an Employer Leadership Table about childcare to motivate investments and peer learning.
- Form a childcare consortium or co-op with multiple businesses to pool resources, mitigate risk, and spread out costs.
- Lee Container Case Study: Employer purchased an empty school building and gave it to a local childcare provider looking to expand. Spaces are reserved for Lee Container employees, but it also serves the broader community.
- Provide on-site childcare (full-time or as a back-up center for employees who need short-term care due to childcare provider illness, vacation, etc.)
- Invest in the Opportunity Dubuque workforce development to ensure trainees have childcare while they are gaining the skills needed to enter the workforce.

Advocacy & community investment:

- Educate employers about the “cliff effect” and how it affects recruitment & retention of low-wage workers.
- Educate state & federal legislators about the “cliff effect” and how it limits the ability for low-income people to enter the workforce and work themselves out of generational poverty.
- Public relations campaign to educate the general public about how affordable, high-quality childcare is necessary infrastructure for a robust economy.
- Establish a philanthropic fund for investment in childcare (WAGE\$, Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) focused on financing childcare centers, etc.)
- Increase support for low-income parents; those who need assistance with childcare may also need help with transportation, housing, nutrition, parenting classes, medical care, etc.