



**CHILD CARE
iNNOVATION
FUND**



**INFANT & TODDLER
CHILD CARE STARTUP**

**Innovations from the Field: Home-Based
Child Care Development in Rural Michigan**

The Evolution of the “Micro Center” Model by the Leelanau Early Childhood Development Commission

August 29, 2023



Today's Presenters



Joan Blough
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Patricia Soutas-Little
Chair, Leelanau Early
Childhood
Development



Tom McConnell
Owner, McConnell &
Associates Marketing
Communications

AGENDA



- 01 **Housekeeping**
- 02 **Innovation Fund Purpose & Priorities**
- 03 **Grantee Presentation**
- 04 **Q & A**
- 05 **Closing**

Let's get started!

Housekeeping



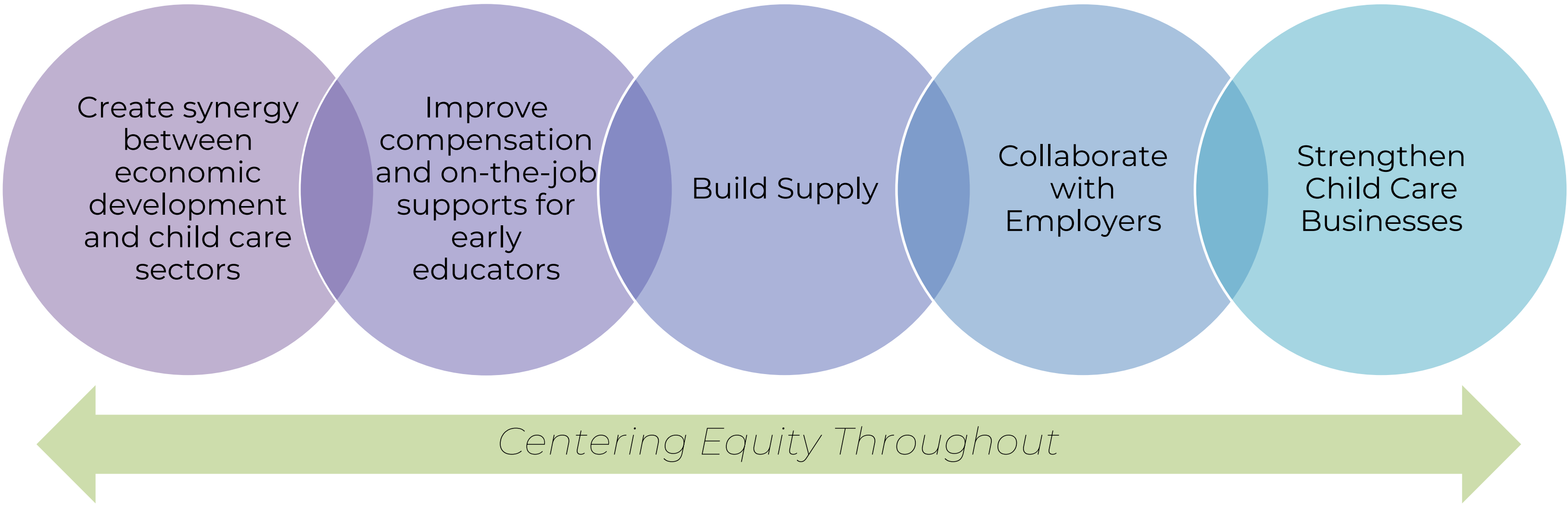
- Today's Webinar is scheduled to last up to 60 minutes
- The Webinar is being recorded and will be posted on online *(including slides)*
- All participants will be muted throughout
- Submit all questions through the Q&A button
- Questions submitted in the Q&A can be viewed and upvoted
- Questions will be answered at the end of the presentation

Purpose of ECIC's Child Care Innovation Fund

- Collaborate with regional and community partners to pilot common-sense business and financing solutions for child care.
- Invest in innovations designed to benefit employers, working families, child care business owners and early educators.
- Educate and advocate for scaling proven child care solutions across Michigan.



Child Care Innovation Fund Priorities



What is the Infant and Toddler Child Care Start Up?



The Leelanau Infant/Toddler Childcare Startup Initiative

- **Scaled up** a county-based business model to support culturally and economically diverse qualified adult entrepreneurs
- **Focused on** starting and/or expanding and operating viable, quality home-based child care businesses
- **With a Goal to** providing more infant and toddler care opportunities for working families in Leelanau County
- **A Collaborative effort**
- **Funded by** ECIC (\$318,000)



LEELANAU PENINSULA
ECONOMIC FOUNDATION



**Leelanau Early Childhood
Development Commission**



LEELANAU
**CHILDREN'S
CENTER**

Who is the Leelanau Early Childhood Development Commission?

Leelanau Early Childhood Development Commission- A leading advocate for early childhood programs and services who created the *ITCS Project Team* and served as fiduciary for the project.

Leelanau Children's Center- A premier model quality child care program that coordinated the quality training experiences and child care best practices disciplines.

Leelanau Peninsula Economic Foundation- The primary EDO working with businesses and communities to strengthen and sustain economic vitality. They provided business training resources and connections to the business community.



**Leelanau Early Childhood
Development Commission**



**LEELANAU
CHILDREN'S
CENTER**



**LEELANAU PENINSULA
ECONOMIC FOUNDATION**

What We Set Out To Do

With Center-Based child care facilities closing in Leelanau, LECDC set out to increase our community's infant and toddler child care offerings focusing on home-based child care providers.

Secure a grant to start up five new home-based child care businesses that could:

1. Ensure diversity
2. Expand capacity
3. Ensure quality
4. Enhance sustainability (ensure a living wage for providers and establish a subsidy program to fill the gap between what providers need to charge and what families can pay)



The ITCS Model: Key Partnership Elements

- Establish supportive relationship with the business community
- Identify existing quality child care programs and desert areas of need
- Secure a nonprofit agency (501c3) to serve as fiduciary (LECDC)
- Communicate with current providers so they hear about the initiative
- Partner with agencies that are already involved in local/regional ECE such as *Great Start to Quality* to ensure ongoing future monitored quality review
- Reach out to State regulators and establish a positive working relationship



The ITCS Model: How We Did It

- Engaged a core group of volunteers who were passionate about child care
- Established a fiduciary to manage the funds
- Sought out potential facilities in the areas of greatest need
- Developed a recruitment strategy to engage & secure home-based providers
- Developed a proposed facility budget framework to understand current provider startup costs
- Created a brand (ITCS) and developed a website and all recruitment marketing communications materials including a video





Share Your Love for Infants & Toddlers with Your Own Child Care Business, And We Can Help You!



INFANT & TODDLER
CHILD CARE STARTUP



Leelanau Early Childhood Development Commission

www.leelanauearlychildhood.org



Want to start your own infant & toddler child care business at home? WE WANT YOU!

If you ever wanted to start your own business caring for little children, now is the time and we are ready to help!

- ✓ *Financial assistance for start up costs*
- ✓ *Help from personal coaches*
- ✓ *Learning materials and other resources*
- ✓ *Getting your home State-approved*



To learn more about this opportunity visit our website at leelanauearlychildhood.org



*In Collaboration with
The Leelanau Children's Center
and the Leelanau Peninsula
Economic Foundation*



INFANTES Y NIÑOS PEQUEÑOS TE NECESITAN ¡ COMIENZA TU NEGOCIO CUIDANDO !

Nosotros podemos ayudarte. La Comisión de Desarrollo de la Infancia Temprana del Condado de Leelanau ha recibido una beca para establecer más centros de cuidado para infantes y niños pequeños en éste Condado.

Si te gustan los niños pequeños y quieres comenzar tu propio negocio cuidando pequeñines, ¡ahora es el momento y estamos listos para ayudarte!

Estas son las cosas en que te podemos ayudar:

1. A conseguir ayuda financiera para la licencia y los costos iniciales.
2. A desarrollar destrezas comerciales con la ayuda de un instructor personal.
3. A proveer materiales de aprendizaje como juguetes, libros, y otros recursos.
4. A completar todos los requisitos para ser un hogar de cuidado infantil aprobado por el Estado de Michigan.



Si deseas saber más de ésta oportunidad, visita nuestra página web: leelanauearlychildhood.org o puedes llamar al (231)942-4537



*In Collaboration with
The Leelanau Children's Center
and the Leelanau Peninsula
Economic Foundation*





Want More Employees?

Help Us Increase the Number of Child Care Businesses in Leelanau

We are helping people who have a desire to start up their own childcare businesses, expanding opportunities for our young families and allowing more people to return to the workforce.

The Funding

The Leelanau Early Childhood Development Commission has received a grant from the Child Care Innovation Fund, a private non-profit corporation, to help establish more infant and toddler childcare businesses in Leelanau County.

The Need

This grant will enable us to provide financial support for these start ups and help fill the financial gap between what it costs to be in the childcare business and what families can afford to pay (often exceeding \$1000 a month for a family of three children). The initiative will also fund a lot of the start up costs like licensing, training, and equipment.

The Effort

Please join us and help us in this effort. If we are successful, it will mean more quality childcare for families and an more quality employees for Leelanau businesses. We only have until January of 2023 before the funding will end.

To learn more about the details of this initiative and find out how you can help visit our website at leelanauearlychildhood.org or call 231-942-4537.



In Collaboration with
The Leelanau Children's Center
and the Leelanau Peninsula
Economic Foundation



The Details

The Early Childhood Start Up was formed when the Leelanau Early Childhood Development Commission (LECDC) received a \$318,000 grant from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, a private organization in Lansing that exists solely to promote childcare opportunities for very young children. Leelanau was one of only five communities in Michigan to receive a grant. The Leelanau Children's Center and the Leelanau Peninsula Economic Foundation are also assisting in the effort.

The grant specifies that the monies be used by LECDC to create a working model for establishing home-based childcare facilities for infants and toddlers. The need is obvious to young families. The childcare shortage is a nation-wide problem right now, and Leelanau County in particular has been hit hard. The intent of this new model will be to establish at least five new facilities in Leelanau this year. The one-year grant term will end in January of 2023.

Eligible providers are required to be licensed by the State of Michigan. So enrollees will be assigned a personal coach to help them in the process every step of the way. Enrollees will also be assigned professional business coaches to ensure that they will get the basics they need in banking, legal, and record keeping to start up and run a successful childcare operation.

The Model

Beyond personal training, the ITCS will fund, up to \$12,000, a new provider and facility for the following things:

- Licensing costs
- Required training and education
- Facility upgrades (fences, etc.)
- Equipment and educational materials
- Accounting assistance
- Business plan development & basic business skills training

The Ultimate Goal

After these grant monies end, the new childcare facilities will have to sustain themselves going forward. The ITCS goal is to provide enough help in personal development, facilities preparation, and financial assistance to enable these new businesses to be successful and continue well into the future.

Leelanau needs childcare now, so job candidates are able to return to the workforce knowing their children are being well-cared for. And employers can realize greater opportunities in their search for ideal staff members.

How You Can Help

If you have a business that could benefit from this effort, or have professional skills that can help in this important initiative, please contact us so we can work together to invest in Leelanau children.



Childcare center for Northport gains ground

By Meakala Prowich-Liu
mea@leelanauenterprise.com

Exterior work for Northport's Children Center began this month, with as many as 16 volunteers so far on board tackling the job of tidying up the surrounding area of the building. The structure has been vacant for four years since the last child care program, known as Leelanau Children's Center, moved their program from Northport to its current location on 5th Street in Leeland.

Kathy Garthe, Leelanau Township Community Foundation (LTCF) president, has been helping to coordinate the exterior work to get the building grounds ready for a fall opening hopefully in the next couple months. Much of the work being completed outside the building would not be possible without the volunteers that have so far finished multiple projects ranging from taking down dead trees and those that could potentially damage the fence and building, sweeping/cleaning out the Henry's House structure, and cutting down the brush in front of the facility. People are currently in the process of removing vegetation from between sections of the sidewalk and rebuilding the tall wooden fence around the larger play area as well, which

area. "It's one of the things coming back to life too... It's just really heartbreaking for any of us parents that had kids that went up there and were serviced by that building... there's a long, long history of that building being for children care, and we're really excited it's going to go back to that," Eggers said. "We're cleaning it out now and it's just gorgeous... work is ongoing until everything is done — so we're super supportive of Northports Children's Center. We plan on cleaning up Henry's House and making sure it's ready for the kids when they do arrive. Right now it has debris in it, and we plan on power washing it so we can get some of the grime out."

Amalie Kristiansen, a Northport native and the daughter of local business owners Scot and Jennifer Wack, will be the first person to be licensed as a daycare provider at the site. Kristiansen is also the mother of an almost 10-month old son named Theodin, and is one of the main reasons why she is passionate about serving the community as a child care provider in Northport.

"Just to be able to be with him and have this service for parents because now I know what it feels like to hand over a kid to another stranger," Kristiansen



Volunteers from part of the crew working to clean up the exterior. Pictured from left to right are Kent Shoemaker, Ty Wessell, John V. Garthe, and Kent Van East.

2022, or by email at littlecornice@gmail.com.

"I've lived here all my life and I'm lucky to be here... I'll be licensed for 12 kids, and we'll probably end up with six, depending on what the need is. We'll have a waiting list up soon," she said.

Childcare Initiative
Patricia Soulas-Little, District No. 6 commissioner and member of the Leelanau Early Childhood Development

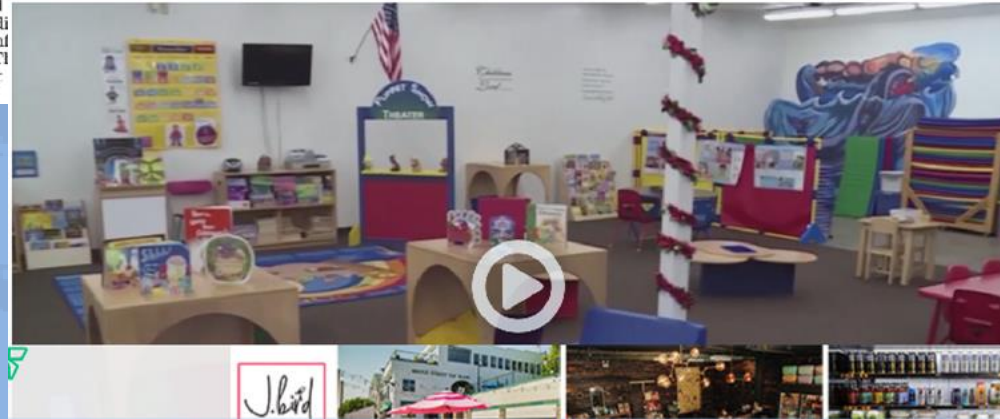
County in the \$318,000. The private investment company announced roughly in grants, with new coming to Leelanau county residents home-based child nesses and expanding for quality infant child care. TI called the Infant Child Care Start

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NEWS

Leelanau County's Early Childhood Development Commission May Have More Childcare Options By Fall

9and10news Site Staff
04/29/2022 9:08 AM EDT



Television

Current Weather in Cadillac

69°	2 PM	3 PM	4 PM	5 PM	6 PM
	72°	72°	70°	70°	67°

the TICKER NEWS CALENDAR COMMUNITY REAL ESTATE CLASSIFIEDS ABOUT US SUBSCRIBE



A Leelanau County Startup Sets The Stage For Statewide Childcare Innovations

By Emily Tyra | April 13, 2022

A groundbreaking effort is now underway in Leelanau County to create innovative, sustainable infant and toddler childcare for its working families. If the plan succeeds, it could mean reviving two now-dormant childcare facilities — with a twist! — and put Leelanau County at the epicenter of changing state regulations for childcare licensing.

Right now, the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA)

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How We Did It, cont.

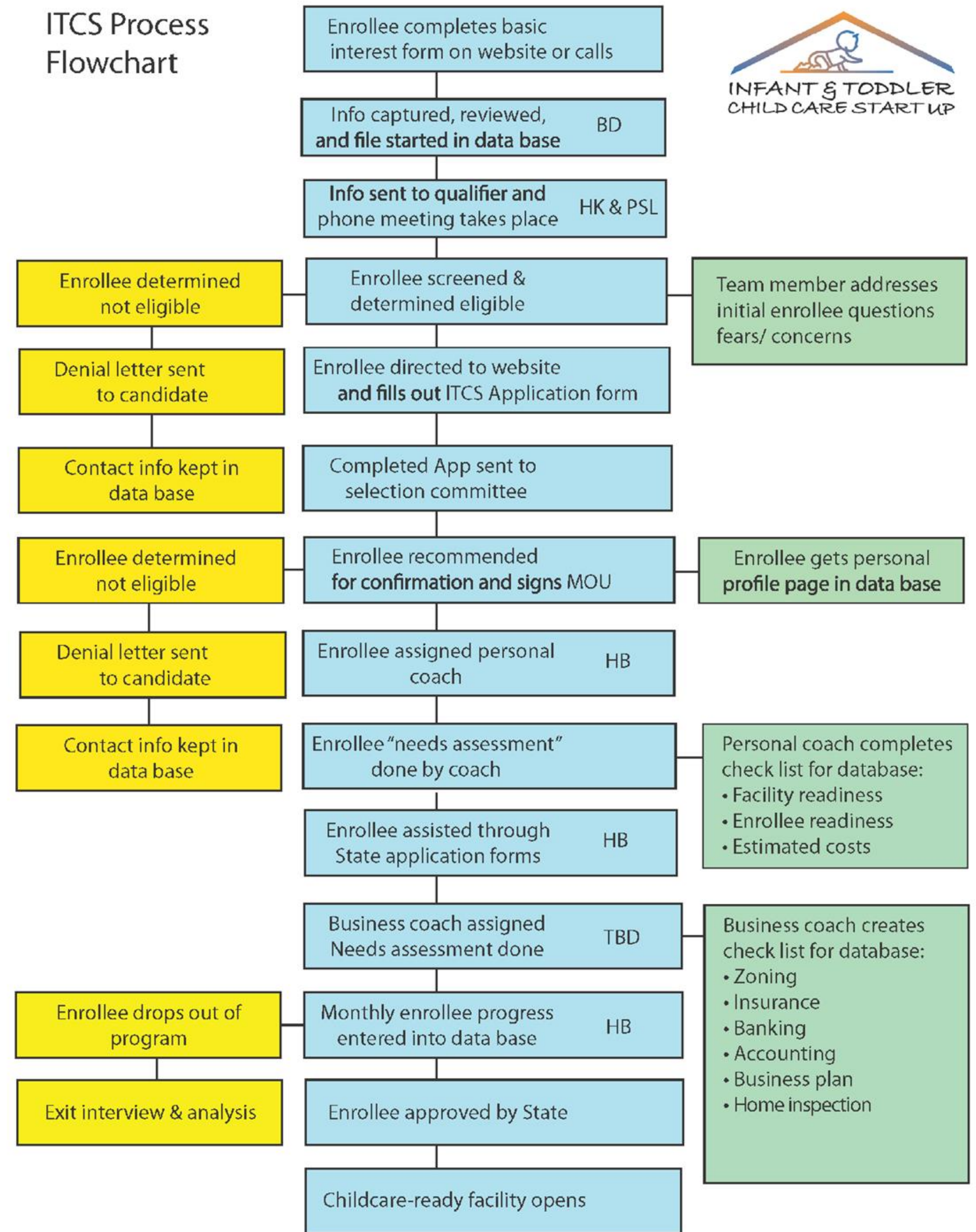
- Developed necessary enrollee documentation database and a Google Drive repository for all materials related to the initiative
- Created wraparound support materials for enrollees:
 1. Recruited “coaches” to assist enrollee in three areas– business, licensing and child care best practices
 2. Partnered with local CDFI to create a “Business Plan Bootcamp”
 3. Created quality training experiences
- Rolled out the recruitment campaign with posters, Facebook ads, and press releases
- Got the various local communities to support the program
- Initiated an interview process



Infant & Toddler Child Care Start Up Process Flowchart



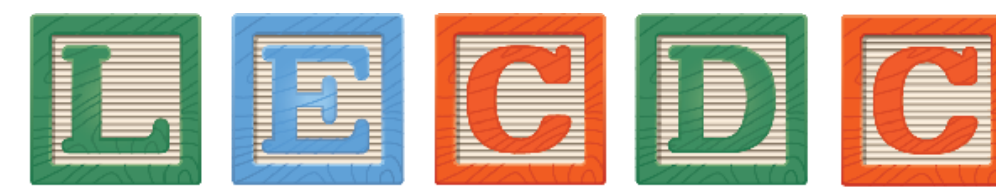
ITCS Process Flowchart



Leelanau Early Childhood Development Commission

Our Expectations of the Enrollees:

- Must meet state licensing and regulations requirements regarding personnel and site/location
- Secure necessary liability insurance and bonding and Participate in the *Great Start to Quality Enhancing Quality Process* or other quality care improvement performance program
- Work with assigned coaches on best practices
- Provide quality care and give enrollment priority for infants and toddlers
- Meet required reporting and records maintenance
- Participate in networking and sharing experiences



What Enrollees Can Expect the LECDC to Provide:

- Funding for business startup costs mutually agreed to by both parties
- Additional funding for repairs, maintenance and capital improvements to the home as agreed upon with shared costs
- Support with starting your home-based child care business
- Support through the process of obtaining initial licensing, meeting regulatory standards (to both provider and location), personnel training, and records retention
- Opportunities for no/low cost shared services, including but not limited to; accounting, invoicing and other business services
- Nutritional information including menu planning and/or enrollment in State funded food programs
- Education and training to create a quality child care program
- Home-based child care coach and business coach
- Networking opportunities

What We Learned Along The Way

- Existing home-based child care model didn't always work for rural operations (under current Michigan regulations a facility **must** be the provider's personal residence)
- Prospective providers couldn't create a facility in their own home due to size, property restrictions, or other factors
- Working with our State regulatory agency, a cost-effective alternative could be created as a "Micro-Center", and received approval to beta-test, utilizing Center regulation variances
- The cost model for a home based program didn't work (prohibitive overhead costs) when a facility was established outside of the home necessitating modification of the model
- Significant hand holding will be required for new enrollees because this is huge leap of faith for enrollees
- The importance of gaining support from your communities and stakeholders for the success of an individual facility

The Micro-Center Model

Key Components of the Micro-Center:

- Allows a provider to obtain a “home-scaled” license for up to 12 children while operating outside of their home
- Enables partnerships with schools and other facilities where child care can be provided
- Requires the provider to meet the standards of a Family Child Care Home or Group Child Care Home
- Requires the facility to meet the standards of a Child Care Center
- Creates flexibility for prospective providers and allows for innovative public/private partnerships
- And finally, plan to be creative- there will be unexpected hurdles and challenges along the way

What Has Happened To Date

- Six new facilities are set to open this year as a result of this initiative
- Two are home-based and four are Micro-Centers
- Developed the pilot Micro-Center model that operates out of a community owned space
- Each facility and enrollee situation is unique, but all will provide quality programs for infants and toddlers
- Scholarships/tuition subsidies need to be made available to the newly opened licensed providers to ensure diversity
- The ITCS Model has energized local child care providers through networking with other providers, enhancing the quality of services they can provide, and impacting their sustainability as a business



Questions and Answers



THANK YOU

Have additional questions or inquires about today's content?
Please use the following information to reach out to the presenters:



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