

2022 | Codington County Child Care Discussions

CODINGTON COUNTY CHILD CARE SURVEY

Results - January 2023



Codington County
South Dakota



WATERTOWN
DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

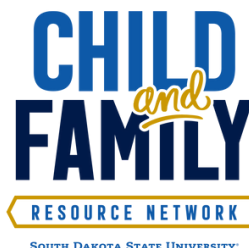


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INTRODUCTION | BACKGROUND

The 2022 Codington County Child Care Survey was conducted as part of the Codington County Social Services Strategic Planning process. This process identified child care as one of the top five social service concerns to be addressed in Codington County which led to a collaborative working group led by Codington County Welfare Office and the Child and Family Resource Network (CFRN) at South Dakota State University. The mission of the CCWO resolves to administer poor relief equitably and efficiently to provide the necessary resources to those most in need. The mission of the CFRN is to promote the quality care of children through educating, supporting, and connecting the individuals in their lives as part of the South Dakota Early Childhood Enrichment System.

Individuals attended:

Sara Foust, Codington County Welfare; Brittany Luoma, Child Care Provider; Carrie Schroeder, Child Care Provider; Ambuer Jaacks, DSS Child Care Licensing; Melanie Schroeder, Wurth Electronics; Alanna Huck, ICAP Headstart; Jillian Lanphear, Child Protection Services; Traci Stein, Watertown Development Company; Angela LaFramboise, Child Care Center Owner; Jessica DeYoung, Human Service Agency; Liam Culhane, Attorney; Sarah Hansen, Persona; Amber Worthington, Legacy Financial Partners; Rachel Busmann, Child & Family Resource Network; Jennifer Heath, Watertown School District; Audrey Rider, Early Childhood Field Specialist; April Flemming, Child & Family Resource Network, & Kami Bartels, Child & Family Resource Network.

The survey was initiated to gain a better insight as to the child care needs in Codington County. An additional purpose of the assessment is to obtain data and information that can be used as a guide for community-based decisions and policy-making around the issues of child care. This survey targeted parents or guardians working or living in Codington County, SD to help support planning and critical conversations for the Codington County Social Services Advisory Council. This report summarizes findings from the responses of 345 individuals within Codington County.

METHODOLOGY

Great effort was made to gather as much data as possible to obtain a valid sample size. The survey was administered through QuestionPro and advertised utilizing both paid (print and social media) and unpaid (email distribution) methods. The survey was opened from October 13, 2022 to December 4, 2022, with a total of 345 responses.

Based on the answers provided, not all questions were asked of all participants. For instance, those who indicated they did not currently utilize child care were asked a specific list of questions that others were not. The data in this report includes the number of participants who responded to the questions. While this survey provides good information executed in a precise way, it cannot be considered scientific.

Targeted Population

The main audience for the survey was anyone who lived and/or worked within Codington County or surrounding areas including parents or guardians in Codington County, SD.

QUANTIFYING THE NEED

Child Care in Codington County

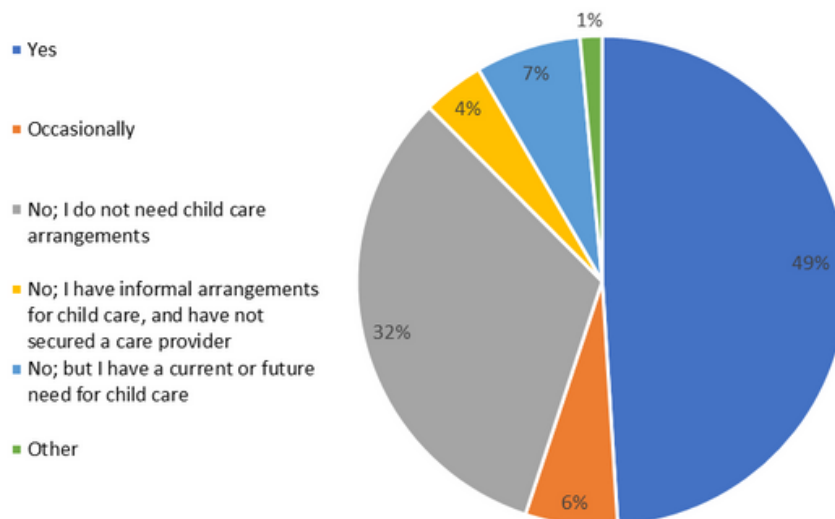
In the 2021 data from Kids Count South Dakota, Codington County has 1,962 children under the age of 6. The majority of children under 6 years old have both parents in the labor force. Approximately 84.7% of children in Codington County rely on some form of child care as both parents are in the labor force.

SOURCE: 2021 Kids Count Data Center

Do you currently utilize the services of a child care provider?

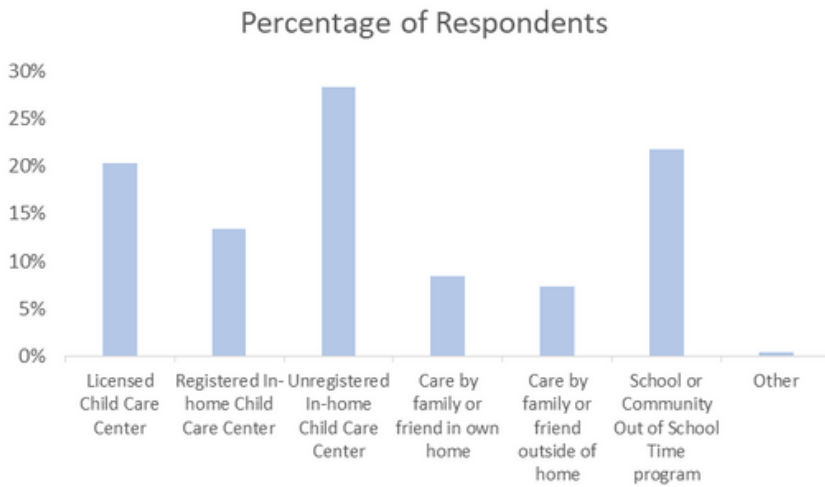
The current need for child care is increasing rapidly as many children have a reliance on some form of child care. 49% of survey participants are currently utilizing child care, while nearly 10% of respondents have a future need or are currently looking to secure child care for their children.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	169	48.99%
Occasionally	21	6.09%
No; I do not need child care arrangements	112	32.46%
No; I have informal arrangements for child care, and have not secured a care provider	14	4.06%
No; but I have a current or future need for child care	24	6.96%
Other	5	1.45%
Total	345	100%



What type of care are you currently utilizing (check all that apply)?

Unregistered, in-home child care received the highest number of responses with 74 out of 261 (28%).



Answer Choices	Responses	
Licensed Child Care Center	53	20.31%
Registered In-home Child Care Center	35	13.41%
Unregistered In-home Child Care Center	74	28.35%
Care by family or friend in own home	22	8.43%
Care by family or friend outside of home	19	7.28%
School or Community Out of School Time Program	57	21.84%
Other	1	0.38%
Total	261	100%

“South Dakota law defines a Family Day Care Home as providing care and supervision of children from more than one unrelated family, in a family home, on a regular basis for part of a day as a supplement to regular parental care, without transfer of legal custody or placement for adoption. A family day care home may not be registered for care and supervision of more than 12 children at any one-time including children under the age of six who are living in the home.”

SOURCE: South Dakota Department of Social Services

Identify the number of children you currently have enrolled in child care.

Of the 209 respondents there were a total of 397 children represented in the following age categories.

According to South Dakota Department of Health, there was a 22% decrease in the birth rate in Codington County from year 2011 to year 2020.

SOURCE: South Dakota Department of Health - Office of Health Statistics

	COUNT
Birth to 24 months	96
25 to 36 months	64
37 months to 5 years	106
Before/After School Care (K-6th grade)	105
After School Care (7-9th grade)	26
Total	397

ACCESSIBILITY OF CARE

In your most recent search for child care, how many providers did you contact before securing care?

Based on survey responses, 56% of respondents had to connect with 3 or more providers before securing child care for their infant.

Answer Choices	Responses	
1-2	65	33.51%
3-5	74	38.14%
6+	35	18.04%
Cannot Recall	20	10.31%

"It amazes me how fast a childcare spot fills as soon as it opens. People are desperate for care. When I needed care, it took me a month or 2 before I could find any, and that was after talking to 5 providers. Spots for infants particularly are hard to come by. Luckily, I need care during regular business hours. I couldn't imagine what shape I'd be in if I needed extended care or overnight hours. As someone new to town, I have no family or friends close by that could help either."

Survey Participant

How long did it take you to secure child care?

About 51% of the 195 respondents said it took more than 1 to 2 months to secure child care. 27% of respondents stated they secured child care less than a month, while 21% found care immediately in Codington County. The information shows the number of respondents that spent a significant amount of time searching for and contacting child care providers before securing a spot.

"It is severely lacking- the wait list for most places can be 1+ year. I am lucky to have a very good center. But if something would happen and my daycare would close I would be forced to quit my job, I do not feel confident I would be able to find another option that I feel comfortable with."

Survey Participant

195 Respondents



Do you think Watertown area has a sufficient number of child care options?

73.68%

of respondents believe there is **NOT** a sufficient number of child care options in Codington County.

Data collected tells us individuals that participated in the survey do not feel that there are enough child care options available in Watertown. Individuals and families are having a challenging time finding available infant care.

What schedule is needed for child care (check all that apply)?

Among individuals that participated in the survey, 33% of individuals are in need of child care during daytime hours from 7:00AM to 6:00PM. Other individuals are in need of after school care for their children, while 24 participants seek weekend care.

513 Respondents	Answer Choices	Responses	
	Weekdays, daytime hours (7am-6pm)	167	32.55%
	Weekdays, early morning care (5am-8am)	50	9.75%
	Weekdays, evening care (6pm-midnight)	21	4.09%
	Weekdays, overnight care (6pm-7am)	11	2.14%
	Full-time care	66	12.87%
	Part-time care (partial days/weeks)	43	8.38%
	Drop-in care	50	9.75%
	After school care (3pm-6pm)	81	15.79%
	Weekend care (Saturday/Sunday)	24	4.68%

"There are no known registered providers that offer weekend care as part of their hours."

SOURCE: Department of Social Services

Community Voices

for the need for varying child care schedules:

"Finding before/after school care in Watertown is almost impossible. Having to fill out applications every few months to keep your child in a program they've gotten to know the staff and make friends at is frustrating. What after school care programs Watertown provides I'm grateful for but there's no attendance policy so if my child misses his bus and doesn't make it there after school, I'm not notified that my child didn't show up or that something could have happened. Currently have to change work schedule because there is no morning care available before school hours."

Survey Participant

"There are currently no daycares in Watertown for nights, overnights, and weekend care. Being a single mother of children 8 and 5, finding care is a struggle while working a job that requires nights, overnights, and weekend care."

Survey Participant

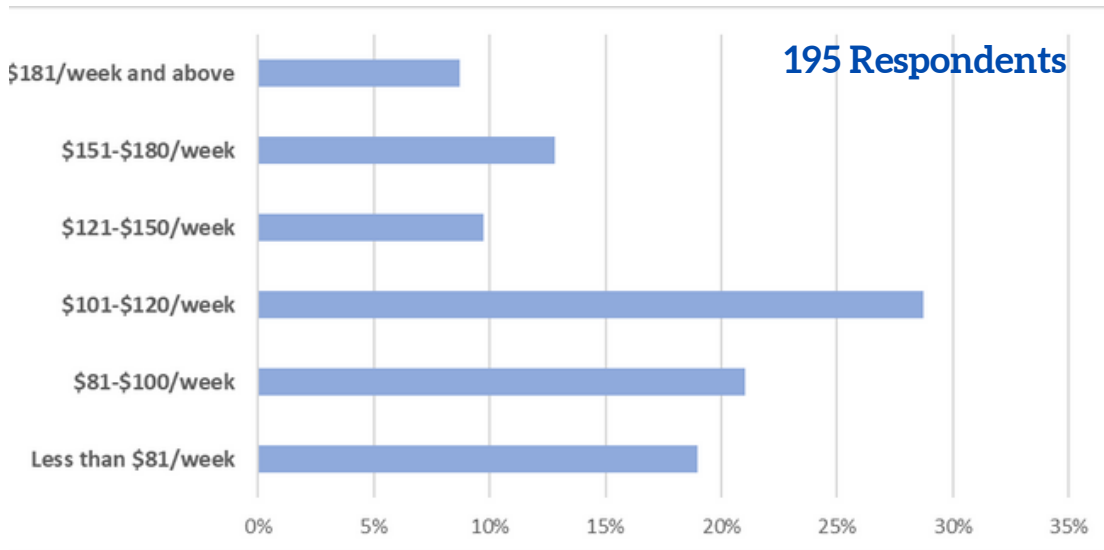
"Because of the age of my child I find that the only option is the Boys and Girls Club because the after-school programs fill up so fast or are so out of my price range I can't afford to do that for my child. On a side note we have also had to baby-sit my baby niece because of the lack of daycare options in Watertown taking infants."

Survey Participant

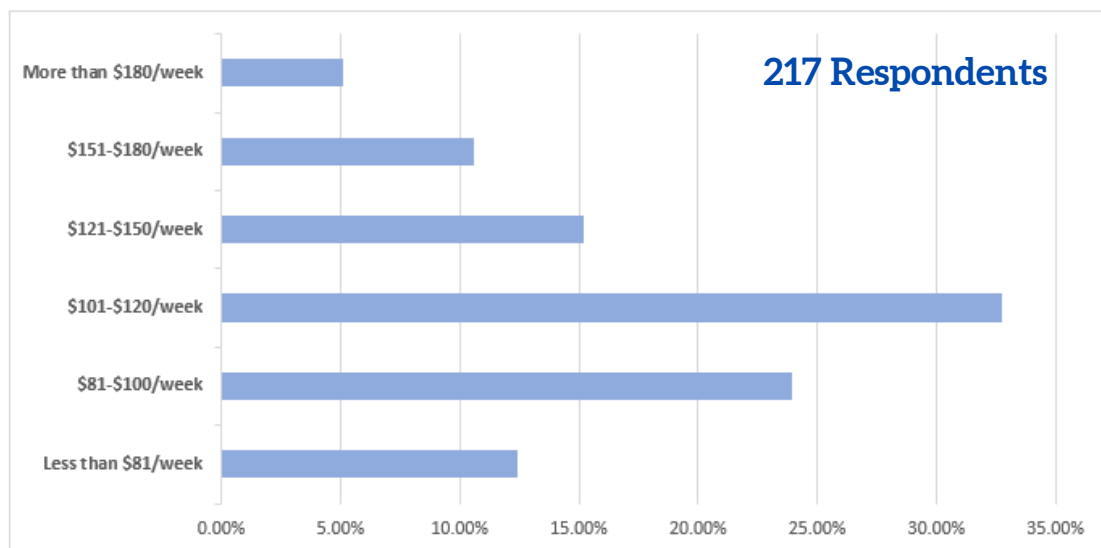
AFFORDABILITY OF CARE

What do you spend on child care (per child)?

In terms of child care costs, 29% of respondents are paying between \$101 to \$120 per week, per child for their current care services. Additionally, 22% of survey respondents are paying at least \$150+ per week, per child to their current child care provider.



How much would you be willing and/or able to spend on child care (per child)?



More than 32% of survey respondents indicated that they would be willing and/or able to spend \$101 - \$120 per week, per child on child care in Codington County. While almost 24% of respondents would be willing or are able to spend less than \$100 per week, per child.

What is the difference between what families are currently spending on child care vs what they are willing and/or able to?

The data from the survey shows us that more individuals are paying more than what they are willing to and/or able to on child care. For example, about a 4% difference of survey respondents are paying more than \$181 per week, per child when they are not willing to do so. Additionally, about a 6% difference of survey respondents are not paying what they would be willing to and/or able to, which was \$121-\$150 per week, per child.

What does it cost for a typical South Dakota family household to secure child care?

Approximate Average Household Annual Income of Survey Respondents

\$0-\$24,999	11	5.05%
\$25,000-\$49,999	34	15.60%
\$50,000-\$74,999	45	20.64%
\$75,000-\$99,999	57	26.15%
\$100,000-\$124,999	28	12.84%
\$125,000-\$149,999	15	6.88%
\$150,000-\$174,999	11	5.05%
\$175,000-\$199,999	5	2.29%
\$200,000 and up	5	2.29%
Prefer not to answer	7	3.21%



What would 10.5% be for each family?

Weekly	Annual
\$0-\$50	\$0-\$2,624
\$50-\$101	\$2,625-\$5,249
\$101-\$151	\$5,250-\$7,874
\$151-\$201	\$7,875-\$10,499
\$201-\$252	\$10,500-\$13,124
\$252-\$302	\$13,125-\$15,749
\$302-\$353	\$15,750-\$18,374
\$353-\$403	\$18,375-\$20,999
\$403	\$21,000
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Child care can make up about an average of **10.5%** of a typical South Dakota family's income.

SOURCE: 2021 Kids Count Data Center

According to Kids Count Data Center, parents pay between \$5,850 and \$7,250 per year for a child to attend a registered family home. While parents pay between \$7,020 and \$9,830 for their child to attend a licensed facility.

DID YOU KNOW?

Families can apply for Child Care Assistance with the Department of Social Services, which supports low-income families in paying for child care

For more information, go to dss.sd.gov

In December of 2022, Child Care Assistance served 37 cases (63 children) in Codington County.

SOURCE: L. Menning
(Child Care Services)

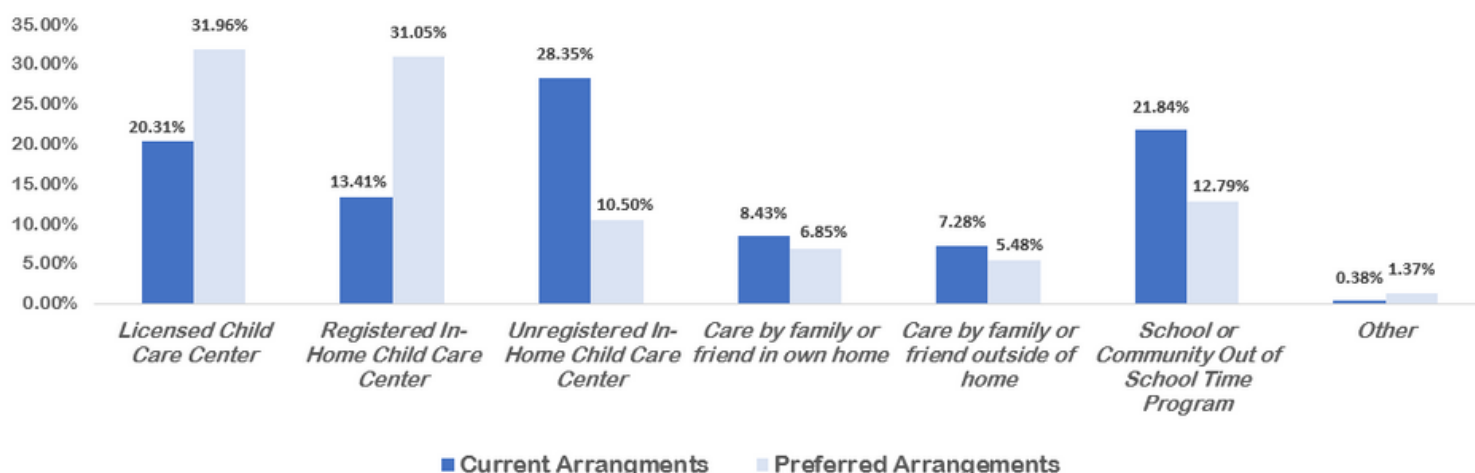
"While I understand that is how they make a living prices for daycare are insane and unreasonable. Most people spend their entire paycheck just to have child care for a month, even at some in home daycares they are asking the prices of centers. How can someone work just to pay a daycare bill?"

Survey Participant

Comparison of Current and Preferred Arrangements

The current use of unregistered, in-home child care centers received the highest number of responses (74 out of 261). While the highest number of responses for the preferred child care arrangements is a licensed child care center. With the data collected for this survey, it can be said that a majority of respondents are not able to spend the money per year to have their child(ren) attend their preferred child care arrangement, a Licensed Child Care Center.

Current Arrangments vs. Preferred Arrangements



Regulated Family Day Care: care of no more than 12 children in the provider's home and must comply with federal and state standards for maintaining minimum health and safety.

Group Family Day Care Home: group care for 13-20 children in any facility, including the provider's home and must meet federal and state regulations.

Unregulated Family Day Care: care of no more than 12 children in the provider's home and are not required to meet any federal or state standards nor can they receive child care assistance payments or other federal funds unless they become registered.

Day Care Center: group care for 21 or more children in the provider's home or a separate facility and must meet federal and state regulations.

Before or After School Care: care of school-age children before or after regular school hours, including full-time during school breaks and must meet federal and state regulations.

For more information go to <https://dss.sd.gov/childcare/licensing/>.

QUALITY OF CARE

Are you satisfied with your current child care arrangement?

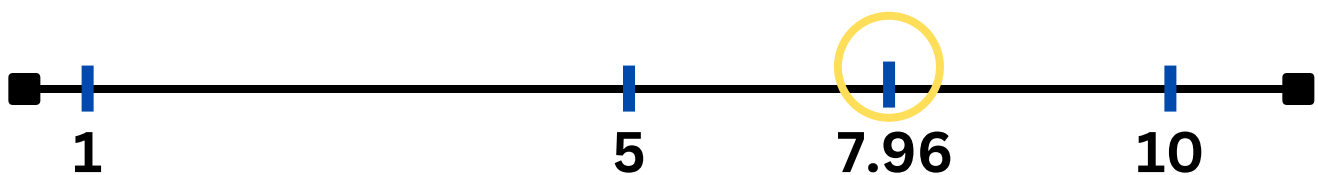
About 71% of survey respondents say they were very satisfied or satisfied with their current child care arrangements in Codington County. On the other hand, 18% of respondents say they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their current child care arrangements.



Figure represents the 71% of respondents that were satisfied out of 100%

How would you rate the quality of your child care arrangements (1-10, with 10 being the highest quality)?

Most survey respondents are happy with their current child care provider in terms of overall quality with the average rating being a 7.96 out of 10.



How could the quality of care be improved for your child(ren)? Check all that apply.

When individuals were asked to indicate what areas their current care provider could improve on, the highest area implied was to see more education/learning opportunities for their children.

Other areas of improvement are as follows in the figure below:

{448 Survey Respondents}

<i>More educational/learning opportunities</i>	19.87%
<i>More staff to meet the children's needs</i>	16.29%
<i>Better communication between provider and family</i>	14.06%
<i>Provider (staff) that has ongoing child care focused training and CPR certification</i>	13.62%
<i>More nutritious meals/snacks</i>	12.50%
<i>Better ratio of indoor to outdoor play (weather permitting)</i>	10.71%
<i>A safer and well-maintained environment</i>	7.14%
<i>More age-appropriate toys</i>	5.80%

The Department of Social Services, Child Care Services (CCS) contracts with the South Dakota Early Childhood Enrichment (ECE) System to meet the growing demand for early childhood and school-age training, and to help recruit and retain quality child care providers, as well as to encourage and support program quality across the state of South Dakota. South Dakota's ECE programs offer a systematic approach to providing early childhood and school-age education services and technical assistance. Services are available to all child care and after-school providers, parents and others involved in the day-to-day care of children and youth.

The Early Childhood Enrichment (ECE) offices across the state deliver a variety of services focused on parents, family child care providers, childcare center staff, youth development professionals and other early education professionals throughout South Dakota.

The Child and Family Resource Network at South Dakota State University is your trusted local partner to support building quality in family child care homes, child care centers and programs serving the community's youth. For more information on trainings, resources, and supports go to www.sdstate.edu/cfrn.

What is most important to you relating to your child care needs at the present time (Ranking from 1-8, 1 being most important)?

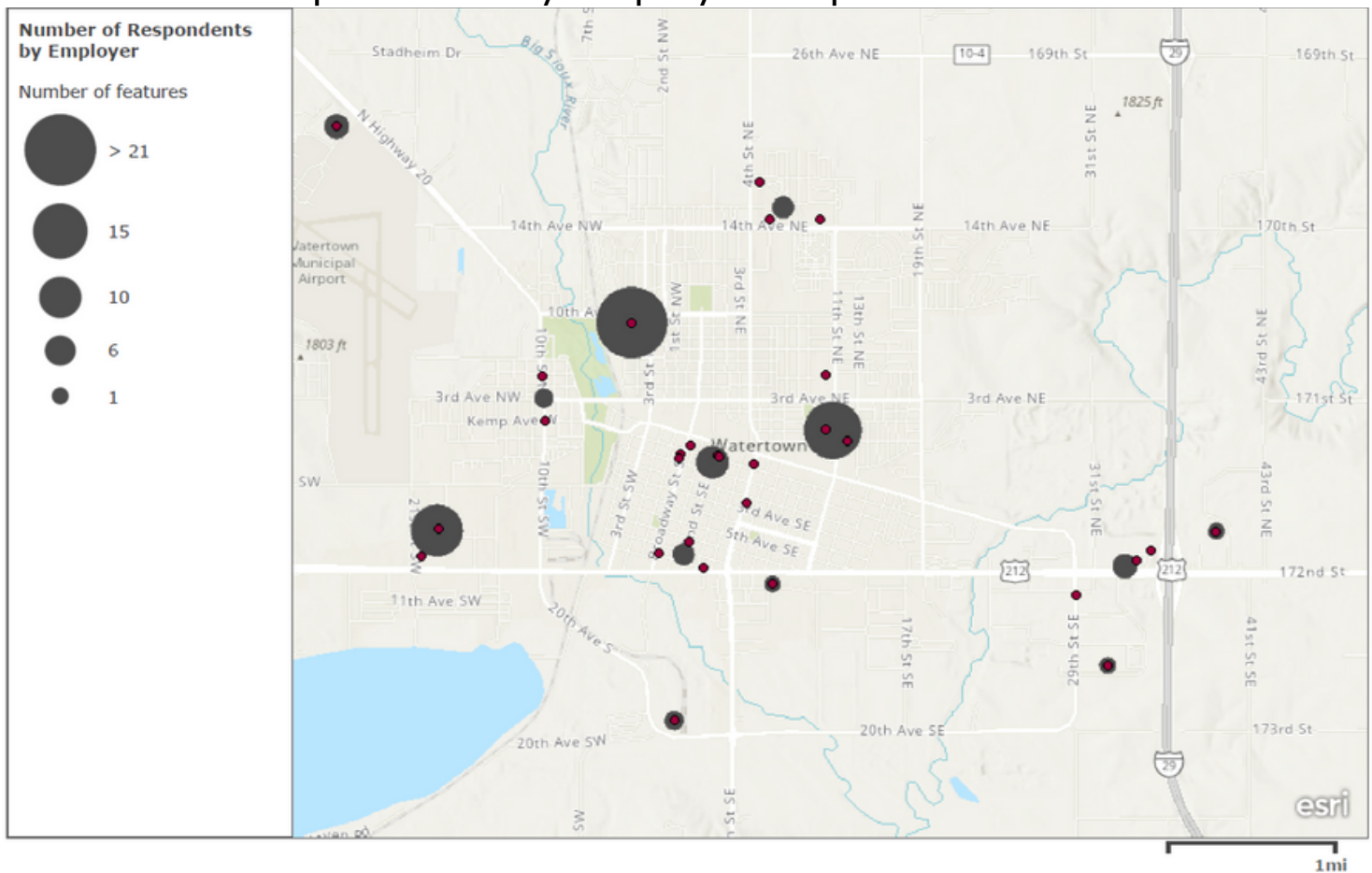
- 1.** FINDING TEMPORARY CARE
- 2.** ACCESS TO MORE REGISTERED CHILD CARE PROVIDERS
- 3.** ACCESS TO MORE LICENSED CHILD CARE PROVIDERS
- 4.** EXTENDED HOURS OF CARE
- 5.** LOCATION OF CARE
- 6.** COST OF CARE
- 7.** QUALITY OF CARE
- 8.** SAFETY OF CARE

"There have recently been many daycare closings in the area. We need something in the community to make up for this. I think another daycare center would be great for our town. Especially for families who need assistance, and there is very little chance that a daycare center is closed due to a child illness that an in-home daycare may have. They are more flexible for parents."

Survey Participant

DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of Respondents by Employer Map



The map displays the number of survey respondents that listed their employer. The circles demonstrate the areas of Watertown where the respondents are employed. The larger the circle, the higher concentration of survey respondents.

The number of respondents depicted on the map is 102. Of those, the highest number of respondents are employed with Prairie Lakes Hospital, along with Persona, the Watertown School District, Lake Area Tech, and Wurth following closely behind.

NEXT STEPS | SOURCES | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Community's Next Steps:

The Child Care Working Group will utilize these survey results to create an action plan to address child care needs. Two of the initial goals that will be addressed are:

1. Increase slots available to support families looking for child care in Codington County.
2. Support workforce development, retention, and economic growth by eliminating barriers and creating supports.

These meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Codington County Welfare office and on Zoom. Please contact the Codington County Welfare Office at (605)882-6286 for more information.

Additional Sources

- South Dakota Department of Social Services
- 2021 Kids Count Data Center
- South Dakota Department of Health - Office of Health Statistics
- Partners at the Codington County Child Care Services

Acknowledgements

Through collaborative partnerships with the Codington County Welfare Office and the Child and Family Resource Network (CFRN) at South Dakota State University, this survey was conducted and distributed to obtain results that were concluded in this report.