

CHILD CARE BUSINESS ASSISTANCE DIRECTORY



*Support for child care businesses in the East Central Minnesota counties
of Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs and Pine*

Updated September 15, 2026



EAST CENTRAL
Regional Development Commission

CHILD CARE IN EAST CENTRAL MINNESOTA

To understand the need and shortages regarding child care in the East Central region of Minnesota, an in-depth Supply and Demand Gap Analysis including community surveys, research into state/county statistics and other information was conducted.

The analysis revealed child care shortages range from 350 to 1500 'needed child seats' (openings) across the region indicating families have a lack of child care options and, due to a number of reasons, it is very difficult to be a child care provider heavily influencing the ability of providers to sustain their operations. Also revealed, child care shortages severely impact local workforce and employers in the region.

To combat these challenges and identify potential solutions, Child Care Strategic Planning Committees and Coalitions have been formed in East Central Minnesota counties. These committees are working diligently to identify potential solutions that will assist in increasing child care options and seats for their communities, as well as support for existing providers. Please reach out to these communities for information and/or support. Visit EastCentralChildCare.com for regional information, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Office of Child Care at mn.gov/deed/programs-services/child-care, or the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families at dcyf.mn.gov.

Child Care Committee Leads

Chisago County	Nancy Hoffman	Nancy@chisagocounty.org 651.674.5664
Isanti County	Jenny Darling	Jennifer.Darling@co.isanti.mn.us 763.689.8148
Kanabec County	Kirstin Faurie	K.Faurie@cityofmora.com 320.679.6357
Mille Lacs County	Lainy Hoskins	Lainy.Hoskins@millelacs.mn.gov 320.983.8349
Pine County	Lezlie Sauter	Lezlie.Sauter@co.pine.mn.us 320.591.0019

County Child Care Licensors

Chisago County	Lanay Miller	Lanay.Miller@chisagocountymn.gov 651.213.5218
Isanti County	Nicole Simpson	Nicole.simpson@co.isanti.mn.us 763.689.1711
Kanabec County	Danielle Linkert	Danielle.Linkert@co.kanabec.mn.us 320.679.6350
Mille Lacs County	Makayla Wilcox	Makayla.Wilcox@millelacs.mn.gov 320.241.9133
Pine County	Nikki Wiener	Nikki.Wiener@co.pine.mn.us 320.591.1614

East Central Regional Development Commission

Michelle Thomas Michelle.Thomas@ecrdc.org | 612.390.0370

Business Assistance

Resources for child care providers and businesses from training, operations, financial understanding, profitability, growth, marketing, and much more.

East Central Regional Development Commission

Providing resources and support to the child care industry and community coalitions.

100 S. Park St, Mora, MN 55051

ECRDC.org | EastCentralChildCare.com |

320.679.4065

Michelle Thomas: michelle.thomas@ecrdc.org

Child Care Startup and Retention Navigator

Parent Aware/Child Care Aware

One-stop network for starting/supporting child care programs.

Pine Technical & Community College

900 4th St SE, Pine City, MN 55063

pine.edu | 320.227.3069

Tara Hallberg: Tara.Hallberg@Pine.edu |

320.318.1855

First Children's Finance

Providing mentorship, training and financing to child care businesses. Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Ctys.

111 N 3rd Ave #220, Minneapolis, MN 55401

firstchildrensfinance.org | 507.218.2265

Shelly Kunz: ShellyK@firstchildrensfinance.org

Business of Child Care

Providing mentorship, training and financing to child care businesses. Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Ctys.

8400 Normandale Lake Blvd, Ste 920,

Bloomington, MN 55437

businessofchildcare.com | 844.444.5602

Jeff Andrews: info@businessofchildcare.com

MN Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

Assistance with business plans, securing financing, financial statements, marketing and more.

mn.gov/deed/business/help/sbdc

Register: ECenterDirect.com

Pine Technical & Community College

Child care education and Parent Aware Program.

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

900 4th St SE, Pine City, MN 55063

pine.edu | 320.227.3069

Tiffany Sullivan: Tiffany.Sullivan@pine.edu

Minnesota Office of Child Care Community Partnerships

Supports and promotes the expansion of quality child care statewide and accessibility to child care for underserved communities.

mn.gov/deed/programs-services/child-care | 651.802.2238

Carla Vita: carla.vita@state.mn.us

Women's Business Alliance

Resources for female entrepreneurs.

Kanabec, Mille Lacs & Pine Counties.

309 1st Street NE, Suite 103, Little Falls, MN 55345

efund.org | 218.735.6033

Sandy Voigt: sandyv@efund.org/218.735.6033

Business Assistance

Entrepreneur Fund

Offering business advising, classes and other technical support. Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

202 W. Superior St, Ste 311, Duluth, MN 55802
efund.org | 218.623.5747

Bunker Labs

501(c)(3) network of veteran entrepreneurs dedicated to helping veterans start their own businesses.

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

400 S. 4th Street #401, Minneapolis, MN 55415
bunkerlabs.org | 612.836.3710

WomenVenture

Training, classes and loans for female entrepreneurs.

Chisago and Isanti Counties.

165 Western Ave N, Ste 8, Office #100,
St. Paul, MN 55102

womenventure.org | 612.224.9540

Deb Brown: DBrown@womenventure.org

LeeAnn Rasachak:

LRasachak@womenventure.org

Central Minnesota Jobs & Training Services (CMJTS)

Connect with qualified workers, employee training and business resources. Partners in Minnesota Workforce. Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

Mora: 903 Forest Ave E / 320.679.6488

Cambridge: 140 Buchanan St S. Ste 152
763.279.4492

cmjts.org

Rebecca Perrotti: rperrotti@cmjts.org

612.247.9319

SCORE Twin Cities

Classes/one-on-one mentorship to businesses & entrepreneurs.

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

2021 E Hennepin Ave Ste 220, Minneapolis, MN 55413

score.org/twincities | 952.938.4570

Legal Corps

Free/reduced cost transactional business legal services for entrepreneurs, small business and nonprofit organizations.

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

1000 LaSalle Ave. SCH 317, Minneapolis, MN 55403

legalcorps.org | 612.206.0780

Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families

Offering resources and information to Minnesota families, providers, and partners.

<https://dcyf.mn.gov/>

Child Care Business Lenders

East Central Regional Development Commission

Providing gap financing to local businesses.

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

100 Park Street South

Mora, MN 55051

320.679.4065

ecrdc.org

Michelle Thomas: Michelle.Thomas@ecrdc.org

First Children's Finance

Providing financing to child care businesses.

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

111 N 3rd Ave #220

Minneapolis, MN 55401

507.829.9920

firstchildrensfinance.org

Amanda Brewington :

AmandaB@firstchildrensfinance.org

Women's Business Alliance

Financing for female-owned businesses.

Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

309 1st Street NE, Suite 103, Little Falls, MN 55345

218.735.6033

efund.org

Sandy Voigt: SandyV@efund.org/218.735.6033

Initiative Foundation

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

405 1st St SE

Little Falls, MN 56345

320.632.9255

www.ifound.org

Doug Adams: DAdams@ifound.org

WomenVenture

Financing for female-owned businesses.

Chisago & Isanti Counties.

165 Western Ave N, Suite 8, Office #100, St. Paul, MN 55102

612.224.9540

womenventure.org

Deb Brown: DBrown@womenventure.org

LeeAnn Rasachak:

LRasachak@womenventure.org

Entrepreneur Fund

Providing financing to childcare businesses.

Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties

202 W. Superior Street

Suite 311

Duluth, MN 55802

218.623.5747

efund.org

US Small Business Administration (SBA)

Offering a variety of business financing programs.

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties.

330 2nd Ave S #430, Minneapolis, MN 55403

612.370.2324

sba.gov/mn

East Central Minnesota Cities and Counties

Please check with your city, county and Child Care Community Leads (listed on page 1) for child care programs, loans and grants. Each entity operates independently and many offer one-time and/or continuous child care provider assistance such as the waiving of license fees, business expense reimbursements, etc. See page 1 for county contact information for assistance.