A photograph of a woman with dark, wavy hair, smiling, with a young girl with pigtails sitting on her shoulders. They are in a grassy field with a bright sun in the background. The image is partially covered by large, overlapping circular shapes in blue, green, and yellow.

North Dakota Child Care Resource & Referral 2010 Activity Report

NORTH DAKOTA
CCR&R
CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL

Child Care Resource & Referral is a program of Lutheran Social Services in western North Dakota
and Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership in eastern North Dakota

finding solutions



Linda Lembke

Child care in a growing economy

Families want good care for their children. However, most communities in North Dakota's growing economy still struggle to recruit and retain the child care services that working families need.

North Dakota Child Care Resource and Referral (ND CCR&R) was established by the North Dakota State Legislature in 1991. Today, we help parents connect to child care, plus work to recruit, train and retain a child care workforce that serves the needs of communities, employers and working families.

Collectively, ND CCR&R services impact the care and education of over 32,000 children in North Dakota. This 2010 Activity Report provides data snapshots of our services and testimonials from parents and providers who have benefited from CCR&R services during FY2010.

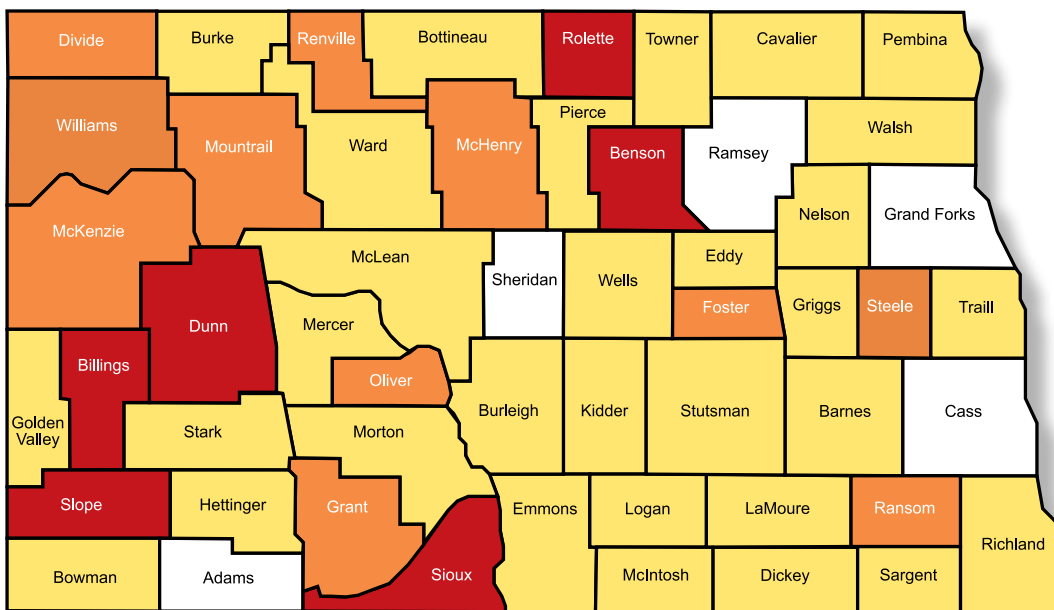
ND CCR&R is proud of the role we play in shaping North Dakota's future. We value your input and look forward to working with you and others as we strive to build a strong child care system for our youngest citizens.



Linda Reinicke

Linda Lembke,
Eastern ND Program Director

Linda Reinicke,
Western ND Program Director



Demand for child care in North Dakota

North Dakota's child care shortage affects every county in the state. This shortage is especially acute in western counties.

National child care standards recommend that licensed care should meet at least 50% of potential demand. Currently, only five counties – Adams, Cass, Grand Forks, Ramsey and Sheridan – meet that minimum.

Figure 1: Extent licensed care meets demand

Source: CCR&R Parent Services Database

0 to 10% 11 to 25% 26 to 49% 50 to 80%

Connecting families and child care providers

North Dakota parents are in the workforce at a higher rate than almost every other state, and ND CCR&R is the trusted resource to help them efficiently navigate their child care options. Families can choose to search online at www.ndchildcare.org or use a toll-free phone number to speak with a trained specialist. ND CCR&R generates lists of specific child care options and provides step by step information and guidance on selecting quality child care, understanding licensing, and awareness of child care costs.

During FY2010, ND CCR&R helped the families of 9,601 children in North Dakota search for licensed child care that fit their needs. Finding care for babies continues to be the biggest challenge faced by parents due to the limited supply. Care during non-traditional hours is also a challenge. 2,184 parents needed care for their children before 7 a.m., after 6 p.m. or on weekends.

Referral requests by age and time of day

Source: CCR&R Parent Services Referral Database

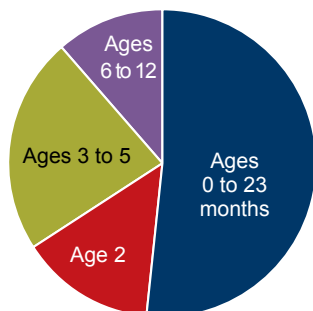


Figure 2: Referral Requests by age

Ages 0 - 23 months	52%	4986
Age 2	14%	1355
Ages 3 to 5	23%	2182
Ages 6 to 12	11%	1078
TOTAL		9601

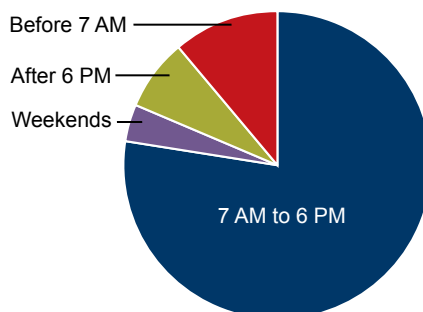


Figure 3: Referral Requests by time of day

Needing care 7 AM to 6 PM	77%	7417
Needing care before 7 AM	11%	1073
Needing care after 6 PM	8%	724
Needing weekend care	4%	387
TOTAL		9601

A data snapshot of North Dakota child care

ND CCR&R also collects data and publishes reports about child care in the state. These reports, available at www.ndchildcare.org, provide data-rich information on a wide range of topics including cost of care, availability and trends in child care.

Community partners and state leaders use this information to develop an understanding of current and potential child care needs on a county and statewide level.



"I had no idea how hard it would be to find child care."

Marea Trautman took a year off from her job in the Bismarck school system after the birth of her oldest son, Jaden. As she prepared to go back to work, she ran into an unexpected problem.

"I had no idea how hard it would be to find child care," Marea says. "I thought all I had to do is choose a place and they'd have room – not the case. I made call after call. Either the care provider had no openings or something about the place made me uncomfortable. I didn't know what I was going to do until a friend suggested that I try CCR&R's referral service."

As a new mom, Marea was nervous about leaving Jaden with someone else. CCR&R's Child Care Checklist helped her sort her priorities and figure out what questions to ask when she interviewed potential providers.

"I knew I'd found the right one as soon as I met Kristi," Marea says. "She cared for Jaden up until he started school and now cares for our second son, Kyler. I would not have found Kristi without the help of CCR&R."



Child care comes to Main Street in Powers Lake, ND

When Jessica Bullinger (right) saw a need for child care in Powers Lake, she turned to CCR&R for advice on how to get started. With the help of city leaders and community partners, a once vacant main street building was transform it into Lil' Ranchers, a group child care facility that opened in July 2010.

Sarah Schultes (left), director of Lil' Ranchers, took start-up training through CCR&R and is now working to earn her CDA credential.

Community involvement and CCR&R resources make it possible for children in Powers Lake to stay in their home community while their parents are at work.



“We wanted to build the best in North Dakota.”

► Care options for infants are often in short supply, even in larger communities. Co-owners, Chelsey Steinlicht (left) and Linda Bakken (right) were able to address that important need when they opened Early Years, a child care learning center in West Fargo that cares for 57 children ages 0 to age 5.

“We wanted to build the best in North Dakota,” Steinlicht says. Recruitment dollars made is possible for us to create a natural playscape at our center that helps us incorporate hands-on-learning. It has shifted my thinking from what do we have for children to play with... to what can we do to help them learn.”

Recruitment of new providers builds capacity & supports economic growth

Child care businesses depend almost exclusively on human capital to operate. A building, furniture and other fixtures are important, but a child care business can’t operate without people to provide care. This is why recruitment is so important.

Free training and start-up funding offered through the Growing Child Care North Dakota initiative helped ND CCR&R recruit 84 new family/group providers and 12 centers through October 2010.

In addition, ND CCR&R business consultants work with economic developers and community leaders who are interested in addressing local child care issues.

Community surveys and interviews are used to identify gaps in child care services. When needs are identified, ND CCR&R works with communities to recruit providers, explore funding options, identify capital assets and organize community partners.

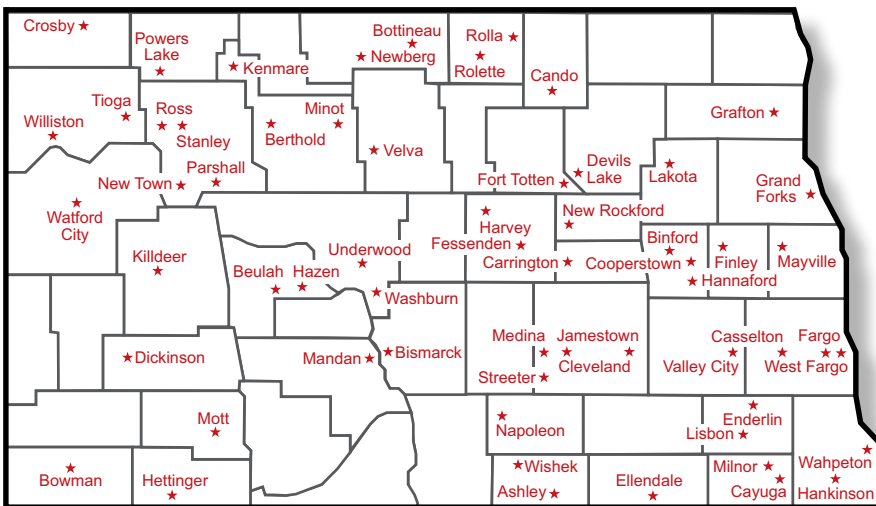


Figure 4: Community and Economic Development Consultations
Source: ND CCR&R Child Care Program Database

“CCR&R has been a valuable asset for the Wishek community. We’ve already gained one new provider. In a town our size, seven children having quality child care makes a huge difference”

*Katie LaBree, Economic Development Coordinator
Wishek Job Development Authority*

County	Family / Group Providers Enrolled	Child Care Centers Enrolled	Potential Increase in Licensed Capacity
Barnes	1		7
Burke	1		18
Burleigh	10	2	190
Cass	22	4	451
Dickey		1	49
Foster	1		7
Grand Forks	1		7
Griggs	2		14
Logan	1		7
McHenry	1		7
McKenzie	1		7
McLean	1		10
Mercer	3		14
Morton	4		28
Mountrail	1	1	57
Nelson	1		7
Ramsey	1		7
Ransom	3		21
Rolette	1		18
Sargent	1		7
Stark	5		35
Stutsman	4		38
Towner	1		7
Ward	13	4	331
Williams	4		28
Total	84	12	1372

Figure 5: Enrollment in 2010 Recruitment Project
Source: ND CCR&R Tracking System

Child care workforce training enhances early learning

Child care workforce training is essential to meet North Dakota's growing demand for high-quality child care and help children start school ready to succeed.

Approximately 4,800 North Dakotans earn their living caring for and educating children in licensed, early childhood settings. ND CCR&R is the primary source of training for this crucial sector of North Dakota's workforce.

ND CCR&R significantly expanded its online training delivery in January 2010. New EasyReach and Eager to Learn online courses have helped to eliminate training barriers, such as distance, weather and schedule conflicts. Learners can now control when

they take courses and have the ability to review content as needed to enhance learning.

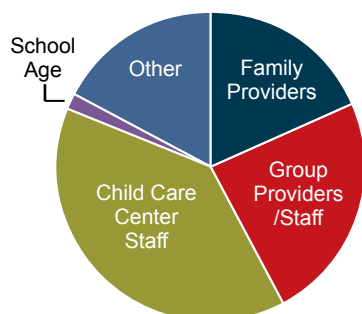
The EasyReach courses are available online 24/7 and are used to provide training on basic content.

Eager to Learn courses are used to deliver more in-depth training. These courses are delivered online in multiple sessions at specific times. They include the added feature of discussion boards and chat sessions to give learners the opportunity to apply course content, and interact with the instructor and others in the class.

ND CCR&R also offers face-to-face training and signature events in communities across the state.

Training Participation by Provider Type

Figure 6: Source: ND CCR&R Training Database



Setting	%	Participants	Setting Description
Family Providers	18%	2151	Cares for 7 or fewer children in the provider's own home.
Group Providers / Staff	24%	2734	Care for 8 to 18 children in the home or other type of facility.
Child Care Center Staff	39%	4508	Care for 19 or more children in public or private buildings, churches or schools. Children are often grouped by age.
School Age	2%	183	Cares for 19 or more school-age children before or after school. Some provide care during school holidays and summer vacation.
Other	17%	1987	Head Start staff, preschool teachers, licensers, CCR&R staff, social workers, parents, Kindergarten teachers, etc.



"I've been in child care for 15 years... what I'm learning now actually works."

Kathy Bushnell operates a licensed group child care out of her home in Minot, ND. Kathy participated in the CCR&R enhancement project to strengthen her skills and earn materials and resources for her business.

"At first, I was apprehensive about taking online training, but once I got into it I loved it," Kathy says. She especially enjoys the Eager to Learn courses.

"I've been in child care for 15 years. When I took trainings before I'd kind of forget about it once I was finished. With the Eager to Learn courses, I have to write about it and think about what was presented in the class. This is the first time I've actually implemented things I've learned in trainings."

I've found that what I'm learning now actually works and the resources I've earned help me get the kids ready to start school."

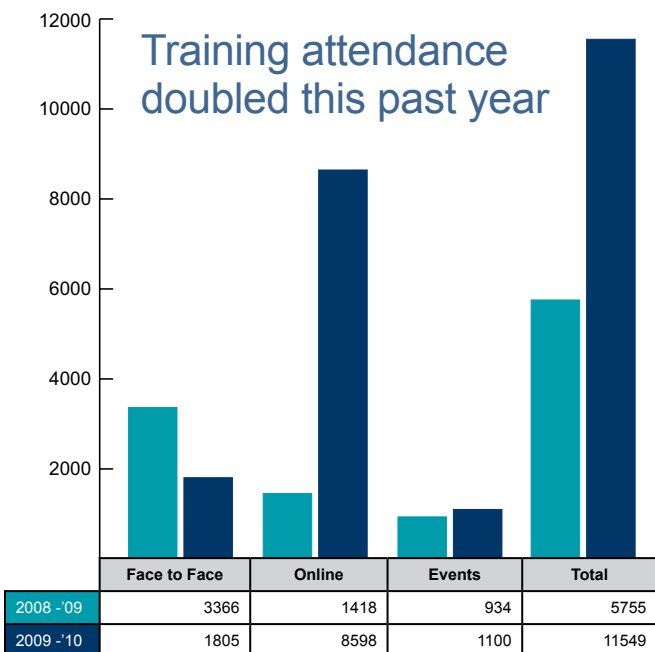
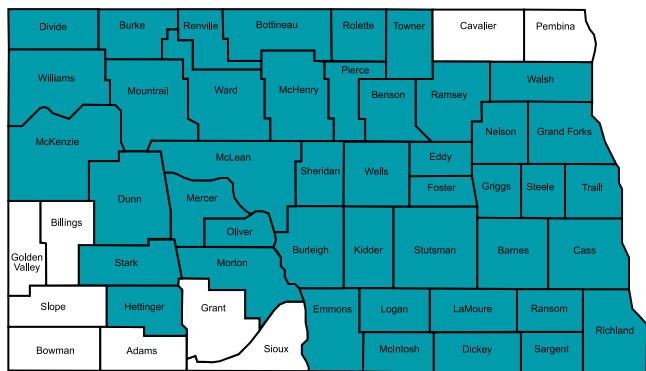


Figure 7: Source: ND CCR&R Training Database

Participation in ND CCR&R's online training courses grew six fold this past year. This growth was spurred by the roll-out of 30 new online courses and state funding support that made it possible to offer EasyReach courses at no charge from January 2010 through June 2011. Participation in special training events featuring prominent speakers also grew by 17%.



Online Course Participation

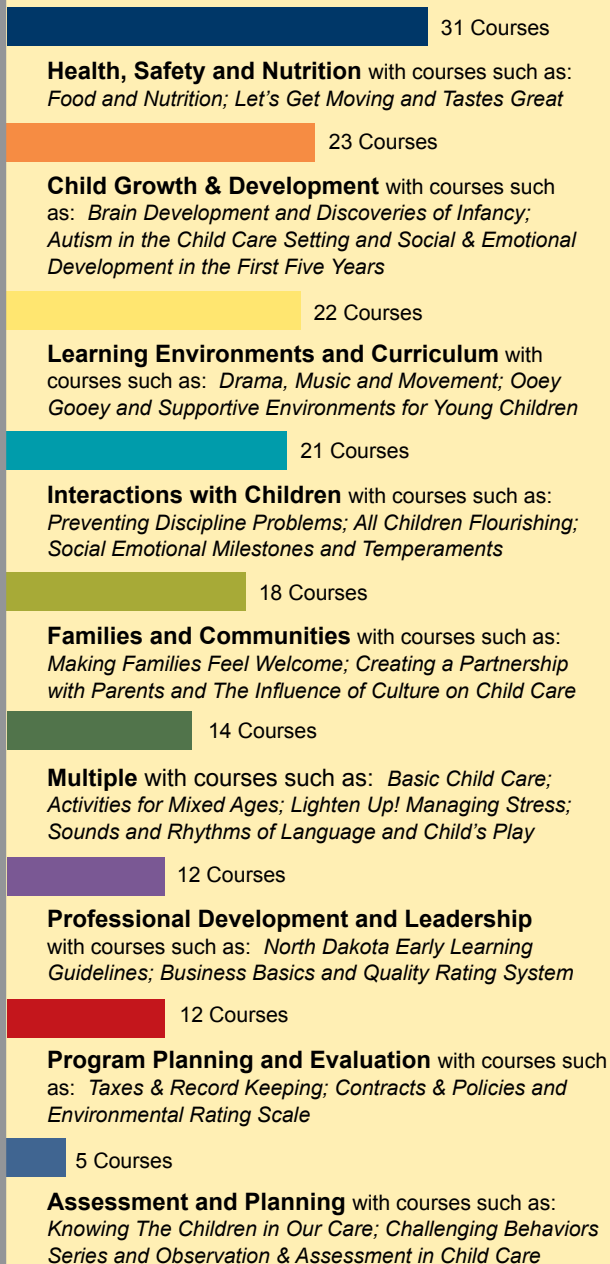
Figure 8: Source: ND CCR&R Training Database

Online courses expand statewide participation

The increased availability of online training provides statewide access to training. In the past year, at least one participant from 43 counties used this convenient option. ND CCR&R works one-on-one with providers to address access issues and build their technology skills as needed.

ND CCR&R training builds workforce competency in eight key areas

ND CCR&R develops and delivers child care workforce training in eight core competency areas. Shown here are the number of courses in each competency area that were offered during FY2010. Additional courses are added on an on-going basis as we continue our work to build the skills of child care providers, center directors and others who work in the field of early childhood.



► recruit ► train ►

“My program is now more professional. The children benefit from my training and their parents tell me that they do too.”

► Cindy Nickerson (right), owner of Alphabet Soup Home Day Care in Valley City, ND has a dream. She would like to expand her group child care, where she cares for 15 children, and become the owner/director of a Christian-based child care center that cares for 30 children. To open her new business, Cindy needs to earn her Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

Earning a CDA seemed like an overwhelming challenge, both in time and money, until Shannon Brown (left), a CCR&R family/group consultant, recruited Cindy into the CCR&R enhancement project.

Now for each 40-hour block of CCR&R training Cindy completes, she earns resources for her child care business and gets one-step closer to earning her CDA.

“I would not be pursuing my CDA if it wasn’t for Shannon and CCR&R,” Cindy says. “Shannon’s monthly visits and the additional support she provides by phone and email are a huge benefit for me...the resources I’m earning along the way are also a plus.

“I am now integrating more math and science activities into my program. I was also able to purchase a quad stroller that makes it possible for ALL of us to go for a walk, attend story time at the library and go on field trips around town.

“My program is now more professional. The children benefit from my training and their parents tell me they do too.”



◀ Tammy Anderson (right), director of Super Kids Junior Academy child care center in Bismarck, ND, works closely with CCR&R Health Consultant, Kathy Lampman (left).

“When we opened Super Kids, CCR&R consultants helped us set up classrooms, establish health and safety procedures and recommend best practices for our infants and other age groups,” Tammy says.

“I can’t imagine life without Child Care Resource and Referral. They are there when I have questions about what to do when... and what to do if. Children in our center stay healthy because of the practices CCR&R has helped us put in place.”

Consultants help the child care workforce put their training into practice

Child care providers work in a dynamic environment where the physical, emotional and cognitive needs of the growing children in their care is constantly changing. As independent business owners, child care providers are often isolated from co-workers who could provide additional expertise and daily support. One-on-one visits from ND CCR&R consultants help to fill that gap.

In FY2010, CCR&R consultants worked extensively with 460 licensed child care programs through face to face visits or by phone. Child care providers throughout North Dakota benefited from this service.

ND CCR&R's early childhood, business and health consultants help child care providers put their training into practice. They also update child care providers on new information between trainings and help them with specific concerns.

Early childhood consultants help child care providers incorporate best practices into their programs. Together they cover a wide range of topics including age appropriate learning activities, how to set up a quality child care environment and strategies for challenging behaviors.

ND CCR&R health consultants work with providers on specific health, safety and sanitation procedures. Business consultants focus on topics like setting up business plans, marketing, budgeting and cash flow.

Growing Child Care ND Retention Project

In January 2010, ND CCR&R launched a new initiative to help retain and strengthen North Dakota's child care workforce.

Existing family/group providers who completed up to three 40-hour blocks of training and participated in follow-up visits by CCR&R consultants could earn free materials and resources for their business.

Child care center directors had the opportunity to strengthen their skills and earn a Center Director Credential by participating in Aim4Excellence training. Upon completion, they could apply for free resources and materials for the center. In addition, center staff were awarded grants to earn their CDA credential.

County	Programs Enrolled in Retention	40 Hours of Training Completed	80 Hours of Training Completed	120 Hours of Training Completed	Potential Capacity Retained
Barnes	1		1		12
Bottineau	1	1			18
Burke	2	1			36
Burleigh	16	4	17		176
Cass	33	31	4		869
Dickey	3	1	1		43
Eddy	1	1			18
Grand Forks	15	12	4		519
Hettinger	1	1			18
Kidder	1	1			18
LaMoure	3	1			54
McIntosh	1				18
Mercer	1				18
Morton	4	3	1		61
Mountrail	1	1			18
Nelson	1				7
Ransom	1				15
Ramsey	1		1		18
Richland	2	2			32
Stark	6	2	2		86
Steele	1				18
Stutsman	7	6			79
Towner	1	1			15
Trail	1	1			18
Walsh	2	1	1		42
Ward	18	7	2	2	524
Wells	1				18
Williams	1		1		60
Total	127	78	35	2	2828

Figure 9: 2010 Retention Project Participation
Source: ND CCR&R Tracking System



▲ ND CCR&R Business Consultant, James Bender and Laurie Gustafson, owner of Castle Walz Child Care in Williston, ND, meet to review the business training modules that are part of Laurie's Aim4Excellence center director training.

Helping children stay active and eat healthy

Child care settings are an ideal place to influence the budding health habits of young children. ND CCR&R, in partnership with the North Dakota Department of Health and the Dakota Medical Foundation, is leading efforts to instill healthy living practices, including increased physical activity, into everyday practice in child care settings.

This past year, 89 Cass County child care providers earned incentives after completing training, tracking nutrition and physical activity criteria and posting their progress on a Wikispace. Karen Kost of Casselton (shown here) earned a free square foot garden box when she completed the project.

96% of participants reported they had increased their knowledge of healthy living in child care and that they had a valuable training experience. Many more training opportunities on healthy living practices are planned for the coming year.



Collaborations strengthen our ability to serve children, families and communities

High quality child care benefits more than children and parents, it impacts all segments of the community. Developing productive partnerships with community leaders, business, economic developers, the military and philanthropic organizations leads to collaborative opportunities to meet specific needs. ND CCR&R works with partners to leverage people, time, skills and funding to benefit the child care system in North Dakota.

► ND CCR&R worked with the city, county and emergency management teams to help evacuate and relocate child care providers during the Spring 2010 flood in the Red River Valley.

► Sgt. 1st Class Corey Askin embraces his sons after returning from a nearly year long deployment on a peacekeeping mission to Kosovo. ND CCR&R works with Operation Military Kids to support the children of North Dakota military families during all stages of deployment, including peacetime.

► ND CCR&R partners with organizations like USDA Rural Development and the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives to address child care needs in rural communities. In addition to helping communities with needs and resource assessment, CCR&R's Community Child Care Toolkit will soon offer communities the option of a "lot-ready" child care building, complete with furnishings.



Quality Rating & Improvement System Pilot Launches in Cass County



The United Way of Cass Clay and The Fargo-Moorhead Area Foundation are leading the charge to create and pilot an

Early Childhood Rating & Improvement System to help families assess and choose the quality and care environment they want for their child.

The Early Childhood Rating system measures child care programs against objective criteria and awards a rating of one to five stars. This system not only makes it easier for families to make informed choices, but also helps them understand what factors contribute to quality care and the role that a care provider plays in their child's development.

"As a parent, I experienced uneasiness, worry and guilt about leaving our baby. This tool offers parents reassurance that their children are in a safe, caring and educational environment."

- Nikki Eckman, Parent from Fargo



A program of
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Child Care Resource & Referral

North Dakota Regional Offices

Fargo-Moorhead
(800) 452-3646

Bismarck
(888) 223-1510

Grand Forks
(888) 778-3435

Minot
(800) 450-7801

Jamestown
(888) 767-0350

www.ndchildcare.org