

Tiny Sprouts Day Care on the Prairie

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After several home-based options and the childcare center in Granite Falls closed, the childcare shortage in the City of Clarkfield and Yellow Medicine County intensified, and a county-wide engagement process began

Primary Contact

Amanda Luepke, City Administrator for the City of Clarkfield.

Background

Preparation & Development

After several home-based childcare options and the childcare center in Granite Falls closed, the childcare shortage in the city and county intensified, and a county-wide engagement processes began. There was representation from economic development staff, city/county government (elected and administrators), local employers, child care licensing staff, local philanthropy, school representatives (public, charter, higher education), a childcare business consultant, regional foundations, child care providers (center and family run), parents, community action agency, and tribal government.



Through the county-wide engagement process, the City of Clarkfield determined they wanted to make more childcare options available. The City of Clarkfield, the Clarkfield Charter School, Clarkfield business owners, and the Clarkfield Economic Development Authority, identified that they would work together for a local solution.

They took four basic steps:

1. Created a non-profit board to oversee the operations and finances. The board will consist of: City Administrator, Charter School Director, City Council Member, School Board Director, Childcare Financial Advisor, two parents within the child care.
2. Found a location that utilized available property. The local charter school was unable to receive authorization for an extended child care center within their chartered facility, but they identified their role within the community project as providing seamless early childhood program following the infant and toddler care found at the childcare center.
3. Identified a childcare center consultant to educate the board on day to day activities such as staffing, licensing, nutritional planning, activities, curriculum, supplies, staff recruitment, etc. They also identified the goal of becoming Parent Aware rated.
4. Continue to develop partner engagement through small business relationships, city in-kind donations, health services partnerships and other as determined.



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Established

Planning to open Spring 2018

Services

The Tiny Sprouts on the Prairie will provide a supplemental preschool program. The Clarkfield Area Charter School provides full day preschool to 3-year old's on Tuesdays & Thursdays and 4-year old's on Monday/Wednesday/Friday. Children enrolled in these programs can attend Tiny Sprouts at a daily rate of \$36 for the days not in preschool. Tiny Sprouts will not be providing a stand-alone preschool program but will use a creative curriculum to supplement a child's cognitive and behavioral growth.

Food

Tiny Sprouts provides breakfast, lunch, and snacks to children and will use funds from the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Building Information

The Tiny Sprouts owns their building which has 4,400 square feet of indoor space and some outdoor space.

Enrollment

There are 36 children enrolled at Tiny Sprouts. These families heard about Tiny Sprouts by word of mouth. There are plans for other advertising strategies in the future. Tiny Sprouts is licensed for 58 children.

Age Range	Number of Children
6 weeks to months	24
16 months to 33 months	14
33 months to kindergarten	20*

* 10 kids per day (20 in the summer)

Schedule

Tiny Sprouts is open from 7 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. They are not open on weekends.

Fees

The cost to send a child to Tiny Sprouts starts at \$150 per week per child. A child enrolled in a PreK program elsewhere will pay a daily rate of \$36 on the days the child attends.

Staff

Currently, 4 full-time staff and 3 part-time staff are employed at Tiny Sprouts. These staff are employed by the nonprofit board of directors. To attract staff, Tiny Sprouts offers competitive wages and benefits to their employees in addition to 50% off childcare services to their employees, simple IRA, and PTO.



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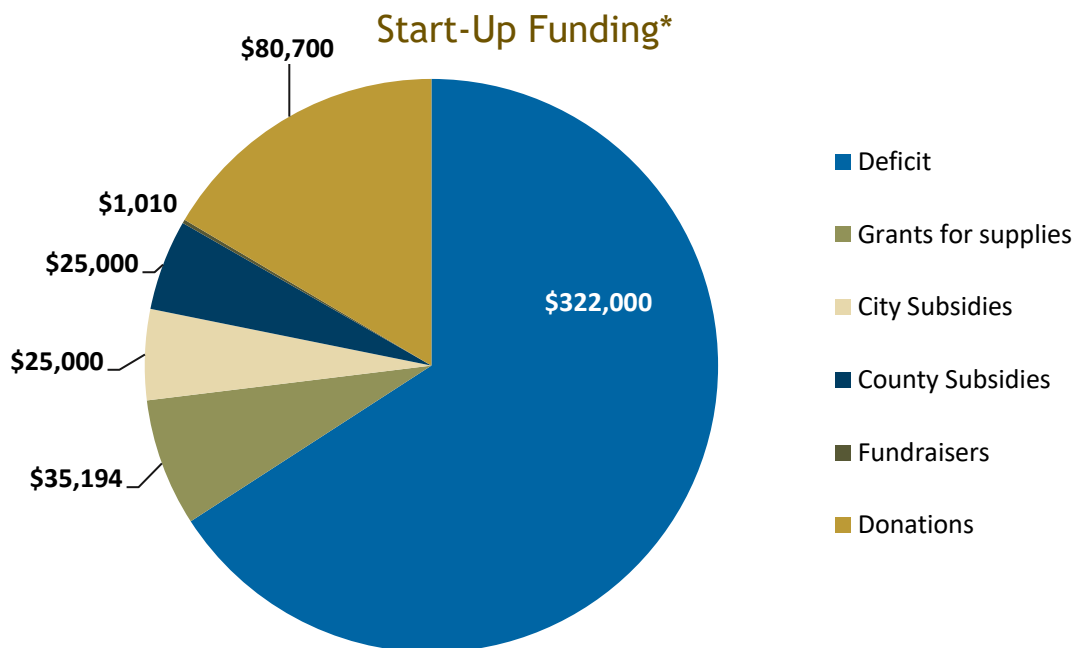
Financing

Start-Up Costs

In total, Tiny Sprouts had \$595,000 in start-up costs. This was spent on:

- Childcare Center Building Construction
- License
- Supplies
- Furniture
- Pilot Daycare Program Implementation
 - Space
 - Food
 - License
 - Supplies
 - Training
 - Staff Positions
 - Insurance

The pie chart below details the sources of revenue Tiny Sprouts is using to cover their start-up costs.



*The start-up cost total of \$595,000 is based on a budget created in February 2018. The revenue and deficit are correct as of 4/20/18



Operating Budget (projection)

Annual Operating Revenue	Amount
CACFP – Federal Food Program in Child Care Center	\$5,700
Annual Expected Child Care Center Revenue (75% enrollment)	\$285,000
Expected Pilot Program Revenue	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$300,700
Annual Operating Expenses	Amount
Space Rental/ Utilities	\$30,500
Staff Positions	\$198,000
Training	\$3,000
Operational (food, supplies, insurance, dry goods)	\$36,600
TOTAL	\$268,100
Revenue over expense	+\$32,600

*This operating budget estimate is from Oct. 2017

Challenges and Successes

Biggest Challenge

The biggest challenge for Tiny Sprouts was constructing the new building and making sure it met all the building and licensing requirements.

Greatest Success

Tiny Sprouts is most proud of completing a building where they can serve 58 children so they can enhance and supplement Pre-K education for families in the community without competing with the school districts.

