Iowa Child Care Connect

What is it?

Iowa Child Care Connect (C3) is Iowa's integrated data system that combines relevant information from multiple sources to help stakeholders in understanding child care supply and demand in their community. In the past, data about child care was fragmented across multiple, individual systems with different rules and variations in the timing of their updates. These differences made it difficult to understand the potential child care needs of children and families in Iowa. C3 includes near-real-time updates directly from child care providers through various systems, integrates it, and then powers online dashboards and a child care search that benefit families, child care providers, and local and state authorities, as well as private sector leaders, across Iowa.

Data
- Child care providers
- State agency systems
- Supporting organization systems

Integration
- Multiple systems
- Bidirectional
- Near-real-time

Decision-Making
- New insights
- Strategic investments

How Does it Work?

C3 is an operational data storage (ODS) system. An ODS is a secure, centralized data exchange that moves specific data in and out of multiple sources to provide comprehensive data that will help drive decision-making. By developing an ODS that integrates near-real-time child care availability data from providers across the state, stakeholders can:

Empower action from child care providers and organizations that support them to meet local needs.
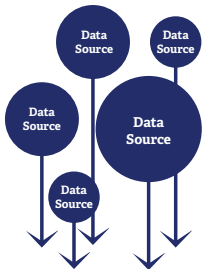
Connect public and private partners for community and economic development.

Enhance child care quality by informing continuous improvement efforts.

C3 is maintained by Iowa State University as the state's university partner, but local child care providers, organizations that support child care providers, and state agencies will continue to own and operate their own data systems. Through C3's secure, centralized ODS, data from these systems are imported, processed, and integrated in near-real-time. Relevant information, such as child care vacancies, is then shared back to users through the C3 Child Care Data Dashboards and the Child Care Search.

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https://childcareconnect.iowa.gov