

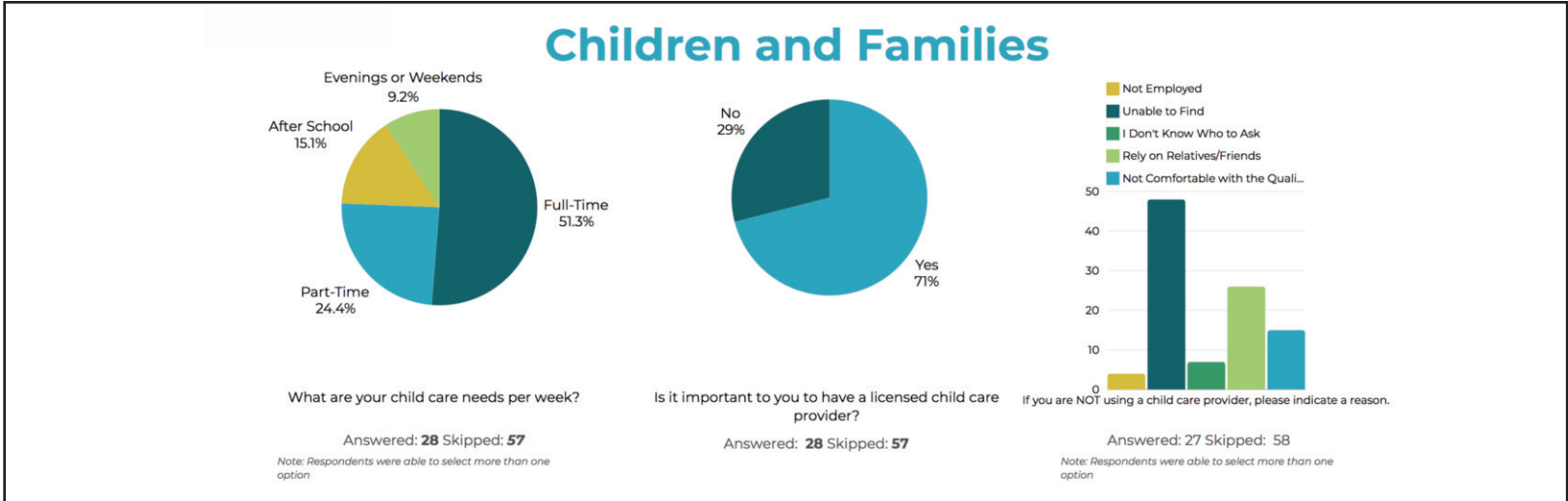
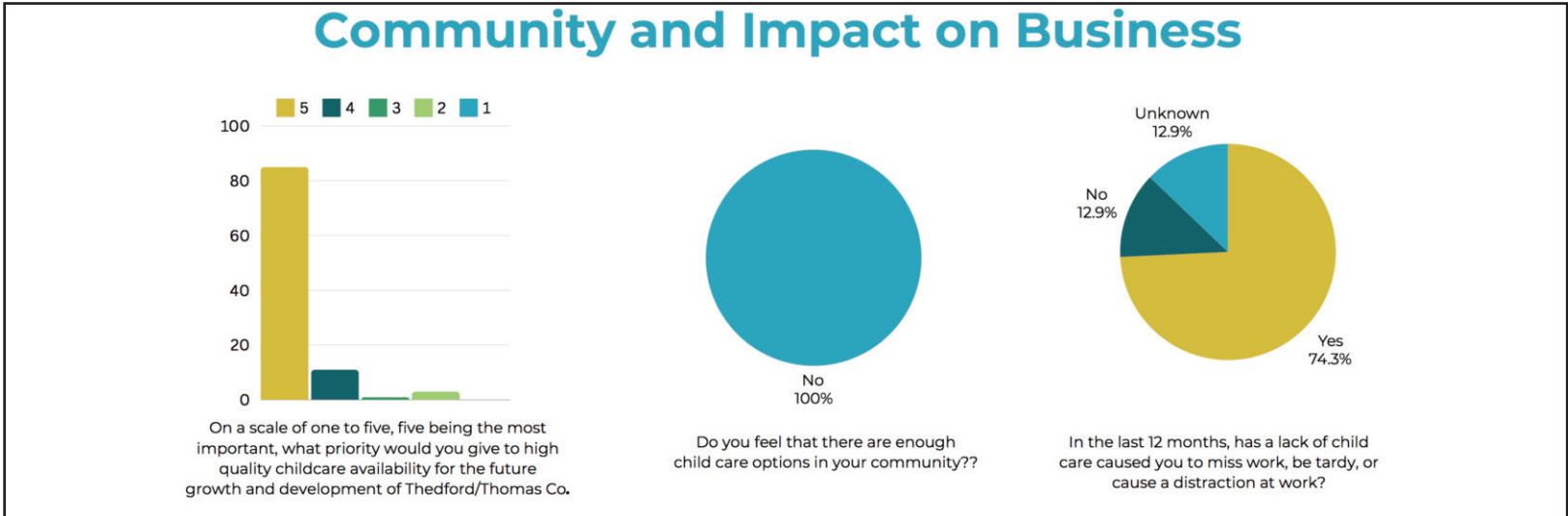
Filling the need in Thomas County

Sandhills Area Child Care set to open in July

MARCIA HORA

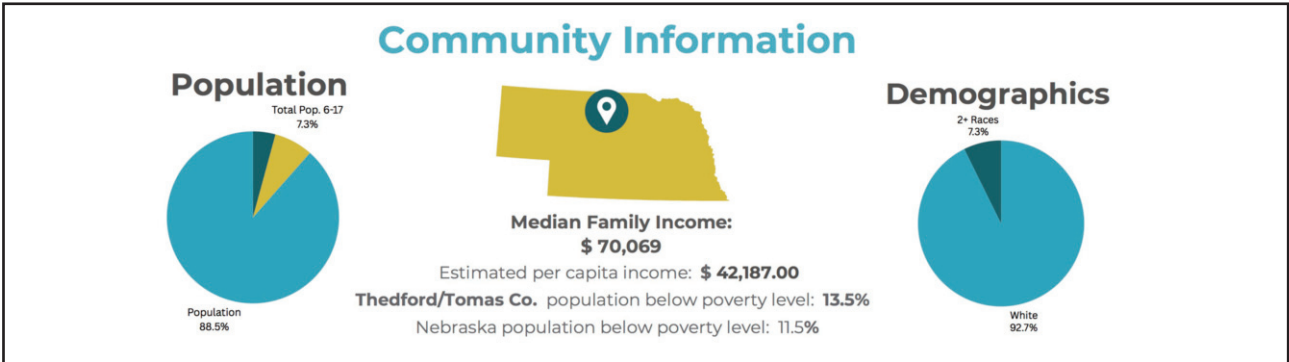
Most rural Nebraskans see a lack of affordable child care options in their communities and believe that increasing access should be a high priority, according to the 2023 Nebraska Rural Poll. The importance of child care in a community cannot be overstated. It promotes development of children, supports working parents, fosters economic growth, and nurtures a more equitable and cohesive society. The United States economy loses an estimated \$122 billion a year due to child care challenges and on average, businesses lose \$1,640 a year for each working parent, due to lost revenue and hiring costs because of insufficient child care, totaling \$23 billion annually.

Interested individuals in the small Village of Thedford were witnessing firsthand what the lack of child care was doing to their community. People were going elsewhere to land teaching positions and businesses were unable to hire employees who had small children. They decided something needed changed and knew the only way to solve the problem was to come up with a workable solution that would fit the needs of people living in and



around Thomas County. Thomas County treasurer Andrea Thomas spearheaded a group to begin delving into the options for the Sandhills. They used a day care model in Burwell and set

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MARCIA HORA - THOMAS COUNTY HERALD

Kyle Hinton, general contractor on the Sandhills Area Child Care project, installs a dutch door on the kitchen that will serve the child care facility and American Legion Post #230. Other local contractors are Frey's Heating & Air and Kim Cox.



MARCIA HORA - THOMAS COUNTY HERALD

This photo shows the new Legion meeting room at left and the hallway leading to the new large child care room. There are now two newly installed bathrooms and a utility room that will also serve as a laundry. Flooring has been installed in the front half of the building and new electrical and lighting has been completed. The committee is hopeful for a July opening date as the facility begins to take shape.

Shooting Sports Break In Newly Sided Fair Building



COURTESY

Competing in the Thomas County Archery 4-H Competition pictured above, l-r: Bobbi Scott, Ariata Scott, Katelyn Blackford, William Blackford, Hudson Warner, Piper Sikes, Piper Hansen, Mary Licking, Grit Licking, Bronc Reiser, Mason Sutton, Emmett Sprague and Haxton Hoffman.

The Thedford Sandhills Sharpshooters 4-H Club had their 2024 awards ceremony on Monday, May 6 at the newly sided Thomas County Fair Building. Sponsors for the evening were Sandhill Oil, Thedford Lumber & Supply, Kyle Hinton Construction, Sandhills Physical Ther-

apy-Mullen, AL Ranch, Bar None Hat Co., Hoffman Ranch, WC Ranch, Cow Country Animal Clinic and additional help from the community. Results of the competition:

ARCHERY
Junior Division
(8-11)

Recurve Bare Bow - William Blackford, blue, 47; Ariata Scott, blue, 51; Piper Hansen, purple, 59; Grit Licking, Purple, 67; Katelyn Blackford, reserve grand, 70; Mary Licking, grand, 77. Compound Bare Bow - Piper Sikes, reserve grand, 60; Hudson



COURTESY

BB Gun competitors in the Thomas County 4-H program pictured above, l-r: Gabe Vogt, William Blackford, Noah Werner, Nicholas Werner, Ariata Scott, Hayden Hoffman, Kennedy Hoffman, Haxton Hoffman, Hudson Werner, Grit Licking, Mary Licking and Piper Hansen.

Warner, grand, 81. Intermediate (12-14)

Recurve Bare Bow - Bronc Reiser, grand, 90 Compound W Sights - Haxton Hoffman, purple, 103; Emmett Sprague, re-

serve grand, 127; Mason Sutton, grand, 139 BB GUN Eighth

1. Noah Werner, 248 Nine & Ten 1. Hudson Werner, 290; 2. Ariata Scott, 263; 3.

Grit Licking, 258; 4. William Blackford, 256; 5. Piper Hanson, 154; 6. Hayden Hoffman, 56 Eleven + 1. Mary Licking, 309; 2. Haxton Hoffman, 282; 3. Gabe Vogt, 265.