

## Vaughn: 4-C: Community Coordinated Childcare advocates for families in need



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4-C: Community Coordinated Childcare is a nonprofit agency founded in 1971. Their service area includes DeKalb, Lee, Ogle, Whiteside, McHenry and Carroll counties. 4-C advocates for inclusion and celebrates diversity through a culturally sensitive approach.

The 4-C mission is to promote children’s wellbeing by advocating for quality, affordable, accessible child care. They support families and those providing child care by offering information, education, resources and support services.

4-C recognizes that working parents need access to safe, affordable child care and that children need caregivers who are nurturing, who support their social-emotional development and who help them reach their social and academic potential.

The organization assists child care providers in navigating licensing and funding information, accessing continuing education options and in securing support to respond to the behavioral and mental health needs of the children in their care. In addition, 4-C assumes the vital role of representing parents, children and child care providers to ensure they have a voice in the budgets and laws that impact the child care profession.

Recently, a single mom who was experiencing homelessness because of moving from another state came to 4-C for assistance, as her sister told her we could help her. This individual came in to 4-C and received help with obtaining financial aid for child care. 4-C gave her information for child care openings as well as housing information and other local resources that might help make her transition to Illinois a little easier. This young woman was very grateful for our assistance and the resources that were shared with her.

4-C provides families with access to quality child care and assists child care providers in the development and maintenance of quality child care programs.

The nonprofit consists of departments that specialize in specific service areas and work in unison to meet our agency vision that “all children will be nurtured in healthy, supportive environments and grow to become contributing members of their communities and able to nurture children.”

The following 4-C services are designed to offer guidance and encouragement to families and child care providers navigating the complexities of the child care process:

- Child care Financial Assistance helps families determine if they meet the eligibility requirements to receive assistance with child care costs through the IDHS Childcare Assistance Program.
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants offer mental health services and support to those caring for children. Services include helping teachers with challenging children, working with parents and referring families to other services when needed.
- The Workforce Development Specialist provides support to child care providers and families regarding the social-emotional development of children in their care.

To learn more about 4-C, visit [four-c.org](http://four-c.org).



Susan Petersen, executive director of 4-C: Community Coordinated Childcare. (Photo provided by Michele Vaughn)

- Michele Vaughn, Ed.D., is executive director and president of Kishwaukee United Way.