

SUCCESS STORY

DICKINSON 2022



INSPIRATION STATION

DICKINSON --- Ashley Rasmussen and Erika Sickler, owners of the Inspiration Station, have always had a passion for caring for children and helping them learn. Together they have worked with the assistance of the ND SBDC to expand their childcare and preschool facility into what it is today.

A business that started out in Ashley's home with just 12 children, has now expanded to allow up to 57 children. The business has moved to a much larger facility and has created three other full-time jobs and a part-time position with plans to add more staff in the future.

The Inspiration Station opened on August 22, 2022 and provides daycare for children 0-6 years old. In addition to daycare, they also offer two preschool sessions - morning and afternoon. The



Ashley Rasmussen

team said, "this allows for parents to not have to leave work to take their children to preschool. We also offer preschool enrollment to children not in the daycare."

As if caring for young children isn't enough of a challenge, the team has had the challenge of finding amazing staff to do just that. Finding the right staff for their business was very important to Ashley and Erika. They wanted to make sure the quality of care didn't change at all. The team has fortunately been able to find a great team and they hope they're able to continue to do so.

The duo said, "It's such a rewarding career knowing that we play such a critical role in the children's development. When our waitlist



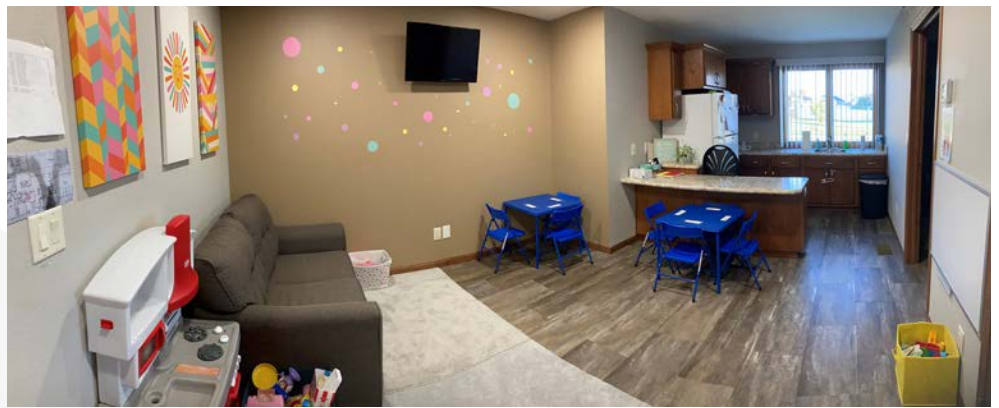
Erika Sickler

wouldn't stop growing, we knew we could expand."

With their expansion, Ashley and Erika really wanted their new location to feel like a home. They wanted windows, natural light, a welcoming and safe environment as well as caring staff for the children enrolled. Their new facility has such a unique set up and provides them with all of this.

When Ashley and Erika first made the announcement of the opening of their new location, they said, "We were flooded with emails asking and inquiring about our care. The families who attended the daycare and preschool have been amazing in supporting our growth and have cheered us on." They have also reached out to different local businesses about stopping by for their career week and they've had great support from that.

In addition to the support of the families that attend the Inspiration Station, the business



has had the support of many other individuals as well. They stated, "We have had an amazing team behind us in every aspect of starting this business. We are so thankful for the team at the ND SBDC, Cornerstone Bank, the team at Stark Development Corporation, and our families. Without their support and help along the way this would not have been possible."

Before securing the building for their business, Ashley and Erika knew they wanted a solid business plan. Their banker, Chris Venneman at Cornerstone bank, referred them to Matt, the Dickinson ND SBDC advisor, who helped them look over their business plan and answered their other questions. Because of their business plan, they have been able to grow their business and open their larger facility.

Prior to their sessions with Matt, they were unsure what to expect as they were new to creating a large business. They said, "We were very happy with the advice that was given. The ND SBDC has continued to reach out and express they are there for us if we need them at any point."

When asked what advice Ashley & Erika would share with other small business owners they said, "Don't let the fear of failing stop you. Hard work and a great plan will make whatever dream you have become a successful reality. It's worth your time to stop down and chat with Matt in Dickinson! Especially if you are new to creating a business, there are so many questions that come up and they are a great resource to have."



www.ndsbdc.org