

**Success Story High Hopes Learning Center****The Honorable Steve Austria (R)  
District 7****447 Existing Businesses****546 Pre-ventures****993 Total Clients**

In 2001, after 20 years in the daycare profession, Sandy Hanson applied her experience and skills to start High Hopes Learning Center, a child care center that provides service to children ages six weeks to 12 years. Hanson contacted the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at SBDC, Inc. in Springfield to help her identify the necessary steps to starting a small business. Counselor Warren Holden helped Hanson write a business plan, find funding, and locate a building in Enon, for her business. With assistance from the SBDC, Hanson also secured a private loan and a grant for funding assistance.

"The SBDC was informative and the advisors listened to my opinion. They gave me great advice, and helped me meet with bankers for potential loans. I would highly recommend the SBDC's services – it is an excellent resource for people who have great ideas, but do not know where to get started," said Hanson.

Throughout the growth of her business, Hanson has continued to work with the SBDC and received assistance in developing a website and upgrading playground equipment. Today, Hanson cares for 110 children daily, and has 12 full-time staff members.

"We treat each child at High Hopes Learning Center as if he or she were our own. We try to provide a real family atmosphere at our child care center. For the kids we create a warm, friendly, and loving atmosphere. The children enjoy coming, and it makes us feel like a family."