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## Wichita Business Journal

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# Child Start set to open new Head Start center on Second Street

Wichita Business Journal - by [Josh Heck](#)

**Child Start Inc.** is nearing completion on its new Head Start center at 1510 E. Second.

The nonprofit, early childhood development services organization is leasing the nearly 10,000-square-foot building that most recently housed the **European Car Co. Child Start** signed a 10-year lease.

Teresa Rupp, executive director for Child Start, says the organization is in the process of moving into its new building from the site it was leasing from **United Methodist Open Door** at 228 Ellis, a 4,027-square-foot space.

The new location, Rupp says, will help Child Start expand its services and provide more child care. The new center, which will be able to provide care for 128 children, will serve kids up to 5 years old. Sixty of those are new child care slots. Child Start also is hiring about 13 more workers to staff its Head Start center. Eight employees will move from the Ellis Street location.

“It’s new kids, new jobs,” Rupp says. “We are real excited about it.”

The building has four classrooms and space for Child Start employees to work with teen parents. It also has a large playground. The additional space, Rupp says, will allow Child Start to put infants, toddlers and preschoolers in the same center. Child Start has had those age groups in separate facilities.

Child Start is expanding with the help of about \$2.5 million in federal stimulus money. It will help cover operational costs associated with expanding. The money also will help Child Start cover child care expenses for parents who are either working 30 hours a week or are in school. Both are services Child Start has long provided.

Rupp says she’s enjoyed watching a former car dealership being transformed into a child care facility.

“It is a fairly remarkable transformation,” he says. “The first time I was in the building it was full of cars.”



Josh Heck / WBJ

Child Start Inc. is opening a new Head Start center on Second St.

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**Conco Construction Inc.** did the work. GLMV Architecture was the architect for the project.

Rupp says the building's owner covered the cost of the renovation. The price was not disclosed.

Child Start's Ellis Street location will close.

The organization has eight locations total, plus child care agreements with other organizations such as The **Greater Wichita YMCA.**

Rupp says Child Start is working on becoming licensed to offer care for a full day, which she expects will be finished by fall. In the meantime, the center will provide short-term day care to children whose parents come to the center for counseling. Rupp says that doesn't require a special license because the children's parents are on site too.

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