

Iowa Community Empowerment Newsletter

April 2004
Volume 5, Issue 2

On February 3, early childhood advocates gathered for an engaging training session to hear dynamic messages from Governor Vilsack, Abby Thorman, Director of the Metropolitan Council on Child Care at Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), and Taj Anton Brown, from the Children's Defense Fund.

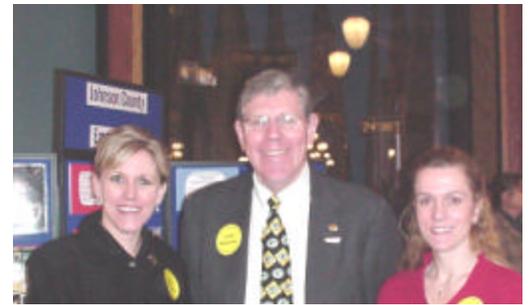
All three stressed the importance of coalition-building as inevitable and necessary to advocates for quality care for children. The message conveyed was, "Those who say it can't be done need to get out of the way of those who are going to do it. What works in creating a successful early childhood system:

- * targeted investments
- * emphasis on outcome-based services
- * multi-faceted services
- * clear standards and accountability
- * initiatives that don't go broad and shallow, but go deep and narrow
- * having a means for sustainability"



Day on the Hill Advocating for Iowa's Young Children

On the 4th, the advocates gathered in the Capitol Rotunda and met with many legislators to share their message. Over 30 displays were set up. Reports from participants show that over 40 legislators stopped at the displays. All of the state agency department Directors connected with Empowerment visited the displays and met with local advocates.



Sen. Doversky visits with Johnson County Empowerment

*Iowa's Early
Childhood Vision:
Every child,
beginning at birth,
will be healthy and
successful.*

Shanell Wagler Appointed New State Community Empowerment Facilitator

Shanell Wagler has been appointed the state Facilitator for Community Empowerment. Many readers know her in her former position as the Community Liaison for Community Empowerment.

Shanell has worked in state government since 1990. She has worked with the Departments of Economic Development, Workforce Development and Management. A life long Iowan, Shanell enjoys spending time with her husband and two children. She received her two-year degree from the American Institute of Business.

In a note regarding the announcement, Cynthia Eisenhauer, Director of the Dept. of Management stated, "Governor Vilsack has once again exercised sound judgment and appointed Shanell Wagler to the position of Community Empowerment Facilitator."



Questions/Comments:
Shanell Wagler, (515)281-4321
Shanell.Wagler@iowa.gov

Iowa's Early Childhood Vision: Every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful.

Administrative Update – February 2004 - March 2004

Upcoming Events

Iowa Empowerment Board 2004 Schedule

May 7, 2004

July 9, 2004

September 10, 2004

Empowerment Indicator & Performance Measures Training

April 13, 2004

Creston/Coralville

April 27, 2004

Waverly

April 29, 2004

Des Moines

Early Childhood Core Stakeholders

May 18, 2004

Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts Meeting

May 19, 2004

March 2004 Board Meeting and Related Activities

The Iowa Empowerment Board met on March 5, 2004. The board is redefining limits for functions and activities supported by administrative funds by community empowerment boards. At the same time the Board directed the technical assistance team to clarify the definition of community collaboration activities that could be funded with program dollars. The revised criteria and definitions will be reviewed at the May IEB meeting. Board members reviewed the Leadership Agenda. The proposed changes and recommended revisions will be reviewed at the May meeting.

Update on the Iowa Department of Public Health Grant Opportunity

The State Empowerment Team is working on the proposal for continuation of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Planning Grant, due April 15, 2004.

The six Early Childhood Stakeholder workgroups will be working on activities from the ECCS grant. The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement workgroup is working on developing common terminology for family support and parenting education. The workgroup is also working on identifying Iowa family support and parenting education networks and convening partners in the fall.

Early Care, Health and Education System Building Activities

- Iowa Learns Council (Team 1) - March 26
- Iowa Empowerment Board Meeting – March 5
- Systems Financing Project Oversight Committee – February 11
- ECHE Congress Day on the Hill - February 3 & 4
- State Department Directors Meeting - February 11
- Northwest Iowa Community Empowerment/HFA - February 12
- Meetings with Smart Start Coach – February 13
- Early Childhood Core Stakeholders Meeting – February 19
- ECHE Congress Planning Meeting, February 26
- Empowerment Fiscal Accountability Work Group – March 19
- ECHE Public Engagement Work Group – March 22
- Iowa ECE Professional Development Group – March 23

The Iowa Empowerment Board is seeking interested Iowa residents to fill current and future open positions on the board.

If you know of someone who would be interested, please have that person fill out and send to the Governor's office a **Gubernatorial Appointment Resume**, which can be found at <http://www.governor.state.ia.us/boards/gubernatorial.pdf>.

Also, if you or the candidate would notify Shanell Wagler at Shanell.Wagler@iowa.gov so she will have knowledge of the applicant when the Governor's staff receives it.

The Iowa Empowerment Board Seeks Nominees for Board Appointments

Administrative Update – Continued February 2004 - March 2004

Other Events and Activities

Prevent Child Abuse Iowa- Child Abuse Prevention Conference

April 19 –20, 2004
Holiday Inn University Park
West Des Moines
<http://www.pcaiowa.org>

Region VII 2004 Annual

Head Start Conference

May 26 - 28, 2004
Westin Crown Center Hotel
Kansas City, MO
<http://www.r7hsa.com/regionvii/2004ConfSchedule.pdf>
<http://www.r7hsa.com/regionvii/2004Confregisform.pdf>

Success 4 Specialized Services Group

**Summer Institute 2004
August 4, 2004
Hotel Gateway Center, Ames**

Community Empowerment Performance Accountability Training April 13, 27 & 29

Site Visits/Technical Assistance Activities

- Performance Accountability Training (Pilot site) Ft. Dodge – February 11
- Tama County Empowerment Board Planning Meeting, Feb 10
- Family Connections/HFA Model/Prenatal; Mason City – February 2
- Marion County – February 13
- Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts meeting - February 18
- Winnebago County – Feb. 27
- Tama County Board Meeting - March 2
- Clinton/Jackson Counties – March 18
- Johnson County – March 18
- Cherokee, Lyon, Plymouth and Sioux Counties (NW Iowa) – March 23
- Allamakee, Howard, Winneshiek and Clayton Counties (HAWC) – March 25

Linkages/Outreach Activities

- Promise Jobs Coordinators - March 3
- Performance Measures Group - March 5 & 19
- AGA Governance Advisory Team – February 24
- Early Childhood Assessment group - March 10
- Family Connection/ HFI - February
- Community Action Academy - February 3 -6
- Iowa Child Protection Council - February 10
- Early Learning Standards Writing Committee - February 13, March 23
- Promise Jobs/FaDSS Coordination meeting - February 16
- DHS Liaison Meeting - February 16, March 15
- Early Learning Standards Executive Committee - February 20
- Family Resource Network Parent Leadership Training - February 25
- Early ACCESS Council – March 19
- Early ACCESS Liaison meeting - March 15
- Child Development Coordination Council - March 17
- FaDSS Council meeting - March 18
- Early Learning Standards Core Stakeholders - March 29
- Public Health Spring Conference - March 30–31
- Public Health Spring Conference, Family Centered workshop – March 30

The state Community Empowerment Technical Assistance Team is offering training in the selection and use of performance measures for contracting, monitoring progress and for reporting in annual reports. The training is open to local contacts and coordinators, board members and providers. A review of the Common Language and examples will be presented. Hands-on time is scheduled for local areas to bring their current measures or annual reports and assistance will be provided to refine the work for each area in attendance.

Sessions will be held from 9:00 AM to noon on the following dates and locations:

April 13 – Creston, Southwestern Community College
April 13 – Coralville, Coralville Community Library
April 27 – Waverly Civic Center, Waverly
April 29 – United Way Conference Center, Des Moines

ECHE System Building Updates

Links to Empowerment Web sites

State: www.empowerment.state.ia.us

Benton County

www.bcempowerment.com

Buchanan Delaware Fayette:

www.bdfempowerment.org

Cerro Gordo, Hancock, Worth:

www.cghwempowerment.com

Dubuque:

www.empowerdubuque.org

Floyd, Chickasaw, Mitchell:

www.fmcempowerment.com

HAWC (Howard, Allamakee,

Winneshiek):

www.HAWC-Iowa.com

Hardin

<http://www.empowerhardin.com/>

Humboldt, Hamilton, Wright

www.buildingfamilies.net

Jasper:

<http://www.jaspercountyempowerment.org/>

Johnson:

<http://www.jcempowerment.org>

Linn:

www.linnempowerment.homestead.com/homepage.html

Marshall:

www.youthandviolence.org

Pocahontas, Calhoun and

Webster:

www.linking-families.com

Polk:

www.humanservicesplanningalliance.org

Scott:

www.scottcountyempowerment.org/

Story:

<http://www.storycountyfamily.org>

Washington:

www.empowerwashington.org

Woodbury:

www.siouxlandship.org

Send us your web site address
and we'll include it in the next
newsletter.

Iowa's Early Childhood Core Stakeholders

The Early Care Stakeholders last met on February 19, 2004.

The current chairs of the six component workgroups have met and identified the need to have co-chairs for each group. For each there would be one co-chair from state government and one not from state government. The workgroups will meet at least once prior to the May 18th meeting. The co-chairs of all the workgroups will meet quarterly, the month prior to the full stakeholder meeting, to develop the agenda.

A state agency liaison team, composed of state agency decision makers, has been established to be kept apprised of workgroup and stakeholder work and recommendations in developing the system. This team will meet on an ad-hoc basis to provide feedback and support as needed.

A subgroup has been formed to make a recommendation, from suggested names, an identity name and logo for the core stakeholder group. This will be presented at the May meeting for discussion and consensus.

Iowa Learns Council

On February 26, Governor Vilsack met with representatives of the three teams to review preliminary recommendations from each team. The early childhood team, or Team 1, was represented by John Calhoun (Woodbury County Empowerment) and Kathryn Erickson (Davenport Schools), and Chris Carman (Linn County Child Development Center). The preliminary recommendations from team one:

1. Build an integrated, comprehensive early care, health and education system.
2. Support the implementation of Iowa's Early Learning Standards and assure the standards are incorporated in to the early care, health and education system.
3. Promote seamless transitions between the system of early care, health and education (ECHE) and the K-12 system by developing strategies that incorporate the implementation of comprehensive transition plans that involve key partners, including families, early childhood and K-12 programs, communities and the State.
4. Provide universal preschool for 3-4 year olds using the Shared Visions model.
5. Identify and provide communities and early childhood providers a resource guide of recommended research and/or evidence-based family support services, including child care, to support the parents of young children and to assist them in being their child's first and best teacher.

Team one will be meeting in March to refine the recommendations and action steps. A final set of recommendations is due to the Governor this Fall.

For more information on the Iowa Learns Council, visit:

<http://www.state.ia.us/iowalearns/>.

Urban Education Network (UEN) Early Childhood Financing Study Group

On April 20th, the UEN school superintendents, state agency directors and invited business partners will meet to hear Rob Gruenwald of the Federal Reserve Bank speak about the importance of investing in early childhood to assure a quality work force. Charles Bruner, Child and Family Policy Center, will present a draft business plan for financing an early care, health and education system. Tony Solari of the North Carolina, will facilitate a discussion with the invitees on how this business plan could be improved to increase public/private in support for young children and their families.

SFY '05 Budgeting and Funding



Even though the legislature has not finished up with appropriations for state fiscal year 2005, many community empowerment boards have begun or will begin the local process for allocating Early Childhood and School Ready funds in the community.

While both funds are intended to support children, 0 – 5 years old, to be healthy, being ready for school, to live in safe communities, to live in nurturing and secure families and to have access to nurturing and secure child care environments, there are some differences on what activities may be funded. As Community Empowerment Boards make funding decisions, it is suggested they visit the Community Empowerment web-site and in particular, take a look at the following Tool Kit pages which address fiscal issues.

Empowerment Tool Kit:

http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us/EmpowermentTools/Kit_documents/tool_kit_docs.htm

For funding parameters (Tool G):

http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us/EmpowermentTools/kit_tools/ToolG.pdf

For fiscal clarifications (Tool H):

http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us/EmpowermentTools/kit_tools/ToolH.pdf

Forgivable Loans for Child Care Centers

These competitive loans are offered yearly through the NetWork's Child Care Center Business Practices program. Statewide, ten child care centers with the highest regional scores received the first round of forgivable loan awards. Meeting a specific set of criteria over a three year period allows the loan to be forgiven. Loans are funded by federal Child Care Development Funds earmarked for child care quality improvement through the Iowa Department of Human Services; and, are available to licensed, registered non-profit center programs. In addition to direct financial assistance through competitive start-up and expansion forgivable loans, emergency loans are available to centers throughout the year.

The Business Practices Program is designed to assist child care centers in the development and implementation of sound management practices. The key feature of the Business Practices Program is training for center administrators and program technical assistance. This is available to all child care center programs in Iowa regardless of receiving a forgivable loan.

For more information contact Kathy Zarghami, 515-883-1206 ex. 130

Child Care Health Consultant Activity Log Training Announced

Empowerment Area Coordinators are invited to attend an ICN training on Thursday, **April 8 from 1-3 p.m.** via the Iowa Communications Network about use of the Child Care Health Consultant Activity Log. Many Empowerment Areas support a local child care health consultant. Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC) are specially trained registered nurses who have successfully completed the Iowa Training Project for Child Care Health Consultants and work in local public health agencies, maternal and child health agencies, or Head Start or Early Head Start settings to provide training, consultation, and resources for early care and education providers. You are encouraged to attend the training with your child care health consultant. The Iowa Department of Public Health is currently accepting online registration at www.idph.state.ia.us/register. More details about this training are available on the IDPH Conferences page at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/conferences.asp>, including steps to complete the online registration process. Please contact Kim Tichy if you have questions about this session.

Meet Michael Bergan



Iowa Empowerment Board Member

A resident of Winneshiek County in Northeast Iowa, Michael Bergan serves as a board member of HAWC Partnership for Children, a local empowerment area in Howard, Allamakee, Winneshiek and Clayton Counties. Michael is serving his second term as a county supervisor and has been involved in Decat and Empowerment collaboration for over seven years.

As a state board member, Michael hopes to increase collaboration between state departments and foster increased opportunities in local areas. The inclusion of Iowa Department of Economic Development in our board activities is an important step in increasing business and industry cooperation in the empowerment effort. This should serve as an example to local areas to improve collaboration in this area. It is also important to provide technical assistance and insure accountability in our local empowerment areas. We need to provide tools for each local area to address needs which may be unique to their area.

Michael has been involved with several local agencies providing services to children, families, and the elderly. These include Northland Agency on Aging, Aase Haugen Nursing Home Board, Family Development and Self Sufficiency in Northeast Iowa, the local DHS Advisory Board, North Iowa Juvenile Detention Center Board, Northeast Iowa Mental Health Center Board, and Spectrum Industries, an agency providing sheltered workshop and employment training to individuals with disabilities.

Michael serves in other statewide roles in his involvement with the Iowa State Association of Counties and as a county supervisor representative on the state Mental Health Developmental Disabilities Commission. The MH/DD Commission plays a role in reviewing and making recommendations for changes in service delivery to Iowans with disabilities involving mental illness, developmental disabilities and brain injury. An extensive redesign initiative has been developed for the adult system over the past two years. The commission is organizing an initiative in the children's area this year. The example of cooperation and collaboration in empowerment will provide a model, which can assist us in utilizing prevention, early identification, and intervention in the children's system.

Michael is married with two children. His spouse, Carol, is an elementary/middle school reading teacher. His seventeen year old daughter, Johanna, is currently working as a page in the Iowa House of Representatives. He also has a twelve year old daughter, Clara. Michael works as an accountant, primarily focusing on income tax service in addition to his duties as a county supervisor.

Local Community Empowerment Areas Unite With New Association

Prior to the regularly scheduled Empowerment Contacts meeting on February 18th, some community empowerment coordinators met to continue an effort to organize themselves as representatives for young children and their families. They adopted a name for their network, the **Association for Iowa's Children**. They are in the process of producing a website that will serve as a training tool and as a communication network to better present the issues of children with one voice in legislative agendas, advocating for children, and promote programs that serve children. For more information contact, John Calhoun, Woodbury County, calhounj@aea12.k12.ia.us or at (712) 274-6000 ext. 6364.

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." - Henry Ford

NAEYC's Week of the Young Child

April 18-24, 2004

How will some of Iowa's communities celebrate Week of the Young Child?

The purpose of the Week of the Young Child is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.



Taylor County

Like last year, center and home care providers, including Head Start, will be invited to bring the children in their care for snacks and a balloon launch.

Cerro Gordo, Hancock, and Worth Counties

The area partnership will be advertising in all forms of media to get the awareness out to the public that early education and support for children are important. Radio advertisements will be played during the "week of the young child" to promote awareness. A press release will be given to all written and video media to promote the awareness of the "week of the young child."

Johnson County:

3rd Annual Celebration of the Young Child - Sycamore Mall in Iowa City on Saturday, April 17 from 10 to 12. Empowerment has been an active force in the organization of this event from the beginning. In fact, the activity began as one of our projects under the Technical Assistance grant and has turned in to an annual event and sparked the re-forming of the local AEYC group. The activities include display tables from local groups (preschools, agencies, councils, etc), many of whom have child-focused activities (coloring, sensory tables, seed planting, etc). The local fire, police, and ambulance departments bring vehicles for children to "tour" and there will be a child car seat safety check and safety child fingerprinting. Coming To Your Senses/Lions Club will be offering no-cost vision screenings. There are demonstrations by local children's dance troupe, jump rope group, Kindermusik, story time by Waldenbooks, and a local musician leading children's songs. Empowerment distributes early literacy materials.

Buchanan, Delaware and Fayette Counties:

Building Direction for Families is celebrating April as Early Childhood Month! Calendar of events:

April 3 – 9-1:00 Early Childhood Fair -Fayette County Fairgrounds in West Union

April 7 – 6:30 pm – Appreciation Night for BDF Early Childhood and Preschool Professionals – Cedar Lodge - Manchester

April 8 – 6:30 pm - Appreciation Night for BDF Early Childhood and Preschool Professionals – Sportsman – Oelwein

April 17 – 9-1:00 Early Childhood Fair – Delaware Fairgrounds in Manchester

April 24 – 9-1:00 Early Childhood Fair – Falcon Center in Independence

Ida County:

Ida County Empowerment and State Farm Insurance will sponsor the Third Annual Health and Safety Fair, Thursday, April 1, 2004 3:30-6:30 pm.

Scheduled Events:

STORY CORNER- CUTIE PIE CONTEST- AGE APPROPRIATE GAMES

Drawings for gift baskets every 20 minutes.

There will also be: Car Seat safety checks (Faulty car seats can be replaced by purchasing at reduced prices); Free Lead Screening; Free finger printing and child ID (Ida County Sheriff's Department).

Pottawattamie County

Pottawattamie Empowerment Board will be purchasing materials with our TANF carry forward to support the "Quality Child Care Awareness and Education Campaign." The materials have been developed by Iowa State University Extension and the theme is "Child Care Lasts a Lifetime". Our Quality Childcare Taskforce (an Empowerment subcommittee) will be implementing this campaign and distributing the materials to our target audiences: families, providers, business and community leaders. We will also be coordinating this campaign with other initiatives such as : SWIAEYC Magic Show event on April 24, Prevent Child Abuse Pottawattamie County/Shaken Baby Taskforce Parade at Bayless Park, and the Building Families Boutique breakfast and auction on April 17.

Bremer, Butler, Franklin, Grundy Counties

Together 4 Families (Bremer, Butler, Franklin, Grundy Counties) will be showing the *I Am Your Child - Why Early Childhood Matters* video to the local planning committees in each of the four counties and the Empowerment/Decat Planning Committee. CCR&R has ordered a number of videos to distribute to providers to share in their programs. This will be occurring throughout the month of April, not just for that week.

TYLENOL(R) & Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation National Child Care Teacher Awards Ceremony Honors Two Iowans

The TYLENOL® & Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation National Child Care Teacher Awards, an annual program celebrating excellence in quality child care, will honor 52 child care teachers, representing 22 states, for their professionalism and commitment to the children they teach. In addition, one winner will be named the TYLENOL® & Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation National Child Care Teacher of the Year. This year's awards will be held on March 31st. Each award recipient will receive a \$1,000 grant: \$500 to implement their proposed project; \$500 to acknowledge the special dedication of child care.

Joy McManus, Apple Tree Children's Center (Urbandale) and **Roberta Morgan**, Apple Tree Children's Center (West Des Moines) will be two of the Iowa honorees.

Ms. McManus' project is *Gardening In The Classroom* and Ms. Morgan's is called *Literacy: A Multifaceted Jewel*.

The TLLCCF is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of child care and early childhood education for all children, by supporting teachers, raising awareness of the need for affordable quality child care and by partnering with business and government in making child care a priority.

2005 Tylenol® & Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation National Child Care Teacher Awards application will be available in July 2004.

For more information about the TLLCCF visit www.childcareabc.org.

REFLECTIONS OF 27 YEARS OF CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL

Child Care Advocate- Joanne Lane- to Retire

*The following is an excerpt,
penned by Ms. Lane,
for the Northeast Iowa
CCR&R newsletter*

The foundation of Child Care Resource and Referral of Northeast Iowa was laid with a 17 month (February 1, 1977-June 30, 1978) pilot project for community coordinated child care. Under the leadership of the Long Range Planning Division of the Cedar Valley United Way, the Exceptional Persons, Inc. agency was identified to serve as the managing agency. Serving the child care provider was the first focus of the Project which, within three years moved into the second of the CCR&R core services, serving the community/employer. A survey that identified the difficulties that parents encountered in finding child care and their concerns about the safety and quality of care that was available, thus the parent referral (the third CCR&R core service) service was established.

In the early 1990s, Iowa established 5 CCR&R Regions with one designated lead agency responsible for the delivery of the Iowa Code defined core services. As the CCR&R System has developed, specialized services/staff positions have been added that include the child care health consultant, child care home consultants, and infant/toddler specialist.

The development of Iowa's Early Learning Standards gives recognition of the significant role of the child care provider/early educator. CCR&R working with our partners—the Area Education Agencies, Title V Child Health Grantees, Head Start and Empowerment will provide support to parents as they make informed decisions regarding the early education/care for their children, the early educators/care providers, and the communities/employers.

This CCR&R Director has had the wonderful opportunity to experience the 27 years of CCR&R evolution in Region 2. I will miss the opportunity of working with the capable, competent and creative CCR&R staff who I also call WONDERFUL! I ask that the same opportunities for partnering and collaborative delivery of services afforded to me, be provided to my successor.

How Can Empowerment Boards sponsor Child Care Apprenticeship in Your Community?



One way to significantly improve the quality of child care is through a special program available now in several parts of the state. Child Care Apprenticeship sites are registered through the U.S. Department of Labor. As with other apprenticeship programs, an apprentice is a newer or less educated employee in a child care program who may be looking to grow, learn and improve as a child care provider. An apprentice completes 4000 hours of on-the-job training, supervised by an experienced mentor or journeyman, as well as 288 hours of course work (roughly 20 credit hours of early childhood education classes). This usually can be completed in a two year period, as a person is employed at a licensed center/preschool or registered child development home. Several registered apprenticeship sites have been successfully operating in Iowa for the past three years.

The Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network, with funding from the Iowa Department of Human Services and support from U.S. Department of Labor staff, is actively recruiting additional sites to become registered. Participants in registered Child Care Apprenticeship programs are encouraged to apply for T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA scholarship funding, through the Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network, to assist them in completing the college credit portion of the project.

Black Hawk County Empowerment (Cedar Valley's Promise Empowerment) has successfully supported apprenticeship for several years. Cedar Valley's Promise Empowerment has provided the funding to support a part-time coordinator and tuition scholarships for the apprenticeship program. Currently, six child care centers and thirteen child development home providers are participating in this program. For more information about the specifics of this project, contact Stacie Steveson at Child Care Resource & Referral of NE Iowa at 319-233-0804 or 800-475-0804.

An Empowerment board could also choose to sponsor a child care program, or several programs, to become a registered Apprenticeship site. While there is no cost to be registered in by the Department of Labor, a center would have costs. These might involve providing funding for quality improvements, assisting with tuition costs, providing stipends for the center to allow the mentor/journeyman and apprentice to meet regularly for consultation, and other identified needs. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA scholarships may be obtained for the apprentices of a given program, and may be supported with funds from the local Empowerment area. Another option would be to set up a full apprenticeship project, with partnership from your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency and other early childhood community partners, as was done in Black Hawk County.

Iowa Child Care and Early Education and Iowa's U. S. Department of Labor staff are pleased to attend local Empowerment Board meetings or early childhood education classes or conferences to answer questions about the projects. The TEACH/Apprenticeship program is supported by with public/private partnerships, primarily through the Iowa Department of Human Services with federal funding through the Child Care and Development Block Grant Quality improvement initiative.

For more information, contact Barb Merrill, Apprenticeship/T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project Director, Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, 218 Sixth Avenue, Suite 710, Des Moines, Iowa, 50309 or Jan Smith, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Apprenticeship & Training, Room 715, 210 Walnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309. Email your questions to Barb at bmerrill@iowachildnetwork.org or call (515) 883-1206. Jan may be reached at (515) 284-4690 or smith.jan@dol.gov.

Early Learning Left Out: An Examination of Public Investments in Education and Development by Child Age (February 2004)



“While 85% of a child's core brain structure is formed by age three, less than 4% of public investments on education and development have occurred by that time.

“This under-investment in young children also appears to be the greatest for the very earliest and most formative years of life.”



A new report, *Early Learning Left Out*, written by Charles Bruner and Victor Elias of the Child and Family Policy Center (Iowa) and Debbie Stein and Stephanie Schaefer of Voices for America's Children, may be found at: <http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org/>

Excerpts from the Executive Summary

This study, *Early Learning Left Out*, presents the most comprehensive picture, to date, of public investments in the education and development of children by three age groupings – the early learning years (roughly 0–5), the school-aged years (roughly 6–18), and the college-aged years (roughly 19–23). It is based upon detailed analysis of state, federal, and school district spending in 12 states [including Iowa] across the country, conducted by organizations in those states with strong understanding of early childhood services and state budgeting. It is designed to give policy makers and the public a better understanding of overall public investments on education and development of children, in the context of the research on brain growth and child development and the research on potential returns on investment from early learning programs.

Some key findings, include:

- While 85% of a child's core brain structure is formed by age three, less than 4% of public investments on education and development have occurred by that time.
- On a per child basis, public investments in education and development are more than seven times greater during the school-aged years (\$5,410 per child) than during the early learning years (\$740 per child).
- On a per child basis, public investments in education and development are nearly five times greater during the college-aged years (\$3,664 per youth/young adult) than during the early learning years.
- This means that for every dollar society invests in the education and development of a school-aged child, society invests only 13.7 cents in that child during the earliest learning years – a major investment gap.
- This under-investment in young children also appears to be greatest for the very earliest and most formative years of life (the infant and toddler years – 0–2).
- While most states have a number of early learning programs, which may give the impression that a great deal is being done, most are small in scale and do not reach a large segment of the young child population, nor provide very comprehensive services or supports.

In addition to the analyses of state spending, the report also synthesizes existing research on early learning needs and potential returns on investments, providing evidence that:

- Families with young children are those who are most likely to struggle economically and are in the least position to be able to privately pay for additional educational and developmental services and supports.
- Comprehensive, high quality investments in education and development in the early years have demonstrated high monetary returns-on-investment – both to government and society in reduced social costs and increased economic activity and to the individuals served in improved educational and economic status.
- There is strong public support and advocacy for expanding investments in early learning and closing the investment gap, because there is evidence of need and the potential for societal gains from investments.

The study concludes that closing the investment gap will require increased commitments at both the national and state levels.

Who's Caring for Iowa's Children?

Early Care and Education Workforce Study 2003

"The Iowa Early Care and Education Workforce Study highlights that those who care for Iowa's children report

- *Low levels of education,*
- *Inadequate training history,*
- *Low income,*
- *Lack of benefits,*
- *High turnover rates.*

All of these factors directly impact the quality of care our children receive."

The Iowa Early Care & Education Professional Development Project (IECEPDP) conducted this study through the Iowa State University Extension Community Development–Data, Information, and Analysis Laboratory (CD-DIAL) and the ISU Department of Human Development and Family Studies. For more information regarding this study, please call (515) 883-1206 <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/cd-dial> or <http://www.iaeceprofdev.org/pubs/index.html>.

From the brochure:

Research confirms that caregivers with higher education levels offer higher quality early education programs with more positive child outcomes. This is particularly true when caregiver education is in child development and early childhood education.

Training:

Caregivers who have completed results-based training (e.g., CDA) provide higher quality training than caregivers who have not. Caregivers also need regular in-service training to stay current with best care and education practices and to comply with state regulations.

Income & Benefits:

Individuals who receive adequate wages are more likely to remain in the early care and education field. Benefits such as health insurance, retirement savings, and vacation pay are also critical to maintaining a quality child care workforce.

Turnover:

A child's emotional health and ability to form positive, loving relationships are greatly influenced by the bond developed with a caregiver over time. It is critical that the child does not experience frequent changes in caregivers.

Funding:

Child care programs need a stable source of funding in order to build quality programs. Funding directly impacts the income and benefits, training and education opportunities, and ability to retain quality caregivers. Parental fees are not a stable funding source and parents cannot bear the full cost of quality.

The Iowa Early Care and Education Workforce Brochure that was developed in conjunction with CD-DIAL and ISU Extension is now available. You can get your own personal copy at: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/SP222.pdf>

Iowa Child Development Coordinating Council (CDCC) Annual Report Released

The complete Annual Report can be found on the Iowa Department of Education website:

www.state.ia.us/educate.

The Iowa Child Development Coordinating Council (CDCC) report details annual results from the two state-funded early childhood programs for at-risk children and families: Shared Visions Parent Support programs for children aged birth to three and their families, which provided support for 1,000 families and 1,537 children; and Shared Vision Preschool Programs for children 3 to 5 years old. The Shared Vision Preschool Programs served 2,360 children in 51 counties through public schools, Head Start agencies, and licensed non-profit childcare centers.

Results from the Preschool program show:

- **Kindergarten Readiness** - Shared Visions graduates met or exceeded kindergarten teachers' performance expectations in reading, writing, and problem solving.
- **Academic performance** – More than 80 percent of the Shared Visions graduates were rated at or above average in reading and writing at the end of kindergarten.
- **Special Education Referrals** - Fewer than eight percent of Shared Visions graduates were receiving special education services by the end of kindergarten.
- **Long-term Effect** - Second grade teachers rated Shared Visions graduates higher on internal assets, including positive values, social competencies, and positive identity, than children who did not participate in Shared Visions Preschool Programs.

Prevent Child Abuse Iowa Annual Conference "Cherish The Child" April 19 –20, 2004



The 2004 Child Abuse Prevention Conference, Cherish the Child, will be held April 19 –20 at the Holiday Inn University Park, West Des Moines.

Keynote speaker Robin Karr-Morse, the former Director of Parent Training for the Oregon child welfare system, talks to audiences about the daunting challenge of raising healthy children. She not only addresses the influence of environment on children's actions, she uses research in neuron biology to back up her studies. The co-author of *Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence* offers a shocking but empowering message: to understand violent behavior, we must look earlier – before adolescence, before grade school, before preschool – to the cradle. Karr-Morse presents startling evidence that points to the earliest months of life as the time when violent behavior is born and cultivated. Recent research shows that infancy is the stage during which the foundations for trust, empathy, conscience, and lifelong learning and thinking are laid down – or during which a predisposition toward violent behavior is "hardwired" into the brain.



For more information about the conference or to access the brochure:
<http://www.pcaiowa.org>

Free Vision-Screening Services for Iowa's Young Children

Contact a Lions Club member in your community to learn how to receive the free service, or contact the *Coming to Your Senses* office (319-353-7616 or ctys@uiowa.edu) to be put in touch with one.

Coming to Your Senses is a joint project of the Lions Clubs of Iowa and the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences dedicated to enhancing early detection and treatment of vision impairments in young children (target population 6 to 48 months of age) through screening and public education.

Lions Clubs throughout Iowa have been trained to conduct vision screenings, using an MTI PhotoScreener. Screenings are typically arranged in childcare facilities, or advertised to the community and held in community buildings. Parents must complete a Consent Form prior to their child being screened. It takes approximately ten minutes per child to conduct a vision screening; it's as simple as having your picture taken. Screening results are sent to the University of Iowa for interpretation, and then returned to parents.

Information is also available on the Internet: <http://webeye.ophth.uiowa.edu/ctys>.

"I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift should be curiosity." - Eleanor Roosevelt



*This article is submitted by
Anita Hampton
Early Childhood Specialist,
ISU Extension Henry County Office*



Project REACH of Henry County has implemented a new program for the 2003-2004 year. The Star*REACH program creates a small, but elite and ongoing group of child care providers committed to change and improvement in their child care programs. Child care providers who had earned thirty or more hours of training with the Early Childhood Specialist through home visits or workshops were eligible to participate in Star*REACH. Nine providers fit the criteria, with five choosing to participate. Each participant must agree to 1) a pre-and post-assessment by an outside observer who has achieved reliability in Thelma Harms' Family Day Care Rating Scale, 2) submitting a written Individual Improvement Plan, and 3) completing any reading or assignment between workshops, and 4) implementing improvement in their program. The program consists of six 2 1/2 hour workshops, each focusing on an area of the Rating Scale: Basic Care, Language and Reasoning, Learning Activities, Social Development, Space and Furnishings and Adult Needs.

Each workshop is held in a different participant's home, where the group is able to assist the host with any program, facility or organizational need. As a follow-up to the group workshop, a monthly private one-hour consultation is held between the participant and the early childhood specialist. Any special concerns or needs of the provider are discussed. Progress with the Individual Improvement Plan is monitored. Upon successful completion and improvement, the participants are awarded a \$300 stipend at a celebratory event that includes the families that they serve. These participants are expected to become mentors to the next class of Star*REACH participants.

Plans are underway to expand the program to include childcare centers next fall. A single childcare center with multiple staff will be piloted. The center will agree to 1) pre- and post-assessment agreed upon by the board (if applicable), director, and staff, 2) completing any readings or assignments between workshops, and 3) implementing improvement in their program. Staff will attend an hour-long workshop during the day when there is low child-staff interaction time (i.e. naptime or the end of the day) on an alternate week basis for seventeen weeks. Topics will follow the Thelma Harms' Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale. In addition, one-hour consultation between the director and the Early Childhood Specialist will be conducted on a monthly basis to monitor progress and discuss change strategies. Upon successful completion and improvement, the center will be awarded a \$500 stipend and the staff members will receive an additional stipend at a celebratory event with the families that they serve.

Project REACH has been committed to improving the quality of childcare in Henry County for four years through regular on-site visits to childcare programs and monthly group workshops. Because Star*REACH is in addition to the regular schedule, participants are able to meet with the early childhood specialist up to nine hours per month. Quality is promoted by educating small, but committed and industrious groups of childcare providers. Star*REACH promises to make an impact on hundreds of children, a few at a time.