

Iowa Community Empowerment Newsletter

Questions/Comments:
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Community Empowerment Board Member Training

*Iowa's Early
Childhood Vision:*

**Every child,
beginning at birth,
will be healthy and
successful.**

Regional training for Community Empowerment Board Members was conducted in September in Cedar Rapids and Atlantic. Two hundred people participated in the training.

As part of the training day, a review of basic board member functions/roles was discussed as well as specific items about being on a Community Empowerment Board. Leslie Anderson, our coach with the Smart Start grant shared specific examples of successful stories from North Carolina with helpful handouts.

A group from the Head Start Association and parents that participate with Head Start shared their knowledge, expertise, and story of why Head Start is a great example of quality care for young children and the importance of quality care. We appreciate Head Start's willingness to work together for this training.



Head Start Presenters during the Atlantic training.

Effective September 15th, Kris Bell temporarily assumed a position of education policy advisor to the Governor and Lt. Governor. She will be performing these duties until December 31st.

During this interim period, central contact is Shanell Wagler at (515) 281-4321/email to: Shanell.wagler@iowa.gov.

Thanks for your support during this adjustment period.

Administrative Update –

July – September 2003



Upcoming Events

Iowa Empowerment Board

October 3, 2003
10:00-2:00
Blank Park Zoo

Iowa Empowerment Board

2004 Schedule
January 9, 2004
March 5, 2004
May 7, 2004
July 9, 2004
September 10, 2004

Early Care, Health and Education Congress

November 18-19, 2003
Scheman Center, Ames

Day on the Hill

February 3 & 4, 2004
Hotel Fort Des Moines
State Capitol

October Board Meeting and Related Activities

The next Iowa Empowerment Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 3. Meeting time is 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We will be meeting at the Blank Park Zoo, Discovery Center. A strong emphasis on advocacy will occur during this meeting.

Update on the Iowa Department of Public Health Grant Opportunity

Iowa, through the Department of Public Health Bureau of Family Health applied for and received a State Maternal and Child Healthy Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Grant. IDPH will partner with Community Empowerment to develop the single comprehensive plan for Iowa early childhood system.

Iowa's Early Care, Health and Education Congress

The conference dates will be November 18-19, at the Scheman Center in Ames, Iowa. A main focus will be on economic growth around early childhood issues. – Mildred Warner, a well-known economist will make a keynote address as will Joan Lombardi, from the National Institute for Early Education Research, and Kim Ellis from the Ruby Payne organization.

Locally, the department directors that serve on the Iowa Empowerment Board will host a workshop entitled, *Iowa's Early Learning Future*. They will describe current initiatives including the Iowa Learns Council, the Governor's Leadership Agenda, including the 90/90 goal and will also seek input from the audience.

Smart Start Activities

- Core Stakeholders Meeting – July 9, September 9
- Early Care, Health, and Education Symposium – July 10
- Iowa Empowerment Board Meeting – July 11
- Planning Meeting Conference Call – August 20
- Planning Meeting Conference Call – August 27
- Preparation Time, HRSA Grant Planning – September 8
- Polk County Planning Group – September 9
- Community Empowerment Board Member Training – September 10 and 11
- Planning Meeting Conference Call – September 26

Site Visits/Technical Assistance Activities

- Washington County Empowerment Area – July 2
- 11-County Regional Meeting in Osceola – July 15
- Scott County Empowerment Area – July 22
- Hamilton, Humboldt, Wright Board Meeting – July 28
- Madison County Board Meeting – August 12
- ADLM Board Meeting – August 21
- Empowerment Contacts/Coordinators Meeting – September 24

Administrative Update – July – September 2003 – cont.

Linkages/Outreach Activities

- Empowerment State Advisory Council – July 9
- Strength-Based Program Management Training – July 17
- Quality Workgroup (for Child Care Advisory Council) – July 22, August 25
- Interview with Con Hogan – July 23
- Congress Planning – July 24, August 28, September 25
- Early Learning Standards – July 24, August 26
- ISU Research Group – July 25, August 19
- TEACH Steering Committee – July 28
- Enduring Concepts for Early ACCESS – August 1
- Business Practices Training, Leadership Team – August 1
- Polk County Father Involvement Group – August 7
- Iowa Child Protection Council – August 12
- Child Care Advisory Council – August 14
- Assessment Group – August 15
- Barn Raising Conference – August 14-16
- Prevent Child Abuse Conference Planning – August 27
- Steve Scott, Prevent Child Abuse – September 3
- Early Childhood Advocacy Committee – September 4
- Urban Education Network – Sue Donielson – September 8
- Kindergarten Readiness Conference – Chicago – September 15-17
- Child Development Coordinating Council – September 17
- Early ACCESS Council – September 19
- Systems Financing Project Oversight Committee – September 23

Mandatory newborn hearing screening legislation passes.

On May 1, 2003, Governor Vilsack signed House File 454 that mandates universal newborn hearing screening and data reporting in all birthing hospitals in Iowa. All newborns will be screened for hearing loss, and procedures will be in place to assure that needed re-screens, confidential data sharing, and referrals to services occur.

Democratic and Republican legislators sponsored the bill in both the House and Senate. Sponsors included Representative Ro Foege (D) from Mount Vernon, Representative Brad Hansen (R) from Carter Lake, Senator Nancy Boettger (R) of Harlan and Senator Amanda Ragan (D) of Mason City. Other advocates for the legislation included the Iowa Chapter of March of Dimes, the Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Iowa Medical Society, the Iowa Speech-Language and Hearing Association and the many members of the Iowa Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Advisory Committee and their respective agencies. Parent testimony and encouragement provided important influence during the legislative process.

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is developing the Administrative Rules for implementing the new law. The rules will be open for public comment after September 12th. To obtain a copy of the rules and more information, contact Denise Ramsey at the IDPH's Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) office (515) 242-5639 or dramsey@idph.state.ia.us. For more information about the legislation as well as Iowa's Early Hearing Detection & Intervention program, check the EHDI web site: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/IAEHDI/>.

Uniting for Iowa's Children Equals Economic Growth

Iowa Early Care Health and Education Congress

**November 18-19, 2003
Scheman Center, Ames**

Brochure and registration information available at:

www.iowachildnetwork.org

Sign up Today!



Economic Growth. These are the buzz words on the lips of Iowa leaders these days. But what do they mean? Jobs, security, homes, savings, and QUALITY EARLY CARE, HEALTH AND EDUCATION. “As a society, we cannot afford to postpone investing in children until they become adults, nor can we wait until they reach school age – a time when it may be too late to intervene. At current levels of investment, the returns to investments in the young are quite high. Therefore the central conclusion is that efficiency would be enhanced if human capital investments were reallocated to the young.” (*Invest in the Very Young*; James Heckman, Ph.D.)

The 11th Annual Iowa Early Care, Health & Education Congress (The Congress) will focus on how important early care, health & education are to the economic growth and stability of Iowa. The Congress will be held November 18 & 19, 2003 at the Scheman Conference Center in Ames and will feature an outstanding line up of speakers including Joan Lombardi, Mildred Warner, Rob Grunewald and Kim Ellis.

Joan Lombardi is one of the nation's leading experts on early childhood education. She is the director of The Children's Project, a non-partisan effort to improve public, private and civic investments in children and families. Mildred Warner is an assistant professor in the department of city and regional planning at Cornell University in New York City. Dr. Warner's research emphasizes the role child care plays as part of the social infrastructure for economic development. Rob Grunewald is a regional economic analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. He co-authored “Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return”, an economic policy paper. Kim Ellis is with aha! Process Inc., an organization devoted to educating professionals and community leaders about the effects of class and poverty on our society. Kim is a former preschool and elementary teacher.

In addition to the featured speakers, The Congress will offer information on successful partnerships involving business and community, quality care – what it is and how it is achieved, tax breaks for families and children, serving immigrant and minority populations, better health for Iowa's children, mandatory child abuse reporting for child care providers and much more. The Congress will open its activities by recognizing recipients of the Gold Seal Award in child care. The Gold Seal Award is presented to child development homes that have achieved accreditation from the National Association for Family Child Care and to licensed child care centers that have achieved accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

In a time of limited resources, the economic challenge is to identify where we are likely to get the most return on our investment. Economic experts are starting to realize that investments in early childhood yield extraordinary returns, far exceeding the return on most investments, public or private. These experts will be available at The Congress to discuss and provide research to help Iowa move toward important investments in children.

This is the second year that The Congress will be offered in conjunction with the annual Iowa Community Empowerment conference. Over 500 attendees from across Iowa are expected for the November conference. More information on The Congress can be found at www.iowachildnetwork.org or by calling Marla Sheffler at (515)883-1206.



**Other Events and
Activities**

**Iowa AEYC State
Conference**

October 10-11, 2003
Polk County Convention
Complex, Des Moines

ICAA Annual Conference

October 20-22, 2003
www.iowacommunityaction.com

**Family Home Visiting
Educational Opportunity**

November 6, 2003
Urbandale Public Library
Urbandale, IA

For registration info.,
contact Jo Hinrichs at
jhinrich@health.state.ia.us

**2004 National Smart
Start Conference**

Building Brighter Futures
January 25-28, 2004
Greensboro, NC
www.ncsmartstart.org

New School-Based Outreach Materials!

Covering Kids and Families has developed a new School-Based Outreach display with accompanying handouts. With the support of national research, these tools demonstrate the connection between health insurance and school performance. The display and handouts include:

Display

- Research Overwhelmingly Demonstrates That...
- What Can You Do?
- School Districts Participating in *hawk-i* Outreach by Referring Families to the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

Handouts

- School Outreach Ideas
- Linking School Performance and Health Insurance

These helpful tools can be found on the Covering Kids and Families Web site at www.idph.state.ia.us/coveringkids under noteworthy news. You can also contact Beth Jones at bjones@idph.state.ia.us or 1-800-383-3826 for additional information.

10 Tips for Getting and Keeping Business Involved

Links to Empowerment Web sites

State: www.empowerment.state.ia.us

Benton County -- NEW!

www.bcempowerment.com

Buchanan Delaware Fayette:

www.bdfempowerment.org

Dubuque: www.empowerdubuque.org

Floyd, Chickasaw, Mitchell:

www.fmccom.org

HAWC (Howard, Allamakee, Winneshiek):

www.HAWC-Iowa.com

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

Humboldt, Hamilton, Wright

www.buildingfamilies.net

Jasper:

<http://www.jaspercountye empowerment.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.scottcountye empowerment.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.

The Families and Work Institute is a non-profit center for research that provides data to inform decision-making on the changing workplace, changing family and changing community. They produced a guide early childhood leaders to work effectively with business partners. Below is a highlight of the 10 tips shared in the guide. If you wish to acquire the entire guide, or any of their many other publications, go to:

www.familiesandwork.org.

Tip #1: **Make the (right) business case**

Many business want to do the right thing, but their main goal is to make a profit. Early childhood leaders too often believe that their own good work is enough to make a compelling case, which can lead to disappointment and missed opportunities. The important thing is to see early childhood through the eyes of a business person, understanding that unless the company benefit, there is no compelling reason to be involved.

Tip #2: **Have Clear Vision, Goals and Strategies**

Businesses' success depends on their ability to reach identified goals with profitable results. Framing your request in language business uses and understands will increase attention to and support for your efforts.

Tip #3: **Know What to Ask For**

To successfully get business help with early childhood concerns, it is critical to understand not only why early childhood matters to business, but how business can best contribute.

Tip #4: **Understand Business Culture and Avoid Jargon**

Think of business as another culture, with its own language and customs that you must understand and respond to. Framing partnership efforts to emphasize what businesses can get out of their involvement can help you get the best thinking and commitment from your business partners.

Tip #5: **Find the Right Champions**

It is critical to identify and get support from champions who have a passion for or reason to care about early childhood issues and who are able to affect decision-making within their businesses.

Tip #6: **Get Business Peers to Help Recruit Others**

Peer recruitment is the most effective way to get the best champions involved. Everyone feels more comfortable joining an effort that trusted colleagues endorse, with people that they know and with whom they enjoy working.

Tip #7: **Measure and Report on Results**

Many businesses use data to inform business decision-making and to assess the impact of their investments. Giving business partners data that substantiates the need for community action provides a rationale for their participation and investment.

Tip #8: **Keep in Touch and Keep it Brief**

Work with business partners to figure out the best ways to keep them up to date about the impact of their efforts, identify new opportunities and encourage ongoing participation.

Tip #9: **Encourage Businesses to Draw from Multiple Sources**

Community leaders can work proactively with businesses to broaden their awareness of all the ways businesses can help and how different kinds of involvement might help achieve multiple business goals.

Tip #10: **Publicly Recognize Business Contributions**

Most businesses see a positive public image as essential to their financial success. Being recognized with awards and media coverage can often lead to an even deeper level of involvement.

Healthy Families America Standards The Model for Iowa's HOPES-HFI Program

*(article submitted by Joane
Hinrichs, Department of Public
Health)*

Nominations to the Iowa Empowerment Board are always welcome. The vacancies for citizen members are appointed by Governor Vilsack based on recommendations from community empowerment boards.

If you know of potential candidates, please send a letter of nomination to the Appointments Coordinator in the Governor's Office.

Please contact the Empowerment office if you need additional information.

Shanell.wagler@iowa.gov or
kris.bell@iowa.gov

Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success – Healthy Families Iowa (HOPES-HFI) is a state funded prevention program designed to support pregnant women and families with young children. HOPES-HFI offers intensive home visiting services to overburdened families. The program is comprehensive and addresses a host of issues such as health, development, school readiness, socialization, parent – child interaction, a link to community services and family coping skills. A trained home visitor develops a relationship with the family based on trust. A family centered approach is essential in the program design to assure the family reaches their optimal level for safety, health, nurturing and can function independently in the community.

HOPES-HFI is funded by a state grant administered by the Iowa Department of Public Health. Organizations in nine counties provide the HOPES-HFI services and follow the national model established by Healthy Families America (HFA) of Prevent Child Abuse, America. HOPES-HFI personnel serving families receive the HFA standard curriculum to assure uniform quality training and certification. The “critical elements” set the standards of practice and quality in the HFA HOPES-HFI program model.

Critical Elements (Standards of Practice) for HFA:

1. Initiate services prenatally or at birth.
2. Use a standardized (i.e., in a consistent way for all families) assessment tool to systematically identify families who are most in need of services. This tool should assess the presence of various factors associated with increased risk for child maltreatment or other poor childhood outcomes. (i.e., social isolation, substance abuse, parental history of abuse in childhood, etc.)
3. Offer services voluntarily and use positive, persistent outreach efforts to build family trust.
4. Offer services intensely (i.e., at least once a week) with well-defined criteria for increasing or decreasing intensity of service and over the long term (i.e., three to five years).
5. Services should be culturally competent, such that staff understands, acknowledges and respects cultural differences among families; staff and materials used should reflect the cultural, linguistic, geographic, racial and ethnic diversity of the population served.
6. Services should focus on supporting the parent(s) as well as supporting the parent-child interaction and child development.
7. At a minimum, all families should be linked to a medical provider to assure optimal health and development (e.g., timely immunizations, well-child care, etc.). Depending on the family's needs, they may also be linked to additional services such as financial, food and housing assistance programs, school readiness programs, child care, job training programs, family support centers, substance abuse treatment programs and domestic violence shelters.
8. Services should be provided by staff with limited caseloads to assure that home visitors have an adequate amount of time to spend with each family to meet their unique and varying needs and to plan for future activities (i.e., for many communities, no more than fifteen families per home visitor on the most intense service level. And, for some communities, the number may need to be significantly lower, e.g., less than ten).

Save the Date!

November 6th, 2003

What: Educational session for any of Iowa's family home visiting programs

Topic: Potential Partnerships for Resources, Services, and Funding to Expand Home Visiting Capacity

Areas to be Addressed:

** Title V Grantees, Child Health Specialty Clinics, Child Health Periodicity Screen, & Medical Home

** XIX Targeted Case Management in Iowa

** Title XIX for Certified Organization's prenatal and post partum home visits

When: 10:30- 3:30,
November 6

Where: Urbandale Library,
Urbandale, IA

Registration Required

because of number of seats available.

No Registration Fee

Lunch and Breaks Costs are payable at the door, and receipts will be provided

For more information, contact Jo Hinrichs at jhinrich@health.state.ia.us

- Service providers should be selected because of their personal characteristics (i.e., non-judgmental, compassionate, ability to establish a trusting relationship, etc.), their willingness to work in or their experience working with culturally diverse communities, and their skills to do the job.
9. A. Service providers should have a framework, based on education or experience, for handling the variety of experiences they may encounter when working with at-risk families. All service providers should receive basic training in areas such as cultural competency, substance abuse, reporting child abuse, domestic violence, drug-exposed infants and services in their community.

B. Service providers should receive intensive training specific to their role to understand the essential components of family assessment and home visitation (i.e., identifying at-risk families, completing a standardized risk assessment, offering services and making referrals, promoting use of preventive health care, securing medical homes, emphasizing the importance of immunizations, utilizing creative outreach efforts, establishing and maintaining trust with families, building upon family strengths, developing an individual family support plan, observing parent-child interactions, determining the safety of the home, teaching parent-child interaction, managing crisis situations, etc.)
 10. Service providers should receive ongoing effective supervision so that they are able to develop realistic and effective plans to empower families to meet their objectives; to understand why a family may not be making progress and how to work with the family more effectively; and to express their concerns and frustrations so that they can see that they are making a difference; and in order to avoid stress-related burnout.

There are nine organizations, one with five sites, awarded the state grant to provide HOPES-HFI. The majority of state grant projects have been awarded additional Community Empowerment funds to expand their capacity to serve families. Eight of the organizations have been through the rigorous process to obtain the National HFA Credentialed award. The remaining five are HFA affiliated and actively involved in the process toward national credentials, with a goal for all HOPES-HFI sites awarded state grant funds to obtain HFA Credentials by FY05. Two of the Community Empowerment Area (CEA) funded sites are HFA affiliated. One is in Pottawattamie county CEA and the other in Northwest Iowa CEA serving Plymouth, Lyon, Sioux and Cherokee counties. Many additional Community Empowerment Areas support a home visiting program that applies all or the majority of the standard practices of the HFA critical elements.

For more information on Healthy Families America:

www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org

For more information on HOPES-HFI: jhinrich@health.state.ia.us

Reading Rockets Launches First Major Spanish Language Web Site For Parents To Help Children Learn To Read

www.ColorinColorado.org
Offers Fun and Colorful
Approach to Literacy

Colorín Colorado is the first major, comprehensive Web site designed specifically for Spanish-speaking parents to help their children learn to read and succeed in school. Packed with information, activities and advice on turning children into confident readers, the Web site is rooted in the vast resources of Reading Rockets, WETA's multi-media initiative that provides information on teaching kids to read and helping those who struggle.

"Across America, children are struggling to learn to read," says Reading Rockets executive director Noel Gunther. "Children from non-English speaking homes face an additional challenge in learning to read in English. We created Colorín Colorado to give these children a better chance. With Hispanics now the largest minority group in America, this kind of service is more important than ever."

The Web site features beautiful illustrations from Caldecott Award-winning illustrator David Diaz and entertaining video clips of celebrities such as the late, beloved Celia Cruz and Miguel Varoni and author Pat Mora. The bilingual Web site is for parents of children between infancy and nine years old and includes simple, powerful ways to help them become successful students. There are ideas on what to do at home, how to help a child succeed in school, fun reading tips and activities, recommended books and more.

"If you're from a Spanish-speaking country, you probably recognize the phrase 'Colorín Colorado'," says Reading Rockets Web site director Pam McKeta. "It's part of a verse that many children and adults say after reading a good story together: '¡Y colorín, colorado, este cuento se ha acabado!' ('Colorín colorado, and that is the end of the story!'). The saying brings back happy memories of childhood for generations of people from many different countries, and making people smile about reading seemed like a perfect way to begin the project."

The site also includes downloadable resources for teachers and librarians to reproduce and distribute to parents in their own communities. "Colorín Colorado can empower parents and other educators with the tools that they need to help children become successful readers," says Reading Rockets research director Latrice Seals. "This site provides information on how parents can use stories, discussions, songs, rhymes and games in either Spanish or English to increase literacy in children."

Colorín Colorado -- www.ColorinColorado.org -- is part of an ongoing WETA initiative called Reading Rockets, which looks at how young children learn to read, why so many kids struggle and what can be done about it. In 2002, Reading Rockets produced "Launching Young Readers," an award-winning educational series on PBS. This fall, a new documentary called "A Tale of Two Schools," which looks at what it takes to turn around a low-performing school, will air on PBS stations across the country. The project's Web site, ReadingRockets.org, offers teaching tips, articles by reading experts, daily news about reading, and exclusive interviews with prominent authors of children's books. Reading Rockets also offers a bilingual print guide in Spanish and English, teleconferences for educators, and the ongoing "Take Me to Your Reader" outreach campaign. Reading Rockets works closely with 24 national partners, including the American Library Association, the International Reading Association and the National Education Association. Reading Rockets is funded primarily by a major grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

Head Start and Community Empowerment

Article submitted by Tom Rendon, Head Start Collaboration Office

Head Start and Empowerment are perfect partners.

Here are two questions to think about:

- What do Empowerment’s administrative rules say about working with Head Start?
- And what do Head Start’s regulations say about working with community empowerment?

Empowerment rules say its purpose is to “establish partnerships between state government and communities...to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local education, health and community services.” Those “local...services” include the Head Start programs across Iowa run by 18 grantees.

Head Start performance standards say that Head Start programs “must take an active role in community planning to encourage strong communication, cooperation, and the sharing of information among agencies and their community partners and to improve the delivery of community services to children and families....Documentation must be maintained to reflect the level of effort undertaken to establish community partnerships.”

Both efforts specifically recommend or require strong partnerships between communities and Head Start. In the words of the administrative rules, the desired result of Empowerment is “to improve the quality of life for children and their families in Iowa.” Both want the same thing—every child, beginning at birth, to be healthy and successful. (Yes, the Iowa Head Start Association has endorsed this vision!)

So it shouldn’t surprise anyone that many Community Empowerment Areas do collaborate with Head Start. If you look at the 2002 Empowerment Annual Report, almost half of all Empowerment areas reported some kind of collaborative work with Head Start. The collaboration involved five types of partnering arrangements: 1) increasing Head Start enrollment or expanding Head Start services, 2) using Head Start as a performance measure, 3) launching new or joint programs, 4) supporting related services, and 5) broad CEA-wide partnerships. Each type of partnering arrangement provides a model of how Empowerment areas across the state and Head Start grantees might engage in new collaborative efforts. What is reported here is only a sampling of the strong collaborations already at work between Head Start and Iowa Community Empowerment.

Increase Head Start Enrollment

The most common type of partnering arrangements mentioned in the report by nine CEAs, is where Empowerment areas add money to existing Head Start and Early Head Start programs so more children can be served by the Head Start program. These arrangements provide funding for children to attend Head Start who are both Head Start eligible children (meaning from families at or below federal poverty level) and those who are low income but whose families’ incomes make them ineligible for Head Start. At Ida County CEA, Head Start scholarships were provided for families at or below 180% of poverty level. In other counties, Empowerment dollars help fund for child care when Head Start isn’t in session either before and after the full-day or half-day Head Start preschool or during the summer when the preschool isn’t in session.

Use Head Start as performance measure

Because of Head Start’s strong accountability, Head Start programs tend to gather and track a lot of data about their children and their services. Many CEAs, use these data in their planning and reporting. The Head Start program operated by Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (serving Linn County as well as Benton, Iowa, Johnson, Jones and Washington Counties) helped gather essential data for Linn County Community Empowerment. Increasing participation in Head Start became a performance measure for some empowerment areas because children who attend Head Start programs are more likely to be “ready to learn” than eligible children who don’t. Research shows that Head

Start “graduates”, once in school, are less likely to repeat a grade, to need special education services and to drop out of high school. Strengthening or expanding Head Start can be an important way for CEAs to demonstrate results in their “ready to succeed” goal area. Because of the comprehensive services provided by Head Start, supporting Head Start efforts allows CEAs to show progress in all the other result areas as well.

Launch new or joint programs

When the need for high quality preschool becomes apparent, some CEAs turn to Head Start as a natural partner in establishing new programs. One CEA provided some funding to help open an additional Head Start classroom in a rural community working with a local school district. Lakes Area CEA helped support a Head Start model childcare center to meet the needs of children who were on a waiting list for Head Start.

These collaborations take time, but an early childhood center of Head Start quality can be the pride of any community.

Supportive Services

Head Start is more than a child development program. It includes a wide array of comprehensive services, such as health care, oral health and mental health screenings, family support and involvement efforts, transportation services, kindergarten transition assistance. CEAs reported on activities to meet the needs of Head Start’s required comprehensive services. That assistance included working with local health programs to provide early health, oral health and mental health screenings, covering the costs of fluoride varnish applications, providing mental health services, literacy support services through community libraries and Empowerment-supported Every Child Reads efforts, and paying for transportation costs. These services are both vital and expensive. Community support becomes a necessary component of a successful Head Start program. Mobilizing these services for Head Start, also helps an Empowerment area mobilize those services for other children.

CEA-wide partnerships

Some Empowerment collaborations with Head Start have focused on Empowerment’s ability to convene and establish partnerships between community organizations and Head Start. Seven CEAs helped ensure Head Start was at the table when developing community wide programs and services. Decatur County celebrated the fact that Head Start and three public school systems worked together to provide early childhood education to fifty-three children in their county. Hamilton, Humboldt, Wright Empowerment, which funds the Families Forward program, has made efforts to link this program with other home-visitation programs operating in their community including Early Head Start and HOPES. Across many areas, CEAs and Head Start share professional development and training.

These five ways of working with Head Start show that partnership is not only possible but desirable. Because working successfully with state initiatives is such a priority for Head Start, the federal program funds an office at the state level to help foster collaboration between Head Start and state initiatives such as Community Empowerment. The Head Start State Collaboration Office is available to help you in establishing productive collaborations and partnership like the ones described here.

DID YOU KNOW?.....

As of July 1st, there is a Regional Child Care Home Consultant in each of the five Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral regions? Technical assistance offered by Home Consultants is one of the fastest expanding services offered to child care providers.

Currently, there about 50 Home Consultants identified in the Iowa CCR&R Directories, many funded through local Empowerment Boards. (Iowa CCR&R Directories can be downloaded and printed at the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork website: www.iowachildnetwork.org.)

Regional Child Care Home Consultants work with the other Home Consultants in their region to facilitate communication and consistency in service delivery to child care providers. Communicating with the Regional Child Care Home Consultant in your Empowerment area can make your job easier. The Regional Child Care Home Consultant in your area:

- Provides orientation, support and technical assistance to child care home consultants within their region.
- Coordinates home consultant services within the region to help assure consistency in services offered to child care providers.
- Compile regional data for statewide reports.
- Works with state DHS staff and the Iowa CCR&R Coordinator to plan and coordinate statewide efforts and receive up to date information about regulations and programs for home providers.
- Facilitates every other month meetings with the other home consultants in the region to provide information and technical assistance.

Have you met the Regional Child Care Home Consultant in your area yet? She is expecting your call!

Region 1:
CCR&R of Northwest Iowa
Gale Randall
712-786-3482 or 800-859-2025
grandall@mid-siouxopportunity.org

Region 4:
CCR&R of Central Iowa
Deb Scrowther
515-286-2063 or 800-722-7619
dscrowt@co.polk.ia.us

Region 2:
CCR&R of Northeast Iowa
Jane Dahlhauser
319-274-8209 X466 or 800-475-0804
jane.dahlhauser@episervice.org

Region 5:
CCR&R of Southeast Iowa
Liz Novak
563-324-1302 or 800-369-3778
lnovak@iowatrains.org

Region 3:
CCR&R of South Central Iowa
Deb Martens
712-755-7381 or 800-945-9778
dmartens@swiowachildcare.org

Lending you a helping hand

