

Iowa Community Empowerment Newsletter

April 2003
Volume 4, Issue 2

Questions/Comments:
Kris Bell, (515) 281-4537
Kris.bell@idom.state.ia.us



Activities with the National Technical Assistance Grant from North Carolina

Work on a single comprehensive plan for an Early Care, Health and Education System continues. On February 27, the Smart Start Core Stakeholders group met to review the progress made on gaining endorsements for the system goals. The following entities have formally endorsed the vision and goals (outreach to other groups is ongoing).

- ✓ AEA Directors of Special Education
- ✓ AEA Early Childhood Network
- ✓ Better Baby Care Campaign
- ✓ Bureau of Family Health, Child Healthy Advisory Team
- ✓ Bureau of Family Health, Women's Health Team
- ✓ Central Iowa Region Child Care Resource and Referral
- ✓ Department of Education Early Learning Team
- ✓ Department of Human Rights Administrators
- ✓ Early ACCESS Regional Coordinators
- ✓ Early Childhood Special Education Network (AEA)
- ✓ Iowa Childcare and Early Education NetWork
- ✓ Iowa Early ACCESS Council
- ✓ Iowa Empowerment Board
- ✓ Maternal and Child Health Advisory Council
- ✓ Special Education Advisory Panel
- ✓ State Childcare Advisory Council

Iowa's Early Childhood Vision:

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

**Smart Start
Training on July
10th!**

**S
A
V
E
T
H
E
D
A
T
E**

Early Care, Health and Education Symposium

Let's Talk About.....

- Quality Child Care
- Iowa's Picture of Child Care
- Local Collaboration Strategies
- Advocacy Efforts



**Four Points Sheraton
Army Post Road
Des Moines, IA
Thursday, July 10, 2003
8:30 am - 4:00 pm**

For more information, visit
www.empowerment.state.ia.us

Speakers

- Karen Ponder, Executive Director, North Carolina Partnership for Children
- Leslie Anderson, Iowa's Smart Start Coach
- Angela Deal, Executive Director of Smart Start Local Partnership
- Carol Coulter, Executive Director of Smart Start Local Partnership
- Tony Solari, North Carolina Partnership for Children
- Julie Ingersoll, State Child Care Director - Dept of Human Services

**S
A
V
E
T
H
E
D
A
T
E**

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

Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit – Released Online

If you have problems accessing the electronic version from the website, you may contact Shanell Wagler at (515 281-4321 or by email at shanell.wagler@idom.state.ia.us.

DON'T FORGET!

Also on the Empowerment Website under Tools is the Empowerment Toolkit.

This Toolkit is designed to provide communities with ideas and resources to assist in the organization and ongoing activities of the Community Empowerment Boards. It offers a variety of tools for communities to use to deal with specific issues that may arise.

It provides both a basic overview and identifies resources for additional detailed information and advice. It is not a “recipe book” or set of instructions that prescribes a specific set of ingredients that must be mixed together in a specific order. It is designed to be used as a resource for Community Empowerment Boards.

Iowa Community Empowerment has released an Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit. This toolkit can assist new advocates and seasoned advocates alike, educating key audiences about early childhood issues and providing a tool to activate communities to support early childhood initiatives. Sections of this toolkit include: *Early Childhood Background information, Legislative Basics, Suggestions on What you Can Do, Lobbying Regulations for Non-Profit Organizations (but good practice for everyone), Media Advocacy, Advocacy During Election Years, Organization of Advocacy Efforts and finally an entire section of advocacy resources.* This section includes website links, sample letters, tips on letter writing, early childhood statistics and a legislative glossary.

We hope you find this toolkit helpful in many ways. Feel free to share with anyone interested in learning more about advocacy and especially advocacy on early childhood issues. If you have comments/suggestions to enhance this tool (i.e. helpful tools; tips you have used successfully, etc.) feel free to share with me to add to this toolkit.

Here is the link to the Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit.

http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us/EmpowermentTools/Advocacy_Toolkit/Advocacy_tool_kit.htm

To give you a sampling of the information shared, shown below is a section from Part VII Organization of your Advocacy Efforts, Elements for a successful coalition:

- 1. Common Goals:** The expressed need and the desired change should be understood by all involved in the coalition.
- 2. Communication:** Use common language that everyone can understand. Avoid professional jargon. Each member needs to know what is taking place and what is expected.
- 3. Each Member is Important to the Coalition:** Each participant should be able to perceive him- or herself as an important part of the whole, contributing to its success.
- 4. Opportunity to Participate:** Each member should have input into goals, methods and decisions.
- 5. Ownership:** By encouraging members to participate in the decision-making process, members feel a part of the coalition and feel responsible for action.
- 6. Delegation:** Consider delegating to each entity a part that they can control. This provides an opportunity for individual accomplishments and contributes to the overall success of the coalition.
- 7. Efficient, Effective Meetings:** Keep the meetings moving toward the agreed upon goals. Each meeting should update members on the progress towards these goals, so that members leave with some sense of accomplishment.
- 8. Process and Pattern:** Establish a format for conducting meetings and the decision-making process early in the development of the coalition.
- 9. Shared Leadership:** While one organization or individual may be responsible for initiating the coalition, it is important that several persons or groups share leadership responsibilities throughout the life of the coalition.
- 10. Broad-Based Membership:** Expand your membership to include organizations and individuals with diverse focuses and varying areas of expertise. This strengthens the coalition and allows you to reach a broader audience.

Administrative Report –

January 2003 – March 2003

This is a new section to the newsletter that will be included in every other issue. The administrative report includes activities by the State Empowerment Team.

Dr. Koob presenting at the Lee/Van Buren Child Care Conference, January 18



Day on the Hill, February 4



Exhibit Fair, February 5

April 4th Board Meeting/Blank Park Zoo

Although the board will be meeting at their regular time in April, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., we are planning a little different type of meeting. From 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 will be a social time. The first half of the meeting will follow a usual schedule, with a time for *board* breakout sessions in the afternoon. The breakout time will focus on action steps for the board's leadership agenda.

Iowa Empowerment Board Appointments

In March Governor Vilsack submitted to the Iowa Senate the following nominees to the Iowa Empowerment Board: C. Arthur Wittmack, Thomas Wilson, Rebecca Burgart, Elaine Szymoniak (all reappointments) and Michael Bergan (replaces Dr. Koob).



New member Mike Bergan has been involved with planning, implementation, and currently serves the Board Chair for Decat and Empowerment in the HAWC region. He is a Winneshiek County Board of Supervisor, accountant, and the proud father of two daughters. His wife, Carol, is a teacher in the South Winneshiek School District. Mike's interest and concern for children, youth and families is evident in his volunteer work as well.

The Senate has appointed Senator Jack Holveck (D), Des Moines. Senator Holveck replaces Mark Shearer. Senator Holveck serves on the Education, Human Resources, Juciciary and Natural Resources and Environment Committees.

Iowa Department of Public Health Grant Opportunity

In March, the State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning Grant application was submitted for approval. Health Department representatives provided information about the grant at the January IEB meeting.

Early Care, Health and Education Congress

Planning has begun for the 2003 Congress. The 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. – More details will be shared as time nears.

IEB Leadership Agenda Committee

This subcommittee to the board met on March 5th. They will be sharing their recommendation to the board at the April 4th meeting.

Administrative Report – Cont.



Systems Change is defined as:

- a “revision of the ways that people and institutions think, behave, and use their resources to affect fundamentally the types, quality and degree of service delivery to children and families.”

This change is achieved through

- the commitment of resources;
- a willingness to alter existing policies,
- and partners “sharing a vision, establishing common goals and agreeing to use their power to achieve them.”

Together We Can: A guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services, 1993

Fiscal Accountability Workgroup

The Fiscal Accountability Workgroup met on March 17. Topics included Annual Report review; Smart Start update; quarterly payment process review; discussion on sharing fiscal agents; and budgeting process.

Smart Start Activities

- National Smart Start Conference, January 25-29
- Smart Start Core Stakeholders Group, February 27
- Planning Meetings with Grant Coach, Leslie Anderson, March 5 and 6

Site Visits/Technical Assistance Activities

- Buchanan, Delaware Fayette Board planning session, January 7
- Audubon, Carroll, Guthrie, Greene board meeting, January 17
- Lee/Van Buren Child Care Conference, January 18
- Lee/Van Buren technical assistance with indicators, January 30
- Southwest Iowa 11 County Regional Empowerment Mtg. Feb 18
- Jefferson/Keokuk Board Meeting, February 18
- Lee/Van Buren technical assistance, February 20
- Winnebago County annual report technical assistance, Feb. 28
- Clinton/Jackson County Board Meeting, February 24
- Jones County Board Training, February 25
- Empowerment Contacts and Coordinators Meeting, February 26
- Harrison, Monona, Shelby Empowerment Board, outcomes, local indicator and quarterly progress reports, March 13
- Buchanan, Delaware, Fayette Board Retreat, March 15
- Woodbury County Empowerment Board, Results Accountability Presentation, March 17
- Scott County Fiscal Committee, March 19
- Poweshiek County Board Retreat, March 24
- Johnson County Training on DECA Assessment Tool; March 28

Linkages/Outreach Activities

- IDPH Grant Team, Jan. 3, 9, 16, 17, 24, 31, Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21,
- Early ACCESS Council, January 15, March 21
- Number 1 Question legislative breakfast, January 15
- Iowa Optometric Association, January 15 
- Performance Measures Group, January 17, February 7, 21, March 7, 21
- Covering Kids, Child Health Outreach, January 22
- Governance Advisory Group, January 28, February 25, March 25
- Better Baby Campaign, January 30
- Day on the Hill, Exhibit Fair, February 4 and 5
- Education Appropriations Sub Committee, February 6
- Department of Human Rights Administrative Team – presentation about Community Empowerment, February 10
- School Ready Assessment Team, February 10, 17, March 28

- **Linkages/Outreach Activities – Cont.**



- Child Care Advisory Council, February 13
- Day on the Hill Planning Meeting, February 18
- Child and Family Policy Center, February 20
- Head Start Association, February 21
- Child Care Facility Loan Program, February 24
- Congress Planning Committee, February 25, March 27
- Iowa Community Action Agency Legislative Breakfast, February 25
- Prevent Child Abuse Iowa Legislative Breakfast, February 25
- HOPES HFI State Advisory Committee, February 25
- Governor Briefing, February 26
- Family Support Network Building, February 28
- Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, March 4
- Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning, (CJJP), March 10
- Public Health Spring Conference; Advocacy Workshop, March 25
- Day on the Hill Planning Committee, March 27

**Meet Iowa
Empowerment Board
Member
Sally Hartley**

Sally Hartley joined the State Empowerment Board during the summer of 2001. Sally has lived in Iowa her entire life, having grown up in Rock Rapids and currently residing in Salix (Woodbury Co.). Sally attended Iowa State University for her bachelor's and master's degrees in Child Development. For the past twenty-five years, she has taught in early childhood programs, including kindergarten, school-aged child care (Iowa State University lab schools), preschool/education lab school (Morningside College, Sioux City), and early childhood special education teacher/consultant (Western Hills AEA). Sally has also taught several early childhood courses for Morningside College and Western Hills AEA.

Sally has been married to Dan for 22 years. They have 2 sons, Nick, 20, attending Iowa State University, and Patrick, 15, a sophomore at Heelan High School.

Sally is active in community and church activities. She currently is the committee chair for Boy Scout Troop 269, president of Siouxland IAEYC chapter, 4-H superintendent for Woodbury Co. Fair, and 5th grade religious education teacher. Sally and her family are involved with Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Sally serves as co-chair of the Woodbury Co. Empowerment Board and is the coordinator for Every Child Reads in Woodbury County.

She is a member of NAEYC (Siouxland, Iowa, Midwest affiliates), AAHBEI (American Association of Home Based Early Interventions), CEC/DEC (Council for Exceptional Children), and High Scope Association.

Sally believes that "there is much we can do with the Empowerment Board, at the local and state level to have an impact on what is understood about the needs of young children, their families and child care providers. We, as a community (local, state, and national) are becoming more aware of what it takes to ensure the educational success of young children, now we must be willing to support those efforts."

Free Birth to Three Trainings in Learning & Development

by Beth Walling, State Coordinator IA PITC

The first three years of a child's life are critical in laying the foundation for learning. Child care providers, parents, grandparents, foster parents, administrators and advocates are eligible to attend free training opportunities. The Iowa Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers (IA PITC) has trainers who are now certified in Module III: Learning and Development. A basic training series (five two-hour lessons) focuses on:

- Cognitive Development and Learning
- Language Development and Communication
- Special Needs
- Culture, Language, and Cognition
- Brain Development in Infancy

With any of the modules, trainings are tailored to meet the needs of the audience and use a variety of adult learning strategies: small and large group discussion, activities, videotapes and materials developed by WestEd and the CA Department of Education.

Iowa PITC has had wonderful responses from training participants: "This course is teaching me so much, there are lots of ideas." "The video was so excellent, this is the second time I saw it, but learning something from the video was good. The handouts are...excellent." "The information was interesting and very useful." "I can't wait to share with my children and their parents." "It gave me words to be able to use with parents." "Lots of good ideas, I never dreamed there was so much."

If you are interested in attending any of the PITC trainings, you may find additional information (including a regional Child Care Resource & Referral map) at: www.dhs.state.ia.us/ACFS/pitc/pitc.asp or contact your regional Infant Toddler Specialist:

Kari Daale, Northwest IA	800-859-2025
Toni Stork, Southwest IA	800-945-9778
Anne Kelly, Central IA	800-722-7619
Tiffany Luck, Northeast IA	800-475-0804
Barbara Newcomb, Southeast IA	800-369-3778

Series in Module IV will also soon be available around the state. Module IV: Culture, Family, and Providers.

Empowerment areas in the South Des Moines DHS Region (Adams, Adair, Union, Madison, Marion, Warren Clarke, Decatur, Ringgold, Wayne and Lucas) have attended a second collaborative meeting. Eight empowerment areas were represented with 24 people in attendance. Cindy Duhrkopf was a guest speaker and shared information how a four - county empowerment area works and collaborates.

Each empowerment area brought and shared information on the types of programs. It was concluded they all have a very similar home visitor program offered in each county. Each empowerment area also shared about board composition. One board has high school students who have active roles on the board. It was also noted that most areas did not give stipends or mileage for citizens to attend meetings, but there was great interest from many areas to change their philosophy on this.

There is great interest in learning more about request for proposals, contracting procedures, and outcome reporting. The group will work on these issues at the next meeting March 18th, at 1:00-3:00 to be held at Southwestern Community College in Osceola. These meetings are open to the public and other areas are encouraged and welcome to attend.

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

Upcoming Events

Iowa Empowerment Board

April 4, 2003
July 11, 2003
October 3, 2003

State Advisory Council

Meeting Schedule
June 10, 2003
August 26, 2003

Contact/Coordinator

Meeting Schedule
May 28, 2003
September 10, 2003

Mark Your Calendars!!
Smart Start Training Day
(see flier in this newsletter)
July 10, 2003

Early Care, Health and Education Congress
November 18-19, 2003
Scheman Center, Ames

2nd Regional Meeting Conducted in Southwestern Iowa

(This information submitted by Deb Schrader. For more information contact Deb at 641-202-1522.)

**Iowa State University
Extension
COMMUNITY
FATHERHOOD
FORUM
April 10 and 11, 2003**

Share your ideas on how to strengthen relationships between fathers, children and families. Come for part or all of this event! Speaker: Neil Tift, National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families

**Coming to Your Senses
An Iowa Project**

(Article submitted by Dr. William Scott, M.D., University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics)

A Provider Forum

When: Thursday, April 10, 2003, 1:00-4:30 PM,
Where: Faches Center, Linn Room, 951 29th Av SW, Cedar Rapids
Who: Professionals who are dealing with father absence, family violence, visitation, child custody, teen pregnancy, and other significant family issues should plan to attend.
What: Hear from the experts! Participate in guided discussion about needs and services available to fathers & families, begin creation of community action plan.
Registration: Call 399-6809 by Friday April 4.

A Public Forum

When: Thursday, April 10, 2003, 6:00-8:30 PM
Where: Elks Lodge #251, Banquet Room, 801 33rd Av SW, Cedar Rapids
Who: Fathers, mothers, grandparents, and other interested community
What: A guided discussion and information sharing session. Offer your perspective on the needs of fathers in the community. Dinner will be served, courtesy of the Parent Education Consortium.
Registration: Call 399-6809 by Friday, April 4 for meal count.

An Invitation to Action Breakfast

When: Friday, April 11, 2003, 7:30-9:00 AM
Where: United Way of East Central Iowa, 1030 5th Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids
Who: Major employers, business owners, foundation members, United Way Agency Executive Directors, community board members, elected officials, CEO's, educators, and other community leader.
What: Hear about the needs and issues identified and help create a community action plan to support fathers and families in our community. A light breakfast will be served, courtesy of the Parent Education Consortium.
Registration: Call 399-6809 by Monday, April 7 for a meal count.

For more information please feel free to contact Alison Graham, Director, Parent Education Consortium at 399-6809 or via e-mail agraham@aea10.k12.ia.us or Kristi Cooper, Linn County ISU Extension 377-9839, kcoop@iastate.edu

“Coming To Your Senses” is a statewide vision screening project for young children between the ages of 6 to 48 months. It is a joint project of the Lions Clubs of Iowa and the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics and the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. The reason for vision screening is that vision loss affects a significant portion of our population; as many as 7,800 Iowa children under the age of 4 suffer from poor vision, at least in one eye.

Half of all the children with amblyopia (lazy eye) are diagnosed after the age of 5, when therapy is less effective. Early detection and treatment can prevent permanent and debilitating loss of sight. Currently, children are not typically screened until they enter school and for many children this proves to be too late. The goals of Coming To Your Senses are: (1) to objectively screen for vision loss in young children at no cost to families, (2) to educate the public about the risk of undetected vision loss in infants and young children throughout Iowa; and (3) to identify ways to sustain this vision screening program in this state.

The Iowa Lions are making a difference to these children and families throughout the state of Iowa through this service project. The Iowa Lions support “Coming to your Senses” by volunteering their time at screening events. Since this program began in May 2000 under a three year International Lions grant, there have been 1,114 Iowa Lions trained to conduct screenings. From May 2000 through 2002 over 13,000 children have been screened. The grant from the International Lions is running out in July 2003. We are now seeking support to continue this program. Therefore, we would like to make this program known to the Empowerment Services of Iowa for consideration of financial support for the continuation of this program.

National Healthy Families America National Model

Great Results for Children and Families

(Article submitted by Joane Hinrichs)

Iowa Early Care Health and Education Congress

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

The dates are set for the next combined Early Childhood Conference!

An Economic Growth approach to issues/workshops will be one focus for this year's event. Economist, Dr. Mildred Warner has been invited to be a keynote presenter.

If you have suggestions for workshops, please contact Shanell Wagler at shanell.wagler@idom.state.ia.us . or any of the other planning committee members: Kris Bell, Jo Hinrichs, Annette Dunn, Sara Behn, Jeanette Randall or Kate Bennett.

More Details will be forwarded!

Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success – Health Families Iowa (HOPES -HFI) is a home visiting program for families beginning during pregnancy or at the birth of a child. The state grant funded program sites follow the **Healthy Families America** national model. Eight of the thirteen state grant sites have been awarded national Health Families America accreditation. The remaining five sites are actively involved in the accreditation process. HOPES-HFI services may continue with a family for up to 4 years of the child's age. A standard tool to identify risk factors, screens a family for the conditions and characteristics that impact child growth and development, child health, family coping skills, parenting skills and family functioning. Following the screen, families identified as high risk are offered HOPES -HFI services and participation is voluntary.

The home visitors from HOPES -HFI are known as family support workers. The national model is designed for the paraprofessional functioning in partnership with professional support. The majority of family support workers in the state grant HOPES-HFI programs are professionals. At a minimum, home visits are provided each week for the initial six months. Success for reaching positive family outcomes results from the relationship and trust developed between the home visitor and the family. Frequent visits reinforce the information taught about the importance of parenting skills, parent and child interaction, preventive health, early brain development, and the social and physical developmental benchmarks for infants and toddlers.

Family support workers are knowledgeable about the recommended schedule for preventive child health and understand it's important for a family to develop and access a medical home. Care coordination for health services is a portion of the interaction with the family and includes transportation. Families may be challenged to obtain health care coverage. The HOPES -HFI home visitor assists the family with the application process for available health insurance and to gives encouragement to maintain the child's enrollment. Home visitors have learned to help a family to coordinate health information and reports from various services the family is involved in. Families often take a list "in-hand" of the activities to be done at the child's medical home for the preventive health appointment. Organizations providing HOPES-HFI advocate for adequate child health in their communities and educate providers about appropriate children's health services

Health Outcomes for FY02 HOPES -HFI:

- 54 % of families enrolled during the prenatal stages
- 91 % had five or more prenatal visits at primary care providers
- 95 % have adequate health care coverage
 - 84 % are enrolled in Medicaid
 - 9 applications for Medicaid are pending
- 98 % established and accessed medical homes (National Pediatric definition)
- 90 % obtained **all** recommended "well child" exams and preventive services
- 89 % were current with recommended immunizations by age 2
 - Reasons for not obtaining immunizations were reported
- 58 % of 12 months of age or older were screened for lead levels
 - 8.2 % of those screened had high blood lead levels
 - 93.3 % of the high blood lead levels had follow-up and level returned to normal
- 27 % were referred for dental services
 - 55.5 % of referred accessed dental services
- 18 % identified with a potential developmental delay and referred to Early ACCESS
 - 70.2 % accessed the referral

National Healthy Families America National Model - Cont.

Nominations Sought for Iowa Empowerment Board

The state Empowerment Board will have vacancies this Spring. 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 you need more information.

Positive family outcomes to improve home and child safety, make appropriate choices for child care, develop social support, apply literacy skills with children, improve child and family nutrition, acquire adequate housing, increase knowledge of age appropriate child development and activities, learn new parenting skills, develop family coping skills, and find and maintain employment are documented, measured and reported for the 832 families in Iowa enrolled in the HOPES-HFI state grant program. Standard tools used by HOPES-HFI home visitors are the Denver Developmental Pre-Screening Questionnaire, Ages and Stages of Development and the Caldwell/Bradley HOME Assessment, as well as other tools developed and researched at a national level.

Curricula are utilized with each family, however the language, culture, and literacy level determine the one most appropriate for the family. HOPES-HFI workers have several standard and researched curricula to select from at each site. HOPES-HFI providers have had training to use the Partners for a Healthy Baby Curricula developed through the Center for Early Intervention. Another popular curricula is "Little Bits".

Social, Emotional, and Environmental Outcomes for FY02 HOPES-HFI

- 87% increased knowledge of infant care
- 86% increased knowledge of age appropriate activities
- 85 % enrolled in Women and Infant Nutrition Program
- 84% accessed appropriate childcare
- 82% increased knowledge of child development
- 76% resolved substance abuse
- 73% resolved or decreased domestic violence
- 72% increased knowledge of parenting skills/discipline
- 68% resolved or improved issues in their living/housing situation
- 53% implemented family planning practices
- 54% resolved or improved their financial situation
- 46% resolved or improved their level of education

The providers of the state grant HOPES-HFI program document "match" funds and in-kind support of \$1 for every \$2 of state grant. The FY02 total cost of HOPES-HFI services per family averages \$2,178 a year, a bargain for the family outcomes and imp18 % identified with a potential developmental delay and referred to Early ACCESS
70.2 % accessed the referral act made in the life of a child.

From Lucille and David Packard Foundation, clip from *Future of Children, Fast Facts*

- More than 40% of adults on welfare had less than a high school education in 1999, but only 6% were participating in job training and education activities. (Winter/Spring 2002)
- By the time a child of unwed parents reaches age 7, studies indicate only about 22% of fathers are in frequent contact. (Winter/Spring 2002)
- Fatherless children are more likely to drop out of school, have poorer attendance records, score lower grades, and abuse alcohol or drugs compared with children whose fathers are in their homes. (Winter/Spring 2002)
- A 2000 study estimated that women with associate's degrees earned hourly wages that were 19% to 23% higher than did women with similar characteristics who lacked such degrees. (Winter/Spring 2002)
- Although both federal and state spending on child care has increased since welfare reform, subsidies are used by less than one-quarter of all eligible families nationwide. (Winter/Spring 2002)
- Children in high-quality child care demonstrate greater mathematical ability, greater thinking and attention skills, and fewer behavioral problems than children in lower-quality care. (Winter/Spring 2002)



Since the *hawk-i* program began in 1999, 67,651 children have received health care coverage either through Medicaid or *hawk-i*. Although this shows tremendous success on the part of local and state outreach, an estimated 30,069 eligible children for Medicaid or *hawk-i* remain uninsured. A key component to reaching these families involves developing a successful communications effort. An effective message will resonate with families so that they will take action, and in the case of *hawk-i* outreach, they will want to apply.

For example, the state led *hawk-i* public education campaign that took place between February-April 2001, increased application requests by 300%. Since 1999, communities across Iowa have risen to the challenge of getting the word out about *hawk-i* through a variety of mediums. However, an important part of social marketing is keeping the message new and fresh. As a community program, creating new messages can be challenging. Two key reasons to update your outreach messages include:

1. It takes hearing a message 7 times to remember the message. This makes it important to deliver the message to families through various mediums and approaches.
2. Because families receive both state and local messages that are crucial, the messages must support each other and be consistent.

For more concrete examples, the Message Strategies Toolkit can be found at www.idph.state.ia.us/coveringkids

In this toolkit you will find:

- What is the Covering Kids Message Strategy?
- How Does the Message Strategy Translate into a Message?
- Covering Kids Guiding Principles
- Helpful Statistics
- Spokesperson Talking Points
- Message Evaluation Checklist
- Campaign Planning Questions to Answer
- The Supporting Research: How Did We Get Here?

A comprehensive study sponsored by Covering Kids and Families provides tips on effective outreach messages for Medicaid and SCHIP. This toolkit provides helpful ideas for developing a communications effort. The following toolkit excerpt demonstrates research-based “connections” with parents to be incorporated into a message:

- Parents want to **make smart decisions that improve the health and well-being of their children.** Calling to apply for *hawk-i* or Medicaid will feel like a smart decision and will be recognized as such by others because these programs are low-cost or free, and ensure that children get the health care they need to stay healthy.
- Parents want to **feel good about the way they raise their children.** Calling to inquire about health care coverage will promote this feeling because it is a step toward helping their children grow up healthy and achieve success in life.
- By enrolling their children in a low-cost or free health care coverage program, parents experience the emotional payoff of **reduced stress related to raising children and balancing finances.**
- Ultimately, parents desire **peace of mind about their children’s well-being and their household finances.** This is the value of enrollment.

Here’s an example:

“Parents work hard to take care of their kids. But it’s not always easy. Without health insurance, medical

bills can break the family budget. Now there’s help. Approximately 30,000 Iowa kids are eligible for low-cost or free health care coverage – and your child could be one of them, even if you work. In fact, many working families earning up to \$36,800 or more can get a health care card for their kids. If your kids don’t have health insurance, call 1-800-257-8563.”

Community Empowerment Early Childhood Funding FAQ's

(Information submitted by Jeff
Anderson)

Links to Empowerment Web sites

State :

www.empowerment.state.ia.us

Benton County -- NEW!

www.bcempowerment.com

Buchanan Delaware Fayette :

www.bdfempowerment.org

Cherokee, Lyon, Plymouth Sioux:

www.northwestiowa.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.jaspercountypowerment.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.scottcountypowerment.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 below questions and answers are designed to provide assistance to the Community Empowerment Boards when working with the Early Childhood Funds. If you have additional questions, contact either Shanell Wagler or Kris Bell.

1. Can the Early Childhood funding be used for subsidies for families?

Direct subsidies to families that utilize the federal Early Childhood funding will not be approved. This is because of federal regulations that govern this TANF funding.

Direct subsidies for families would include cash payments or vouchers to the family, or payments directly to a provider or community entity on behalf of specific families. When direct subsidies occur, federal reporting requirements would kick in and a great amount of detail would have to be reported to the federal government on each individual family.

Options to avoid the direct subsidy include grants to providers for startup or expansion to increase capacity; scholarships for providers to serve children in families who are between 140 -185% of poverty; equipment, educational material or toys, or curriculum that support quality care for the children.

2. Can Early Childhood Funding be used to expand of link Head Start with other child care or preschool?

Yes, if it is tied to supporting the parents' employment. Expansion should be a grant to a Head Start provider or other community entity .

3. Could a position be funded through Early Childhood funding for Department of Human Services spot checks and/or to assist in the licensing and registration process?

Yes but, it cannot supplant current funding of such a position and the case would have to be made that this ties to supporting not only quality but also parents' employment.

4. Can Early Childhood funding be used to support or deliver training to child care providers?

If you have this need, you should first contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency if you have not already; they have a position to do this work and also have provider training money. If an additional need is identified, then this funding can be used for training if you can tie it to supporting quality child care and parents' abilities to obtain and maintain employment.

5. Can cribs and other supplies or equipment be purchased with Early Childhood Funding to support infant care?

Yes, if the goal is to support quality child care and parents' abilities to obtain and maintain employment.

Community Empowerment Early Childhood Funding FAQ's (cont.)



6. Can Early Childhood funding be given to a child care facility for start-up costs associated with evening care for children whose parents work second and third shift?

Yes, if the goal is to support quality child care and parents' abilities to obtain and maintain employment. However, please note that federal requirements must be followed. This includes a prohibition against funding construction.

7. If Early Childhood funds are used for evaluation of an initiative, do they count towards the 5% administrative funds limit?

Yes, costs of evaluation do count towards the 5% limit.

8. Can Early Childhood funding be used to fund child care in a church or religious setting?

Federal regulations state: "Funds provided under grants or contracts to providers may not be expended for any sectarian purpose or activity, including sectarian worship or instruction." Funds can be made available to providers who deliver care in a church or religious setting, as long as religious beliefs or teachings are not a requirement for the family, and religious teachings and activities are not delivered as part of the care program.

9. Can Early Childhood funding be used as a supplement to DHS child care wraparound funding?

Yes it can; however families who receive DHS child care wraparound services would have to meet all state child care assistance (CCA) eligibility requirements, which are more restrictive than the TANF rules. For example, state CCA income eligibility is at 140% of poverty for most families, while the TANF rules are at 185% of poverty. The TANF supplement could be used for families between 140% and 185% of poverty.

10. Can Early Childhood funding be used for community outreach and/or consumer surveys?

If you can make the case that it ties to the availability and accessibility of quality child care that will enable low-income families to obtain or maintain employment, then it is allowable.

11. Can Early Childhood funding be used to fund transportation?

Yes, for transportation to and from the child care setting. This should also be tied to supporting quality child care and parents' abilities to obtain and maintain employment.

**2003 Child Abuse Prevention
Conference
Do All You Can to Protect Us
April 28-29, 2003
Marriott Hotel Downtown
700 Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa**

Join other professionals for the 22nd Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference hosted by Prevent Child Abuse Iowa. Almost 500 people attended last year's conference. We have three great Featured Speakers and 20 workshops.

**For more information or questions
contact:**

Prevent Child Abuse Iowa
800-CHILDREN

Electronic Brochure available at:
www.pcaiowa.org

Shared Visions: High Quality Programs for Iowa Children

(article submitted by Penny Milburn)



12. Examples of ways that Early Childhood funding can be used.

Moneys appropriated in this section shall be used by communities for the purposes of enhancing quality child day care capacity in support of parent capability to obtain or retain employment. The moneys shall be used with a primary emphasis on low-income families and children from birth to five years of age. Moneys shall be provided in a flexible manner to communities, and shall be used to implement strategies identified by the communities to achieve such purposes. The strategies may include but are not limited to developing capacity for regular child day care, sick child care, night shifts child care, and emergency child care; enhancing linkages between the head start and early head start programs, early childhood development programs, and child day care assistance programs; and implementing other strategies to enhance access to child day care. The moneys may be used to either build capacity or for support of ongoing efforts.

Some specific examples include:

- ⇒ Incentives to reduce turnover of teachers, particularly for infants and toddlers.
- ⇒ Encouraging and supporting of providers seeking and maintaining registration or licensing status
- ⇒ Accreditation of providers/programs.
- ⇒ Transportation to and from the care setting.
- ⇒ Developmental curriculum.
- ⇒ Training of providers.

A small group of preschoolers are working in the block area. They have constructed a 'swimming pool' and are discussing sharks with their teacher. "Do sharks swim in swimming pools?", one child asks "No they are too big", says another. "Where do sharks live?" asks the teacher. "Sharks live in the ocean!" In another part of the room two children are working on a computer periodically asking for help from their teacher.

One evening at another center, families and children participate in the Partners in Print program. The teacher has designed activities such as making books, writing stories, working with environmental print and other literacy activities. Families and children engage in each of these activities with the teachers there to address any questions and provide suggestions.

At another school, the teacher works with both a foster and a biological family in support of a little girl. This child is adjusting so well that she draws pictures of her *whole* family, including biological and foster family in one! And at another school the Family Contact Person assists in finding coats, mittens, boots, and other essentials for children and their families.

A teen mother, who has lived in poverty her whole life, celebrates her recent completion of the GED program with the Family Development Specialist. With the assistance of the Family Development Specialist, the teen mother has accessed resources such as health insurance, transportation, and child care allowing her to raise her toddler and accomplish her education goal. She will soon be employed and her child will be going to preschool.

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

Shared Visions: High Quality Programs for Iowa Children – cont.



These are just a few examples of the services provided by Iowa's Shared Visions grants.

Shared Visions programs are state funded grants providing quality comprehensive child development programs for high-risk children (for families with incomes below 130% of the poverty level) located in 47 Iowa counties. The grant funds support two components: parent support programs for children birth to 3 and preschool programs for children ages 3 to 5. Currently, the Iowa Department of Education administers the 12 Parent Support Programs serving 1000 families with children birth to 3 years of age and 109 Preschool programs serving 2,360 children ages 3 to 5.

Shared Visions Preschool programs are high quality and demonstrate a positive impact on children's success in school (Regents' Center for Early Developmental Education, 2002 unpublished data). Recent research found two important markers of high quality in Shared Visions Preschool programs. First, programs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a process that demonstrates a high standard of quality and developmentally appropriate practices. Of the approximately 172 early childhood programs accredited by NAEYC in Iowa, 109 are Shared Visions preschools. Second, about 60% of Shared Visions preschool teachers have a four-year degree with the majority of the teachers holding a degree in early childhood education.

Additional research using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) to evaluate the Shared Visions preschool programs indicated an average rating was 5.56 versus the national average of 4.26 (scale of 1-7 with 5 being *good* and 7 being *excellent*). (Zan & Edmiaston, 2002). Approximately 70% of Iowa programs were considered good quality as compared to less than 20% of programs nationwide (*The Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study*, 1999, National Center on Early Development and Learning).

The research also found positive outcomes for children in the following ways:

- Shared Visions graduates met or exceeded kindergarten teachers' performance expectations in reading, writing, and problem solving.
- Fewer than 8% of Shared Visions graduates were receiving special education services by the end of kindergarten.
- 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 programs

For more information about Shared Visions contact Penny Milburn at pmilburn@iastate.edu.

Other Events and Activities

Risky Business Conference

May 6, 2003,

Scheman Building, ISU, Ames Iowa.

Presented by Community Youth and Family Development Branch of Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. For questions about registration process, workshop content, etc., call YSS at 515-233-3141.

www.yss.ames.ia.us/riskybusiness/

The Governor's Conference on Public Health – Barn Raising IV

August 14-15, 2003

Drake University, Des Moines

www.idph.state.ia.us

Iowa AEYC State Conference

October 10-11, 2003

Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines

2004 National Smart Start Conference

Building Brighter Futures

January 25-28, 2004

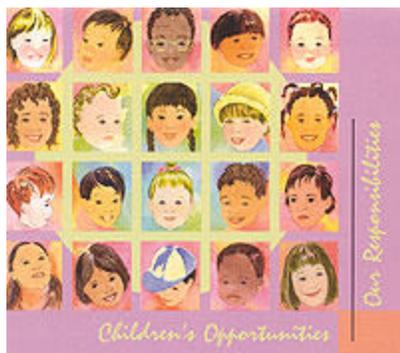
Greensboro, NC

www.ncsmartstart.org

NAEYC's Week of the Young Child

April 6-12, 2003

"Children's Opportunities--Our Responsibilities"



The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) sponsors the Week of the Young Child each April to focus public attention on the rights and needs of young children. It's a celebration of young children, and of those who help children make the most of their opportunities in the early years. It's also a time to encourage others to join in giving all young children a great start. The theme this year for Week of the Young Child is "Children's Opportunities—Our Responsibilities." In Iowa, many organizations and communities choose to celebrate the entire month of April. Listed below are great items shared with me.

Indianola: Local child care providers may stop in the Child Care Resource and Referral of Warren County office to receive their Appreciation Gift anytime during regular business hours; Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the week of April 1 – 4, 2003.

Des Moines: Nationally known children's musician Phil Baker will be performing two shows on Friday, April 4, 2003 at 9:15 – 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 – 11:15 a.m. at Iowa Methodist Medical Center, 1200 Pleasant Street in Des Moines. Fee for the performances is \$3.00 per child, adults are admitted free. Space is limited—contact Tony Lacy at 515-279-5364 to make your reservations.

Knoxville: Purple ribbons will be distributed by the Child Care Resource and Referral of Marion County office to help child care providers and local community people show support for the needs of young children. Community leaders have been asked to "job shadow" child care providers working in centers and home settings.

On April 12, 2003 CCR&R of Marion County, Knoxville Chamber of Commerce and the Knoxville Optimist Club will be sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt. Kites will be given away to promote the importance of spending quality time with young children.

Ames: To celebrate April as Month of the Young Child there will be a children's parade beginning at 10:00 a.m. in Ames on Monday April 14, 2003. Area children are invited to attend and help celebrate. Children will gather at the Ames Public library starting at 9:30a.m. and will parade down main street to Ames City Hall. Following the parade children will join the Mayor of Ames in proclaiming April as the Month of the Young Child. All children are welcome to attend. For more information call Center for Care Resources at 1-800-437-8599 or 294-8833.

The Handprint award will be presented following the Children's Parade and the Mayor's Proclamation at Ames City Hall on April 14, 2003. The Handprint award is intended to recognize an individual who has shown a dedication to children in Story County. For more information on this award or for a nomination form call 1-800-437-8599 or 294-8833.

Other public awareness activities in the Ames area include tray liners at all local McDonalds with ideas for early literacy activities that will help children develop good language skills. Promotional radio spots about Month of the Young Child will be aired on local radio stations throughout the month. Signature Ads will also be placed in local newspapers.

NAEYC's Week of the Young Child

April 6-12, 2003

- Cont.

Ida County: A Health and Safety Fair will be held on April 10th. Scheduled events include: car seat safety checks, free lead screenings, free finger printing and child id's by the Sheriff's Department, sign-up for preschools, farm safety and sun safety information provided, hand washing 101, and healthy and nutrition session for children 0-5 years of age. In all, over 20 booths will be set up to share information.

In addition to the fair, 2 out of the 5 mayors have worked with their boards and have voted to proclaim publicly the week as Week of the Young Child.

Webster County:

Webster County will have various activities all week. The 12th annual Children's Festival will host wonderful games and activities for children. Empowerment Board members and other city officials will take a tour of child development homes in order to better appreciate and understand quality care issues and the efforts of those who work towards better quality. The mayor of Fort Dodge will sign a proclamation urging all citizens to recognize and support the needs of young children in their community. The Curious Kids' Museum will have many special activities planned during the week.

For more Week of the Young Child celebration ideas, tips on organizing events and other resources, visit NAEYC online at www.naeyc.org/woyc. The website includes the new Week of the Young Child communications kit, with tools and suggestions for generating media and public awareness of your events and making the Week of the Young Child a huge success—in your neighborhood and around the country.

***Mark Your
Calendars!***



Iowa Early Care, Health & Education Congress

New name, same great quality conference!

- ▶ ***The 11th Annual Congress will focus on Economic Development!***
- ▶ ***Mark Your Calendar for November 18 & 19, 2003 at Scheman Center in Ames***
- ▶ ***Watch for more information this summer***

Uniting for Iowa's Young Children
