



Dear Iowans:

The 1998 Iowa legislative session created a revolutionary initiative. It was founded on the vision communities and state government could work together to improve the well being of young children and their families. The challenge of implementing the vision was enormous. Success meant changing the culture within state government and meshing the change with dozens of local cultures. It would be premature to say that this challenge has been successfully met, but the Year 2001 has seen continued progress and been exciting for Community Empowerment.

Revolutionary initiative created

By April 14, 2000, 58 Community Empowerment Areas (CEA's) were established and include all of Iowa's counties. During 2001 the level of

Collaboration is the key to success

integration and collaboration among local community partners committed to young children grew substantially.

In January 2000 the Iowa Empowerment Board (IEB), adopted statewide indicators of performance for each of the five desired results for Community Empowerment:

Five Results for young children established

Healthy Children; Children Ready to Succeed in School; Safe and Supportive Communities; Secure and Nurturing Families; and Secure and Nurturing Child Care Environments. Two years of data for these indicators can be found on the Empowerment web site. This year's annual report highlights the progress that has been made in using data to track success and guide local decision making.

During 2001 the Iowa Empowerment Board updated its strategic plan and produced a

Leadership Agenda. The Board's agenda

IEB Leadership Agenda focuses on Achieving Results, Collaboration and Advocacy

focuses on three key goals: 1) Achieving Results; 2) Collaboration; and 3) Advocacy. The agenda sets strategies to achieve these goals.

Providing technical assistance to communities is a vital component for the Iowa Empowerment Board. This year a *Community Empowerment Toolkit* was published to provide communities with ideas and resources to assist in the organization and ongoing activities of Community Empowerment Area Boards.

Empowerment Toolkit published

Pulling together many elements into a successful plan seemed impossible in the beginning. Each year toward achieving and progress is made toward collaboration, statewide results, increased advocacy for early childhood. Activities and measures reported from local communities this year prove that significant progress is being made. It is a testament to how much Iowans care for young children and their families as they put aside individual interests and work together to help make Iowa a better place to raise a child.

Progress is being made

Thanks to everyone that has contributed to this worthy effort.

Dr. Robert Koob
Iowa Empowerment Board Chairperson

