

Iowa Community Empowerment Newsletter

February 2005
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Questions/Comments:
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***Iowa's Early Childhood Vision:
Every child,
beginning at birth,
will be healthy and
successful.***

Disclaimer:
Many articles in this newsletter are submitted by various entities. The views and opinions contained within may or may not be those of Iowa Community Empowerment.

Focusing on Outcomes for Young Children



The Iowa Empowerment Board met on January 7th. We were fortunate to have First Lady Christie Vilsack present about her recent trip to study the early education system in France. She provided an overview of practices observed in that country and shared thoughts on how we could learn or incorporate some strategies into practice in our state.

In the spring of 2004 an empowerment data work group was formed with four local coordinators and a state technical assistance team member to guide the development of a common set of performance measures and the collection of this data at the state and local level to show the impact Community Empowerment has on the lives of young children and their families.

The data work group surveyed all 58 areas to assess what performance data is being collected, determine common measures, and make recommendations for what data is to be collected beginning in fiscal year 2006. Fifty-one of the areas responded. For a copy of the report and the powerpoint presentation used to highlight the report's findings, go the empowerment website at www.empowerment.state.ia.us.

The Iowa Empowerment Board approved the inclusion of the following local performance measures as a part of the Community Empowerment Area FY'06 annual report process.

- Unduplicated count of children participating in funded home visitation programs
- Unduplicated count of families participating in funded home visitation programs
- Number of face-to-face visits
- Percent of participants who did not have a confirmed child abuse report while in the program
- Percent of children, 0 - 3 years old, referred to Early ACCESS services

The Data workgroup will soon be providing definitions for each of these measures to guide the collection of data on the local level, as well as proposing models for local data collection and the model and framework to be used for state-wide collection of the data.

Administrative Update

December 2004 - January 2005

Upcoming Events 2005 Calendar at a Glance

Footsteps to Iowa's Future - Day on the Hill

February 24, 2005
State Capitol Rotunda

Iowa Empowerment Board

March 4, 2005

Blank Park Zoo, Des Moines

May 6, 2005

Lee/Van Buren Empowerment Area

July 8, 2005

Blank Park Zoo, Des Moines

September 9, 2005

Pottawattamie Co. Empowerment Area

November 2005

Meeting TBD

Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts Meetings

February 16, 2005

Walnut Hills United Methodist Church

Urbandale

May 18, 2005

Walnut Hills United Methodist Church

Urbandale

September 14, 2005

Heartland AEA, Johnston

December 14, 2005

Heartland AEA, Johnston

Early Childhood Iowa Core Stakeholders

February 15, 2005

West DM Learning Resource Center

May 17, 2005

West DM Learning Resource Center

September 13, 2005

Heartland AEA, Johnston

December 13, 2005

Heartland AEA, Johnston

Iowa Early Care Health & Education Congress

November 8 & 9, 2005

Scheman Center, Ames

Early Care, Health and Education System Building Activities

- Iowa Learns Council Forums with the Governor – December 1
- Cultural Competency Overview Training, ECI Co-chairs – December 2
- Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant meeting, DC – December 3-6
- Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders meeting – December 7
- Early Childhood Iowa Co-Chairs meeting – January 6
- Family Support Leadership meeting – December 8
- Head Start/Family Support networking session – December 10
- State of Promise Press Conference – December 13
- State Superintendent Advisory Council – December 15
- Results Accountability Workgroup – December 16 & January 13
- ECHE Systems Implementation Grant Meetings – Dec 10, 21, Jan 4, 11, 12, 18 & 25
- Public Engagement Workgroup – December 17 & January 14, 19
- Resources and Funding Workgroup – January 6
- Governance, Administration and Planning Workgroup – January 13
- ECHE Congress Planning – December 3, 14 & January 14
- Quality Services & Programs Workgroup – January 3
- ECHE Congress Sponsorship meeting – January 4
- Meet with President of DMACC to discuss Iowa Community College Early Childhood Alliance – Dec. 22
- Proclamation for the Iowa Community College Early Education Alliance – January 10
- Regional Public Health meetings presentation of ECI strategic plan – Jan 14, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28
- National Smart Start Conference, Greensboro, North Carolina – January 23-27

Site Visits/Technical Assistance Activities

- Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts meeting, ICN – December 8
- Clarke County Annual Report Review – January 24
- Bremer, Butler, Franklin, Grundy Annual Report Review – January 31

Linkages/Outreach Activities

- Meeting with Blank Children's Hospital Representative – Dec. 6
- ABCD II Grant Meeting – December 6
- Meeting with Principal Financial Group – December 16; January 21
- Child Care Advisory Council – December 9
- PJ/FaDDS – October 7
- State Child Care Advisory Council – December 9
- Head Start/Family Support networking session – December 10
- Presentation to the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women – Jan 6
- FaDDS Day on the Hill – January 18
- HOPES Program Managers – January 20
- Iowans for a Better Future – January 20
- Early ACCESS Council – January 21
- DHS Service Contract Advisory Committee – January 27

ECHE System Building Updates

Other Events and Activities

Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Legislative Forum

February 4
AEA 267, Waterloo

Framework for Understanding Poverty

February 18, 2005
Carroll, IA
vburns@commopp.org

Early Childhood Leadership Training IAEYC

March 12, 2005
tom.rendon@iowa.gov

Partnering for a Healthy Iowa

2005 Public Health Conference
March 29 & 30, 2005
Iowa State Center, Scheman Building
Ames
m spatkin@yahoo.com

Enriching the Lives of Iowa Children

April 18 & 19, 2005
University Park Holiday Inn
West Des Moines
www.pcaiowa.org/conference.html

Connecting the Pieces for Iowa's Children

Early Childhood Symposium
April 28 & 29, 2005
Amana Holiday Inn
kschulte@idph.state.ia.us

Update on the Iowa Department of Public Health's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Building Grant

Iowa will be applying for a three year implementation grant through Health Resource Service Administration (HRSA). The implementation grant will start July 2005-July 2008. The Early Childhood Comprehensive System Project is spearheaded through the Community Empowerment State Technical Assistance Team. The Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders serve in an advisory role for the project.

Iowa will also be applying for a competitive one year enhancement grant (July 2005-June 2006). The grant will focus on improving quality family support and parenting education programs and services.

Update on the work of Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders

The Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) Stakeholders have finalized an Early Care, Health, and Education Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan includes result areas, goals, and strategies for an Early Care, Health, and Education System. The Strategic Plan will serve as the action plan for the ECI and their work in the next three years.

Recent activities of the ECI Group and individual component workgroup include:

- developing a financing strategy, (through partnership with the Urban Education Network);
- developing a public awareness campaign, (through multiple partnerships, including Every Child Counts);
- convening statewide family support leadership programs and services to explore establishment of a family support network; (developing a common terminology of family support, next steps)
- developing indicators for the goals identified in our strategic plan; and
- compiling an inventory of early childhood programs for children ages 0-5 in Iowa.

ECI stakeholders along with Iowa Access have been working on developing a website for ECI information. The website will serve as a hub for the Early Childhood Iowa stakeholders and system building activities. The basic format for the website will include an overview and what's new on the homepage, with other pages to include:

- Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholder Information
- Iowa Grant Initiatives
- Components of the System/Achievements and Products
- Advocacy Calendar of Events
- How You Can Get Involved
- History
- Early Childhood Links

The website will be live at the end of February.



Meet Doug Peters

Doug Peters was appointed to the Iowa Empowerment Board in May of 2004 making him one of the board's newest members. As the senior minister of Walnut Hills United Methodist Church in Urbandale, he represents the faith community. Doug has also served Iowa United Methodist Churches in Woodbine, Iowa Falls, Bertram and Solon.

Doug is married to Martha Schut, who is a psychotherapist in Iowa City, so they are both very familiar with a two-hour segment of Interstate 80. He is the father of three grown children. Matthew is a classical music booking agent and composer in New York City, Timothy is a violinist in Houston and Anne is a senior at the University of Florida majoring in elementary education.

Doug is also a recorded singer/songwriter and loves to travel and read. He has written an unpublished book about a sabbatical leave five years ago during which he rode 23,109 miles over a two-month period on the train throughout the U.S. and Canada. Doug believes that serving on the IEB has proven to be a wonderful privilege for him to learn about the needs and opportunities of Iowa's youngest citizens. In November he was able to attend the Early Care Health and Education Congress in Ames and found it to be very beneficial in understanding his new role as an IEB member.

Doug's life experiences will be a great asset to the Board. We look forward to the expertise he can give as we strengthen the link between early care health and education and the faith community.

It's the Children's Turn!

Plan Now to Make A Difference for Our Youngest Iowans.

Join Advocates from around the State, on February 24, 2005.

For registration information, visit

www.iowachildnetwork.org

2005 Day on the Hill First Steps to Iowa's Future

**Iowa Early Care, Health, and Education Congress
Thursday, February 24, 2005**

The Day on the Hill will be one of the most visible opportunities for advocates to make their case for investing in young children.

State Capitol

8:00 a.m.

Briefing on the schedule and early childhood public policy messages

9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Meet with legislators/visit exhibits

You are encouraged to make appointments with your legislators prior to arriving at the Capitol*. For information on who your legislators are and how to contact them, go to www.legis.state.ia.us.



Grants Awarded to Child Protection Centers

A children's advocacy/protection center provides a comfortable, private, child-friendly setting that is both physically and psychologically safe for diverse populations of children and their families who are victims of suspected abuse and neglect. The centers offer a new way of serving abused children through a comprehensive approach to services. A team of specialists at the centers work together in the investigation, treatment, and prosecution of child abuse cases. The goal of the child advocacy/protection centers is to ensure that children are not re-victimized by the very system designed to protect them.

In 2004, IA Legislation appropriated \$100,000 to be awarded for the purpose of establishing new centers or for the support of existing CPCs that meet, or are in the process of implementing, standards established by the National Children's Alliance (NCA). NCA is a nationwide not-for-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote and support communities in providing a coordinated investigation and comprehensive response to victims of severe child abuse.

Through an application process, four Child Protection Centers in Iowa were awarded grants in the amount of \$23,000 to assist in supporting existing services within the centers. The grants will be used to support forensic interviews and family support. The four centers that were awarded grants are as follows:

- ❖ St Luke's Child Protection Center located in Cedar Rapids, serving counties in the east central and southern portion of Iowa.
<http://www.stlukescr.org/body.cfm?id=288>
- ❖ Mercy Child Advocacy Center located in Sioux City, serving counties in the northwest corner of Iowa.
<http://www.mercysiouxcity.com/news/childadvocacy.shtml>
- ❖ Blank Children's Hospital Regional Child Protection Center located in Des Moines, serving counties in central and south central Iowa.
<http://www.blankchildrens.org/body.cfm?id=160>
- ❖ Quad City Child Abuse Council located in Moline, IL, serving counties on the southeastern border of Iowa. <http://www.childabuseqc.org>

For a power point on child abuse, visit:
www.coe.ufl.edu/Counselor/people/prevention.ppt

HAWC Partnership for Children

Is accepting applications for the following position:

DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR

BA/BS degree in Human Services, Education, Health Services, or two years related comparable experience in working with youth/families required.

HAWC Partnership for Children is an Organization addressing the needs of children and their families in a four county area.

Candidates must show positive successful experience in the following areas of supervision: ability to coordinate, promote and collaborate work among community organizations, and possess the following: budgeting, grant writing, communications, language, mathematical, reasoning, and computer skills.

Position requires own transportation, a valid drivers' license and background check.

Send a letter of application and resume to
HAWC Partnership for Children, 1111 Paine St., Suite H, Decorah, IA 52101 or
hawcne@netins.net

www.hawc-iowa.com

Deadline for application is Friday, Feb 4, 2005

4:00 pm EEO/AA

New Regular Feature



Healthy Smiles

The Head Start Association recently received a grant from Delta Dental and the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation to fund *Healthy Smiles*, a home based family education and training program designed to build the confidence and competence of parents to play their part in keeping their young children cavity-free. Oversight of the program will be provided by Tom Rendon, Coordinator of the Iowa Head Start State Collaboration Office and by the Iowa Head Start Association (IHSA). The Collaboration Office will provide a single point of contact in connecting state services to Head start grantees and IHSA will provide the support and cooperation of individual grantees.

Recently, the position of Project Coordinator, a contracted position, was filled by Marcia Manter and Nina Jones with Flint Associates. Their primary responsibilities will be to design and implement the project, develop and implement an ongoing communication process, design and implement outcomes documentation system, prepare reports, and coordinate trainings and conferences.

The goal of *Healthy Smiles* is to increase by 50% the targeted parents' involvement in their child's oral health care by focusing on increased family involvement in prevention, early identification, and establishment of a dental home. Targeted families include those enrolled in Early Head Start, Head Start or participating in a variety of home visitation and parent education programs including WIC, HOPES, Title V Clinics, and those funded by Iowa Community Empowerment.

Twenty co-trainers, making up a team of four for each of five regions, will conduct regional sessions to orient home visitors and other interested people to oral health for pregnant women and children, birth to five. They will also be conducting skill-building workshops at local sites for home visitors. A *Healthy Smiles* Home Visitor Toolkit containing parent education materials, oral health reference materials, and age-appropriate hygiene supplies and teething and weaning supplies will be given to home visitors that attend the workshops in their community. Ongoing assistance will then be provided to all participating home-based agencies by the Project Coordinators through e-mail and phone communication.

The *Healthy Smiles* program will be implemented between March and August, 2005 starting with the regional meetings. Notification of those meetings will be forthcoming.



For more information please visit our website www.iowaschildren.com or contact John Calhoun jbc@calone.net

ASSOCIATION FOR IOWA'S CHILDREN

By John Calhoun, President, Association for Iowa's Children

The Association for Iowa's Children continues to develop. New memberships are still coming in as the by-laws and articles are being put into place. There has been some delay due to my retirement. I am currently in the process of moving to Polk City and will be officially moved on January 29th. At that time I will be sending out my contact information and will be completing Association work that has been delayed due to this move. I ask you for your patience and assure you that the Association will continue to grow and will assist in making a difference for the children and families in Iowa. In the meantime, I ask that you continue to support the recommendations of the Iowa Learns Council and help the Governor as he travels across the State to promote Early Childhood. He is keeping his promise to be a special advocate for early childhood, but cannot accomplish his bold agenda without our help. Thank you.



**Every Child Counts
Sheila Hansen**

Kelli Soyer

515-280-9027

shansen@cfpciowa.org

ksoyer@cfpciowa.org

***Every Child Counts is
Available for Your Next
Meeting!***

Every Child Counts continues to grow, with over six hundred members within the first six months! Our network has developed because of your work. Members have been responsible for arranging community meetings and inviting Every Child Counts to speak about this exciting opportunity in Iowa.

Our goal is to recruit three thousand members within the first three years. In order to reach our goal, we continue to need the support and guidance of our members. If you have community members you think would be interested in hearing more about Every Child Counts, we are available to schedule speaking engagements. Please feel free to contact Sheila Hansen, shansen@cfpciowa.org, or Kelli Soyer, ksoyer@cfpciowa.org, or at 515/280-9027

Every Child Counts – Update

From Sheila Hansen and Kelli Soyer

As 2004 ends, we begin 2005 with enthusiasm and strength to promote a child's agenda during the upcoming legislative session. We look forward to working with you to accomplish this task.

December was a busy month for staff at Every Child Counts. Two new reports were released, one focusing on child care in Iowa, the second on Medicaid and hawk-i.

The child care report, "Financing Child Care in Iowa: How Far Is Too Far Behind?," details how Iowa's child care affordability and quality lag behind other states. Iowa is a leader among states with the numbers of working parents, therefore, leaving children to be cared for in an out-of-home setting. Iowa spends \$28.94 per child in the Child Care Subsidy Program, compared with the \$44.53 national average.

Quality of child care in Iowa is another issue outlined in the report. According to a report, completed by the Midwest Child Care Research Consortium, only 20% of licensed child care settings would be considered "good" quality, followed by 58% considered "mediocre", and 22% considered "poor."

In order for Iowa to raise their state expenditures to the national average, an additional investment of \$13.84 million is needed.

Child care and early education issues have gained media attention over the last few weeks. Below are a few links to e-mail web sites to read the press coverage.

http://www.omaha.com/index.php?u_np=0&u_pg=1640&u_sid=1300360

<http://www.thedesmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050102/NEWS10/501020335/1001/archive>

The Medicaid and hawk-i report, "The Iowa Health Care Crisis Without Medicaid – The Role of Medicaid and hawk-I in Covering Children," outlines the continued need for subsidized medical insurance in Iowa.

Between 1999 and 2004, the number of Iowa children served by these programs has grown by 80,000 children, nearly doubling the percentage of Iowa children covered by either Medicaid or hawk-I (from 12.6% to 24.5%).

The increase in the numbers of children enrolled in Medicaid and hawk-i could be attributed to a number of factors, including a growth in the number of children who qualify for the program guidelines. Parental unemployment and the rise in health care premiums could also attribute to this increase.

When the General Assembly resumes on January 10th, they will be faced with appropriating an addition \$52 to \$85 million to continue the Medicaid program through the end of this fiscal year.

If you would like a copy of either of these reports, please contact us at everychildcounts@cfpciowa.org.

Iowa Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers (IA PITC) Trainings

"Taking steps toward..."



*...raising the quality of care for
Iowa's infants and toddlers."*

PITC Demonstration Site in California

By Beth Walling

This past December, I and three other IA PITC representatives had the remarkable opportunity to visit the Children's Center at San Francisco State University. Louis Torelli, Designer (and PITC faculty), and Sarah Johnson, Executive Director of the center, shared how the philosophy of PITC is reflected within this amazing setting. I would like to share with you a few of the impressive qualities of this facility.

Just inside the wide entrance and past the check-in desk is a cozy little cove which mimicks a small living room, perfect for families to sit for a few minutes. To the left is the preschool wing. To the right, a wide angled interior hallway leads to the infant and toddler rooms, each with its own window seat opposite the program door. The doors and windows look like ones that we would see in our homes, and therefore create a sense of familiarity. The front (and back - to the play yard) doors of each room are a specific color so that the children will associate it with their room.

The spaces and materials are open yet defined in efficient while still inviting ways that are important to young children and the adults working with them. The colors are soft, corners are rounded and there are comfortable nooks and even hammocks to retreat to. Conducive to developing skills, the infant rooms have low sinks (with adult height valves on the wall behind them). Lots of natural lighting and low windows create a calm aura.

A common kitchen with half walls sits in between the infant and toddler rooms with sliding wood and plexiglass gates so the children can see in and across. Staff share a desk and resources in here as well.

Entering into the play yard feels like a common back yard or neighborhood park. Each room has its own gabled roof with a covered porch like area and underneath there are blocks and art nooks with sinks and clothes line for hanging artwork. Further into the yard there are sand boxes, flower beds, a riding surface, a greenhouse, grassy knolls, trellises, small wooden cabins, and climbing equipment.

I have always hoped that some day we will have demonstration sites in Iowa which reflect the PITC relationship-based philosophy of care. It should be obvious from the quality of the staff:child interactions through the design of the entire setting! You know the saying, "A picture is worth ...". Well, being there was even better. But, for a sneak peak at some photos of this center please go to:

<http://www.spacesforchildren.com/sfsu.html>

Teen Health Insurance Information

Covering Kids and Families has partnered with the Healthcare Coverage for Kids Coalition (HCKC) to conduct outreach to teens. Through their collaboration they developed a teen health insurance information packet titled, “*What the Health? – Answers & Information.*” The packet is a teen version of the Insured Success/Family Education packet and was developed using student feedback. It defines health insurance, describes what medical care costs, displays an insurance options chart, and provides a health care coverage glossary. The packet is very teen friendly and is a great outreach tool for describing health insurance and the *hawk-i* program to teenagers.

HCKC staff presented the value of health insurance to a local health occupations class using the packet. The packet was well received with positive comments and suggestions.

HCKC is also collaborating with a local audio/visual class to create an educational outreach video about health insurance. The purpose of the video is to drive home the importance of health insurance and make students better future consumers. HCKC staff met with the class to discuss the students developing a partnering video to accompany the “*What the Health?*” packet. The video is expected to be completed at the end of January, 2005. Future plans are to create a curriculum component on health insurance based from the packet and video for use in middle and high schools. The “*What the Health?*” packet can be accessed at:

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/coveringkids/resources.asp>.

A New Lead Resource

The Bureau of Lead Poisoning Prevention has completed an extensive literature search and developed a document that contains a summary of the studies regarding the effects of lead poisoning on school performance. To obtain this document, you can contact Rita Gergely at rgergely@idph.state.ia.us or 800-972-2026. Copies of the studies cited are also available upon request. Since the document is an electronic file that can be e-mailed, e-mail is the preferred method to request the document.

Guide to Funding Resources

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/funding/fundguide.html>

This 24-page document provides resource information and links to searchable databases offering funding opportunities from government and private sources. It provides web links to online guides, manuals & tips on writing successful proposals. There is also a bibliography of published grant writing resources & funding directories.

Organization: Rural Information Center

Date: 2004

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.linncountycommunityempowerment.org

Marshall:

www.youthandviolence.org

Pocahontas, Calhoun and

Webster:

www.linking-families.com

Polk:

www.humanservicesplanningalliance.org

Scott:

www.scottcountyempowerment.org/

g/

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.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA Scholarship Program

By: Barb Merrill,
Apprenticeship/TEACH Program
Coordinator

For more information, call or



write:

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA
218 Sixth Avenue Suite 710
Des Moines, IA 50309-4093
(515) 883-1206 ext. 129
bmerrill@iowachildnetwork.org

Early Childhood Associate Degree Scholarship Program for Child Care Center Directors

Who is eligible for a scholarship?

Any director who would like to attend a community college to earn an associate degree in Early Childhood Education and is employed full-time (30 hours/week minimum) in a licensed child care center is eligible to apply for a scholarship. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of need and commitment to the Early Childhood Education field, as shown through information on the application. If a staff person works more than 20 hours a week providing direct care and education for children, a different T.E.A.C.H. scholarship (Associate Teacher) will apply, even if they have some administrative responsibilities.

What kind of support does the scholarship program provide?

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA pays for 50-80% of tuition and books, provides a travel stipend each semester and offers counseling and administrative support. T.E.A.C.H. awards a \$300 bonus to each director who completes the 9-18 semester hours within a contract year, except for director/employees receiving raises on option one.

Can directors from any center apply?

Yes. Directors can be from any DHS-licensed for-profit, church, not-for-profit, public or Head Start program. Any center wishing to make a commitment to director education and compensation by meeting the terms of the program can participate. Are the requirements different for directors who are employees and directors who are also center owners?

Yes. Options One and Two describe the program requirements for directors who are employees of the centers where they work. Option Three describes the program requirements for directors who are also owners of the centers where they work.



A State of Promise for Children and Youth!

Iowa Named As State of Promise

On December 13, 2004, America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth named Iowa a "State of Promise" in recognition of Gov. Tom Vilsack's comprehensive early childhood focus and the state's long-standing commitment to helping young people receive five fundamental resources, also known as The Five Promises.

"All Iowans should take pride in this honor," Vilsack said. "As citizens of this great state we take seriously our responsibility to our children. We must make sure that every child has the best opportunity to succeed in life by making a commitment to their education, ensuring their health and well-being, and providing endless opportunities for their future endeavors."

The State of Promise is "Mobilizing our state to Build the Character and Competence of Children and Youth by fulfilling the Five Promises of America's Promise". Those five promises are: caring adults, safe places, healthy start, marketable skills, and opportunities to serve. To learn more about the Five Promises, or Iowa's initiative, log on to <http://www.iowaspromise.org/>.

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

What's New: Johnson County

Johnson County Early Learning Initiative

By Kay Schieffer, Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County Grant Coordinator

The Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County (NCJC) and the Johnson County Empowerment Board have been awarded a \$486,000 Early Learning Opportunities grant from the U.S Department of Health and Human Services. The grant is supporting the **Johnson County Early Learning Initiative (JCELI)**. JCELI targets children birth to 5 years and their families in three high need neighborhoods in Johnson County.

The project goal is to improve educational and health outcomes for young children and prepare them for a successful school experience by inspiring a genuine love of reading and learning. Our approach will integrate community-based and family focused strategies, while improving the overall community's awareness of the importance of early education. JCELI will emphasize the role and importance of parents as the first teachers of their children while creating opportunities for professionals in child care to enhance their capacity as providers and partners with parents.

The JCELI will feature a "Yearn to Learn" community campaign to raise awareness on early learning and school readiness. The campaign will offer community events like "First Books" read-ins, "Make-and-Take" story box activities and neighborhood-based pediatric health services. These are events and activities that promote good health, reading and learning all the while emphasizing the importance of parents as the first teachers of their children. These types of activities are fun and help parent build relationships with other parents and early child hood providers.

In addition, the project will create a new intensive classroom for preschoolers. Preschoolers Reaching Educational Potential (PREP) emphasizes communication, pre-academic and social skills needed for school success. It is designed for children who face special challenges such as children with developmental delays, children who have never been in a group program and children who are recent immigrants to the community.

"Johnson County is in the midst of a dramatic demographic transformation," stated Johnson County Empowerment Board President, Charlie Eastham. "We have had dozens of low-income families make Johnson County their home as they seek community and educational and economic opportunity." This trend has been associated with some decreased educational outcomes in the target neighborhoods. "Our goal is to reach children early to insure the best attainable educational achievement for every student," Eastham added.

To attend any of these events or for further information, please call: Kay Schieffer at 319-354-2886.

Training on Child and Family Performance Outcomes

How do we gather information in order to show that services are making a difference for children and families? Providers receiving funds from Community Empowerment are invited to attend a workshop to gain a better understanding of performance measures and to explore measurement tools to gather information on child and family outcomes.

Coming in April 2005
9:30 AM – 3:00
Cost: \$10.00/person

4/7/05 – Storm Lake
4/12/05 – Creston
4/14/05 – Ames
4/15/05 – Iowa City
4/21/05 – Waverly

SAVE THE DATE!

Empowerment Contacts,
Board Members &
Providers

Watch for details and
registration information
coming soon!

Healthy Child Care Iowa

Sally Clausen, ARNP, BSN
Healthy Child Care Iowa
Iowa Department of Public Health
sclausen@idph.state.ia.us



HCCI Update

Name Change: The Iowa Department of Public Health will be changing the title for registered nurses conducting child care health and safety consultation. The new title is Child Care Nurse Consultant. Our customers were confused about the title Child Care Health Consultant. Customers often did not realize they were accessing the knowledge and skills of a professional registered nurse. Because the term "health consultant" had no professional credentialing process we were faced with non-professionals using the term. The new title will help our customers to understand they are receiving services from a licensed health care professional. The name change should be completed by July 1, 2005.

Updated website: The Healthy Child Care Iowa website has a new look and new features. www.idph.state.ia.us/hcci. Users may now easily find their regional child care nurse consultant, order materials on-line, view child care related events sponsored by IDPH, and find product hazard/recall information for child related products.

Regional Child Care Nurse Consultant position open in southwest Iowa. The Child Care Resource and Referral agency at West Central Development Corp. has a full-time position open for a registered nurse with public health background. The nurse will provide regional consultation to approximately 22 counties. Interested RNs should contact Glenna Thompson, Regional Director, West Central Development Corp. Telephone: (712) 755-7381 or (800) 945-9778. Email: gthompson@swiowachildcare.org

Fall 2005 Child Care Nurse Consultant training: The 45-hour initial training program for new child care nurse consultants will again be offered in the fall. Tentative dates: September 29th & 30th October 26th – 28th and November 17th & 18th. The course will be offered in the Des Moines area. Registration will begin in early summer. Kim Tichy can respond to your questions Tel: 515-281-7519. Email: ktichy@idph.state.ia.us

Opportunity for Discussion

Promoting Social Emotional Competence

JOIN US FOR INTERNET CHATS WITH LEADING EXPERTS

The Center on Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior will be hosting a series of Internet Chats on topics related to supporting young children's social emotional development and preventing challenging behaviors.

For more information on these chats, please see <http://csefel.uiuc.edu/chat.html>

Leadership Strategies for Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Development and Addressing Challenging Behavior

Date/Time: March 30, 2005 1:00 – 2:00 PM Central Standard Time

Guest: **Barbara Smith, Ph.D.**, University of Colorado at Denver

Summary: In this chat, we will discuss strategies, tools, and resources available for administrators to use in their efforts to help early care providers support children's social emotional development and address challenging behavior.



IOWA'S QUALITY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM STANDARDS

During the 2003-04 school year the Iowa Department of Education's (DE) Early Learning Team was given the charge to develop Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) for Iowa's early care and education programs that had ties to the Iowa Department of Education. These programs would include preschools that are operated by local school districts (Title 1, ECSE, etc.) and those programs where preschoolers' IEPs are being implemented. The Early Learning Team selected all ten of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) program standards and 45% of the NAEYC program criteria. They also developed a self- assessment to go with the criteria.

In June of 2004 the DE was notified that it had received a three year State Improvement Grant (SIG) that was funded by the Federal Office of Special Education Programs. This grant is allowing the QPPS to be rolled out in a systematic way taking into consideration best practices for adult learning and program change.

In January sixty-five facilitators, representing area education agencies, local school districts, community empowerment areas, community colleges, and Child Care Resource & Referral were trained on the QPPS. These facilitators will each work with 8 staff members from two community based early childhood programs. The programs will complete the self-assessment, which will lead to a quality improvement plan. At the same time five community colleges are involved in the training so that they can infuse the QPPS in their course curriculums.

Iowa State University will be compiling the information from the self- assessments to determine what the statewide needs are in regards to improving the quality of Iowa's early care and education programs. Technical assistance for the next two years will be linked to the outcomes of the self -assessments.

For more information regarding Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards and their implementation feel free to contact Mary Schertz at Mary.Schertz@iowa.gov or 515/281-5433.



Connecting the Pieces for Iowa's Children - Early Childhood Symposium

SCRIPT (Supporting Changes and Reform in Interprofessional Preservice Training) and HRSA (Health Resource and Service Administration - Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Project) are jointly sponsoring an Early Childhood Symposium on April 28 and 29 at the Amana Holiday Inn. The keynotes for the conference will be the Lt. Governor Sally Pederson (invited) and Camille Catlett from Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. The Symposium will put emphasis on early care, health, and education pre-service training. For more information, contact kschulte@idph.state.ia.us. Brochures will be sent out the middle of February.

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