

Iowa Community Empowerment Newsletter

April 2005
Volume 6, Issue 2

Questions/Comments:
Shanell Wagler, (515) 281-4537
shanell.wagler@iowa.gov



Early Childhood Advocates Come Together at the Capitol

Approximately 300 early childhood advocates created a strong voice for our youngest Iowan's while at the Capitol on February 24. Over 50 displays and many delegates from across the state shared their message about the importance of supporting early childhood investment in our state.



Gov. Vilsack with Jones County Empowerment

Partners that worked together for the success of the day included individuals from many entities and programs, public and private, from both the state and local levels. Local empowerment areas showcased the efforts of their communities through displays, as well as state-wide efforts working on behalf of Iowa's children. These included: Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, Parents Anonymous, ISU Extension to Families, Iowa Child Care & Early Education Network, Early ACCESS, Iowa Respite & Crisis Care Coalition, Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, Child & Family Policy Center, and the Hemophilia Society of Iowa. Also, working to make the event successful was Lakeshore Learning Materials & Iowa Head Start Association who helped to sponsor the reception; the Principal Financial Group® who printed our early childhood fliers; and the Iowa Department of Economic Development and the Integer Group who designed the finished product.

New this year was the participation of a large delegation of early childhood students from colleges across Iowa. There were over 60 students and faculty members representing the following schools: Hawkeye Community College, Iowa Western Community College, Iowa Lakes Community College, and Des Moines Area Community College. Activities planned especially for the students included Advocacy 101 training with Every Child Counts and a private meeting with the

Governor. They were also invited to the joint press conference with the Governor and Helen Blank from the National Women's Law Center.

Here are some comments from the students regarding their experience:

"It was a good educational experience. I am much more open-minded to the responsibilities of our legislators."



Rep. Roger Thomas with Buchanan/Delaware/Fayette County Empowerment Area

"I appreciate more what the people at the Capitol do for us. They're very busy people and they're all working hard for us."

In this issue:

Day on the Hill Activities	1
Updates	3
ECHE System Building Empowerment	
Other Events/Activities	
Iowa Empowerment Board News	5
March Meeting Highlights	
IEB Nominations Sought	
New Member	
Local CEA News	6-8
NICE Empowerment	
Lee/Van Buren	
Floyd/Mitchell/Chickasaw	
Association for Iowa's Children	
Other News	
Every Child Counts Update	9
ICCEEN Updates	10-12
Executive Director Named	
PITC Update	
Child Care Center Business Practices	
T.E.A.C.H.	
Governor's Recent EC Efforts	13
Law Enforcement	
Above & Beyond EC Awards	
Health News	14-16
HCCI Update	
CHNA & HIP	
Healthy Smile	
Covering Kids & Families	

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.

Making A Difference For Our Youngest Iowans

Early Care, Health & Education Day on the Hill Activities – cont'd...

“I feel more comfortable in advocating now because I know more about it.”

And from one of the instructors, “The students left with good feelings about the day. They were interested to get a glimpse at how the political process works and were reminded of the importance of being an advocate for early childhood issues. The biggest impact they felt was the commitment for quality early childhood care and education shared by the Governor at his press conference. He made them feel very good about the choice they have made to work with young children.”



Governor Vilsack with Black Hawk County Empowerment



First Lady Christie Vilsack & advocates from Johnson County

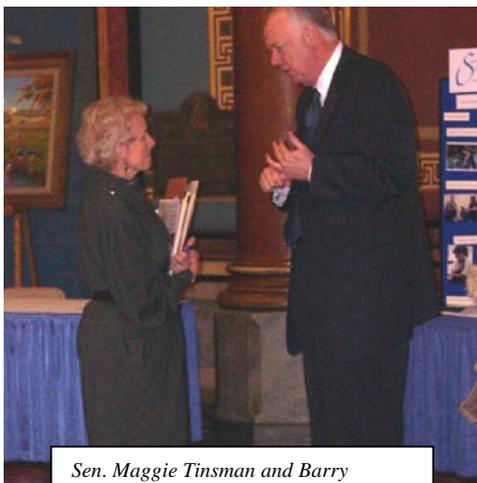
Legislators listened to community folks as the message focused on a request for the support of an increased investment in a comprehensive approach that builds upon existing strengths and community energy ensuring that health, early intervention, child care, family strengthening, and pre-school needs are all addressed. Specific areas of increased investment included:

- ü Community Empowerment investments build local ownership and investment.
- ü Child Care investments build upon existing subsidy and quality enhancement efforts, including professional development and quality rating system.
- ü Pre-school investments build upon research based programs like Shared Visions and Head Start.
- ü Investments in comprehensive health services and early intervention ensure early identification of developmental issues and access to services.



Governor Vilsack, First Lady Christie Vilsack & Helen Blank address the college students and the media

Here is what some of the early childhood advocates had to say about the day:



Sen. Maggie Tinsman and Barry Griswell, President & CEO, Principal Financial Group®

“... thank you for yesterday’s Day on the Hill opportunity. It was a well spent day and I think that Early Childhood Care and Education now has more strong advocates in this community. Some of the folks that came to the Capitol from Story (County) had never done anything like that before and by the end of the day were talking about continuing to communicate with their legislators and passing what they learned on to the families that they our involved with. It was great to see their excitement.”

“Very informational...good opportunity to become acquainted with legislators. All four of the legislators from our empowerment area stopped by our display.”

“It was a tremendous day to me! It was outstanding to be a part of the press conference on the importance of early childhood and then terribly frustrating to see the press ignore that topic & go on to other things. It makes it more understandable now why early childhood is seldom in the news.”

Overall, it was a positive day at the Capitol for supporting early childhood initiatives in Iowa. Thank you to everyone who participated to make the day a success and for working so diligently for our youngest Iowan’s.

Administrative Update

February 2005 - March 2005

Upcoming Events 2005 Calendar at a Glance

Iowa Empowerment Board

May 6, 2005

Fort Madison, Iowa

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

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

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 & Education Day on the Hill

February 7 & 8, 2006

Early Care, Health and Education System Building Activities

- Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders meeting – February 15
- Early Childhood Iowa Co-Chairs meeting – February 10
- Results Accountability Workgroup – February 10
- ECHE Systems Implementation Grant Meetings – March 1
- Public Engagement Workgroup – February 18 & March 17
- Governance, Administration and Planning Workgroup – March 10
- ECHE Congress Planning – February 11 & March 11
- Quality Services & Programs Workgroup – February 3 & March 2
- ECHE Congress Sponsorship meeting – February 21
- State Agency Liaison Group – February 4
- Early Care, Health & Education Day on the Hill – February 24
- Pre-K Now (seeking EC Advocacy Resources) – March 2 & 4
- Early Childhood Public Hearing – March 7
- EC Advocacy Outreach to Law Enforcement Agencies – March 15 & 21
- FaDDS Council – presenting ECI Strategic Plan - March 17
- Above & Beyond – EC Awards – March 19
- ECI Planning with Leslie Anderson (Smart Start coach) – March 28

Site Visits/Technical Assistance Activities

- Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts meeting – February 16
- TA Woodbury County – February 3
- TA Buchanan, Delaware, Fayette – February 7
- Data Measures Workgroup – February 24
- Empowerment Data Presentation, State Library – March 1
- TA Clinton/Jackson – March 22
- Iowa Empowerment Board meeting – March 4
- Redesignation TA, ICN – March 16
- Association for Iowa's Children Board – TA Planning – March 23
- Annual Report Reviews:
 - Appanoose/Davis/Lucas/Monroe; Warren; Buena vista/Crawford/Sac – February 8
 - Cedar; Adams – February 9
 - Lee/Van Buren; Union – February 10
 - Pottawattamie – February 14
 - Floyd/Mitchell/Chickasaw – February 17
 - Clarke – February 24
 - Polk – March 2
 - Hamilton/Humboldt/Wright – March 3
 - Cass/Mills/Montgomery; Ringgold; Iowa – March 7
 - Dubuque; Washington – March 8
 - Decatur – March 10
 - Palo Alto/Kossuth; Henry; Taylor; Scott – March 11
 - Ida; Emmet; Johnson – March 14
 - Dallas; Benton – March 15
 - Harrison/Monona/Shelby – March 17
 - Winnebago; Clinton/Jackson – March 22
 - Pocahontas/Calhoun/Webster; Cherokee/Lyon/Plymouth/Sioux – March 24
 - Mahaska/Wapello; Poweshiek; Page/Fremont – March 31

ECHE System Building Updates

Other Events and Activities

Enriching the Lives of Iowa Children

April 18 & 19, 2005
University Park Holiday Inn
West Des Moines

www.pcaiowa.org/conference.html

Stepping Up To The Plate: Exploring Early Childhood Programming for Iowa

April 27, 2005
West Des Moines Marriott
West Des Moines

www.sai-iowa.org/earlychildhood.pdf

Connecting the Pieces for Iowa's Children

Early Childhood Symposium

April 28 & 29, 2005
Amana Holiday Inn

kschulte@idph.state.ia.us

Healthy Families America Training

May 2-6, 2005
Grace Lutheran Church
Des Moines

nancy.krause@lsiowa.org

The Explosive Child Conference

June 6, 2005
University Park Holiday Inn
West Des Moines

www.ifcmh.org

2005 Juvenile Justice National Symposium: Joining Forces for Better Outcomes

June 1-3, 2005
Miami, Florida

dwhite@cwla.org

Head Start Region VII Leadership Conference

June 1-3, 2005
Hyatt Regency Crown Center
Kansas City, MO

Tom.Rendon@iowa.gov

Governor's Conference on Public Health: Building Iowa as a Healthy Community - Barn Raising V

July 28 - 29, 2005
Drake University
Des Moines

www.idph.state.ia.us

Linkages/Outreach Activities

- Early ACCESS Advisory Council – March 18
- Education Appropriations Subcommittee presentation – February 3
- State Child Care Advisory Council – February 10
- Summit on Access to Dental Care – February 18
- Health & Human Services Appropriation Subcommittee presentation - February 23
- TA to MHDDMR Oversight Committee – February 25
- EC Public Hearing – March 7
- MCH Advisory – March 10
- IAIEYC Leadership Training – March 12
- Youth Development/State of Promise Activities – Feb 23, March 18 & 28
- CCR&R Region 2 Director – March 17
- Iowa Public Health Conference – March 29 & 30
- CCR&R Regional Director's meeting – March 31

Update on the work of Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders



Check out the Early Childhood Iowa Website!

www.earlychildhoodiowa.org

The website went live early last month and has been expanding ever since. The site provides an outlet for Iowa's Early Care, Health, and Education System Building work. Visitors can access the Early Childhood Iowa Strategic Plan, Charter Documents, meeting minutes and agendas and information about the activities of the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders and Component Groups. Keep checking back as the site continues to develop!

Partnering With Parents – ONLINE

Walking the Journey Together

An educational outreach academy focused on parenting education.

It begins on June 6 and continues through December 2, 2005. This interactive online training includes 11 modules and brings together parenting educators across the country. Chat rooms, discussion boards, videostreams virtual small group assignments, eJournals, and short readings are methods used to facilitate learning.



A Parenting Education Certificate of Completion, three hours of ISU undergraduate/graduate course credit, Iowa teacher renewal credits, social worker hours, ISU CEUs, AAFCS PDUs, NCFR CFLE CEUs are available.

To learn more, visit www.extension.iastate.edu/pwp.

Iowa Empowerment Board News



March Meeting Highlights

The Iowa Empowerment Board held their bi-monthly meeting on March 4. Highlights from the meeting included a healthy discussion about the heightened awareness and media attention that is occurring around investing in early childhood quality programs and activities.

The Board approved the updated Technical Assistance Plan. The plan provides an overview and process of technical assistance opportunities to community empowerment areas. The plan will be shared with the Empowerment Contacts/Coordinators during their May meeting. The Iowa Empowerment Board reviewed and endorsed the Strategic Plan that was developed by the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders.

A presentation was made by Lynn Graves, Vice President of Executive Operations at Principal Financial Group and Rose Vasquez, an employee of Principal on loan to Project Destiny (an early childhood project in Polk County).



Rose described information about the project and her particular role. Lynn shared information about the Women's Leadership Connection and their philanthropic investments in young children. They inspired the board as to the role business can play as early childhood partners.

The May meeting of the Board will be held in Fort Madison. Members will have an opportunity to witness firsthand the programs for children and families offered in the Lee/Van Buren Empowerment Area and see the difference investments are making at the local level.

On-going Nominations Sought For Iowa Empowerment Board

The Iowa Empowerment Board is currently seeking on-going nominations for citizen members. Citizen members are appointed by Governor Thomas Vilsack and confirmed by the Iowa Senate. Interested candidates must complete a gubernatorial appointment resume in addition to seeking a letter of recommendation from their local empowerment board. The gubernatorial appointment resume can be found at <http://www.iowai.net/iowa/governor/boards/>. Citizen member selections are reflective of the state's congressional districts to ensure representation from across the state. An equally important criterion is that appointments reflect the ethnic, cultural, social, and economic diversity of our state. We encourage candidates from diverse populations to apply. Please contact the Empowerment Office if you need more information.

Meet New Board Member: John Calhoun

John Calhoun, a 1971 graduate of Briar Cliff College in Sioux City, worked as a juvenile court officer in the 3rd judicial district for 27 years. He was hired as the Director of the Siouland Human Investment Partnership (SHIP) in Sioux City in 1999 and served as the Empowerment & Decategorization Coordinator. John has served on many boards and committees including the Iowa Learns Council for which he served as the team leader of the Early Childhood Team. John retired on December 31, 2004 and has moved to Polk City with his wife Beth, who recently took a job as a CSIP Consultant for the Dept. of Education. John & Beth have two daughters and two grandchildren living in the Des Moines area. They are both very happy to be close to their children & grandchildren. John will begin with the Iowa Empowerment Board as of the May meeting.



Week of the Young Child April 3 – 9, 2005

Children's Opportunities ~~ Our Responsibilities

**--Submitted by Mary Swanson
Hawarden, IA
Northwest (NICE) Empowerment**



4th Annual Children's Fair

This year the *Week of the Young Child* is April 3 - 9 2005. To celebrate, Hawarden's 4th annual Children's Fair will be held on Saturday, April 9, and the mayor will be available to offer a proclamation. Each year different things, new things, have been planned, and as coordinator of this event, I feel that this is going to be the BEST year yet.

Each year there have been vehicles for the children to look at, climb into and get a first hand experience with when they are not in an emergency situation. Examples have included a fire truck, police car, ambulance, garbage truck, tow truck, a semi truck, and new this year, will be Mercy Medical Hospital's helicopter. The event also includes many hands on tables where the children can participate in art activities, make-it-take-it activities, a music corner, games, face painting, and a reading corner. Pizza Ranch is serving pizza and pop and there will be informational tables for families about resources and services around Sioux County. Participating agencies and programs include: Mid-Sioux, WIC, Head Start, Extension office, AEA, and others. The Poison Control Center's display will help children recognize medications that might actually look like candy. This booth was a big hit last year. If possible, information will also be provided in Spanish and interpretation services have been sought.

This year our hope is that the event will go beyond just one Saturday. Downtown businesses have been contacted to allow children's art work to be displayed in their windows. Other possible events include: a story hour on Thursday at the public library; an after school activity on Thursday offered by the Great Plains Zoo; and a car seat safety check on Saturday.



Children First 5th Annual Childcare Enhancement Conference

Eighty-six child care professionals from Lee and Van Buren counties participated in the fifth annual Children First Child Care Enhancement Conference that was held at Central Lee Middle School on February 12th, 2005. This all-day event is designed to provide six hours of local training on issues relevant to the child care profession. This year's conference focused on literacy, puppets, infant care, grant writing, snacks, transitions, music, and conflict resolution.

Registered and licensed child care providers who attend this annual conference receive numerous resources that will enhance the child care setting and gain the opportunity to network with other professionals. Funding for the conference is provided by Children First, a part of Iowa Community Empowerment.

Agencies that collaborated to host this year's event include Child Care Resource and Referral, Lee County Health Department, Girl Scouts of Shining Trail Council, Iowa State University Extension, and members of the Children First Child Care Enhancement Task Force. For more information regarding this conference or other programs funded by Children First, please contact Rhonda Boltz, Children First Coordinator, at 319/526-5686.

FMC Community Empowerment Partners With AEA 267 and Area School Districts to Offer Preschool Parent Literacy Trainings

--Press Release, March 16, 2005

FMC Community Empowerment (Floyd, Mitchell, Chickasaw) has successfully joined forces with AEA 267 and three area school districts to offer preschool parent literacy trainings. The free trainings are part of a collaborative effort between the FMC Empowerment area, Area Education Agency 267, and three school districts that include: Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock (R-R-MR), Nashua-Plainfield Community Schools, and the Osage Community School District.

According to Laurie Kristiansen, FMC Empowerment Facilitator, the free trainings are part of a three-part series dealing with language, reading, and writing. Parents of preschool children, ages 3 to 5, learn how to help their children develop skills in language, reading, and writing. Grandparents, preschool teachers and assistants, along with daycare providers are also encouraged to attend.

Children do Better

“The more parents take part in their children’s school-related activities, the better they will do in reading,” said Virgene Hopkey, AEA 267 trainer for the R-R-MR sessions.

“We know, based on conclusive research, that preschool children perform significantly better in school when parents have taken an active role in early literacy activities,” said Hopkey. “This specialized free training for parents will help them develop fun and meaningful activities at home for their preschoolers.”

According to Kristiansen, the literacy trainings are made possible through a \$1.5 million dollar Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC) Federal grant through the local AEA 267.

The R-R-MR district completed the three-session series in March, with as many as 25 participants. The Nashua-Plainfield District and the Osage Community District will offer the series in April.

Language, Reading, and Writing Covered

The first session in the series deals with language development. Session 2 focuses on reading development and the final segment concentrates on writing development. Each session runs for 90 minutes and includes 15 minutes where parents can select two free books to take home with them. Parents who attend all three sessions can choose an additional book at the final session. However, participants can also sign up for any or all of the three sessions.

“It’s possible to take home a total of 7 new books for preschoolers, valued at \$35, along with all kinds of information and ideas about incorporating literacy into everyday routines,” noted Kristiansen.

Parent Responses

Participants at the R-R-MR training were excited to be part of this first-time opportunity. Evaluation comments ranged from, “I never realized how many resources there are for reading, writing, and language,”; “they offered suggestions I’d never thought of!” to “we need to stay on top of literacy and not let TV control our kids!”

First in the State

According to AEA 267 officials, the FMC Empowerment area and AEA 267 are the first in the state to work together with area school districts to successfully offer and schedule these trainings.

For more information about the role Empowerment played, contact: Laurie Kristiansen, FMC Empowerment Facilitator, 641-435-4435; email: fmc@rconnect.com.

For information about AEA 267 and the preschool parent literacy trainings, contact: Alison Bell, AEA 267 PIRC Project Director, 1-800-542-8375, 7618.



ASSOCIATION FOR IOWA'S CHILDREN

Submitted by John Calhoun

For more information please visit our website www.iowaschildren.com



The Association for Iowa's Children held an Association meeting in conjunction with the Empowerment contacts meeting on February 16th. The Association held an election to fill the positions of President and Secretary. These positions were left vacant due to John Calhoun and Nancy Everman resigning their positions as Empowerment Coordinators. The Association elected Cindy Duhrkopf as President and Kathy Rindels as Secretary in addition to appointing John Calhoun as a technical advisor. The Articles of Incorporation and by-laws were also approved at this meeting. The current board of the Association is as follows:

President	Cindy Duhrkopf	At-large	Cyndee Dather
Vice President	Elizabeth Stanek	At-large	Jody Means
Treasurer	Jack Maletta	At-large	Sherri Edwards
Secretary	Kathy Rindels	At-large	Rhonda Boltz
At-large	Ann Stewart		

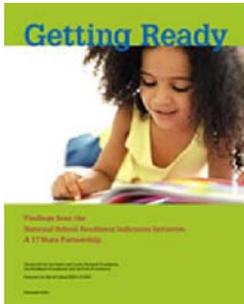
Welcome New Baby Hageman!



Gretchen and Pat are the proud parents of a bouncing baby boy – again! Luke Patrick joins his brothers Bennett and Reese, and while big brother doesn't appear to be too interested in this picture, they are all thrilled with this new addition to their family.

Luke Patrick was born on Sunday, March 20 and weighed in at 7 lbs, 11 oz and was 21 inches. Everyone is doing well!

Congratulations, Gretchen!



The National School Readiness Indicators Initiative: [Making Progress for Young Children](#)

Packard Foundation, the Kauffman Foundation and the Ford Foundation
Prepared by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
February 2005

The National School Readiness Indicators Initiative: Making Progress for Young Children involved teams from 17 states, including Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and Wisconsin. Over the course of the Initiative, 17 state teams worked to increase their capacity to obtain and use data, to develop effective communications strategies and to inform a school readiness policy agenda.

I Am Your Child Changes Focus New Address

www.parentsaction.org

Parents' Action for Children

Some exciting changes have taken place and a new movement is sweeping across America. *Parents' Action for Children*, formerly Rob Reiner's I Am Your Child Foundation, is building a national constituency of parents to change our nation's policies for children and families. Through our new website and online newsletter, Parents' Action links parents together to share their stories and learn from each other. Parents' Action also provides the best available information about quality child care, pediatrician's tips on everything from breast feeding to immunizations, guidance through the health insurance maze, and inspirational stories about local parents fighting for families. The site also provides fast and easy ways to get involved in the issues families care about.

Can also be found on the *Resource Links* of the Empowerment web site: http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us/ResourceLinks/secure_nuturing_families.htm



Every Child Counts

Sheila Hansen

Kelli Soyer

515-280-9027

shansen@cfpciowa.org

ksoyer@cfpciowa.org

For a list of your federal and state legislators, visit:

<http://www4.legis.state.ia.us/fi-nd-leg/>

To find out about individual state legislators, you can go to:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/aspx/Legislators/LegislatorInfo.aspx>

Every Child Counts is Available for Your Next Meeting!

Every Child Counts continues to grow, with over eight hundred members within the first few 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

Building Relationships with Legislators

Legislators are supposed to listen to all of their constituents. Legislators are supposed to represent the people in their districts, not follow their own agendas. Issues are supposed to matter more than connections.

For many legislators, that's true most of the time. But with all legislators, you will be more effective if you cultivate a relationship with them before you need something. The most effective time to talk with legislators is when they can give you more of their attention - during recesses, in their home offices/districts.

Do Your Homework

- Become familiar with the legislator's background.
- What is their personal history?
- What political issues are important to them?
- What committees do they serve on?
- What's their voting record?
- Who supports this candidate by endorsing or donating to them?

Champions and Future Allies

If your legislator is a champion of children's issues, you may feel like you don't have to do much. After all, your legislator already does what you want him or her to do. However, legislators who work for children need your support and resources to continue fighting the good fight.

- Include your legislator in your newsletter, email list, or holiday card list. You may want to add a personal note thanking them for their record of concern for your issues.
- Think of ways to publicly recognize your legislator for his or her contributions.
- Invite your legislator to special events, such as the opening of a new building or program, a holiday celebration, or a tour of a facility in conjunction with a national event (Week of the Young Child, etc.) Events like this can help legislators gain media attention and exposure to constituents, and also allows you to strengthen your relationship.

Legislators who aren't yet on the front lines for kids need a different approach.

- Never verbally attack or threaten your legislator, no matter how disappointed you are with their actions.
- Find common ground with your legislator, even if it's on an issue not related to children.
- You may want to do research on his or her campaign contributors, to see who in the community your legislator does listen to.

The Role of Staff

Republican and Democratic caucuses in both chambers utilize research staffs. The caucus staffs consist of directors, legislative research analysts, and secretaries and provide legislators with policy research, issue and bill analysis, and constituent services. To find out the names of the staff members visit:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Agencies.html>

Saying "Thanks"

All legislators need to be thanked when they do something you like. Legislators rarely get written compliments - more often, they get deluged with complaints. So if your legislator does something you like, even something small, send a thank you letter.

Please take the time to visit with your legislator and continue to cultivate your relationship.

***"Be the change you wish to see in the world....
gandhi***



Iowa Child Care & Early Education Network Announces New Executive Director

Leslie Schmalzried has accepted the position of Executive Director for the Iowa Child Care & Early Education Network. She will begin employment on April 1, 2005.

Leslie is a Licensed Master Social Worker and Certified Prevention Specialist in drug abuse prevention with professional experience in the field of child advocacy in Iowa since 1992. In addition, she possesses a Masters degree in Organizational Management with an emphasis in managing today's not-for-profits. For nearly ten years she has served as Executive Director of Prevention Concepts, Inc., located in Indianola, IA.

Leadership experience serving on community empowerment advisory boards, adjunct instructor in management at Upper Iowa University and DMACC, strategic planning, conference planning, and ability to develop and implement fiscally responsible projects serve her well for her upcoming role as administrator and principal spokesperson in all fields of Network service.

And...

Kristin Hoesing will fill the position of child care provider **Training Registry Coordinator**. Kristin began her employment at the Network on March 15th. This is a new position at the Network, and Kristin will be responsible for the continued development, design, and implementation of the registry, which has been progressing in partnership with DHS and IowaAccess.

Kristin will be providing training to training organizations in the use of the registry, marketing the registry to providers as well as training organizations, and managing the registry as it rolls out. Kristin has a master's degree in administrative studies with an emphasis in communication. Her previous work experiences include marketing, data management, and adult training experiences.

Welcome, Leslie and Kristin to the Network!

Taking steps toward...



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

Iowa Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers (IA PITC)

Infant/Toddler Specialist Job Opening

Child Care Resource & Referral, Region 5, is currently soliciting applications to fill the Regional Infant/Toddler Specialist position. Send your application and resume to: East Central T.R.A.I.N., 500 East 59th St, Davenport, IA 52807. An E.O.E. The length of the position is contingent on the availability of grant funds.

Also, they are currently seeking new PITC trainers. In particular, they are looking for individuals who will be available to train in the western half and south central parts of the state. Interested persons should contact Beth Walling, State Coordinator, or your Regional Infant/Toddler Specialist.

Child Care Center Business Practices Program

Submitted by:
Kathy Zarghami
Program Manager

National Administrator Credential Offered in Iowa

High quality early childhood programs are linked to the actions of their leaders. Most child care center directors do not have formal business management training before stepping into the administrative position and often are hired into programs already in financial trouble. Training and technical assistance are vital to the success of these early childhood care and education programs and strong predictors of overall program quality.

The Child Care Center Business Practices Program at the Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network, in collaboration with the National Child Care Association (NCCA), is offering business training to child care administrators. National Administrator Credential (NAC) training is a forty hour training series covering program development, system management, staff management, facility, legal issues, community relations, financial management and professional/self development. It is available to all licensed center and preschool administrators and offers the only nationally recognized director credential which is awarded by the NCCA. The NAC has been included in the proposed Iowa Quality Rating System and benefits both experienced and inexperienced directors.

Since first offered in Iowa through the Child Care Center Business Practices Program five months ago, sixty-nine directors and assistant directors have received the NAC. Six additional training events are scheduled around the state before July, potentially providing training for an additional 120 administrators. Previously, two NAC classes were offered in Blackhawk County training up to 40 administrators through support from Cedar Valley's Promise. The positive Blackhawk County experience was a significant factor in selecting the NAC training as the curriculum for the Child Care Center Business Practices Program.

NAC training is required of all directors working in programs receiving forgivable loans from the Child Care Center Business Practices Program. In order to ensure availability of this valuable training opportunity to all programs statewide, the Child Care Center Business Practices Program is currently subsidizing the cost of training. Nine child care professionals have become certified NAC trainers to provide convenient, local training. In most cases, travel distance is kept under 70 miles for participants. However, after June 2005, budget constraints may limit class offerings to as little as one per Child Care Resource and Referral Region per year. This will not meet the demand the class has already generated.

As a first of its kind program in Iowa, the Child Care Center Business Practices Program provides financial assistance to child care center programs in tandem with training and technical assistance for administrative staff. This program is funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services with federal funding through the Child Care and Development Block Grant Quality Improvement earmark. The program mandate given by the State Child Care Advisory Council was to increase availability of quality child care slots in Iowa. This effort is being addressed through three formats: loans, training, and technical assistance.

Since January, 2004, twenty-six (26) loans have been awarded throughout the state with two (2) additional emergency applications pending. Non-profit child care programs and preschools may receive up to \$10,000 toward start-up, expansion or emergency costs. These loans are forgivable provided certain criteria are met including NAC training, and development of a sound business plan. Loan applications for the next round of awards will be available on the Network website www.iowachildnetwork.org in early April. Intent to apply must be submitted by June 1, 2005, for the application to be considered. The complete application is due July 1, 2005, with awards slated for announcement in early September.

Regional technical assistance is available one-on-one to loan recipients to address a program's specific needs, and for all early care and education programs through a link coming to the Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network website which will

NAC Information Continued...

include a Directors Bulletin Board and "Ask the Expert" section for best practice information.

The goals and outcomes of early childhood programs are people oriented rather than product oriented making them more difficult to measure but none-the-less important as we look to healthy social and emotional development of children, success in school, and a productive future work force. The Child Care Center Business Practices Program exists to fill a gap in building skills and providing support, both financial and technical, to program administrators in operating the business side of child care.

For more information on the Child Care Center Business Practices Program and the National Administrator Credential Training in Iowa, contact the program manager at kzarghami@iowachildnetwork.org or 515-883-1206 x 126.

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

Barb Merrill, Apprenticeship/TEACH
Program Coordinator

Thank You Community Empowerment!

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA is proud to be supported by four Empowerment areas. This allows 32 providers to be served by a scholarship contract who might not otherwise have the opportunity. Thanks Dallas, Floyd-Mitchell-Chickasaw, Polk and Scott County Empowerment Areas.



"You may not recognize success when it happens. It's not always the thing you expected it to be. Looking back, you will realize that there are successes to be recognized and joy to be seized in every day." - Elizabeth Keane



Law Enforcement Officials Join Governor Vilsack in Supporting Early Childhood Education

“The dollars that the governor is asking to be invested in this early education incentive is going to help law enforcement down the road and it’s going to ease the burden on the taxpayers,” said Jon Thomas, a Dallas County deputy sheriff.

Related Information:

7th National Conference on Preventing Crime: Power of Prevention Silver Successes, Golden Opportunities

October 8-11, 2005
Hilton Washington & Towers
Washington, DC
www.ncpc.org/pop

More than a dozen Iowa law enforcement officials, fire fighters and corrections officers from across Iowa stood with Governor Tom Vilsack today as he urged Iowa legislators to take risks and act now on important initiatives, including early childhood education.

“Iowans are counting on their representatives at the Statehouse to act now on early childhood education initiatives,” Vilsack said. “We have a responsibility to ensure every Iowa child has a world-class education so that they can be successful in school and later in life. We know that if we invest early in a child’s life we will reduce costs for the state and law enforcement agencies in the future.”

A landmark, long-term study of the effects of high-quality early care and education done by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation showed that those students who received high-quality early education had significantly fewer arrests than those who did not. Also, significantly fewer members of those students who received early care than those who did not were ever arrested for violent crimes, property crimes, or drug crimes.

“I am grateful law enforcement officials across Iowa understand that to win the war on crime, we need to start educating our children early in life,” Vilsack said.



Governor Vilsack presents Above & Beyond Awards

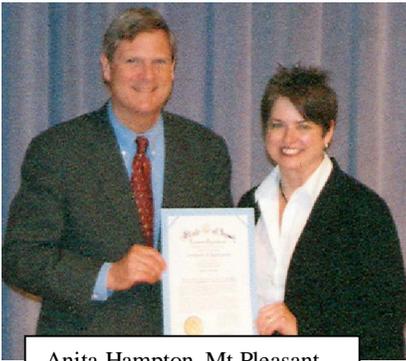
Governor Vilsack honored Iowans who have made an outstanding contribution to the well being of Iowa children through their work in early childhood care, education, and health on Saturday, March 19th. More than 30 individuals and groups were recognized during the ceremony at the State Historical Building, in Des Moines.

“Iowans have long been among the nation’s leaders in recognizing the importance of early childhood,” said Governor Vilsack. “It is because of the dedication and selfless service of remarkable individuals and organizations in communities throughout our state that so many children can get an early start on a successful, healthy life enhanced with educational opportunities.”

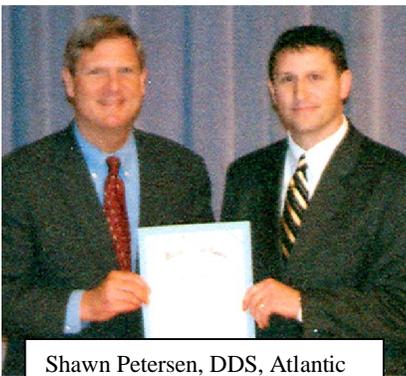
The event was the last in a yearlong series of recognition ceremonies related to the Vilsack/Pederson administration’s “Above and Beyond” initiative to recognize and honor individuals and groups making outstanding contributions to the well being of Iowa children. Award recipients have included juvenile justice officers, literacy advocates, foster grandparents, school support staff, special education professionals, and people involved with after-school programs and teaching kids the importance of preserving our national environment.

The award recipients at this most recent event included preschool and daycare professionals, health care workers and others who make contributions to the lives of children in their earliest years.

Master of Ceremonies for the event was Iowa Empowerment Board Chair, Tom Wilson.



Anita Hampton, Mt Pleasant



Shawn Petersen, DDS, Atlantic

Healthy Child Care Iowa

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



2005 Data Just Released...

Full reports from each county are posted on the IDPH website,
http://www.idph.state.ia.us/chnahip/reports_2005.asp

HCCI Update

The IDPH has early childhood consumer product safety commission product recalls/hazard warnings posted on their website:
<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hcci/recalls.asp> . The recalls listed fall into five categories:

[Beds and Cribs](#)

[Child Clothing and Shoes](#)

[Equipment \(including infant supplies/equipment\)](#)

[Furniture Related to Child Care and Early Education](#)

[Toys and Play Related Items](#)

Consumers may also visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) website to view a complete listing of all recalls: www.cpsc.gov. Early childhood providers are often tempted to purchase second-hand equipment for their business. Providers need to make certain they are not using recalled products or products that have had a hazard warning published.

Consumers may also report unsafe products or products that were involved in an injury. To report unsafe products use the toll-free number for the Consumer Product Safety Commission: 1-800-638-2772 or send an e-mail to info@cpsc.gov

To receive a direct email from CPSC about product recalls subscribe at:
<http://www.cpsc.gov/nsn/nsn.html>

CHNA & HIP

The Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan (CHNA & HIP) is a public health initiative that enables communities across Iowa to assure the health of their citizens through the development of a comprehensive report on leading health indicators, health priorities and health improvement plans. The goal of the Iowa Dept. of Public Health is to create a centralized, consistent method for local agencies to report the results of their independent community-based health improvement plans from all 99 counties.

It is essential that an effective and successful assessment of the community health needs and planning process for improvement include input from members of the entire community. Community partners may include local boards of health, public health agencies, hospitals, community organizations, health centers, social service providers, school officials, law enforcement personnel, faith-based organizations, businesses, industry, citizens, the media and many others.

Recently, the second CHNA&HIP process was completed and plans to address the identified health needs over the next five years were submitted. The reports include:

- § Plan Identification – contact information for the lead organization responsible for the CHNA&HIP process as directed by the local board of health.
- § Partner Identification – partners involved in the assessment and planning stages of the process.
- § Health Improvement Plans – an approach to address public health priorities that have been identified by use of reliable, population-based data.
- § Locally Identified Health Issues – plans that use locally generated data to address public health issues specific and unique to that community.



Healthy Smiles

An Oral Health Family Education and Training Program Cluster Orientation

Parents can keep their young children cavity-free – if they know how and are motivated to do so! *Healthy Smiles* is 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. In *March and April* trained professionals, parents, and home visitors are offering cluster orientations throughout the state, designed for home visitors and all those who support their work and success: family members, home visiting supervisors, program health specialist, early childhood educators, directors, maternal and child health specialists and dental professionals.

Today there is a great urgency to address parent's roles in their children's oral health. Science now teaches us that pregnancy and infancy are significant periods of risk for oral disease. Participants in the orientations will gain *increased awareness and knowledge* of early childhood oral health, including...

- *Healthy Smiles* goals and parent education strategies
- Importance of healthy primary teeth in child's growth and development
- What causes decay and ways to keep children cavity-free
- Roles for families and communities to keep children cavity-free

For additional information and questions regarding dates and locations of trainings, please contact Nina Jones, Healthy Smiles Coordinator at ngwjones@sbcglobal.net or Jane Stockton, IDPH Community Health Consultant at jstockto@idph.state.ia.us.

**Cover the
Uninsured Week
2005**

More information coming soon!

Town Hall Meeting

Monday, May 2, 2005

10-11 a.m.

Des Moines University
Medical Education Center
3200 Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA

For more information, contact Ron Askland at raskland@mercydesmoines.org

CoverThe
UninsuredWeek MAY 1-8
2005
Let's Get America Covered

HCKC
Healthcare Coverage for Kids Coalition

Health Access Partnership
Committed to healthcare in your community.



Report On Health Insurance Coverage Of Iowa Children Shows Gaps

Highlights from University of Iowa News Release

Release: Dec. 16, 2004

A new report on health insurance coverage of Iowa children indicates that nearly 90,000 Iowa children are uninsured at some point in the year. Some programs, however, are available to help families, and more could be done to expand, as well as educate people about, options. The findings are included in the report "*Health Insurance Coverage of Children in Iowa*," a collaborative effort by the University of Iowa Public Policy Center, the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Child Health Specialty Clinics based at the UI. The report was based on the Iowa Child and Family Household Health Survey of summer 2000. The analysis is the first comprehensive attempt statewide to evaluate the status of health insurance for children, and the report points to several trends that policymakers should consider, said Peter Damiano, D.D.S., one of the report's authors and director of the Health Policy Research Program at the UI Public Policy Center. "One of the most important things we saw was that nearly one in eight children, or 12 percent, were without health insurance at some point in 2000. Although the data are from 2000, national studies indicate that the number of insured children has not changed since then," said Damiano.

The study found that at the time of the survey:

- Six percent of the families had no insurance for their children.
- Another six percent of the families reported their children were uninsured at some point in the prior 12 months.
- Combined, these figures indicate 12 percent of Iowa children (approximately 90,000) are uninsured annually.

The study also revealed:

- 80 percent of these uninsured Iowa children were eligible for either Medicaid or *hawk-i*.
- Almost six out of 10 uninsured children live in families earning less than 133 percent of the federal poverty level and could be eligible for Medicaid. For a family of four that annual income would be about \$18,400 per year.

Additionally, a U.S. Census Bureau Population Survey (1999-2001) showed that:

- Iowa's rate of uninsured children is about half the national average and the fifth lowest among all states.
- With more education and outreach, it might be possible to cover about four out of every five currently uninsured children in the state.

In terms of unmet needs, the study pointed to a particular problem with dental care, - one in four children in Iowa has no dental insurance. "Even one in five children who had Medicaid, which covers dental services, were stopped from getting dental care because of the lack of providers willing to take them," Damiano said. "It is important to improve this access." Damiano said the study also showed other ways in which having insurance does not guarantee access to care. Parents who are not insured themselves or who do not routinely seek care for themselves may be less likely to seek or use insurance coverage for their children. "Another major issue with uninsured children is that it puts stress on the family," Damiano said. "Nearly half of the parents who had uninsured children said they were worried about their children's well-being." In contrast, such worry was expressed by only 16 percent of parents with children covered by Medicaid and by five percent of parents with children covered by private insurance.

The report is available online at: <http://ppc.uiowa.edu/health/iowachild2000/index.html>

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.fmcpowerment.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.hspa.org

Scott: www.scottcountyempowerment.org/

Story: <http://www.storycountyfamily.org>

Washington:

www.empowerwashington.org

Woodbury: www.siouxlandship.org

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

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