



Early Childhood Iowa Monday Musings June 27, 2016 Vol. 3, No. 24

Welcome to the ECI **Monday Musings**. It is a compilation of information, practical advice, training announcements, and/or success stories. **Monday Musings** is intended to disseminate information to Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders in a timely fashion. (We may on occasion send out a separate email with information if it needs immediate attention or if for a specific audience.)

Please let us know if you have something you would like to contribute or have suggestions or comments at jeffrey.anderson@iowa.gov

Back Issues of Monday Musing are available [here](#).

“Vision is the art of seeing what invisible to others”

–Jonathan Swift

State Information:

ECI Steering Committee is Accepting Nominations

The ECI Steering Committee is accepting nominations for up to three (3) at-large members for the committee.

1. May be a member for up to two 3-year terms.
2. Complete the third year of a first term (2018), may serve up to two additional 3 –year terms.
3. Complete the second year of a 2nd term; may serve two additional 3-year terms.

Please use the attached nomination form and complete it for yourself or for another person by June 30, 2016.

Please send the completed form to me at jeffrey.anderson@iowa.gov or by mail at the address below.

Also, please pass along to others you may feel are qualified or interested.

The Committee is very interested in seeking new members from the private sector as so many of the members are public sector representatives as required by the federal government to be the state early childhood advisory council.

Here is a link to the [ECI Policies and Procedures](#). (Section 2.2) has information about Steering Committee responsibilities for more information.

Iowa Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan

The Iowa Department of Human Services, Division of Adult, Children and Family Services submitted the State Plan to the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care on March 1, 2016 and are now awaiting federal approval. Click [Child Care Development Fund State Plan](#) to see the current plan.

Learn more about the changes coming to child care

DHS has recorded videos about the child care changes that you can access through the DHS website. Many of the changes and new requirements must be in place by October 1, 2016.

There are separate videos for each type of child care business that must follow the new requirements.

- Non-Registered Child Care Homes with a Child Care Provider Agreement
- Child Development Homes
- Child Care Centers

Access the recorded videos: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/reauthorization-of-the-child-care-and-development-block-grant>

There is a Frequently Asked Questions document available on the Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral website that may answer questions you have. You can also call 1-877-216-8481 if you have additional questions.

Child Care Assistance Program Changes

There are also changes to the Child Care Assistance Program that start July 1, 2016. The changes will benefit children, families and child care providers. There is both a child care provider-specific and parent-specific video that provides information about the changes to the program.

Access the provider-specific video at: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/reauthorization-of-the-child-care-and-development-block-grant>

Access the parent-specific video at: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/child-care>.

Attached are outreach materials to share with child care providers and parents about the videos. There is both a full page and half page option for child care providers and a ¼ page handout for families.

Federal Information:

Funding Opportunity Announcements for Early Head Start Expansion and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships

By Linda K. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development (June 23 ,2016)

Today, we posted the second Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA) for [the Early Head Start \(EHS\) Expansion and Early Head Start-Child Care \(EHS/CC\) Partnerships](#). It comes on the heels of a visit yesterday to the Georgetown, Delaware EHS-CC partnership where Governor Markell showcased the program, read to children and talked to teachers and



parents about what the program has meant to them. He noted that Delaware has increased the number of low-income children enrolled in high quality early care and education programs from just 5% to over 70%. It is an amazing increase and one the state should be very proud of.

Just as importantly, Kathy Moore, Director of the Parents and Children Together at Tech (PACTT) recapped the progress made as a result of the EHS-CC partnership. The program is located at the Sussex Tech High School and serves as a training site for high school students interested in early childhood.

She described the how children are directly impacted by the program, but also noted that all



children benefit from the partnership because of the training all the teachers have received, the new equipment and supplies, the new playground and the overall boost to morale for everyone involved. She emphasized the significant contribution of the tiered reimbursements made available through the Child Care and Development Funds.

Over the years, many of you have heard me talk about how I try to envision a child – any child – when I get in my car each morning. It reminds me of why I go to work. As the result of yesterday, I have many new faces to think about, but one in particular – a child who, because of a concerned teacher at the PACTT center, was referred for medical evaluation and as a result, found to have a brain tumor and now getting treatment. As a result of this visit, I may modify my daily routine and add the face of an early childhood teacher to my morning routine. They are the unsung heroes of the teaching profession.

One of the good news stories about the [EHS-CC partnerships](#) is that the teachers at the PACTT program got a raise. The not so good news is that it wasn't nearly enough for skills needed and the importance of the work they do. As evidenced by the child identified at the PACCT program, the importance of having highly qualified staff cannot be overstated, but to train them and keep them is going to require a significant investment of public funds. Last week, we issued a report [“High Quality Early Learning Settings Depend on a High Quality Workforce: Low Compensation Undermines Quality.”](#) The report describes the pay and compensation of our early childhood teachers. The wages of child care teachers in particular is among the lowest and makes many eligible for public assistance. In all states, the median annual earnings for a child care worker are below 150% of poverty. They are even lower for an infant/toddler teacher.

So where does all this leave us? STUCK, is the easy response! In order to raise the wages of the early childhood workforce, we need a financing strategy that does not include increasing what parents have to pay. This Administration's vision of a financing strategy for the birth to four workforce can be found in Senator Casey's and Congressman Crowley's bills ([S. 2539, Casey and H.R. 4524, Crowley](#)). These are important pieces of legislation and deserve serious debate. They seek substantial increases in mandatory funding. I want to personally encourage you to

read them. Whether you agree with these bills or not, they are a conversation starter – a conversation that is long overdue. So, until we have resolved the financing issues, [the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships](#) provide one opportunity to support higher wages in the infant/toddler workforce. I encourage everyone to seriously consider applying.

Early Head Start Expansion and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Funding Opportunity Announcements Posted!

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announces approximately \$135 million in funding available to expand access to high-quality, comprehensive services for low-income infants and toddlers and their families. This funding will support the creation of Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships and the expansion of Early Head Start (EHS) services to children and families. ACF solicits applications from public entities, including states, or private non-profit organizations, including community-based or faith-based organizations, or for-profit agencies that meet eligibility for applying as stated in section 645A of the Head Start Act.

Find the Funding Opportunity Announcements

The EHS Expansion and EHS-CC Partnerships funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) were posted today, June 23, 2016:

- Early Head Start Expansion and EHS-Child Care Partnership Grants: <https://ami.grantsolutions.gov/index.cfm?switch=foa&fon=HHS-2016-ACF-OHS-HP-1181>
- American Indian and Alaska Native EHS Expansion and EHS-Child Care Partnerships: <https://ami.grantsolutions.gov/index.cfm?switch=foa&fon=HHS-2016-ACF-OHS-HI-R11-1182>
- Migrant and Seasonal EHS-Child Care and EHS Expansion Partnerships: <https://ami.grantsolutions.gov/index.cfm?switch=foa&fon=HHS-2016-ACF-OHS-HM-1183>

Low Wages and Lack of Pay Parity Undermine Quality

Despite the importance of high quality settings to healthy child development and school readiness, many early learning workers earn low wages -- even when they obtain credentials and attain higher levels of education.

Low wages and lack of wage parity across early learning settings undermines the quality of early learning programs.

Read the newest report by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education for a more in-depth look at wage parity for the early childhood education workforce.

- [Download Report](#)
- [Download National Graphic](#)
- To look at wage data for each state: [Wages Map](#)

Cultural Awareness and Knowledge are Fundamental to Serving U.S. Children and Families **By Andrew Keefe, Truman-Albright Fellow, Contract Research Analyst**

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) recently hosted the second webinar in its series, **Enhancing the Cultural Responsiveness of Social Services**. Over 50 federal employees, state and territory administrators, and technical assistance providers participated. They discussed strategies for fostering cultural awareness and knowledge as a way to improve services for diverse children and families.

[Dr. Esther Calzada](#) **Visit disclaimer page**, an associate professor in social work at the University of Texas at Austin, moderated the conversation. She emphasized that cultural awareness and knowledge are one part of cultural responsiveness. *Cultural awareness* means acknowledging that everyone has a culture. Dr. Calzada explained that the cultures of federal employees and grantees shape their worldviews and interactions with stakeholders. *Cultural knowledge* refers to recognizing the languages, historical contexts, and values of others.

Dr. Calzada provided a list of guiding questions for human services providers to ask themselves:

- What do I know about the values, beliefs, customs, strengths, and resources of [specific group]?
- What do I know about the unique challenges of [specific group]?
- What do I know about the history of [specific group], particularly in regards to discrimination?
- What are my attitudes and beliefs about [specific group]?
- How did my family, community, education and life experiences as well as societal perceptions shape these beliefs?
- What values do I have, and from which culture(s) do these values come?
- How are my values similar to or different from those of people from [specific group]?
- How do these similarities and differences influence my work?
- How can I learn more about [specific group]?

Other Information:

Iowa Ranks 3rd in Latest National KIDS COUNT Child Well--Being Report

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2016 KIDS COUNT Data Book finds that more of today's youth are healthier and completing high school on time, despite mounting economic inequality and increasingly unaffordable college tuition. This year, the annual report focuses on key trends in child well-being in the post-recession years, and offers recommendations for policymakers.

According to the Child and Family Policy Center (Iowa Kids Count)
Iowa ranks third nationally in the 2016 national
KIDS COUNT[®] *Data Book* report on child well--being, up one place from
the position the state held in 2015. The 27th edition of the annual *Data*

Book, from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, compares and ranks the 50 states on 16 child and family well-being indicators in four separate domains.

Nationally, Iowa ranks third among all states in the health domain and in the top ten in two other domains: fourth in economic well-being and fifth in family and community. The state just missed the top ten in education, ranking 11th when compared to other states.

Since 2008, Iowa experienced an increase in the percentages of children living in poverty and in single parent families, which both rose seven percent. However, the percentage of children without health insurance and the teen birth rate have shown improvement since that time, decreasing 50 percent and 39 percent, respectively. In addition, the percentage of high school students not graduating on time decreased 21 percent since 2007--08.

“Iowa’s third place ranking overall is a reflection of the importance people in this state place on providing for children and families,” said Michael Crawford, Iowa KIDS COUNT director with the Child and Family Policy Center in Des Moines. “However, there are a few indicators such as child poverty and single parent families that have worsened the past few years. One in seven children in Iowa live in poverty. While the economy has recovered for some, we see a widening gap that leaves some children behind.”

[ORDER YOUR COPY](#)

[VIEW HOW ALL STATES RANK ON THE KIDS COUNT INDEX](#)

To View IOWA’S Data: http://www.cfpciowa.org/en/data/kids_count/

10 Ideas to Get You and Your Child Exploring Outdoors (NAEYC)

Exploring the great outdoors can be useful for summer learning and families looking to spend quality time together. Here are some activities that can be used to observe, document, and interact with nature.

For more information: [10 Ideas](#)

10 Summer Child Safety Tips (Child Trends)

It’s that time again, time for the release of everyone’s summer safety tips. Here at Child Trends, our safety tips are based on—what else?—data!

First, your suspicion is correct: June, July, and August are more dangerous for children than other months, at least if we use deadly unintentional injuries as the measure (see graph). Nearly one-third of all fatal child injuries occur during these three months.

To learn more: [Summer Safety Tips](#)

STEM and Early Childhood — When Skills Take Root: Pennsylvania businesses and the military warn of STEM workforce skills gap; urge greater access to pre-k (Ready Nation)

Pennsylvania businesses and the U.S. military both increasingly need a workforce with strong STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills. Yet **data** show that a shortage of STEM workers is looming: nearly two-thirds of Pennsylvania eighth graders aren't proficient in math and science, and more than a quarter of students entering the PA State System of Higher Education require remedial education in math and English.

Developing STEM proficiency starts in the early years. Disadvantaged children can already be 18 months behind their peers on math and reading skills when they start kindergarten. But this early achievement gap can be prevented: High-quality early education teaches young children real math and science, through enjoyable, play-based activities appropriate for their age. And early math proficiency pays off, predicting later school success into elementary and high school—in both math and reading.

Business and military leaders in Pennsylvania are calling on policymakers to invest more in high-quality early education where STEM skills take root.

To read the full report: [Ready Nation](#)

Save the Date: Iowa AEYC Fall Early Care and Education Institute

Mark your calendar for September 30 and October 1, 2016 for the Early Care and Education Fall Institute. Registration materials will be available in early summer. Again this year, the Institute will be held at Prairie Meadows Events & Conference Center, Altoona, IA.

To view the Announcement: [Early Care and Education Institute](#)

For more information about Early Childhood Iowa, visit our website:

<http://www.earlychildhoodiowa.org/>

To join the ECI Stakeholders, please complete the commitment survey at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FSXR5F2>

2016 ECI Meeting Calendar:

ECI State Board

10:00 – 1:00

September 9

November 4

ECI Stakeholders Alliance

3 – 4 Hour meetings

September 13 (AM)

December 13 (PM)

ECI Area Directors

September 13 (afternoon)

December 7 All day

ECI State Dept. Directors

8:30 – 10:30

October 7

ECI Steering Committee

Time Varies

August 4 (9:00 AM – 4:00 PM)

October 6 (9:00 AM – Noon)

November 3 (9:00 AM – Noon)