

Iowa Community Empowerment Newsletter

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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.

Child Care: It's Not Just for the Children

Economic Impact Study of Child Care in Iowa Just Released

By Kathleen Larson, CD-DIAL Research Director, Iowa State University

A new study from Iowa State University titled *Child Care, Parents, & Work: The Economic Role of Child Care in Iowa* describes the contributions of Iowa child care businesses to community economic vitality and the relationship between employers, parents, and the child care industry. Data for the study comes from statistically representative samples of both Iowa households and Iowa child care providers, and business income and expense records.

Investing in child care makes good business sense. Every dollar invested by state and local governments and parents yields an additional 66 cents in the economy. Child care generates more than 17,000 direct jobs in the industry and an additional 1,500 jobs in industries that supply child care businesses; \$402.5 million in direct effects to the economy; and indirect and induced effects of nearly \$265 million from purchases of goods and services and taxes paid.

As Empowerment Boards know, benefits of such an investment go beyond immediate dollars and cents. Parents of Iowa infants, toddlers, and preschoolers say that they need flexible child care and nearly half indicate that they would have to stop working if paid child care were not available. Parents use the same criteria used by professionals when assessing the quality of child care: safety and an environment and provider that encourage learning.

Iowa parents are struggling to find quality child care that fits in the family budget. Parents in rural areas are more likely to disagree that good choices for child care are available in their community. The majority of parents who changed child care providers of their own volition report that they changed because of the (less than) "caring nature of the provider."

Lower income parents pay lower amounts for child care, but a higher percent of total household income. Most significantly, parents paying a higher percentage of income are significantly less likely to have eaten a meal, read a book, or played a math game with their youngest child in the previous 24 hour period.

Study findings point to the significance of child care cost for families and the child care industry. Nearly half of parents with a youngest child under 5 do not agree that child care in their community is affordable. Yet, reports from child care directors and family child care providers point to the delicate balance the industry is currently facing as it attempts to improve the quality of care, while meeting parents' demands for cost of care that fits their household budgets.

Child Care, Parents, & Work is available at www.extension.iastate.edu/cd-dial. Researchers for the study are Kathlene Larson, Susan Hegland, and Daniel Otto.

Administrative Update April 2005 – May 2005

Upcoming Events 2005 Calendar at a Glance

Iowa Empowerment Board

July 8, 2005

Blank Park Zoo, Des Moines

September 9, 2005

Pottawattamie Co. Empowerment
Area

November 2005

Meeting TBD

Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts Meetings

September 14, 2005

Heartland AEA, Johnston

December 14, 2005

Heartland AEA, Johnston

Early Childhood Iowa Core Stakeholders

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

Iowa Early Care Health & Education

Day on the Hill

February 7 & 8, 2006

Early Care, Health and Education System Building Activities

- Early Childhood Iowa Co-Chairs meeting – April 7
- Early Childhood Outcomes - April 7, 8, 15, 22
- Results Accountability Workgroup –
- ECHE Systems Implementation Grant Meetings – April 11, 18, 25 & May 3, 9, 16, 23
- Public Engagement Workgroup – April 21
- Governance, Administration and Planning Workgroup – April 14
- ECHE Congress Planning – April 8 & May 13
- Born to Learn Public Campaign Kick-off - May 3
- Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders meeting – May 17
- Quality Services & Programs Workgroup – May 4
- Pre-K Now Meeting – May 12
- ECHE Day on the Hill Planning Meeting - May 23
- Professional Development Workgroup - May 24
- Governor Vilsack & Iowa Business Leaders, Joint Press Conference - April 11
- Governor Vilsack & Barry Griswell, CEO, Principal Financial Group, Joint Press Conference - April 12

Site Visits/Technical Assistance Activities

- Empowerment Director's Meeting - April 6
- TA with Cedar Valley's Promise - April 13
- TA to Bremer, Butler, Franklin, Greene - April 14
- FMC Provider Appreciation Event - April 15
- New IEB Member Orientation - April 21
- Iowa Empowerment Board meeting, Ft Madison – May 6
- Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts Meeting – May 18
- Polk Co Empowerment Board Kick-off Event - May 26
- Empowerment Annual Report Reviews:
 - Wayne - April 1
 - Des Moines/Louisa - April 14
 - Marion - April 18
 - Cerro Gordo/Hancock/Worth - April 19
 - Dallas - April 19
 - Jones - April 20
 - HAWC - April 21
 - Linn - April 26
 - Buchanan, Delaware, Fayette - May 9
 - Muscatine - May 10
 - May 11 - Jasper
 - Poweshiek - May 26
 - Black Hawk - May 27

ECHE System Building Updates

Other Events and Activities

The Explosive Child Conference

June 6, 2005
University Park Holiday Inn
West Des Moines
www.ifcmh.org

Partnering with Parents - Online Walking the Journey Together

June 6 - December 2, 2005
www.extension.iastate.edu/pwp

The Happiest Baby on the Block

June 27, 2005
Blank Children's Hospital
Des Moines
312-663-3520 for more information
www.preventchildabuse.org

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

Swing With Life's Ups & Downs

October 27 & 28, 2005
Four Points Sheraton Hotel
Des Moines
Toll-free: 877-255-3140

IAEYC Conference

October 14-15, 2005
Des Moines
www.iowaaeYC.org

The Impact of Couple and Marital Relationships on Parenting and Child Outcomes

December 2 & 9, 2005
Locations available at web site
www.extension.iastate.edu/marriage

Linkages/Outreach Activities

- Early ACCESS Advisory Council – May 20
- Head Start Collaboration Office Advisory Council - April 8
- Early Learning Standards Workgroup - April 11, 25
- CCR&R Region 1 & Empowerment Meeting - April 12
- PITC Advisory Group - April 13
- Meet with EC Providers Floyd, Mitchell, Chickasaw - April 15
- Meet with DHS, Cerro Gordo - April 18
- Prevent Child Abuse Iowa Conference - April 18 - 19
- Early Childhood Funding Options - April 21
- Community Early Childhood Forum, Ames - April 21
- MCH Advisory – March 10
- Youth Development/State of Promise Activities – April 12, 27, May 10, 25
- Madison, Marion, Warren Decat Planning Meeting - April 28
- SCRIPT Conference/Research Symposium - April 28, 29
- Iowans for a Better Future, Education Goal Group - May 25
- Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Symposium - May 31



Update on the work of Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders

Check out the Early Childhood Iowa Website!

www.earlychildhoodiowa.org

The Iowa Department of Public Health submitted the Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS) Implementation grant on May 24, 2005. This is the grant that supports the continuation of the work of the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders and Iowa's Early Care, Health and Education system building work.

The ECCS Implementation grant focuses on the following activities:

1. Implementation of critical components (medical home, mental health, early care and education, family support, and parent education) in Iowa's Early Care, Health, and Education System (ECHES)
2. Strengthen leadership and collaboration to build ECHES infrastructure
3. Develop results accountability for Iowa's ECHES to support data informed decision making
4. Create a commitment for broadening public will and investing resources in Iowa's ECHES

The Empowerment State Technical Assistance Team will help coordinate the grant activities. The Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders will continue to serve as the advisory body to the ECHES.

If you are interested in serving on the ECI Stakeholder group please contact Kelly Schulte at kschulte@idph.state.ia.us.

Iowa Empowerment Board News

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.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.

The Iowa Empowerment Board held their first ever regularly scheduled meeting in conjunction with an Empowerment area site visit on May 5 & 6. Last fall, by unanimous vote, the board decided to take their meetings "on the road" in an effort to stay connected with the work of the local areas. Ten proposals from local CEAs to host the May and September Iowa Empowerment Board meetings were received. The Lee/Van Buren Empowerment Area - Children First - was chosen as the May host site.

Twenty two delegates converged on the southeastern most tip of our state to enjoy a wonderful day of sharing with local providers and board members, and to learn first hand about the activities supported by Children First. Of the twenty two individuals, fifteen were board members, which included four State Department Directors and two legislators. (Unfortunately, the Senate was in session.) In addition to the board members, the state empowerment technical assistance team was also privileged to attend.

On Thursday evening, the Board was invited to a provider appreciation banquet held in Keokuk, overlooking the beautiful Mississippi River. There were over 200 individuals in attendance. It was preceded by an opportunity to visit the displays of empowerment supported programs in Lee and Van Buren Counties and to learn from the providers about the unique circumstances of the families and children they serve.



Floyd Winter, IEB Member, learns about a local program

On Friday morning, the Iowa Empowerment Board held their business meeting in Ft. Madison. The latest information from the legislature regarding bills affecting early care, health and education were shared. Also, a presentation was given by Pete Damiano, DDS, University of Iowa, concerning the 2005 Iowa Child and Family Household Health Survey.



Director Mary Mincer Hansen enjoys outdoor time with children in Keosauqua

The meeting was shorter than usual in order to accommodate site visits to local providers in Keosauqua. The board split up into groups and visited SIEDA Neighborhood Center, Happy Day Express Christian Preschool and Van Buren County Hospital Childcare Center.

The experience was highly regarded by all who were able to attend.

The Board completed their tour with a luncheon in Bonaparte at which members were privileged to hear the stories of four families' encounters with the HOPES and Parents as Teachers programs. They expressed their appreciation for the support they received in order to stay at home and or be able to provide a better environment for their children. They were appreciative for the part Empowerment played in making it possible.

Some of the things board members had to say about their experience:

"It is exciting to be able to observe the various early childhood care, health and education activities that were created through the enactment of the Community Empowerment legislation, which I worked on during my first years as your representative." - Representative Ro Foege

"...it is nice to be in touch with the end product. We can't ever lose sight of that, that the money goes to support real kids and families with very real circumstances." - Barbara Brown

Meet New State Board Member: Director Walter Reed, Jr.



Walter Reed, Jr. accepted the Governor's appointment as the Director of the Iowa Department of Human Rights on December 31, 2004. He began work on February 11, 2005.

Walter recently served ten years as Executive Director of the Waterloo Commission on Human Rights in Waterloo. Mr. Reed managed a highly efficient enforcement unit that investigates alleged discrimination complaints in the areas of employment, public accommodations, housing, credit and education.

Under Mr. Reed's leadership, the Commission addressed discriminatory behavior and practices through education and conciliation. He organized the Cedar Valley Diversity Appreciation Team and Study Circle Program. Both initiatives are a community-based collaboration of area residents, who represent all walks of life that work together to develop and implement a community plan to improve race relations, appreciate diversity, fight discrimination, and prevent hate crimes.

In 1996, Mr. Reed submitted the local Human Rights Ordinance to The Department of Housing and Urban Development for Substantial Equivalence Review. In 1998, the Commission was approved as a Fair Housing Agency, and in 2004 the Commission was certified as a HUD Fair Housing Agency.

Mr. Reed attended Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa majoring in Business Administration. He is a certified Mediator and Human Rights Professional as designated by The National Association of Human Rights Workers, a national civil rights training organization. He has over 20 years of management and supervisory experience.

Recognized not only for his professional accomplishments, but also for 24 years of Community and Civic volunteer experience in a leadership capacity, Mr. Reed has received the following acknowledgements:

- 2003 Presidents Award from the Black Hawk County Branch of the NAACP
- 2001 Ambassador For Peace Recognition by The Inter-religious and International Federation for World Peace
- 2001 Honored Alumnus from The Boys & Girls Club of Black Hawk County
- 2001 Mover/Shaker Award from the Greater Waterloo Chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers
- 2001 Human Relations Award Recipient from the Iowa State Education Association
- 2001 Sports Fan Award from the Black Hawk Officials Association for 19 years of sports broadcasting on Afro American Community Broadcasting - KBBG Radio specializing in football and basketball

Welcome Director Reed, to the Iowa Empowerment Board!

Coming in June 2005...

To a TV station or Billboard near you!

Iowa's Better Baby Care Campaign

Visit

www.iababies.org

For more information on the campaign, see page 10.



Step Up to Quality Child Care

Submitted by Glenna Thompsen,
Regional Director
Child Care Resource and Referral
of Southwest Iowa

*A project for home child care
professionals in Fremont,
Page, Cass, Mills,
Montgomery, Pottawattamie,
Harrison and Shelby counties*



Step Up to Quality Child Care is a project to enhance the quality and capacity of child care for children ages 0-5 years in eight of Iowa's southwestern counties. It is managed by Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), West Central Development Corporation in Harlan with the support of empowerment funds. Recognition of the child care professional's current accomplishments, as well as encouragement to set and attain individual goals, is the intent of this project.

When a child care professional enrolls in *Step Up to Quality Child Care*, he or she, with the help of the CCR&R Child Care Development Specialist, develops a plan to meet an identified goal within nine to ten months. When the goal is met, the provider submits a grant request to meet specific needs within their program. When prioritizing purchases, all health and safety standards must be met before selecting items that support Basic Care, Age Appropriate Play Equipment, Curriculum Enhancement, and Professional Development categories.

There are six steps through which the home child care professional can progress. The grant amounts range from \$200.00 at Step 1 to \$1000.00 at Step 6. Each step builds upon the other, moving a provider from the status of a non-registered child care home through national accreditation, with requirements such as training and environmental rating scale assessments in-between.

In FY05, 70 of the 88 (80%) first year participants enrolled for a second year and met the requirements to move ahead at least one step.

For further information about this quality improvement program, contact Glenna Thompsen, Director, Child Care Resource and Referral by e-mail, gthompsen@swiowachildcare.org, or by phone, 800-945-9778.

Children First Hosts Early Childhood Recognition Dinner

Submitted by Rhonda Boltz
Coordinator, Children First -
Lee/Van Buren Empowerment

On May 5th and 6th the Iowa Empowerment Board held its first site visit in the community of Lee and Van Buren counties. The Children First (Lee/Van Buren Empowerment) Board began the visit by hosting an Early Childhood Recognition Dinner at the Keokuk County Club. Nearly 200 people attended the event which was designed to recognize local individuals who make positive impacts in the area of early childhood. Before the program began, Iowa Empowerment Board members had the opportunity to view displays and visit with local service providers. After the buffet-style dinner, attendees were welcomed by Keokuk Mayor, Dave Gudel. Iowa Empowerment Board Chairman, Tom Wilson, addressed the audience, encouraging them to actively serve as advocates on behalf of young children. The evening also included comments by the Program Director of the local Child Care Resource & Referral office who recognized the efforts and commitment of registered and licensed childcare providers in Lee and Van Buren counties.

Six local individuals received engraved awards for their efforts to improve early childhood. The award recipients were nominated by the public and included Dr. James Liesen, Family Physician from Ft. Madison; Kathy Osipowicz, Director of Aquinas Early Childhood Center in Ft. Madison; Dr. John Wilde, Dentist in Keokuk; Stefanie Bartholomew, Director of Happy Day Express Preschool in Keosauqua; Laurie Mullins, HOPES Family Support Worker from Ft. Madison; and Mary Jo Ray, Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner from Keokuk.



Early Childhood Award Recipients



Representatives Phil Wise and Ro Foege enjoy the Early Childhood Recognition Dinner.

The evening was an opportunity for relaxing conversation and was appreciated by all.

News from Linn County



***Fifteen in Five* Priorities Announced**

Many areas in the state are revitalizing their cities and counties by implementing innovative economic development strategies. In Linn County in December 2004, a fifteen member committee was chosen which was inclusive and broadly representative of the county's residents. Their charge? - To discuss the process and establish a system for determining a list of fifteen priorities to recharge economic development in Linn County. The committee was aware that the decisions they would make would shape the future of Linn County for years to come. They knew that they might receive public scrutiny and would have to make tough and perhaps even controversial decisions. But they also knew that this was an opportunity to be a part of a rewarding civic process.

On May 11, 2005, after many meetings and a great deal of deliberation, *Fifteen in Five* announced their ideas to make the city and Linn County better by 2010. The ideas included the usual suspects you think of when talking about economic development: empower neighborhoods; make parks more attractive; develop the riverfront; grow locally owned businesses. There was also one idea that is recently getting a lot more attention. Because of the hard work of many early childhood advocates in Linn County, when the list of 3,500 ideas was narrowed down to the top 15 priorities, early childhood also made the cut.

The idea is that Linn County will have the "Best-in-the-nation early childhood education program". The goal is to 'develop a preschool education and child-care system available at low cost to county residents.' Congratulations to Linn County for identifying early childhood as an economic development strategy. And now the work begins...

Iowa's Oldest Licensed Preschool Observes 55th Anniversary

In 1950 members of the Charles City Newcomers Club began a civic project that would more than half a century later become Iowa's oldest, licensed preschool. Now 55 years later, in addition to celebrating a Golden-Plus anniversary, Central Preschool has also joined the roster of Iowa preschools offering Community Empowerment preschool scholarships.

Shanell Wagler, of the Iowa Department of Management—Office of Empowerment, joined more than 200 well-wishers who gathered to celebrate the preschool's milestone birthday in April.

Central Preschool started out as Central School Nursery and was located in Charles City's former Central School. When Central School was severely damaged in Charles City's 1968 tornado, the preschool was moved temporarily to Grace Episcopal Church and later to the Congregational Church. It found a permanent home in the newly constructed Trinity United Church in October of 1972.

Central Preschool was licensed in 1954 and incorporated in 1972. According to Empowerment officials, the only other school still in business after 50 years is Plymouth Nursery School in Des Moines (51 years).

In 1954 there were only 47 licensed nurseries, preschools, and day care centers in Iowa. Central School Nursery became the first licensed preschool in Floyd County and the only one in the county until 1970. Rachel Connerley, Central's director, reported that nearly 3,500 students have passed through the preschool's doors in the past 55 years.

Today Central Preschool serves 31 students and offers a variety of learning opportunities with a strong focus on science and kindergarten readiness skills.



Virgil Pickar, Jr, FMC Empowerment Board Chair, congratulates Rachel Connerley, Director of Central Preschool in Charles City

**By Laurie Kristiansen,
FMC Empowerment
Coordinator**



By Kelly Schulte, IDPH

Connecting the Pieces for Iowa Children Early Childhood Symposium - April 2005, Amana, IA

With over 125 participants and 30 presenters the symposium was an enormous success! This event was cosponsored by Iowa's Early Care, Health, and Education System Building Project and the Iowa SCRIPT Team. The symposium was geared towards health and early care preservice professionals. Workshops focused on promoting family centered, interdisciplinary, and collaborative care and practice. Participants enjoyed a wide variety of workshops with topic areas including: current Iowa initiatives that successfully incorporate collaborative learning and interdisciplinary teamwork into curriculum, the Bright Futures Model for health care providers, post partum depression, cultural competency, oral health, Iowa's Medical Home Initiative, Early ACCESS Service Coordinator Training, Iowa's Quality Preschool Standards, Iowa's Early Learning Standards, and Program for Infant and Toddler Caregivers. In addition to the information that participants gathered in the workshops, they took home valuable tools to assist in embedding their knowledge into their current programs, projects, and curricula.

In conjunction with the symposium, the participants were invited to take part in the Research to Practice Reception sponsored by Iowa's Early Care, Health and Education System Building Project. Researchers from Iowa State University, University of Iowa, The Child and Family Policy Center, Loras College and the Iowa Department of Public Health participated in the reception. Over a dozen research projects were shared. To view the abstracts of participating projects at www.earlychildhoodiowa.org

Association for Iowa's Children

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



For more information regarding the *Child At Heart* Award, contact:

Cyndee Dather, Awards Chair
1710 Gary Ave,
Spirit Lake, IA 51360.
712-336-2555.

Child At Heart Award

The Association for Iowa's Children is pleased to announce the 2nd Annual *Child at Heart* Award Nominations. We are looking to honor nominees that have used innovative approaches to support children and families and/or are passionate motivators in a leadership role for children's issues. Local Empowerment Areas are eligible to nominate one person from their respective area. The guidelines and timeline for the process, along with the application form, can be found on the Association for Iowa's Children web site, www.iowaschildren.org.

As part of the nomination you must include a narrative that contains the following:



Kris Bell, Recipient
2004 Child At Heart Award

- § A description of how the nominee is a champion for children.
- § What innovative approaches to support children and families have been implemented?
- § A description of specific achievements and change accomplished through the nominee's efforts locally, regionally or statewide.
- § Evidence of passion and motivation given to others to take leadership roles for children and families

For information about the Award or the nomination process, contact Cyndee Dather, Awards Chair, at the address or phone listed to the left of this article.



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/find-leg/>

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

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/asp/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

The 81st General Assembly Comes To An End

The legislative session wrapped up on Friday, May 20th, three weeks past the scheduled date to end this year's session.

Early Childhood Education became a priority during this legislative session because of all of your hard work and our Governor!

Preliminary results indicate an additional spending of over \$21.1 million for early childhood education. This is a great start! The preliminary numbers show additional spending of \$10.4 million for Community Empowerment and an additional \$10.75 million for child care. Below are a few of the highlights for the additional dollars:

- Implement a quality rating system;
- Raise reimbursement rates for child care providers to the 2002 Market Rate Survey (*effective September 1, 2005*);
- Raise the child care subsidy eligibility for families from 140% to 145% of the Federal Poverty Level (*effective September 1, 2005*);
- Raise the child care subsidy eligibility for families of children with special needs to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Some of the specifics affecting Community Empowerment Areas include:

- \$4.65 million of the State General Funds are targeted to support low income preschool tuition
- \$1 million will support professional development activities between the Iowa Empowerment Board, community colleges and the area education agencies
- The Early Childhood Funds (federal source) remained status quo at \$7.35 million
- Healthy Iowan's Tobacco Trust (HITT) Funds remained the same as FY'05 funding at \$2.15 million

This is just the beginning. We need to take time to celebrate and prepare for next session. In the meantime, pat yourself on the back, thank those who were involved in the process and ponder the following:

From the Book: *The Soul of A Citizen*

"Each of us builds on the work of others. We can take the stories of people who have struggled for justice in the past as a challenge to do the same. Others have risked and persevered. Now it's our turn. As Rabbi Tarfon wrote, nineteen hundred years ago, "It is not up to you to complete the task. Nonetheless, you are not free to desist from it."

The cynics will continue to smirk, insisting that our efforts are futile. But we're never truly alone when we act with courage and vision. To fail to realize the power of our actions is to reduce the potential of our soul. It's to diminish the spark that burns within us.

We all have our distinct gifts, strengths, and opportunities to make our lives count. We all have our particular fears, flaws, and constraints. But no one kind of person is responsible for healing all the wounds of the world. That has to be a common task. The challenge is to ask what we want to stand for, and to do our best to act on our beliefs. For our choices will create the world we pass on.

Rabbi Hillel once said: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I?" Hillel asks a final question: "If not now, when?" These words mean the moment of commitment cannot be deferred. It must become a lifelong process, one that links our lives to the lives of others, our souls to the souls of others, in a chain of being that reaches both backward and forward, connecting us with all that makes us human."

Our youngest Iowans deserve nothing less! The task is still at hand!



By Leslie Schmalzried, MA,
LMSW, Executive Director



Iowa Child Care & Early Education Network

Ah...those life changing events! I'm a new grandparent! I remember standing in the hallway at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines on November 1, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. and hearing that first cry! I remember being flooded with emotions...just as at the birth of my own two sons 20 plus years ago. It's spiritual, you know, the birth of a child. My granddaughter, Tori Lee, is now six months old; and, oh, what an amazing six months we have had! You can truly *see* that little brain and body working as she masters every step in her development.

And now, I have experienced another life-changing event. In April, I left my position as Executive Director of Prevention Concepts, a substance abuse prevention agency, and accepted the role of Executive Director for the Network...and it's all about early care and education! (Hey, Tori Lee, who would have known!) Soren Kierkegaard said, "Life can only be understood backward; but it must be lived forward." Makes sense when I look forward to my new position and think about the years of experience, training, and hard work during my 15 years with Prevention Concepts and other child and family-serving nonprofits in Iowa. But perhaps, just as important is my tenure as a parent who remembers struggling to locate (and keep!) quality childcare in the early 1980s. I am especially thankful for a special friend who had a Masters Degree in Reading and had been teaching in one-room schools and wanted to stay home and provide childcare for just a handful of close friends who worked part-time!

The Network is fortunate to have some amazing talent on our board of directors and our staff who have committed their volunteer hours and/or working lives to early care and education but we could use some help as we continue working toward our vision. Interested about the future of the Network? Call me at 515-883-1206 or email me at leslie@iowachildnetwork.org...and, oh, by the way, don't be bashful about asking! I've got pictures! After all, I am a new grandma!

Iowa Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers (IA PITC)

By Beth Walling
State Infant Toddler
Specialist/State Manager IA PITC

Taking steps toward...



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

The **Iowa Better Baby Care Campaign** is a project of the Iowa Child Care & Early Education Network. The Network will be launching a statewide public awareness campaign beginning in early June to raise awareness of the critical first three years of development and how child care provider education and training contribute to early learning.

The campaign will consist of a public service announcement which will be televised around the state. In addition, there will be an outdoor ad campaign echoing the importance of choosing quality care for babies and toddlers. Companion radio spots will also be aired this summer. All of the messages will include contact information for the new Iowa Better Baby Care Campaign website at www.IABabies.org. This site will hyperlink to partnering organizations involved in the campaign.

For more information on the national campaign please go to:
www.betterbabycare.org.

If you have questions about the campaign, belong to an organization interested in joining the effort, or if you wish to contribute funds to increase the number of outdoor ads please contact Beth Walling, State Infant Toddler Specialist at 515-883-1206 or bwalling@iowachildnetwork.org.





**By Julie Auderer,
Quad Cities Affiliate
Representative
of Iowa AEYC**

For more information on support in considering accreditation or to request a presentation on accreditation, please contact Dee Stolze, chair, Accreditation Facilitation Committee, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children, at (515) 289-1608 or mdstolze@juno.com.

Is Accreditation Worth The Cost?

NAEYC has implemented a new fee structure for the Accreditation process in order to fund the steps that will strengthen the reliability and accountability of NAEYC Accreditation, and ensure that all programs receive prompt and efficient service.

The new fees will be spread out over the entire accreditation process. There will be two fees in the entry stage of accreditation: one for the purchase of self-study materials, and another when the program files a Notification of Intent. The third fee will be due when a program requests an on-site visit. Programs that earn NAEYC Accreditation will also pay annual report fees with each of the four reports they file over the five-year term of accreditation.

I am the director of a large child care center, licensed for 246 children. Our center was accredited in August of 2004 for the fourth time. Although we were assessed the old fees, I know that in 2009, when our accreditation is up for renewal, we will once again go through the process. I will plan to include the new fees into our annual budget and distribute the fees over the entire accreditation process. For the Level 4 fee structure, which is what my center falls into, the total fees for the five year period of Accreditation equal approximately \$4.30 per child, per year. Most local Resource and Referral agencies offer grants to help offset some of the costs involved with accreditation, as well as Iowa AEYC.

Accreditation is a way that we can define the magnitude of what we do and the ramifications of a profession without standards. Some of the benefits of accreditation include:

- Delivery of high quality care and education for young children
- Improved staff development, communication, and collegiality-working together and reaching for the same goal
- Improved family communication and delivery of services to meet their needs
- Recognition by the community
- Recognition by the profession
- Increased funding opportunities

From my experience as a center director, accreditation is worth the cost! Information about the accreditation process and the new fee structure is available at: www.naeyc.org/accreditation



**National Association for
the Education of Young
Children**

**promoting excellence in early
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QUINCE - *Quality Interventions for Early Care and Education*

By Susan Hegland

**For more information
about the Iowa Project,
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What is QUINCE?

Iowa is one of six states involved in a four-year study on the impact of consultation services for early care and education providers. The Child Care Bureau in the Department of Health and Human Services awarded funds to conduct a randomized experiment in California, Iowa Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, and North Carolina. The outcomes of consultation are measured in changes both in program quality and in children's skills. Consultation efforts follow the PFI (Partnering for Improvement) model. The PFI model focuses on helping early childhood consultants both

- develop effective consultation skills, and
- use a collaborative process to partner with early care and education providers in order to improve program quality.

The process gives early care and education providers a method for identifying and addressing needed improvements in their programs after consultation has ended. The PFI model has published research evidence demonstrating its effectiveness in increasing the quality of early care and education programs.

Scientifically based research on consultation suggests that greater change is possible when individuals

- are involved in assessing their own needs,
- receive ongoing staff development over an extended period of time, and
- have opportunities to apply their new knowledge and skills in the work settings.

These principles apply to both the consultants as they learn more effective consultation skills and to the providers who receive the consultation as they change and improve their daily practices. Based on scientifically based evidence on professional development, the PFI approach includes six key components:

1. delivery of consultation services on-site,
2. a focus on the global program, with particular attention to any special needs of children in the program (for example, developmental disabilities, second language learners),
3. collaborative assessment of need by consultant and provider at the beginning of consultation,
4. the collaborative development of a written technical assistance plan based on the collaborative assessment,
5. provision of supportive and empowering skills during implementation, and
6. evaluation of effectiveness of the technical assistance.

The care environment is the first focus of PFI consultation. The PFI consultants working with family child care providers use the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS; Harms & Clifford, 1989), which is a reliable and valid environment rating scale developed at the FPG Institute. The scale examines the use of language and literacy, interactions among children and providers as well as children and peers, learning activities, physical space and materials, and routine care.

The FDCRS guides the collaborative consultation process. In one of the first activities of the consultation process, the consultant and the caregiver each complete the FDCRS and then discuss the results. Involving the providers in the assessment of their needs demonstrates that they are an important part of the consultation process, and aids in building trust between consultant and provider. Using the assessment scale also gives providers the skills they can use in the future to diagnose their own needs in the absence of the consultant.

QUINCE...

What benefits does QUINCE bring to Iowa?

Over 40 child care consultants are providing in-home consultation to family child care providers throughout Iowa through DHS and empowerment funds. However, only minimal supports currently exist to provide ongoing training and support for these consultants. The PFI model includes a state coordinator for consultation, high quality training, and on going support through a consultation model proven to be effective at increasing the quality of early care and education programs.

Currently, the most widely used measures of child care quality throughout Iowa and the nation are the environment rating scales developed by the FPG Institute. QUINCE provides consultants with additional skills in the use of these scales for in-home consultation with caregivers. QUINCE also provides funding to maintain the interrater reliability of eight data collectors for both child and program assessments.

Who's involved in Iowa QUINCE?

An experimental study, QUINCE requires random assignment of caregivers to demonstration and comparison groups as well as random recruitment of caregivers from each group. Consultants from each of the five Child Care Resource and Referral regions in Iowa have received training in the PFI Model. In addition, five caregivers per consultant, and two children per caregiver, have been involved in the data collection efforts.

Currently eight family child care consultants from Iowa have completed PFI training in North Carolina. These consultants serve as the Iowa demonstration group for PFI. They have been given release time by their agencies to implement the PFI model with five family child care providers. Another eight consultants implement the current Iowa consultation model, and participate in the data collection efforts with their caregivers. These consultants serve as the comparison group. After observational assessments have been completed for their five caregivers, they will receive PFI training.

Jane Dahlhauser, from Child Care Resource & Referral of Northeast Iowa in Waterloo, serves as the state coordinator for the PFI consultants. Jane works with support staff at FPG Institute to coordinate the consultation efforts in Iowa. The Department of Human Development & Family Studies at Iowa State University is conducting the QUINCE study in Iowa. Susan Hegland and Kere Hughes, working with researchers in the other five states, direct the Iowa research study while Grace Aiton coordinates data collection efforts. Iowa State University Extension staff collects the program observations in Iowa.

Reach Out and Read!

Submitted by Martha Gershun



Dr. Rizwan Shah enjoys a story with two of her young patients.

Dr. Seuss is coming to Iowa! With the support of Iowa First Lady Christie Vilsack, Reach Out and Read (ROR), a national children's literacy organization, has begun a joint effort with the Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics to help low income children throughout the state grow up with books and a love of reading.

Reach Out and Read (www.reachoutandread.org) works with pediatric medical providers to promote literacy among young children so they begin school ready to learn, with a special focus on children growing up in poverty. Specifically, pediatricians give free books to children at each well child visit from 6 months to 5 years and give their parents information about developmentally appropriate book sharing activities. Research shows that Reach Out and Read is the most cost-effective, evidence-based strategy available to promote school readiness for at-risk children.

Today there are 10 Reach Out and Read programs in Iowa, serving nearly 7,000 children. But, sadly, there are more than 75,000 low income children in the state who are not served by the program.

Reach Out and Read is seeking community-based partners to help expand the program in Iowa by identifying medical clinics serving low income families and telling them about the program. Through an exciting national rural initiative, Reach Out and Read will fund up to 75% of the first-year cost of high quality children's books for any clinic in Iowa which joins to deliver the program, and to train doctors and nurses in these clinics about giving guidance to parents about early literacy.

Community leaders should send an email to Growth@reachoutandread.org to learn more about how to help medical clinics in their Empowerment Areas participate in this extraordinary funding opportunity.



Submitted by
Kory Schnoor, 2-1-1 and
Annette Dunn, DHS

2-1-1 Now Available in all 99 counties in Iowa

A nationally-recognized abbreviated phone dialing code, the 2-1-1 service is a shortcut designed to link Iowans in need of help to information and referrals for basic health, human services or community resources. It also provides hotline counseling and crisis intervention. 2-1-1 operates much like 9-1-1, but rather than connecting people to emergency services, as 9-1-1 does, 2-1-1 connects people to resources, direction and guidance in one easy phone call. 2-1-1 has not been available in Iowa until now.

Trained information and referral specialists answer 2-1-1 calls and access a database with a variety of local, regional and state programs and services. They assess the situation and refer callers to the most appropriate resources to fit the specific situation. It's a quick, convenient and completely confidential way for people in the community to access the programs and services they need.

Because the 2-1-1 phone system began as a federal mandate to assist with human service information and referral, the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) is interested in having it available also via the internet. And, because the Empowerment, Decat, DHS, AEA and Judicial boundaries do not necessarily match one another, it is often difficult to locate services for families when you need to cross these lines. Having statewide information on-line would be invaluable to DHS staff and others as they provide needed information and referrals to individuals that call local offices for resources. To this end, DHS is committing resources within the next few months to ensure that the statewide software and databases are compatible and that information will be able to be placed on-line.

Once completely operational, the benefits of this service will be great. It will then be everyone's responsibility within communities and programs to ensure that the information is valid and useful by keeping it current.

Watch for further information from 2-1-1 and the Department of Human Services as they work to update the system.

2-1-1 offers access to the following types of services:

- Basic Human Needs Resources
- Physical and Mental Health Resources
- Employment Supports
- Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities
- Children, Youth and Families

Supporting An Investment In Our Youngest Iowans

Governor Vilsack, Business Leaders And Pew Charitable Trust



DMACC Child Development Center in Ankeny
April 2005



Aquinas Early Childhood Center in Fort Madison
April 2005



You may have noticed that in the month of April, you couldn't open the newspaper, turn on the radio or the television without reading or hearing something about early care, health and education. That was in part thanks to a grant Iowa received from the Pew Charitable Trust for a public engagement campaign focused on investing in early childhood. There was a full page ad in the Des Moines Register with the message "Kids Can't Wait to Learn; Do Right By Our Youngest Iowans"; and the same ad was heard on two radio stations across the state.

In conjunction with this campaign, the United Way of Central Iowa's Women's Leadership Connection hosted a legislative reception at the Embassy Suites in Des Moines. There were over 50 individuals in attendance, which included 24 legislators.

Governor Vilsack also continued his passionate appeal of the importance of early care, health and education to our State. Whether visiting on-site in preschool or child care programs or speaking publicly in a number of venues, his message remains clear and consistent. "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. Making this investment will not only provide endless opportunities for our children, but bolster our economy."

In March, the Iowa Business Council announced their support for expanding early childhood education in Iowa. Following this endorsement, the Governor was joined on two separate occasions by business leaders urging legislators to make a comprehensive commitment to children and provide them with a world-class education.

On April 11th, Tom Aller, president of Interstate Power & Light in Cedar Rapids and member of the Iowa Business Council, joined the Governor, along with Linda Martin, project manager for the Quad City Development Group, to talk about the impact the Governor's early childhood education initiative will have on businesses and economic development for Iowa.



"I believe this is a unique opportunity for Iowa," Aller said. "I have asked my legislative representatives to support the Governor's efforts to expand early childhood education in the state because I believe it will be good for business. To remain competitive, we must do more and businesses can't do it alone, the state must expect more from students who are entering the workforce. Personal income in Iowa is rising in part because of the success of the Iowa Values Fund, we should use this opportunity to further strengthen Iowa's economy by investing in kids now."

Barry Griswell, Chairman, President and CEO of Principal Financial Group®, joined the Governor on April 12th at Capital Park Early Learning Center in Des Moines where he talked about his interest in early childhood education and the impact he feels such an investment would have on Iowa families and businesses.

"Early childhood education is good business," Griswell said. "By better preparing students today we will have a stronger and brighter workforce in the future. We must help our children succeed – this is a responsibility we must all take on."

Thank you once again to Governor Vilsack and the leaders standing with him for their commitment to Our Youngest Iowans!

Healthy Child Care Iowa

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News from IDPH Oral Health Bureau



By Bob Russell,
IDPH Dental Director



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>

IDPH Oral Health Bureau Seeks to Empower Communities in Addressing Access to Dental Care

Oral health care and preventive dental services for underserved children in Iowa is a high priority for the Oral Health Bureau. However, the needs of each Iowan community for addressing dental care services can differ and require unique approaches tailored to each specific county or community. Out of the 10 primary oral health access projects currently undertaken by the bureau, 5 are focused toward developing community based answers to meeting oral care goals.

These community “empowering” programs come under various names such as; Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD), Child Health Dental Program, Iowa Access to Baby and Child Dentistry Enhanced (ABCD-E), “Healthy Smiles”, and State Oral Health Collaborative System (SOHCS). The focus of these programs are to channel different streams of both federal and state funding into communities to build infrastructure, collaborations, engage stakeholders, support dental provider training programs, provide language interpretation, develop oral health education services, care coordination, oral home care visitor training programs, and provide funding for basic dental care services when children fall outside traditional safety net insurance programs like Medicaid and *hawk-i*. The bureau monitors community achievements through an activity and quality assessment review process and through community forums held by bureau staff across the state.

Due to restrictions in available funding, several of the oral health community empowerment projects are limited to study projects in targeted communities to determine if the resources are producing desired results in sufficient levels to recommend reproduction in other Iowa communities on a larger scale. Many of these projects are showing great promise. Currently the Oral Health Bureau is developing a best practices manual on the ABCD and ABCD-E project and will soon complete a statewide community forum report. These documents are expected to be complete by year end 2005 and will present illustrations on how Iowa communities creatively addressed oral health care access including what works and doesn’t work.



Submitted by Lindsay Miller
IDPH
Covering Kids & Families

New Outreach Materials Available

Covering Kids and Families is excited to announce five new outreach materials! The Covering Kids and Families team has been working diligently to increase enrollment in the **hawk-i** program. They have produced several new materials to assist families and outreach coordinators in learning about **hawk-i** and the application process. The outreach resources include:

- ◆ **Updated Dental Poster** – The very eye-catching dental poster was created last year to inform dental providers of how they can help children access dental services. The poster is for use in dental providers' offices and explains the three possible dental plans for the **hawk-i** program and how the providers can determine which plan participates in their area. The poster was recently updated to include Delta Dental of Iowa.
- ◆ **Immigration Family Flier** – The attractive and consumer friendly immigration flier is for outreach to immigrant families. The flier defines a Lawful Permanent Resident and states the immigrant qualifications for **hawk-i**. Outreach coordinators can print and distribute the flier to families in their communities.
- ◆ **Immigration Pocket Guide for Outreach Coordinators** – The immigration pocket guide is a brochure for outreach coordinators and other professionals to use in learning about citizenship and to assist them with outreach to minority populations. The pocket guide has already proved to be very helpful and has received great reviews!
- ◆ **Teacher **hawk-i** Fact Sheet** – The teacher fact is very similar to the original **hawk-i** fact sheet, but is targeted toward teachers and focuses on how they can contribute to **hawk-i** outreach. The fact sheet has colorful graphics designed for teachers and presents information that children with health care coverage are more likely to: miss less school, pay attention better and perform better in their classes.
- ◆ **Events Calendar for Outreach Coordinators** – The events calendar lists all events, holidays, activities and special occasions for each calendar month. The calendar is a great tool for assisting coordinators in directing their outreach efforts.

All of the materials can be accessed on the Covering Kids and Families website at: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/coveringkids/>. Click on the Helpful Resources link to view each new resource. To order the updated dental poster or the immigration pocket guide please contact Beth Jones at (515) 242-6382 or bjones@idph.state.ia.us.

