

Iowa Community Empowerment Newsletter

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Iowa Empowerment Board Visits Pottawattamie County

The Pottawattamie County Community Empowerment Area was selected to host the Iowa Empowerment Board meeting and site visit on September 9th, 2005. "I think this is a great opportunity for the state board to see what opportunities we have for families and young children in Pottawattamie County", says Becky Burgart, Iowa Empowerment Board member and local Empowerment representative.

"We are delighted to be selected as a site to host the Iowa Empowerment Board" says local Empowerment Director, Patricia Russmann. "Pottawattamie County is an outstanding example of collaboration with active, dedicated community partners. We are especially fortunate to have such strong commitment from our Chamber of Commerce and Iowa West Foundation partners for early childhood investments."



The Pottawattamie Community Empowerment board, consisting of fourteen members, enables local citizens to lead collaborative efforts involving education, health, and human services programs on behalf of children, families and other citizens residing in the area.

Pottawattamie County has been designated a Community Empowerment Area since 1999 focusing efforts on three areas for families with children ages 0 - 5:

- § Parent education, health services, and support;
- § Access to quality, comprehensive and affordable early childhood education programs;
- § Access to quality and affordable childcare.



Pottawattamie County Empowerment program FAMILY was one of the first model programs in Iowa to support the parents of young children. "Teaching parents how to nurture their child's development is not only cost effective, but evaluations show children score higher on kindergarten readiness and standardized measures of reading, math, and language in the early grades and parents are more confident in their parenting skills and knowledge; they read more to their children- a key factor in preparing children for school success," according to Connie Gronstal, FAMILY Program Director.



The Iowa Empowerment Board enjoyed a relaxing reception joined by members of the local board and Chamber of Commerce on Thursday evening, September 8. Prior to the board meeting on Friday, they were also able to visit a local childcare center, childcare home provider, parent support and education program, and preschool program.

Thank you to the Iowa Empowerment Board members who made the trip and to the Pottawattamie County Empowerment Board for making the visit a success.

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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.

Update August 2005 – September 2005

Upcoming Events 2005 Calendar at a Glance

Iowa Empowerment Board

November 8, 2005
Scheman Center, Ames
4:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Empowerment Coordinators/Contacts Meetings

December 14, 2005
Heartland AEA, Johnston

Early Childhood Iowa Core Stakeholders

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 8, 2006

Early Care, Health and Education System Building Activities

- Early Childhood Iowa Co-Chairs meeting – August 4
- State Agency Liaison Team - August 4
- Rules Review Committee - August 10
- State Board of Education presentation of EC model, WI- August 11
- Public Engagement Workgroup – August 4
- Governance, Administration and Planning Workgroup – August 18, Sept 15
- Resources & Funding Workgroup - August 19
- ECHE Congress Planning – August 12
- Quality Services & Programs Workgroup – September 7
- Quality Rating Systems Oversight Meetings - August 5, 25, September 23, 29
- Early Childhood Iowa - September 13
- '07 Budget Offer Meetings - August 10, 15, 24 Final Offer Due - Sept 12
- Pre-K Now Conference Call - August 15, 26
- Barriers Meeting - August 26
- Child Care Incentive Study planning - August 1, 29
- EC Forum with Barry Griswell, Principal Financial - Washington Co, Aug 29
- Systems Outreach with ICCEEN - August 22
- EC Comprehensive Systems Grant conference, Maryland - Sept 15-21
- EC Leadership Meeting - September 22

Site Visits/Technical Assistance Activities

- Empowerment Director's Meeting - August 5
- Rules Review Next Steps meeting - August 22
- Iowa Empowerment Board meeting - August 19, September 9
- Empowerment Orientation for new Director- August 29
- Empowerment Contacts/Coordinators Meeting - September 14
- TA to Cedar County - August 25
- TA to PAK Empowerment Board - August 26, September 26
- TA to Marion County - September 21
- TA to Corner Counties Empowerment - September 19
- Annual Report/Redesignation Self Evaluations/Community Plans due - Sept 15

Linkages/Outreach Activities

- State Child Care Advisory Council - September 1
- Goal Setting Training for providers - August 18
- TEACH Advisory - August 30
- Child Health Stamp Unveiling - September 8
- PITC Advisory - September 8
- EC Health Systems Conference Planning - August 12, September 6
- Youth Development/State of Promise Activities – August 9, 24, September 28
- Iowans Fit for Life, Early Childhood Group - August 9
- Iowa Grandparents Press Conference - September 15
- Household Health Survey Planning meetings - August 26, September 23
- Presentation to State of Promise/Americorps - August 30
- National Community Action Conference - New Orleans - Aug 29 - Sept 2

ECHE System Building Updates

Other Events and Activities

Partnering with Parents - Online Walking the Journey Together

June 6 - December 2, 2005

www.extension.iastate.edu/pwp

Iowa AEYC Conference

October 14-15, 2005

Des Moines

www.iowaaeyc.org

Healthy Families America Training

October 17 - 21, 2005

Des Moines

(515) 271-7315 or

nancy.krause@iowa.org

Families, Workers & Neighbors: Discovering Our Hidden Assets

October 17, 2005

Scheman Center, Ames

www.iowadiversity.org/conference/index

Swinging With Life's Ups & Downs

October 27 & 28, 2005

Four Points Sheraton Hotel

Des Moines

Toll-free: 877-255-3140

www.irccc.com

Iowa Volunteer Conference

November 9 & 10, 2005

Ames, IA

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

Update on the work of Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders

The Iowa Department of Public Health's Early Childhood Comprehensive System's Building Project received notice of award from the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration of \$140,000 each year, for the next three years. This funding will continue the implementation and support infrastructure building around the work of Iowa's Early Care, Health, and Education Systems Building Project, the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders, and their Strategic Plan.

Component Group Spotlight: Quality Services and Programs

This group has been busy! They have worked hard to establish a common definition for Family Support programs in Iowa and are currently in the process of finalizing a tool for evidenced based program assessment of early care, health, and education programs and funders of services. The evidence based program assessment and strategies for increasing effectiveness of home visitation will be presented at the Early Care, Health, and Education Congress November 8&9 in Ames.

Iowa's definition of Family Support programs is as follows:

Family Support programs are defined as community-based services to promote the well-being of children and families.

Family Support programs have the following characteristics:

- **Family driven**, meaning there is a true partnership with families.
- **Comprehensive, flexible, and individualized** to each family based on their culture, needs, values and preferences.
- **Build on strengths** to increase the stability of family members and the family unit.
- Utilize **informal** and **formal** family supports.

Family Support programs produce the following results:

- Increased parent confidence and competence in their parenting abilities.
- Safe, stable, and supportive families who are connected to their communities
- Enhanced health, growth, and development children and adults in the family unit.

Reference Sources: Adopted from – Family Preservation and Support Services Program Act, 1993, Dunst, Trivette, and Thompson, 1990; Family Support America, National Center for Family Support, and Family Centered Services – Early ACCESS

This definition and other products of the Quality Services and Programs component group can be found on the web at:

http://www.state.ia.us/earlychildhood/eci/stakeholder/component_groups/quality_services.htm



www.earlychildhoodiowa.org



Iowa Empowerment Board News August & September Meetings Update

The Iowa Empowerment Board met on August 19th. This meeting was scheduled in order to provide guidance to community empowerment area boards on legislative changes. The Iowa Empowerment Board approved a tool regarding use of funds targeted to professional development activities. This tool is highlighted in this newsletter and can be found on the State Empowerment website at www.empowerment.state.ia.us, click on Tools and scroll down to Tools DD (A) and (B). The Board also received an update and overview of the planned project to support the Child Care Incentives Study being conducted with an arrangement with Iowa State University.

At their regularly-scheduled meeting in September, the Iowa Empowerment Board went to Pottawattamie County and met with local empowerment board and other community members. As part of the activities, site visits were conducted to programs that receive, in part, empowerment funding to support their work. During the meeting, the state board approved a redraft of the tools supporting the Preschool Tuition support for low-income families. Please find the revised tool at the above link, click on Tools and scroll down to Tools CC (A) and (B). Also during the meeting, the Board had a good discussion about the issue of carry-forward for local boards. No decision was made at this meeting. The board wanted to allow for more public comment from local boards. The State Team will gather this information so the board can make a decision at their next meeting. The State Board has recently gone through a process to update the adopted indicators and the measures for those indicators. This information will be reflected in the next state annual report.

The next Iowa Empowerment Board meeting will be held on November 8th from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Scheman Center on the Iowa State University campus in Ames, Iowa.

Nominations Sought For Iowa Empowerment Board

The Iowa Empowerment Board consists of thirteen citizen members, five state agency directors and six members of the general assembly. The state Empowerment Board currently has two vacancies 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 criteria 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 State Board Member: Barbara Brown



Barbara Brown joined the Iowa Empowerment Board in May 2005. Barbara's initial parent/consumer involvement in early care and education quickly developed to include a broader interest in public policy affecting early childhood during her three consecutive terms on the board of directors of Grinnell Community Day Care Center and Preschool. Active with the Poweshiek Empowerment Area from its inception, Barbara believes accessibility of quality, affordable early childhood services is critical to the well-being of any community. She has also served on the board of the Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network.

Barbara came to Iowa to attend Grinnell College and returned there after graduation to work in a support position for the psychology department, where she has been for the last 15 years. Barbara and her husband live in Grinnell with their three school-age children. An older daughter is a college senior.

Welcome, Barbara, to the Iowa Empowerment Board.

Iowa Community Empowerment

Have you visited

www.empowerment.state.ia.us

lately?

Check out Empowerment's newly revised web site for valuable tools and information in the world of children ages 0-5 years and their families

Kelly Schulte, IDPH, Joins State Empowerment Technical Assistance Team!



Kelly Schulte has been employed at the Department of Public Health- Bureau of Family Health since the spring of 2004. She is the project assistant for the Early Care, Health, and Education Comprehensive Systems Building Project and Covering Kids and Families in Iowa Project. She also provides technical assistance to the Maternal and Child Health contract agencies.

Kelly attended Iowa State University and graduated with B.S. in Child and Family Services with a minor in Criminal Justice. Kelly is currently working on her masters in Social Work from the University of Iowa. Before moving to Iowa, Kelly worked as a direct service provider for the State of Illinois' IDEA Part C program. Kelly lives in Des Moines with her husband. Kelly represents the Department of Public Health on the Community Empowerment State Team.

But most interesting is the fact that she teaches Irish Step Dancing. We will have to get her to provide a demonstration some time; it would definitely liven up our meetings! Welcome to the team, Kelly!

The IEB will be on the Road Again! Iowa Empowerment Board Meeting Site Proposal

At the July 8, 2005 meeting of the Iowa Empowerment Board, it was decided that two of the Board's six meetings in 2006 would once again be held in a local community empowerment area. These meetings will occur on the following Fridays, May 19, 2006 and September 22, 2006. A process has been established to determine those sites and is as follows:

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, Clayton)
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

1. The Office of Empowerment will accept proposals from interested areas until the deadline date. Four copies of the proposal should be sent to:
Debra Scrowther
Iowa Department of Management
State Capitol Building, Room 12
Des Moines, IA 50319
debra.scrowther@iowa.gov
2. Proposals must identify the key reasons your site should be chosen. Creativity will be given priority. At a minimum, proposals must include the following details:
 - A brief narrative explaining why your site should be chosen;
 - The site you've chosen for the Iowa Empowerment Board meeting (ability to accommodate 65 persons);
 - Lodging accommodations within close proximity of the meeting site, which accepts the state rate;
 - Information regarding the social event which you would organize for the evening before;
 - Information on site visits (at most 3) to local empowerment-supported programs to be conducted the day of the meeting;
 - Your preferred date selection - May 19, 2006 or September 22, 2006;
 - Your intent to extend an invitation to the legislators in your area.
3. Proposals will be selected and approved by the Empowerment State Technical Assistance Team, and identified members of the Iowa Empowerment Board.
4. Once selected, the top two proposals will work with the Office of Empowerment to finalize the exact schedule and details.
5. Notice of this process, as well as the awardees, will be posted on the State Empowerment website.
6. Community Empowerment Areas wishing to apply are encouraged to submit a proposal of not more than **three pages** in length.

The costs associated with the Thursday evening social event are the responsibility of the local empowerment board. The costs incurred for the Iowa Empowerment Board meeting will be the responsibility of the Office of Empowerment.

Proposal Deadline: November 1, 2005

Pottawattamie County Empowerment, ISU Extension and Iowa Western Community College Making a Difference for Family Child Care Providers

Improving the Quality of Urban Daycare

Submitted by Mary Hughes, ISU Extension

For somebody friends described as an “over-the-top” provider, **Linda Sladky** didn’t think a major makeover was in the works for her *Granny-Nanny Daycare* service in Council Bluffs, Iowa. But following a series of professional workshops sponsored by Iowa State University Extension, that’s nearly what happened.



When the Childcare Task Force of Pottawattamie County identified a need for training to improve the quality of daycare in the area, Iowa State University Extension responded. Through collaboration with Iowa Western Community College, they sought and received a working grant from the Pottawattamie County Empowerment Board.

Fifteen in-home daycare providers were chosen to participate in a training series that went well beyond entry-level basics. One key element was instruction in use of the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS) for self assessment of provider care. Sladky used the self rating system to evaluate the care she was giving in areas such as reading, play, art, cultural awareness and quiet time.



“As a result of what was learned, we really expanded our opportunities for quiet time,” Sladky said. “Kids could go to a big comfy rocker in our “Quiet Room” any time they wanted - something that wasn’t available to them previously. It made a huge difference in easing our discipline problems.”

Another change came as youngsters were introduced to holiday traditions from around the world. From Cinco de Mayo to the Chinese New Year and others, the segment added a fascinating taste of culture to their young minds.

Fourteen of 15 providers initially enrolled completed the entire series. And, using the Family Daycare Rating Scale afterward, average scores for quality of service improved by nearly 20 percent.

“Your program has changed so many lives - not only care givers, but the children.” Sladky commented. “How can one say a big enough thank-you for that?”

To learn more about this and other Iowa State University Extension programs and services, contact Families field specialists, Mary Hughes (712-366-7070) or Pat Anderson (712-482-6449), or visit the ISU Extension website at www.extension.iastate.edu.

Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability

Reach Out & Read Begins in Fort Dodge

Reach Out and Read is Introduced at Mid-Iowa Pediatrics and Trimark Pediatrics in Fort Dodge

Submitted by Elizabeth Stanek, Director of Linking Families and Communities



Getting books from the doctor is now a routine part of well-child visits at Mid-Iowa and Trimark Pediatrics, as doctors and nurses welcomed the Reach Out and Read (ROR) program to their practice. Mid-Iowa and Trimark join more than 2,200 programs nationally (only 10 in Iowa) that are working to make books a part of a healthy childhood.

Reach Out and Read is a simple, yet highly effective concept. The program targets children aged 6 months to 5 years of age and features three key elements:

- Volunteers read with children in pediatric clinic waiting areas or waiting areas have a print-rich environment.
- Pediatricians educate parents about the importance of reading with their children every day.
- Every child from the age of six months to five years receives a new book to take home and keep when they come in for a well-child check-up.

“Giving a book to a young child, along with age-appropriate advice about sharing books for the parents, may be the only concrete activity a pediatrician can routinely do to promote child development,” commented Barry S. Zuckerman, MD, ROR co-founder, and Chief of Pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine.

Medical research supports that claim, showing that literacy-promoting interventions by the pediatrician have a significant effect on parental behaviors, beliefs and attitudes toward reading aloud. For more than a decade, studies have indicated that parents who get books and literacy counseling from their doctors and nurses are more likely to read to their young children, read to them more often and provide more books in the home. In addition, several studies have also shown improvements in the language scores of young children receiving Reach Out and Read.

“We are very excited to be working with Mid-Iowa and Trimark to bring this program to the children and families in the area,” said Elizabeth Stanek, Director of Linking Families and Communities. “Reach Out and Read has the ability to reach a broad number of children and families and has been shown to improve developmental and language outcomes as well as foster the parent-child relationship.”

New Tool Available to Assist Local Empowerment Boards with School Ready Funds to Support High-Quality Professional Development for Child Care and Preschool Providers

Tool DD(A) was approved as guidance by the Iowa Empowerment Board at their meeting on August 19, 2005. You can find this resource, along with other valuable tools, on the Iowa Empowerment web site at www.empowerment.state.ia.us and click on Tools.

School Ready Allocation for Professional Development

The 2005 General Assembly passed the Education Appropriations bill (HF 816) with statutory requirements for the use of School Ready (SR) Funds that are distributed to the Community Empowerment Areas. Of the amount appropriated for the SR funds, \$1,000,000 must be used to collaborate with Area Education Agencies and Community Colleges or both to provide child care and preschool providers with access to high-quality professional development [Chapter 28.9(d)].

Characteristics of High Quality Professional Development

- The following elements are key components of high quality professional development:¹
- Aligns with competencies that early childhood practitioners should know and be able to do with young children and families (Refer to *Core Body of Knowledge for Best Practices* at <http://www.iowachildnetwork.org/iaeceprofdev.htm>);
 - Balances content by combining knowledge, concepts, and research/theory with practical skills, practices and beliefs (i.e. child development, theory, demonstration, practice, observation, reflection, and coaching with promoting healthy lifestyles, creating healthy environments and assessing of children’s developmental abilities);
 - Sets learning goals based on results, identified needs, priorities, and learning outcomes;
 - Uses methods that respect adult learning styles and acknowledges adults’ individual and culturally diverse learning needs;
 - Provides ongoing support, mentoring and technical assistance as adults learn, adopt and implement new practices;
 - Designs learning environments that support continuous learning and ongoing professional growth of staff (i.e. college credit, AEA licensure renewal credit);
 - Includes an evaluation component that documents the improvement in practices and effects on children’s development;
 - Engages all staff in collective professional development (i.e. Director, Teachers, Assistants);
 - Implements organizational structures and resources to maintain long term use of new practices and provide opportunities for refinement;
 - Supports collaboration of professional development opportunities with community agencies, organizations and families representing early care, health and education.

Use of Funds

The funds are designated to provide child care and preschool providers with ready access to high-quality professional development. CEA Boards are required to work with Area Education Agencies, Community Colleges or both to ensure that providers have access to high-quality professional development that includes elements of the above characteristics.

The allocation in HF 816 targeting funds for high-quality professional development acknowledges that outstanding child care and preschool providers are key in enhancing children’s health, developmental skills and abilities. These funds recognize and support the improvement and acquisition of the knowledge and skills of providers through a supportive professional development environment in order to promote positive outcomes for young children.

Examples of Quality Professional Development Statewide Initiatives

- Examples of statewide initiatives that meet the criteria of high-quality professional development include but are not limited to the following:
- Quality Preschool Program Standards
 - Teacher Education and Compensation Helps Early Childhood @ IOWA (TEACH)
 - Every Child Reads: 3 to 5
 - Program for Infant and Toddler Caregivers (PITC)

These funds can also be used to assist child care and preschool providers to obtain college credit in the field of early childhood.

Accountability System

- School Ready Budget for SFY 2006 Form:
- Document projected expenditures for FY 06 to provide child care and preschool providers with professional development (must be 4% of the CEA SR funds for FY06).

CEA Annual Report – Performance Measures:
Document in the FY 06 Annual Report the performance measures through input, output, quality/efficiency and outcome data. (Due September 2006)

Contractual Agreements with Programs

CEA Board will work with Area Education Agencies and Community Colleges to determine the contractual agreements for the provision of professional development for child care and preschool providers.

Technical Assistance

Contact:
Shanell Wagler, Facilitator
Office of Empowerment
Iowa Department of Management
515-281-4321
Shanell.Wagler@iowa.gov



Early Care Health & Education Congress

Our Youngest Iowans Can't Wait:

Invest Now for Continual Returns

Date: November 8 & 9, 2005

Scheman Center, Ames

Keynote Speakers:

Steve Barnett, Director, National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)

Sharon Lynn Kagan, Ed.D., National Center for Children & Families at Columbia University

Visit www.iowachildnetwork.org for registration information

Public Comment for Administrative Rules Open until October 6 For Iowa's Quality Rating System

The rules for Iowa's Quality Rating System have been noticed and are available for review and comment.

You may access the rules by going through the following link:

<http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/policyanalysis/RulesPages/dockets.htm>. Scroll to the bottom of the table on the Rules Docket page, and you will see:

- Child Care: Rescind crisis child care standards and implement child care quality rating system (ARC 4511B-9/14/05)
- Click on the ARC link and it will take you to the Iowa Administrative Bulletin pages containing the QRS rules and times/location of the public hearing.

Empowerment Assists in Hurricane Katrina Relief

Many CEA's have done what they can to assist families displaced by the hurricane. Here is one story that was shared with us...

Fun in the Son Preschool in Fredericksburg was approached about a month ago about a hurricane victim being able to attend preschool classes. The family's home in Biloxi MI was badly damaged by the hurricane, and the children came to Fredericksburg to live with their grandparents while their parents determined what their next steps should be. The child is 4 years old and has two older siblings who attend classes at Fredericksburg Elementary School.

The child began attending classes on Friday, Sept. 9. She is doing a wonderful job of adapting to a stressful situation in her life. FMC Empowerment is providing a preschool scholarship for her to attend preschool with funds from the Fun in the Son scholarship fund being used for the remaining amount. We are in the process of determining what other needs the family may have.

We would like to express our appreciation to FMC Empowerment for their contributions in serving this family during a very difficult time.

~Janiece Kueker, Director, Fun in the Son Day Care and Preschool, Fredericksburg

In her *Parenting Exchange* article, "Helping Children Cope in the Wake of Tragedy or Disaster," Karen Stephens offers practical tips for parents and caregivers. These are simple, but valuable ideas and it can be viewed at http://ccie.com/eed/news_print.php?news_id=1274.



Prevent Child Abuse Iowa is engaged throughout the year in researching child abuse and ways to prevent it. As part of this research, **PCA Iowa** publishes information on trends in Iowa child abuse, with a focus on county-specific information.

Check Out This
New and Improved
Web Site for
Valuable Local
Data!

www.pcaiowa.org

One of the things you can find at the following link, http://www.pcaiowa.org/child_abuse_data.html, are several of the recent tables that PCA Iowa has produced – available in both Excel tables and printable form.

**New Business
Announces
Partnership with
Community
Empowerment**

www.iowagrandparents.com



New Web Site Geared Toward Grandparents

~Des Moines Register, September 19, 2005

A new Web site has been created to improve interaction among grandparents and their grandchildren.

John Calhoun, founder and president of Iowa Grandparents, announced the Internet site at the Creative Center for Young Children on Sept. 15. Calhoun, of Polk City, said it will be a source of information used to mobilize grandparents to be more active in their grandchildren's lives, which would have a positive impact on Iowa's youth.

The Web site, www.iowagrandparents.com, has editorials, recreational ideas and a chat room, among other features. The site is updated as the organization receives feedback from its members, who pay \$25 for access. Those with special financial needs can gain membership at a discounted price of \$10.

Calhoun, who served on Gov. Tom Vilsack's Iowa Learns Council, launched the site in partnership with the Iowa Afterschool Alliance, Iowa Community Empowerment and the Institute for Character Development, which is chaired by former Iowa Gov. Robert Ray.

Iowa Grandparents, a for-profit organization, will donate \$5 of the membership fee to a choice of one of its three partners.



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

A Guide to Legislative Advocacy

~Adapted from NAEYC's Advocacy Toolkit

These are "how-to" tips on effective strategies for legislative advocacy for individuals who are not at the Capitol every day. Since effective advocacy is a 12-month job, the following fits into the category of a year-round homework assignment.

1. Don't be a stranger to your elected officials and their staff. The most persuasive messages come from familiar faces. Know them by name and make sure they know you by name. Anonymity is the antithesis of effectiveness.
2. Introduce yourself at every opportunity. Hand out your business card like candy at Halloween - always have extras. Invite officials to your programs for conversations and photos. Seeing is believing.
3. Always say "thank you" before you say "please." Even if you disagree with your elected official's positions on some (or even most) issues, they are more likely to listen to you if you've found some way to praise them. If nothing else, thank them for the courage to be a public office holder.
4. A well-written, brief thank you note is always appreciated. Remember, officials get 25 complaints for every compliment. Like the wise maitre d once said, "Only two types of people welcome an honest compliment—males and females."
5. Concentrate on principles of policy, rather than the specifics. Trust that your "every day professional advocates" know the details; your job is to set the stage with your elected officials to improve access for your advocates at the Capitol. The hometown connection is essential to help them listen with both ears.
6. Be concise and to the point. The history of your issue or program needs to be a paragraph or a two-minute presentation. The key to influence is not volume, but precision. Elected officials are not experts, but don't need to be overwhelmed with your knowledge. Have them trust you as someone to turn to.
7. Engage the media (or schmooze the newsies!!) who have the power to send your message far and wide. An expert source is golden to every reporter and editorial/opinion writer - but be careful: they should not perceive you as seeking "publicity". Once you're viewed as an accessible expert when they're on deadline, you can pitch them ideas anytime.
8. Writer Letters to the Editor. Submit guest op-ed columns, and encourage allies to do the same. The opinion pages are read word-for-word by every public official. You have their attention if your case is made in print. Never attack, always attract.
9. Advocacy is focused on the art of compromise, never expect it all. While we strive for unanimity, we work for majority. There's a difference between compromising principles (a no-no) and compromising in policy discussion.
10. While there's strength in diversity, there's power in unity. Bring as many diverse voices to your cause as possible, but reach a unifying message. Agree on the important goals and success will be achieved.

Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral



Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral System Targets Statewide Consumer Education on Quality Assurance

Submitted by Rhonda Lassen, Region 1 CCR&R Director

The Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral System is currently on the road to complete the Consumer Education Quality Assurance Program. Consumer Education Quality Assurance is a program that is administered by Child Care Aware and a program of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) and is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Child Care Bureau, US Department of Health and Human Services. This program is designed to ensure that families across the state and nation have access to consistent, high quality consumer education and referral services for parents.

Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral regions are currently working on three criterion that apply to the best practices in the delivery of consumer education and parent referral which includes:

1. Direct services to Families
2. Supporting Child Care Resource & Referral Services for Families
3. Fostering Community Engagement

Each of the criteria is then supported by desired outcomes, of which typical indicators have been defined to signify that the outcomes are being realized. These indicators are then measured by multiple inputs.

Upon completion of all required documentation, a Validation Review Panel will review each region's application and determine if the region will become validated or need further action or time to complete documentation. The suggested timeline for completion of the process varies from program to program but it can be expected that it will take anywhere from 9 to 16 months. The Child Care Resource and Referral of Northeast Iowa has recently completed the validation process and was approved as Quality Assured on July 1, 2005. The remaining four Child Care Resource and Referral regions in the state will have submitted applications by January 2006 with final submitted documentation submitted to NACCRRA by June 30, 2007.

In the future there will be similar Validation programs developed by Child Care Aware and NACCRRA with a focus on Provider Services and Community CCR&R services. For more information on what is happening in your area, please contact your local CCR&R office.

Head Start



Editor's Note:
Congratulations to Dallas County Empowerment on a successful collaboration with Head Start!



Students Welcomed to Head Start Classroom

9/01/2005

*By Elizabeth Martin; photos courtesy of Elizabeth Martin
Waukee Today- reprinted with permission*

Many were skeptical that such a short deadline could be met, but the Waukee Head Start classroom started sessions Tuesday with a fully functioning classroom.

The hint of paint in the air and workers moving in and out of the back door didn't bother the children as they arrived excited about going to school.



The classroom, barely recognizable as the former post office, has been remodeled, painted, cleaned, decorated and furnished in a matter of weeks. Major projects included cutting into the brick walls to make the bathroom doors handicap accessible, removing or moving some of the bathroom fixtures to bring them up to code and preparing plumbing for sinks and a dishwasher located in the classroom.

Penny Lingle, Head Start Director for Community Opportunities, Inc., spent countless hours working in the classroom and coordinating efforts to make the vision a reality.

An open house was held Monday to show off the classroom to the community and celebrate the completion of the project. Last-minute details, such as installing bathroom doors, took place in the wee hours of the morning Tuesday and a few other projects were still being completed in the storage areas as the children arrived.

Twelve children are currently enrolled in the program, but the capacity is 20 students, if there is an even split between 3- and 4-year olds. If there are more 3-year-olds than 4-year-olds, fewer students are allowed to be enrolled, according to federal guidelines.

Students and their parents were invited to an open house Monday to learn more about the program, see the classroom and have questions answered. Lingle said the kids were very excited and some of them didn't want to leave.

The program still needs a teacher, but Vicky Burns, of Community Opportunities, Inc., is filling in until a full-time teacher can be hired. The tight deadline and one teacher declining an offer was a setback, but Lingle said she was prepared to move forward because there were "fully qualified" individuals in her office who were able to step in if needed.

"Each day the students follow a tight schedule and learn a variety of things ranging from studying the alphabet to the importance of washing their hands and brushing their teeth. They will receive two meals each day, breakfast and lunch, which are catered by Dahl's.

The fencing for the playground will go up in the next few weeks, but the playground equipment won't be in place until next year, Lingle said. Donations of playground-type items, such as tricycles and plastic jungle gyms, are being accepted.

Several members of the Waukee community have volunteered time and resources to move the classroom to completion. Larry Lyon, owner of Mr. Fix It, a home repair company in Waukee, was responsible for the renovations and dealing with all of the technical construction aspects of the classroom.

News from IDPH Oral Health Bureau



By Bob Russell,
IDPH Dental Director



Healthy Smiles Nears End of Grant Period

In the April edition of the Empowerment newsletter, you may remember reading about *Healthy Smiles*, a home based family education and training program designed to build the confidence and competence of parents to play their part in keeping their young children cavity-free. The project evolved from discussions among an interdisciplinary management team composed of maternal and child health nurses, dental hygienists, and dentists. The members represent state government agencies, Head Start, public health, and the University of Iowa, College of Dentistry.

Iowa *Healthy Smiles* is a product of eight years of learning between Iowa and Region VII Head Start. Their work produced an opportunity to conduct oral health demonstration projects in three Nebraska Early Head Start (EHS) programs as well as multiple workshops in Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri. The lessons learned from the Nebraska and Kansas statewide EHS initiatives have been incorporated into Iowa's program. As a result, the state recognized that home visitors need an approach targeted directly at their needs. In Iowa, much of the education and training was targeted toward health specialists, who in turn trained home visitors, those considered to be in the best position to help parents adopt healthy habits. The following were identified as objectives for home visitors:

- Gain increased skills in educating and coaching pregnant women and families of young children to play their roles in keeping children cavity free.
- Learn and practice the art of scripting for home visits.
- Gain hands-on experience using *Healthy Smiles* curriculum modules and *Healthy Smiles* toolkits.
- Develop different approaches for motivating families to follow good oral health practices.
- Produce multiple responses to parents' questions or dismissal of good oral health practices.

The funding provided by Delta Dental Plan of Iowa and the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation to implement *Healthy Smiles* will soon be exhausted. Their support produced the development of the home visitors' curriculum, a *Healthy Smiles* flipchart and PowerPoint presentation slides. In addition, 5 training teams held orientation and skill-based workshops throughout the state, which over 325 professionals have participated.

In an effort to keep the project going, the Oral Health Bureau within the Iowa Department of Public Health will be distributing 300 flip charts to local public health agencies in each county, and is discussing the possibility of collaborating with WIC programs to deliver these oral health messages to the vulnerable populations they serve. Additional funding to sustain technical assistance for programs, coaching support for home visitors, and ongoing training is being pursued.

For additional information and questions, please contact Dr. Bob Russell, Public Health Dental Director at (515) 281-4916 or at brussell@idph.state.ia.us.



CHILD HEALTH SPECIALTY CLINICS NUTRITION CONSULTANT SERVICES

Submitted by Jody Kealey, RD, CHSC Nutrition Consultant

jody-kealey@uiowa.edu

Local empowerment boards across the state have the opportunity to be ambassadors for nutrition. Access to nutrition services fits well with the health component of Empowerment's mission.

For more information, please contact one of the CHSC Regional Centers nearest you or contact:

Child Health Specialty Clinics
100 Hawkins Drive
Iowa City, IA 52242
319-356-1469

Fax 319-356-3715

Toll Free Numbers: 1-866-219-9119 or 1-866-236-1423 (TTY)

<http://www.uihealthcare.com/depts/state/chsc/>

What is CHSC?

CHSC is Iowa's Title V program for children with special health care needs funded by the federal Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant and state appropriations.

What are the Nutrition Services offered through CHSC?

CHSC has 1 Registered, Licensed Dietitian (also referred to as Nutrition Consultant) who may provide nutrition consultation to children with special health care needs around the state in communities with limited or no access to appropriate nutrition services.

Where is CHSC located?

CHSC has a total of 12 offices located in communities throughout Iowa. (Refer to the website below). CHSC's Nutrition Consultant is located in the Davenport Regional Center.

How does a child access CHSC's Nutrition Consultant Services? By contacting the CHSC Regional Center closest to your community.

Are their eligibility requirements for a child to receive Nutrition Consultation Services? Yes. The child must be birth through 21 years of age. The child must already be served by one of the other services offered by CHSC*. *Exceptions are reviewed on a case by case basis.

What can the CHSC Nutrition Consultant do?

- Assist communities in setting up nutrition services
- Be a resource linkage to local nutrition services
- Participate in webcam nutrition consultation to instruct families on specific feeding and dietary modifications
- Find payment sources for nutrition services or special formulas
- Write letters of rationale for insurance companies to pay for nutrition services or formulary
- Advocate for nutritional needs in school-based programs, day care programs, etc.

How much does it cost?

There is currently no cost to the family. CHSC Nutrition Services functions in a "gap filling capacity" until families have access to the comprehensive nutrition services required for their special needs child.

Healthy Child Care Iowa

Sally Clausen, ARNP, BSN
Healthy Child Care Iowa
Iowa Department of Public Health

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*New Home Playground
Safety Handbook*

available for download:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/324.pdf>



Submitted by Lindsay Miller
IDPH
Covering Kids & Families

To view the complete Medicaid Reform Bill – HF 841 go to:

Link:

<http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/CoolICE/default.asp?Category=billinfo&Service=Billbook&menu=false&hbill=HF841>

HCCI Update

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from consumer products. Healthy Child Care Iowa maintains a list of recently CPSC recalled products pertaining to child care. To view recalled product information relating to child care please visit: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hcci/recalls.asp> HCCI uses 5 categories of recalled products.

Beds, Cribs, and Bedding No new notices since July

Child Clothing, Shoes, and Accessories 2 new postings, infant carrier sling and children's sandals

Equipment (including infant supplies/equipment) 3 new postings, coffeemaker/carafes, bicycle tires and wheels

Furniture Related to Child Care and Early Education No new notices, a toy chest box was recalled-this product is listed under toy/related items

Toys and Play Related Items 4 new postings, toy box, bicycle tires, bicycle rear wheel girder, and water watches.

There were multiple notices related to bicycles during the month of August. To look at all recalls/notices released during August, 2005, please visit <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prerelaug05.html>

Overview of the Iowa Care Act

The goals of the Iowa Care Act (HF 841) were to preserve Medicaid and reduce the \$65 million gap lost through intergovernmental transfers, gain more federal dollars for health care, give consumers more personal responsibility and ownership of health care and to re-balance long term care.

The plan for Iowa Care is to protect safety-net hospitals, mental health institutions (this includes U of I Hospitals and Clinics and Broadlawns). Medicaid will be expanded to 200 percent of the federal poverty level. It will not be an entitlement program and coverage is limited to services provided by safety-net hospitals. For example, people who will be covered include parents of *hawk-i* kids and childless/single adults.

Iowa Care will include premium cost sharing, incentives to stay healthy and avoid the emergency room. Future plans will be to test on development of health care accounts.

To rebalance long-term care, Iowa Care will expand the home and community-based waiver and provide relief from rigid federal rules regarding nursing homes. It will keep more people in their own homes and communities, which will slow the rate of cost growth.

The advantages of the Iowa Care are that it will expand coverage for the poor, requires ownership of health, avoids institutionalization when not needed, treats Medicaid like a business, includes careful monitoring and health promotion activities and provides a forum for testing innovative health care strategies.

More information on the Iowa Medicaid Initiative is available at <http://staffweb.legis.state.ia.us/lfb/medicaid/medicaid.htm>

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