



Early Childhood Iowa Monday Musings November 14, 2016 Vol. 3, No. 38

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

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

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

“It is not the child as a physical but as a psychic being that can provide a strong impetus to the betterment of mankind. It is the spirit of the child that can determine the course of human progress and lead it perhaps even to a higher form of civilization.”

-Maria Montessori

State Information:

ECI Steering Committee Selects New Co-Chairs

At the November 3, 2016 ECI Steering Committee meeting, two new co-chairs were elected.

Leslie Stonehocker, will serve as the private organization Co-chair. Leslie is employed at Orchard Place, Des Moines Iowa in the Child Care Resource and Referral Program. Leslie, is the Child Care Consultant Coordinator serving Adair, Boone, Dallas, Hardin, Madison, Marshall, Polk, Story, and Warren Counties. Leslie is also currently co-chair of the ECI Public Engagement Component Group.

Kelly Davydov, will serve as the public organization Co-chair. Kelly is employed by the Iowa Department of Human Rights, in the Division of Community Action Agencies. Kelly is a Program Planner for the FaDSS (Family Development and Self Sufficiency) state-wide program. Kelly is also currently co-chair of the ECI Results Accountability Component Group.

DHS Releases New Communication Guides

Registration & Licensing Standards and Procedures

The Department of Human Services announces the release of new Iowa regulations!

- Comm 95 - Minimum Health & Safety Standards
- Comm 143 - Child Development Home Registration Guidelines
- Comm 204 - Center Licensing Standards & Procedures
- Chapter 109 - Center Licensing Rules
- Chapter 110 - Child Development Homes Registration Rules

- Chapter 120 - Child Care Home Rules
- Chapter 170 - Requirements for Child Care Assistance

Communication Guides are available on the CCR&R [website](#) and the DHS [Provider Portal](#).

Please contact your CCR&R [Child Care Consultant](#) with any questions you may have.

Iowa's Barriers to Prenatal Care Project

The findings in this summary are based on the Iowa Barriers to Prenatal Care project. Ongoing since 1991, the purpose of this project is to obtain brief, accurate information about women delivering babies in Iowa hospitals. Specifically, the project seeks to learn about women's experiences getting prenatal or delivery care during their current pregnancy. Other information is included which may be pertinent to health planners or those concerned with the systematic development of health care services.

This project is a cooperative venture of all of Iowa's maternity hospitals, the University of Northern Iowa Center for Social and Behavioral Research, and the Iowa Department of Public Health. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded the first three years of this project. The current funding is provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health. The Director is Dr. Mary Losch, University of Northern Iowa Center for Social and Behavioral Research. The Coordinator for the project is Rodney Muilenburg.

To Look at State and County Information: [Iowa's Barriers to Prenatal Care Project](#)

Federal Information:

U. S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services Release First Joint Policy Brief on Use of Technology with Young Children

The U.S. Departments of Education and [Health and Human Services](#) today released [a policy brief on the use of technology with early learners](#) to help families and early educators implement active, meaningful and socially interactive learning. The brief includes a call to action for researchers and technology developers, highlighting topics for further research and encouraging the development of research-based products.

"The early learning community has been wisely cautious about using technology with our youngest children," said [Libby Doggett, deputy assistant secretary for Policy and Early Learning](#). "But technology, when used appropriately with caring adults, can help children learn in new ways – and lessen the growing inequity in our country. This brief helps early educators think about developmentally appropriate ways to use technology in their classrooms."

The brief, which was developed in consultation with the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), will help those who care for the nearly 36 million early learners ages birth to 8 years make wise decisions about media use, and provides four guiding principles for families and early childhood educators on the use of technology with young children. The guiding principles are:

Technology, when used properly, can be a tool for learning.

Technology should be used to increase access to learning opportunities for all children.

Technology may be used to strengthen relationships among parents, families, early educators, and young children.
Technology is more effective for learning when adults and peers interact or co-view with young children.

“For early learners, technology can provide opportunities to connect, create, and engage in meaningful learning experiences,” said [Joseph South, director of the Office of Educational Technology](#). “But this will only happen if families and early educators consider whether children are using technology in active, imaginative ways as opposed to just passively watching a screen. Active learning with technology is best when an adult is guiding and participating side-by-side with the child.”

“The brain science is clear – in the earliest years, learning is dependent on adult-child interaction and on healthy relationships between children and their caregivers,” said Linda Smith, deputy assistant secretary for HHS' Early Childhood Development. “We are excited about the new learning opportunities that technology can offer young children when parents and early childhood educators use it appropriately to support and supplement one on one interactions between children and their caregivers, both in the classroom and at home.”

In 2013, the Obama Administration launched the [ConnectED initiative](#) and set a goal of connecting 99 percent of America’s students to next generation broadband and high-speed wireless by 2018. This expanded access will support the effective use of technology to transform learning in our nation’s schools. The Administration also has worked to expand access to high quality early learning, including early STEM education. The thoughtful use of technology by parents and early educators can engage children in key skills such as play, self-expression, and computational thinking which will support later success across all academic disciplines and help maintain young children's natural curiosity.

Other Information:

Great Idea: Literacy and Haircuts

Children 12 and under who visit The Fuller Cut in Ypsilanti, Michigan, get a \$2 discount on their haircut for doing a simple task: reading to the barber. [CBS News reports](#) that owner Alexander Fuller and barber Ryan Griffin started the reading program more than a year ago.

“We've been doing this for a long time,” Fuller explained. “When it gets busy people take notice—parents are really receptive of it; they love it.”

“Fuller and his wife started ordering some books and Griffin brought in a shelf. Customers even joined the cause by donating old and used books. Before the pair knew it, kids were grabbing books off the shelf and hopping into the chair to start reading.

“It gives them confidence in reading and helps us understand their comprehension of reading,” Fuller said. “The kids love it. It's one of the best things that has come along for them.”

Iowa AEYC is Hiring!

Join our team! Iowa AEYC has openings for two positions in our offices. Both full-time positions are open immediately and we plan to fill them in December.

Events Specialist

Professional position to coordinate conferences, institutes, and other professional development events for the Iowa AEYC and the Iowa Head Start Association, year-round. Requires a self-starter, highly organized with good attention to detail and excellent customer services skills. The successful candidate will hold a bachelor's degree or higher in events management, education, psychology, communications, or a related field and has a minimum of 3 years' experience in project implementation, event planning, customer services, or training coordination.

Administrative Assistant

Support position to assist non-profit organization with twenty employees with staff day-to-day work. Inventory control and ordering supplies, simple maintenance and cleaning, processing mail, supporting technology and equipment, data entry, other tasks as assigned. The successful candidate will hold an associate's degree or higher as an administrative assistant or related field.

For more details and job descriptions, visit our [jobs page](#). Please send a formal letter of application indicating which position you are interested in and your resume to Barbara Merrill, Iowa AEYC, 5525 Meredith Drive Suite F, Des Moines, IA 50310, or email to info@iowaaeyc.org, no later than **November 25, 2016**.

Protective Factors Framework Training

Prevent Child Abuse Iowa is excited to announce the Protective Factors Framework Training. The training produced by the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds' (Alliance) offers a comprehensive suite of training materials that supports implementation of the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework in multiple settings. The curriculum content includes materials on partnering with parents and concrete examples of everyday actions that research has shown to be effective in strengthening families.

The Core Content of the Curriculum

- Seven courses, each designed to be about two hours in length
- An introduction to the Framework (also useful as a stand-alone orientation)
- A course on each of the five protective factors in the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework
- A wrap-up course that moves participants from knowledge to action
- Real-life parent stories that document the power of building protective factors
- Videos sharing everyday actions that state systems and private organizations have taken to implement the Framework
- A list of key sources, references and websites to support the content of each course

This two day training is offered free of charge and open to direct service workers, administration, CPPC members, Iowa Child Abuse Prevention Council Members and community volunteers interested in strengthening families. Please register at the link with your preferred training site. A flyer is attached for promotion among your networks. (Sessions will be limited to 30 participants, other sessions may be opened if this number is exceeded.)

December 1-2

Waterloo Public Library

9:15 am – 4 pm

<https://ctfalliance.wufoo.com/forms/strengthening-families-pff-training-waterloo/>

The New America Care Report

A good early care and learning system should support the healthy development of children, particularly at a time when their brains are rapidly growing and laying the foundation for all future learning. A functioning system should sustain the financial stability and health of families, promote opportunity and equity, support and sustain businesses, and help the economy thrive. And an effective system should be built on three pillars: affordable cost, high quality, and easy availability.

The Care Index, a data and methodology collaboration between New America, Care.com and others, examined cost, quality, and availability data in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and found that no single state does well in all three categories. Instead, families, providers, and policymakers in every state make difficult compromises that often shape family decisions and can determine the course of children's futures. **Read the report:** [The New American Care Report](#)

New Report: The First 1,000 Days: Nourishing America's Future

The First 1,000 Days: Nourishing America's Future, a new report from 1,000 Days, examines the nutritional health of America's mothers, infants and toddlers and highlights a set of "wins" to ensure that every child in the U.S. can have a healthy first 1,000 days.

Connected at the table: The importance of family meals (Child Trends)

The best part of my day always comes toward the end, when I sit down for dinner with my wife and our two children. Nina and Albert are 9 and 4, so it's rarely a quiet or orderly occasion: food inevitably ends up all over the table or on the floor, they both have trouble staying seated, and those last few bites of vegetables always require significant negotiation. But those are small concerns, outweighed by my gratitude for this daily time together. When they're grown, I know I'll miss those messes.

Family meals aren't just a respite for harried parents, however. **Research shows** that adolescents who regularly eat meals with their parents tend to eat more fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, and are less likely to be overweight. A positive family atmosphere during regular meal times has also been shown to reduce the occurrence of **eating disorders** in adolescents, regardless of demographic characteristics and body-mass index. More broadly, watching parents eat healthily, day in and day out, can positively influence children's own behavior and nutritional choices as they grow.

The benefits go beyond nutrition, too. **Eating together can improve parent-child relationships**, and give kids a sense of stability and connectedness. Children younger than 13 who regularly eat meals with their

families exhibit [fewer behavioral problems](#), and mealtime conversations have been tied to [improved literacy](#). While the frequency of meals with family tends to dwindle through high school, teens who eat with their families tend to be healthier, happier, and [less inclined toward risky behavior](#). They are less likely to think about suicide, take drugs, or suffer from depression, and more likely to get better grades and delay having sex.

Meals are also where we learn our family and cultural values, and where we establish our personal tastes. As a parent, I've seen that experimenting with new foods is one of the first leaps into big-kid territory that little ones often make. Those occasions—like the time Nina and Albert first tried their Polish grandmother's pierogi—become important family memories, as meaningful as any vacation or night out. And dinner at home is a much more accessible experience, especially for families of limited economic means.

That may explain why low-income families are more likely to eat meals together more often than higher-income ones. In 2011 and 2012, the most recent data available, 51 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds in households at or below the poverty level ate family meals at least six days a week. For comparison, only 36 percent of similar-aged young people eat that many family meals if their household income is at least double the poverty level.

The wider trends are less encouraging, however. When parents work multiple jobs or odd hours—or have to [travel long distances](#) to reach the nearest available work—finding the time for family togetherness can be a challenge. Between 1999 and 2010, the number of low-income families who ate meals together actually [dropped](#), while the number for affluent families increased.

This is a troubling development. With all that we know about the physical and psychological toll of [long-term poverty](#), low-income families deserve the benefits of family mealtimes as much as anyone. In a perfect world, all parents would have the ability to regularly join their children for meals. But every parent can make the effort to gather their kids around the table at least a couple times a week. The Family Dinner Project, a nonprofit organization from Harvard University, offers some [helpful resources \(including recipes and conversation-starters\) for families](#) who need a push to get started. There are few easier or more effective ways to improve family closeness and children's well-being.

John Lingan, Senior Writer and Digital Media Editor

Building Communications Capacity: How to improve outreach to Latinos

U.S. Latinos are a large, diverse, and fast-growing population. For service providers, effectively reaching and communicating with them is essential. [The Child Trends Hispanic Institute](#), in collaboration with [the Crimsonbridge Foundation](#), has assembled a new guidebook to help service providers and educators find the most effective ways to reach their audience. Join us for a related webinar on **Tuesday, Oct 18th**, from **2 - 3 p.m. ET**. Learn how to create an evidence-based, strategic communication plan with a clear series of steps: getting to know your audience, setting objectives, messaging, outreach strategy, tactical execution, and data collection. [Register here](#).

Read more here: [Reaching and Engaging with Hispanics](#)

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

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

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

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

2016 ECI Meeting Calendar:

ECI Stakeholders Alliance

3 – 4 Hour meetings

December 13 (PM)

ECI Area Directors

December 7 All day

2017 ECI Meeting Calendar:

ECI State Board

10:00 – 1:00

January 6

April 7

June 2

September 8

November 3

ECI Stakeholders Alliance

3 – 4 Hour meetings

February 28 (PM)

May 9 (PM)

September 12 (AM)

December 12 (PM)

ECI Area Directors

April 19 All day

(June will be regional meetings)

September 12 (afternoon)

December 6 All day

ECI State Dept. Directors

8:30 – 10:30

May 5

October 6

ECI Steering Committee

Time Varies

January 5 (9:00 AM – Noon)

March 2 (9:00 – 4:00 PM)

April 6 (9:00 AM – Noon)

June 1 (9:00 AM – Noon)

August 3 (9:00 AM – 4:00 PM)

October 5 (9:00 AM – Noon)

November 2 (9:00 AM – Noon)

Early Childhood Iowa Day on the Hill

February 28 (AM)