

Iowa Head Start Collaboration Office
Highlights of the work of the Collaboration Office in FY 2001

Improving Availability and Accessibility of Quality Child Care Services

- **Head Start-Child Care Professional Development Projects:** The projects were created by a partnership between Region VII Administration for Children and Youth and the Head Start Collaboration Office to increase the capacity and quality of child care in Iowa. The project provided the opportunity to raise the level of professionalism in communities and to also develop relationships with local CCR&R agencies and community colleges. Each plan designed by the fourteen different agencies receiving funding was unique. Some of the approaches used to provide the training were: CDA training and certification, development of training modules; training child care providers on the USDA food program; and linking up with the existing apprenticeship project to support training, compensation, and the journey person. The current outcome of the project has been stronger connections for training early childhood personnel within community colleges in various geographic areas. Community colleges previously not including training for early childhood personnel are now serving that population.
- **Iowa Program for Infants and Toddlers (PITC):** The Iowa Program for Infants and Toddlers (PITC) began the system of training in Modules I and II for 74 trainers in September of 2001. Modules III and IV are scheduled to begin in July. This project is supported by the Infant-Toddler Quality Set-Aside through the Department of Human Services (DHS) and was designed by the Infant-Toddler Subcommittee of the State Child Care Advisory Council. Each individual trained will be required to provide 15 hours of training to early learning providers in their geographic area. All training must be coordinated with the Infant-Toddler Specialist within each Resource and Referral area and the Infant-Toddler Professional Development Coordinator within DHS. (See below)
- **Infant-Toddler Professional Development Coordinator:** An Infant-Toddler Professional Development Coordinator was hired within DHS through a partnership between the Iowa Departments of Human Services and Education, and Region VII Administration for Children & Families through the Head Start Collaboration Project. The responsibilities are to help coordinate the WestEd (PITC) training, professional development efforts throughout the state, and help create a training registry and calendar for Infant-Toddler training statewide.
- **Iowa Quality Child Care Initiative – Apprenticeship:** Iowa was awarded a training grant for early childhood providers in the fall of 1999 from the Bureau of Labor to develop and implement an apprenticeship program. The funding was for 18 months but two of the three pilot sites have sustained the training through funding from the Iowa Community Empowerment Areas. One unique component of the Iowa apprenticeship projects is the development of a family child care model. Efforts are continuing to obtain sustainable funding to maintain and expand the programs.
- **State Head Start Funding** Iowa Head Start programs receive over \$2,000,000 in supplemental funds to expand or enhance the quality of Head Start and Early Head Start programs from the Iowa Community Empowerment Areas. Currently there are \$15.6 million state dollars being received by the Local Empowerment Areas to provide services for young children with an additional \$6.2 million being transferred from TANF funds.
- **Iowa Head Start Association Map:** The map continues to be updated with current information and reprinted.

Enhancing Family Literacy:

- **Every Child Reads:** The Department of Education's Every Child Reads: Birth to Kindergarten (ECR:BK) Literacy initiative training is partially supported by a State Improvement Grant from the US Department of Education. The training which is divided into three modules, reading, writing and language, is a "train the trainer" model and is now into the second year of full implementation. The outcomes of the ECR:BK is to have teams become informed about research-based practices in emerging literacy, professional development and analysis of data. Work is underway to bring coordination between Every Child Reads and Project STEP Head Start literacy initiative.
- **First Books:** The Iowa Collaboration Office continues to partner with Iowa Public Television Ready to Learn project to sponsor the First Books Initiative. Free books are provided to families who attend

family literacy training sessions through Head Start, state-funded pre-K, Title I, and Special Education programs. Plans are to expand the program into homeless shelters and correctional institutions. Twelve Head Start agencies participate in the program.

Improving Access to Health Care Services

- **Dental Health Review:** The Collaboration Office Coordinator participated in an ASTDD on-site review with the Department of Dental Health. The review was to determine if the dental program is accomplishing the core functions of public health, is in compliance with the guidelines for establishing dental public health programs, and is making progress towards achievement of the 2001 Oral Health objectives. An outside review team of experts assessed the program strengths and weaknesses and provided recommendations to improve the program.
- **Healthy Iowans 2010:** Iowa's ten year health plan, *Healthy Iowans 2010*, included an action step to supplement federal dollars for Head Start programs through state empowerment funds. The Collaboration Office participated in a progress assessment of the plan.
- **Parent Support-HOPES Home Visiting Programs:** Partnerships are being developed between the programs as information is shared and opportunities for connecting are created, encouraged and enhanced by closer ties at the state level. The Collaboration Coordinator supervises the home visiting programs within the Department of Education.

Improving Collaboration with Welfare Systems

- **Ninth Annual Early Childhood Care and Education Congress:** The Congress was held on March 4 & 5, 2002 in Des Moines. The focus of the conference was literacy issues and outcomes and evaluation. Donna Bryant from North Carolina spoke on Outcomes and Evaluation for Early Childhood programs; Christopher Cerf spoke on the IPTV program, *Between the Lions*, and other literacy issues. Resources for the event were less this year, however collaboration continued to be strong and the quality of offerings was not affected.
- **TANF Eligibility:** Arrangements were made with the Office of Economic Assistance to release names to Head Start agencies of TANF participants who have Head Start age eligible children. Families who receive TANF benefits are eligible to receive Head Start services for their children regardless of their income. The Collaboration Office is currently exploring the possibility of sharing the names of eligible children within the Foster Care and Protective Services systems.
- **Migrant Head Start:** An application for the Migrant Head Start program was submitted in January by PROTEUS. The Collaboration Coordinator provided technical assistance in the writing of the application.
- **Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network:** The Collaboration Coordinator serves on the Board of Directors for the Network. The Network has received funding from the Children's Defense Fund for educating advocates on the need to support the reauthorization of TANF and CCDF. The Network also received funds through Child Care Aware to develop a Better Baby Care Campaign. The Collaboration Coordinator is involved in the development of both of these initiatives.
- **"Day on the Hill":** *The Forum for Early Childhood Organization and Leadership Development* partnered with Region VII Head Start Association, the Iowa Head Start Association and the Head Start Collaboration Office to provide advocacy and leadership training for 74 Head Start parents, staff and partners. The training occurred in November and January with a culminating event planned on March 6, 2002 which was called a "Day on the Hill". The theme for the day was "Footsteps to Our Future" and included advocacy training, a march to the Capitol with a chain of children's shoes on a rope. Over 140 people participated in the event. An advocacy notebook was developed which included tips on talking with legislators, "Talking Points", and facts about the condition of children in our state.

Support Access for Homeless Children

- **Homeless Survey:** The Iowa Department of Education, the Head Start Collaboration Office, and Economic Development commissioned a study of Iowa's homeless population. The primary purposes of the study were to:
 - *estimate the size of the homeless population in Iowa,
 - *provide a basic demographic profile of the homeless population,
 - *investigate the causes of homelessness, and
 - *identify the educational needs of homeless children and youth.

A survey form with a cover letter was sent to all school principals, Head Start agencies, Resource and Referral agencies and Shared Visions programs.

Expanding and Improving Education Opportunities in Early Childhood Programs

- **Teacher Evaluator Training:** Many teachers within early childhood settings in Iowa have difficulty applying for a permanent teaching certificate or renewing a current teaching certificate because of a lack of evaluators who have an understanding of early childhood. The Collaboration Coordinator scheduled a Teacher Evaluator training for thirty-five early childhood educators. The cadre of trained early childhood evaluators would be available to observe teachers and guide them through the system of applying for certification.
- **Devereux Early Childhood Assessment training (DECA):** The DECA training organized by the Collaboration Office and ECSE Part B provided the opportunity for thirty personnel from the Iowa Area Education Areas, Resource and Referral, Healthy Child Care Iowa and Head Start programs to become Local Program Mentors (LPM). They will be providing training for child care and Head Start centers. The training focuses on the emotional and social development of the child aged 2 – 5 and is strength based. Resources for the training were also contributed by the SUCCESS 4 Project.
- **Brain Presentation:** The Collaboration Coordinator continues to provide information and presentations on brain research and the impact of stress on the developing brain of the young child.
- **Transportation:** The Collaboration Office and CDI-QIC partnered with the Department of Education Office of School Transportation to develop a summer track for early childhood and Head Start in the School Transportation conference. Information on the new transportation regulations were presented.
- **MAEYC:** The Midwest Association for the Education of Young Children was held in Des Moines in April. The Collaboration Coordinator participated in the planning and helped with the event.
- **Infant-Toddler Program Evaluation meeting:** The Infant-Toddler Home Visiting programs in Iowa, (HOPES, Shared Visions Parent Support, Empowerment, Early Head Start and Early Access - Part C), participated in training in September on evaluating home visiting programs. Iowa State University, CDI-QIC, and the Collaboration Coordinator hosted and conducted the meeting. The goal will be to develop state outcomes for the home visiting programs and an evaluation system consistent with the empowerment areas within their regions.
- **Infant-Toddler Partnership Session:** On the next day the Collaboration Office hosted a session focusing on training about creating and sustaining partnerships within infant-toddler programs. The goal was to provide an opportunity for the programs to become acquainted and explore ways in which partnerships could occur or be blended.

Improving Opportunities for Children with Disabilities:

- **Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Future Search Conference:** The Collaboration Coordinator participated in a future search conference focusing on plans for the future of ECSE in Iowa. The purpose of the conference was to discover common ground from which to develop a systematic approach to generate and maintain successful ECSE services within Iowa's Area Education Agencies.
- **Memorandum of Understanding:** The Memorandum of Understanding being updated between Head Start and the Department of Education is completed and is out for signatures. The MOU will guide the creation of agreements between Head Start and AEA's within local areas.
- **Early Childhood Team:** The Collaboration Coordinator continues to serve on the Early Childhood Team within the Bureau of Community, Family and Children's Services within the Department of Education. Regular meetings provide the opportunity to link services for all children.
- **Natural Allies:** Iowa has been selected as one of four **Natural Allies** states by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center of the University of North Carolina. The grant will help states in preparing personnel to work with young children (0-5) in inclusive community settings. The purpose of the grant is to enhance early childhood programs at community colleges. Iowa was selected because of their strong community college system.