

# Historical Overview of Major Work of the Iowa HSSCO Office Improve the Availability and Affordability 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 also to develop relationships with local Child Care Resource & Referral 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;
- 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 providing training for early childhood personnel are now serving that population.

Here is the complete report on this project. [[link to PDF, tracking down this document](#)]

## [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 began 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 his or her 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.

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 office and other professional development efforts throughout the State, and to 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 \$15.6 million State dollars are being received by the Local Empowerment Areas to provide services for young children and an additional \$6.2 million being transferred from TANF funds.

## Increase 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**

Completed the Memorandum of Understanding between Head Start and the Department of Education. The MOU will guide the creation of agreements between Head Start and AEAs in local areas. For a copy of the MOU, [click here](#).

### **Early Childhood Team:**

The Collaboration Coordinator continued 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.

## Expand Partnerships with School Systems

### **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 few evaluators 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 will be available to observe teachers and guide them through the system of applying for certification. For more on teacher licensure, [visit the web site](#).

### **Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) training**

Training in the [DECA program](#) has been scheduled for participants from the Iowa Area Education Agencies, Resource and Referral, Healthy Child Care Iowa, and Head Start programs. The training focuses on the emotional and social development of the child between two and five years of age and is strength based. The training included a two-

day introductory session and two days of more specialized training for Local Program Mentors.

### **Transportation**

Partnered with the Iowa Association of School Boards and the Iowa Pupil Transportation Association to develop a summer track for early childhood and Head Start in the School Transportation conference. Presented information on the new transportation regulations.

### **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:**

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 partnerships.

## **Strengthen Family Literacy Services**

### **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 goal of the ECR:BK is to have teams become informed about research-based practices in emerging literacy, professional development and analysis of data.

### **First Book in Iowa:**

Continued 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.

## **Promote Access to Timely Health Care Services**

### **Dental Health Review:**

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.

### **Parent Support-HOPES Home Visiting Programs:**

Partnerships were 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.

### **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, and Resource and Referral agencies. For more on homelessness projects at the Iowa Department of Education, [click here](#). For a copy of the 1999 report, [click here](#).

### **Encourage Collaboration with Welfare Systems**

#### **Early Childhood Care and Education Congress:**

A major activity of the Iowa Head Start Collaboration office is its involvement and sponsorship of the Iowa Early Childhood Care, Health and Education Congress.

The ninth annual 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. Although resources for the event were limited, collaboration continued to be strong and the offerings were high quality.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Iowa Early Childhood Care and Education Congress was held November 19 and 20, and featured former North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt, [Dr. Ross Thompson](#), a professor of psychology from the University of Nebraska and contributor to *From Neurons to Neighborhoods*, and [Dr. Sue Hegland](#) from Iowa State University, a great success. Over 400 individuals attended the combined conference at the Scheman Center in Ames, Iowa

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Iowa Early Childhood Care, Health and Education Congress is scheduled for November 18 and 19, and will address economic development. Featured speakers include [Mildred Warner](#), Associate Professor at Cornell

University who has conducted significant research on privatization, devolution and economic impacts of child care; [Joan Lombardi](#), Senior Policy Fellow for the National Institute for Early Education Research and Kim Ellis, educator and trainer for [aha! Process, Inc.](#), and organization started by Ruby Payne to collaborate on effective solutions to poverty. For more information, visit the [Congress website](#).

#### **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.

#### **Migrant Head Start:**

An application for the Migrant Head Start program was submitted in January, 2002, by [PROTEUS](#). The Collaboration Coordinator provided technical assistance in writing the application.

#### **Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork:**

The [Network](#) has received funding from the Children's Defense Fund to educate 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 office was involved in developing both of these initiatives. The coordinator currently serves as the Chair of the NetWork which has recently launched a strategic plan. One of the key activities of the NetWork is the Congress (see above).

#### **"Advocacy Day" (formerly known as "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, 2001, and January 2002, with a culminating event on March 6, 2002, which was called a "Day on the Hill." The theme for the day was "Footsteps to Our Future." Activities included advocacy training and 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 children in this State.

"Day on the Hill, 2003, took place February 4 and 5 at Hotel Fort Des Moines. Featured speakers were Ann Crittenden, former New York Times reporter and author of *The Price of Motherhood*, and Kahree Wahid, state and community liaison for the [National Head Start Association](#).

## Expand and Enhance Professional Development Opportunities

#### **Professional Development Guide**

- Published and distributed a [Professional Development Guide](#) to early care and education professionals. The guide includes the Core Body of Knowledge for Best Practices, a Career Role Matrix, Professional Development Pathways and Options in Iowa, and contact information for agencies and organizations that provide training and education for early care and education practitioners. Held three trainings throughout the State to familiarize early care and education professionals with the Professional Development Guide and to facilitate the use of the Core Body of Knowledge. More training will be offered.
- Began work by the core competency work group on a practitioner Self-Assessment tool. This tool is based on the Core Body of Knowledge and will be used to assist practitioners in identifying their strengths and areas where they need more training. It will also contain resource information for each of the different competency areas.
  - Published a final report from the information collected in the Child Care Center Directors Survey. The 72-page report was distributed to members of the Leadership Council and others. A one-page brochure highlighting the findings of the survey was also produced. This brochure has been distributed across the State to committee members and other early care and education professionals via mailings and conferences. The brochure was also mailed to all child care centers contacted for the survey.
- Facilitated the final focus groups for family child care providers. The information from the focus groups will assist in getting a good response to the survey that will be mailed out to a random sample of family child care providers. Information will be collected on educational background, ongoing training needs, barriers to accessing training, and income and benefits. The tentative completion date for the survey analysis and report is the fall of 2002. The information gathered will support the work of the Professional Development initiative.
- Continued work on the issue of articulating credit bearing training/education. Barriers to articulation have been identified. The articulation work group continues to be expanded to include more community college representatives and four-year university representatives. A directory of all institutes of higher learning that offer early childhood has been compiled and is currently being updated. Information regarding awarding credit for CDA certificates is being studied. Individuals interested in the process of articulation can participate in a statewide listserv. Members of the articulation work group are working in conjunction with another statewide group, Natural Allies, to facilitate discussion of articulation barriers and to promote changes to remove barriers. Natural Allies is a group focusing on training early care and education practitioners to care for children with identified special needs.
- Formed an Executive Board for the project. The members consist of the chairs and co-chairs of the work groups and the Director and Coordinator of the project. This smaller group will meet monthly to direct the work of the project. They will also review and update the budget and begin the process of identifying outcomes and performance indicators for the work.
- Continued to work on the development of a Web site for the project. Target completion date is April 1, 2002. The Web site will contain information about the project and allow individuals to download the materials created by the project and find contact information for agencies/organizations and institutes of higher learning that provide training and education for early care and education practitioners. In the future, the Web site will contain statewide databases for training/education contacts,

practitioner training/education opportunities, approved early care and education trainers, information on Iowa projects related to early care and education, and a practitioner professional development registry that will track the community based training and for-credit education of individuals.