

# Linking Families and Communities



## Strategic Plan

Approved by the Linking Families and Communities Board  
on September 8, 2009

# General Information

## Vision and Mission

Linking Families and Communities (LFC) has created a vision and mission statement to reflect its values

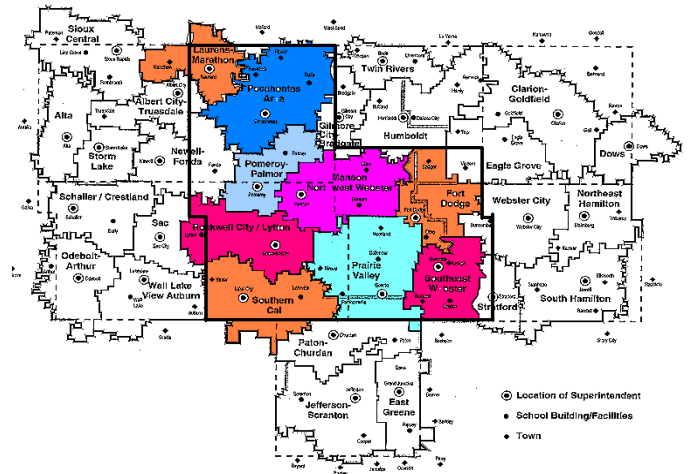
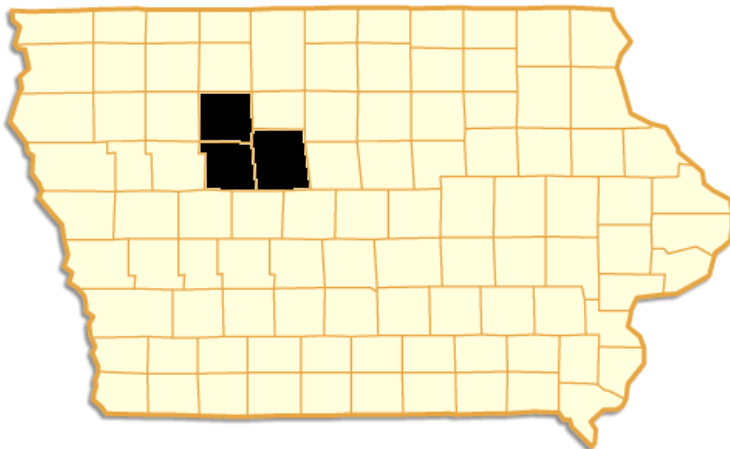
- **Vision** - “Happy, Healthy Children”
- **Mission** - To empower parents in raising happy, healthy children by providing families with educational, economic and health support by coordinating services with community resources.

## Geographical Composition

Geographic areas for Linking Families and Communities are defined by the boundaries of Calhoun, Pocahontas and Webster County and the following school districts: Fort Dodge Community School, Laurens Marathon Community School, Manson Northwest Webster Community School, Pocahontas Area Community School, Pomeroy-Palmer Community School, Prairie Valley Community School, Rockwell City -Lytton Community School, Southeast Webster-Grand Community School and Southern Cal Community School.

Calhoun, Pocahontas and Webster County are located in north-central Iowa. The total land area of the counties is 1,863 square miles and is rural in nature.

Children 0-5 and their families living within the Linking Families and Communities service area are eligible for services funded by Linking Families and Communities.



## Demographical Composition

Data	Calhoun	Pocahontas	Webster	IOWA
<b>Total Population</b>	9,876	7,594	38,464	3,002,555
<b>Percent of population under 5</b> (2007)	5.8%	5.9%	7.4%	7.8%
<b>Percent of population 65 or older</b> (2006)	21.71%	22.6%	16.6%	14.6%
<b>Percent of minority Population</b> (2006)	2.4%	2.0%	7.6%	7.4%
<b>Percent of population with Hispanic origin</b> (2006)	1.1%	1.7%	2.8%	3.8%
<b>Percent of families living in the same house in 1995 and 2000, percent 5 yrs old and older</b> (2007)	62.9%	70.1%	58.4%	56.9%
<b>Percent of housing units in multi-unit structures</b> (2000)	10.3%	7.3%	17.4%	18.4%
<b>Median Income</b> (2007)	\$42,152	\$40,968	\$42,864	\$47,324
<b>Percent of population below poverty</b> (2007)	11.0%	11.2%	13.3%	11.0%
<b>Percent of children living in poverty</b> (2007)	14.5%	15.5%	16.8%	13.7%
<b>Percent of Single Parent Families</b> (2000)	20.9%	20.7%	29.3%	24.9%
<b>Live Birth Rate/ 1,000</b> (2008)	9.6	11.6	12.8	13.4
<b>Out of Wedlock Birth Rate/ 1,000</b> (2007)	324.1	364.9	501.0	529.3
<b>Births to women Under Age 20/ 1,000 births</b> (2008)	52.63	90.91	146.64	90.22
<b>Unemployment Rate</b> (2008)	3.4%	3.1%	4.3%	4.1%

(Sources include: IDPH vital statistics; Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, OJJDP, US Census Bureau and IWD)

Child Population Data				
Age	Calhoun	Pocahontas	Webster	TOTAL
0	103	69	473	645
1	113	83	484	680
2	91	77	449	617
3	98	72	506	676
4	75	69	571	595
5	97	76	470	643
<b>TOTAL (0-5)</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>2,833</b>	<b>3856</b>
<b>Tot. Pop.</b>	<b>9,876</b>	<b>7,594</b>	<b>38,464</b>	<b>55,934</b>

(Source: [www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org) - Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2007)

## Community Needs Assessment

### Community Needs for Children 0-5

Linking Families and Communities has utilized a combination of sources to determine and prioritize the needs for the children age 0 to 5 in the area. We have studied data that is available from the Iowa State Extension Office, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Department of Public Safety and other governmental sources on the web as well as conducted surveys of preschools, child care centers and home providers, early childhood service providers and most important of all, families.

The local surveys conducted were very valuable as they provided information on the barriers that parents and children face in our area as well as attitudes and perceptions of early childhood issues and services. Information was also gathered from service providers about gaps in their programs and in the community. We collected data through dialogue at community meetings, early childhood meetings, phone calls, paper and on-line surveys. We feel that our assessment is most comprehensive due in large part to the surveys that we conducted during this Strategic Planning process.

### Data Analysis

Through the aforementioned data collection process, it was determined that the local indicators needed to be changed to better suit the direction of the Linking Families and Communities Board. The Board also feels that the new indicators are more relevant to the total health of the children in our area; thus the board will be able to get the pulse of how we well it is doing.

Below is a list of the community indicators that were selected and that are tracked. This information is used to look at trends, the effectiveness of the funded programs, and is used to guide our board in making decisions on the funding of programs.

COMMUNITY INDICATORS	State 2008	LFC 2008	LFC 2007	LFC 2006	LFC Base- line
<b>HEALTHY CHILDREN</b>					
<b>Low Birth Weight Babies</b> Rate of babies born weighing less than 2500 grams per 1,000 births (Iowa Department of Public Health)	66.7	69.4	60.6	59.0	59.0 (2006)
<b>Immunization Rate</b> Percent of children immunized by age 2 (Iowa Department of Public Health, Immunization Program)	88%	87%	94%	91%	94% (2005)

<b>CHILDREN READY TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL</b>					
<b>Percentage of children entering kindergarten with at least one year of preschool</b> (School Survey – Linking Families and Communities(LFC))	NA	88.85% (Sept. 2008)	90.83% (Sept. 2007)	86.74% (Sept. 2006)	90.1% (Sept. 2003)
<b>Percent of preschools that are quality (NAEYC, Head Start, IQPPS* Verified, ECERS –level 5)</b> (School survey – LFC)	NA	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	16.6% (6-30-06)
<b>SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES</b>					
<b>Employment Rate</b> The percentage of Iowans 16 and older who are employed (Iowa Workforce Development (IWD))	95.9%	96.4%	96.5%	96.5%	97.0% (2000)
<b>Crime Rate</b> The rate of crime per 100,000 population (Iowa Department of Public Safety (IDPS))	5714.9	5,993.8	6,014.4	8,493.5	7,814.5 (1998)
<b>SECURE AND NUTURING FAMILIES</b>					
<b>Incidence of child abuse</b> Child Abuse Rate per 1,000 (Prevent Child Abuse Iowa (PCAI))	18.1	17.83	19.48	22.43	13.29 (2000)
<b>Teen Birth Rate</b> Rate of births to women under the age of 20 per 1,000 births (Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH))	90.22	126.11	115.21	99.85 (2006)	99.85 (2006)
<b>SECURE AND NURTURING CHILD CARE ENVIRONMENTS</b>					
<b>Percent of Child Care providers participating in the voluntary Quality Rating System (QRS)</b> (Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) – Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc.)	14.9%	8.7%	3.6%	0%	0% (6-30-06)

\*Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS)

## Community Services Analysis

In addition to analyzing data and changing Community Indicators, the board looked closely at the types of service being offered in the area. These services were categorized into four separate areas: Child Care, Early Childhood Education, Health and Human Services. The following tables show the services available, location, ages targeted and in some cases the number of children served and cost of the service. Data sets are from May 2009.

## CHILD CARE: Licensed Child Care Centers and Registered Child Care Homes

Data not available for non-registered child care homes.

Name	Location	Ages Targeted	# of Kids Served	Cost of Service (Based on Full-time)	QRS Level Achieved
Child Care Discovery Center	Fort Dodge	6 weeks – 12 years	184	Infants - \$140/wk Over 2 - \$110/wk	
Children's Time	Manson	6 weeks – 12 years	23	All - \$110/wk	
Community Day Care and Preschool	Fort Dodge	6 weeks – 12 years	162	Under 3 - \$115/wk 3-5 yrs - \$100/wk	☆☆☆
Discovery Day Care	Pocahontas	6 weeks – 12 years	43	Under 2 - \$2.75/hr Over 2 - \$2.25/hr	
Kid's Korner	Fort Dodge	6 weeks – 12 years	20	6wk to 2yrs - \$25/day 2 yrs and older - \$23/day	
Kid's Korner	Laurens	6 weeks – 12 years	20	Under 2 - \$25/day Over 2 - \$21/day	☆☆☆
Kid's Palace	Gowrie	6 weeks – 12 years	27	Under 2 - \$120/wk 2 – 4 - \$112.50/wk Over 4 - \$100/wk	
Kid's Zone	Fort Dodge	6 weeks – 12 years	90	All - \$22/day	☆☆
Kid's Spot	Lake City	6 weeks – 12 years	125	Under 18mo.- \$20/day Over 18 mo - \$19/day	☆☆
Prairie Valley Day Care	Callender	3 yrs – 10 yrs	28	Preschool age - \$2.25/hr School age - \$2.00/hr	
Southeast Webster Day Care	Dayton	6 weeks – 12 years	48	\$2.25/hr	
Tracey's Tots	Fort Dodge	6 weeks – 12 years	76	Under 2 - \$120/wk Over 2 - \$100/wk	
Waddle Inn	Pomeroy	6 weeks – 12 years	21	All - \$2.25/hr	
Registered Day Care Homes	Area Wide	0-12 yrs	1688	Varies – 175 registered providers	

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: Includes Preschools, Head Start, Shared Visions, and Pre-K Programs.**

Name	Location	Ages Targeted	# of Kids Served	Service Time Frame	Cost of Service	Quality Met NAEYC, HS, IQPPS, ECERS	QRS Level
Calhoun County Head Start	Lake City	3-4	18	M-TH AM	Head Start Funded- Available to families at 100% of poverty	✓ Head Start	
Child Care Discovery Center	Fort Dodge	3-4	19	M-F	\$50/week	✓ ECERS*	
		4-5	20	M-F	SWVPP - Free	✓ IQPPS –In Process	
Community Christian Preschool	Fort Dodge	3-4	13/7	T TH AM/PM	\$535/year	✓ ECERS	
		4-5	19	MWF AM	SWVPP - Free		
Community Day Care & Preschool	Fort Dodge	3	16	M-F AM	\$120/mo	✓ ECERS	☆☆☆
		4	19/14	M-F AM/PM	SWVPP - Free	✓ IQPPS –In Process	
Dodger Preschool	Fort Dodge	3-4	16	T TH AM	\$65/mo	✓ ECERS	☆☆☆☆
		4-5	17	MWF AM	SWVPP - Free	✓ IQPPS –In Process	
			16	MTTH PM			
Fort Dodge Community School	Fort Dodge	4-5		M-F All day	Head Start funded & SWVPP - Free	✓ IQPPS –In Process	
Kid's Korner	Laurens	3	6	MWF AM	\$12 ½ a day	Not Met	☆☆☆
Kid's Spot	Lake City	4-5	12	M-TH AM	\$90/mo	✓ ECERS	☆☆
Kid's Zone	Fort Dodge	4/5	14	M-F AM	\$115/mo	✓ ECERS	☆☆
Laurens Marathon Early Childhood Program	Laurens	3-4	10	M-F All Day	Shared classroom with Head Start. HS funded and SWVPP - Free	✓ Head Start	☆☆
		4-5	19	M-F All Day			
Little Lambs Preschool	Fort Dodge	3	15	T TH AM	\$65/mo	✓ ECERS	
		4	15	MWF AM	SWVPP - Free	✓ IQPPS –In Process	
Manson Northwest Webster Preschool	Manson	3	12/8	F AM/PM	\$20/mo	✓ ECERS	
		4	21/17	M – TH AM/PM	\$50/mo		
Pocahontas Area All Start Shared Visions Preschool	Pocahontas	3-5	37	MW AM/PM T TH AM/PM	Shared Visions Funded/ Available to families at 130% of poverty, SWVPP – Free, 3yr - \$30/mo	✓ NAEYC	
Pomeroy/Palmer Preschool	Pomeroy	3	9	M/T AM	\$40/mo	✓ ECERS	☆☆
		4	13	WTHF AM	\$60/mo		

Prairie Valley Preschool	Callender	4/5 Pre-K	19/20 13	M-F AM/PM M-F ALL DAY	\$60/mo School Dist. Funded	✓ ECERS	
Prince of Peace Lutheran Preschool	Fort Dodge	3 4 Pre-K	16 15 11	T TH AM MWF AM MWF PM	\$63/mo SWVPP - Free \$135/mo	✓ ECERS ✓ IQPPS –In Process	
Rockwell City- Lytton Early Learning Center	Rockwell City	3 4	21 36	T/FR or M-TH AM M-T-TH-FR AM or PM	\$50/mo SWVPP - Free	✓ ECERS ✓ Head Start	
St. Edmond Preschool	Fort Dodge	4 Pre-K	52 19	M-F AM/PM M-F AM	SWVPP - Free \$120/mo	✓ ECERS ✓ IQPPS –In Process	☆☆☆☆
St. Paul’s Lutheran Preschool	Fort Dodge	3 4	16/16 18/11	T-TH AM/PM MWF AM/PM	\$55/mo \$75/mo	✓ ECERS	
Southeast Webster Preschool	Dayton	3 4	32 31	M/W or T/TH AM or MW PM M-F AM/PM	\$45/mo SWVPP - Free	✓ ECERS ✓ IQPPS –In Process	
Southern Cal Preschool	Lake City	4 TK**	31 7	M-F AM M-F AM	Shared Classroom with HS and SWVPP - Free	✓ ECERS	
Tracey’s Tots	Fort Dodge	3 4	8 12	M-F AM M-F AM	\$60/week	Not Participating	
Y.O.U.R. Head Start	Fort Dodge	3 4	55 139	M-F M-F	Head Start Funded/Available to families at 100% of poverty	✓ Head Start	

\* To have met the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) level of quality the preschool must have scored an average of 5 with no subscales less than 2 on the ECERS rating scale (Likert scale of 7) as evaluated by an independent evaluator that has established at least 85% inter-rater reliability.

\*\*Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

**HEALTH: Includes both community and private practice centers.**

Name	Location	Service
Calhoun County Public Health	Rockwell City	Respite, Childhood Immunizations, Blood Lead, Waiver Service, Home Visitation
Community Health Center	Fort Dodge	Complete Medical Services, Dental
Community Physician Associates	Lake City	Complete Medical Services
New Opportunities, Inc.	Carroll	WIC, Blood Lead Screening, Childhood Immunizations, Maternal Child Health Clinics, Early Access Service Coordination, I-Smile
McFarland Clinic	Rockwell City	Complete Medical Services
North Central Home Care	Fort Dodge	Home Visitation Services
Pocahontas Community Hospital	Pocahontas	Hospital Services – No Labor/Delivery
Pocahontas County Nursing and Health Services	Pocahontas	Blood Lead Screening, Childhood Immunizations
Pocahontas Home Care Aide Agency	Pocahontas	Home Visitation Services
Stewart Memorial Community Hospital	Lake City/ Gowrie/Dayton	Complete Medical Services/Hospital Services
Trimark Physicians Group	Fort Dodge/Manson	Complete Medical Services
Trinity Regional Medical Center	Fort Dodge	Hospital Services
Upper Des Moines Opportunities	Graettinger	WIC, Maternal Child Health Clinics, I-Smile
Webster County Health Department	Fort Dodge	WIC, Blood Lead Screening, Childhood Immunizations, Maternal Child Health Clinics, I-Smile, Early ACCESS Services Coordination

**HUMAN SERVICES:**

Name	Location	Service
Calhoun County Public Health	Rockwell City	Respite Service, Home Visitation Services, Early ACCESS Coordination
Calhoun County CPC	Rockwell City	Case management for mentally disabled children, respite care services, supported community living
Catholic Social Services	Fort Dodge	Child and Family Counseling
Children and Families of Iowa	Fort Dodge	Child and Family Counseling
Department of Human Services	Fort Dodge, Rockwell City, Pocahontas	Case management for adjudicated children in need of assistance, family income maintenance and information referrals.
Family Resource Center	Carroll	Family Development and Self-Sufficiency, Waiver Services, Child Care Consultants

ISU Extension – All counties	Fort Dodge, Rockwell City, Pocahontas	Parenting Programs
Lutheran Family Services of Iowa	Fort Dodge	Child and Family Counseling
Mental Health Center	Fort Dodge	Child and Family Counseling
Mid-Iowa Family Therapy	Fort Dodge	Child and Family Counseling
New Opportunities	Rockwell City	Energy Assistance, Emergency Assistance, Information Referrals, WIC, MCH, I-Smile
North Central Home Care	Fort Dodge	Home Visitation Services
Parents Anonymous	Fort Dodge	Parent support group
Pocahontas County CPC	Pocahontas	Case management for mentally disabled children, respite care services, supported community living
Pocahontas Home Care Aide Agency	Pocahontas	Home Visitation Services
Prairie Lakes AEA	Fort Dodge, Rockwell City, Pocahontas	Early ACCESS, Early Childhood Screening and Service
Trinity Regional Medical Center	Fort Dodge	Prenatal programming, Parenting programming
Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc	Fort Dodge, Pocahontas	Energy Assistance, Emergency Assistance, Family Development and Self-Sufficiency, Information Referrals, Child Care Resource & Referral
Webster County Disabilities Alliance	Fort Dodge	Case management for mentally disabled children, respite care services, supported community living
YWCA	Fort Dodge	Young Moms/Dads

## Available Funding Sources

Organization/ Program	Service	Ages	\$ Amount for 0-5	Funding Source	Gaps in program/ Wish list for program	Gaps in Community
Calhoun County Public Health	Public Health Services*	0-21	\$261,409	State/ Federal	Not enough funding, transportation	Child mental health, maternal depression services, counseling services to low socio-economic status families, local point of contact to coordinate multiple aspects of care
Calhoun County General Assistance	General Assistance	All	--	State	Transportation, available housing, need more volunteer drivers, Funding	Transportation, available housing, need a program for low-income survival, nutrition (meals w/o a box) and self-help skills
Child Care Discovery Center	Child Care Center & Preschool	0-12	\$60,800	State	Need more training for infants and toddler programs	More financial assistance for child care, dealing with behavior issues, families often go “downhill” after protective day care is removed
Community Christian School	Preschool	3-5	--	Tuition	Transportation, SWVPP, outdoor play equipment, fencing, gross motor equipment	The community needs more things for families to keep busy, transportation, knowledge of resources and more opportunities for parent classes
Community Day Care & Preschool	Child Care Center & Preschool	0-12	\$113,152	State	Not enough funding to serve everyone, quality of staff, need new roof and full-time maintenance person	Younger/Inexperience parents do not know about parenting, people do not know how/where to access resources, transportation is needed as well as a “one-stop shop” for resources.
Department of Human Services	Income Maintenance/ Family Support	All	--	State/ Federal	Transportation, parenting classes, mentoring program for youth, Parent Partner program, Mental Health services, licensed foster parents, crisis child care, long term funding for above programs	Crisis child care, respite care, mental health providers and services, affordable and available housing, employment opportunities, transportation (vehicles as well as public transportation), support of extended family members, hands on parenting skills.
Dodger Preschool	Preschool	3-5	\$102,005	State	NA	NA
Family Resource Center	Child Care Services	0-12	\$1,947,000	State	Mental Health, Funding, Unable to provide parents with useful resources, not enough hours or manpower to be in homes, need	Need to provide training that is needed, Need adequate medical and mental health services for 0-5 population, Pediatricians need to be more available,

					to be able to assist each provider to meet needs for quality care and provide quality training in the community	communities need to support our young families, there is a lack of infant care and quality child care in the community, services are becoming fewer due to less money, communities lack places for technical assistance for families.
Family Resource Center	FADSS	0-18	\$1,947,000	State	Mental Health, Unable to provide parents with useful resources, not enough hours and man power to be in homes, provide each provider to meet needs of quality care, quality training is needed in the community	Need to provide the training that is needed in the community, adequate medical and mental health for children 0-5, Pediatricians need to be more accessible, Young families need to feel supported, Services for 0-5 are becoming fewer because of lack of funding. Infant care and quality child care are lacking, Mental Health
Fort Dodge Comm. School	Preschool, Pre-K, Special Needs	3-5	\$93,184	State		
ISU Extension Service	Education	All	--	State	Not sure how child care providers will get CEUs with changes in Extension, needs additional educational materials for parents and a Family Life Specialist to do programming.	After-school programs/care, parent education
Kid's Korner - FD	Child Care Center	2-12	--	Tuition	Transportation, staff retention and staff quality, playground needs improving	Transportation to and from preschool/school
Kid's Korner	Child Care Center & Preschool	0-12	\$12,000	State/ Federal	Funding, need to improve outdoor play area, more space and storage space. Need to be able to maintain staff	None
Kid's Spot	Child Care Center & Preschool	0-12	\$2,000	Local	Quality of toys, building needs remodeling as well as more storage, professional development opportunities need to be held in Lake City	The community needs a new swimming pool and young mothers need assistance in getting jobs
Laurens Marathon Early Childhood Program	Preschool, Pre-K, Special Needs	3-5	\$73,216 **Does not include Special Ed.	State	New shelving furniture as it is not all child-size	Lack of Child Care, Parents need education on early childhood development, preschool, money management, job training, the community needs more jobs

Little Lambs Preschool	Preschool	3-5	33,280	State	Transportation, needs pro-social behavior curriculum, concerned about future workforce and meeting the SWVPP, furniture items for preschool	Transportation, affordable child care, quality child care. Parents need training on how to educate their children, dental care, positive discipline techniques, Take home activities for parents
Manson Northwest Webster Comm. School	Preschool, Pre-K, Special Needs	3-5	\$74,335	State	Can't offer free four year old preschool like neighboring preschools, not able to offer 3 yr old or spec. ed. Classroom due to lack of funding/resources, playground equipment	Parent education and training, should hook parent evenings to transportation reimbursement
New Opportunities Inc.	WIC, MCH, Dental, Lead Head Start	0-21	\$2,423,225	State/ Federal	Not enough funding to serve everyone, Transportation, Early Head Start	Quality child care. Educational opportunities for parents
Pocahontas Area Community School	Shared Visions, Preschool, Pre-K, Special Needs, Child Care Center	0-5	\$227,561.4 4	State/ Local	Books to give to families	Families are not aware of the resources available, Parent education, especially on how to structure daily living
Pocahontas County General Assistance	General Assistance	All	--	State		
Pocahontas County Health & Nursing Service	Public Health Services*	0-21	\$0	--	We provide limited vaccinations	Transportation, Finances, Services not available in the community, Insurance issues
Pomeroy/Palmer Community School	Preschool, Special Needs, Child Care Center	3-5	\$9,293	Local/ Grant/ State	Not enough funding, Transportation, health care services, resources unavailable, quality of staff, improved playground	More opportunities for recreation and entertainment, parenting support and education on child development, child care, no clothes closet
Prairie Valley Community School	Preschool, Pre-K, Special Needs	4-5	\$89,182.84	State	Transportation, Add 3 yr old preschool, shed for outdoor play items	Quality child care, parent education
Prairie Lakes AEA	Early ACCESS	0-3	--	Federal	No new referrals are taken in summer months for children age 3-5. During summer there are limited programs in which to refer.	Making referrals to Child Health Specialty Clinics is problem as they aren't taking new referrals at this time and there is a long wait to receive services. The community needs quality child care. A community resource book, increased communication between agencies/initiatives...operate as an Early Childhood System rather

						than separate entities. More pediatricians, mental health providers, transportation to dr. appts.
Prince of Peace Lutheran Preschool	Preschool	3-5	\$59,600	State	Transportation, more science and outdoor materials	Parenting support, Education on child development, dental services
Rockwell City-Lytton Community School w/Head Start	Preschool, Pre-K, Special Needs, Head Start	3-5	\$254,280	Local/ State/ Federal	Transportation, planning/collaboration time for teachers, better integration of Head Start and preschool	Appropriate mental health, child care, better service coordination for families as currently there isn't a good one point of contact, families indicate that they want more information about community agencies/services and child care
St. Edmond School	SWVPP, TK	4-5	\$165,806	State	None	Affordable child care, Quality Child Care
St. Paul's Lutheran School	Preschool	3-5	--	Tuition	Fenced in outdoor area for the early childhood program	Vision screening, Parenting skill classes
Southeast Webster-Grand Community School	SWVVP, Preschool, Child Care Center, TK, Shared Visions, Special Needs	3-5	\$187,382	State	Special Needs certified staff, Staff turnover, getting current staff to be certified, need a facility to house all three early childhood programs together w/restrooms in each classroom	Increase in free and reduced lunch count, current services are not meeting the needs of diverse populations, parenting classes are needed with good attendance
Southern Cal Community School	Preschool, TK, Special Needs	5	\$62,980	State	Not enough funding to serve everyone	No three year old preschool available as there is not enough funding
Tracey's Tots	Child Care Center & Preschool	0-12	--	Tuition	Staff turnover is high, need quality/trained staff, the building needs remodeled and to motivate staff to attend training	Families need consistency and stable employment, need transportation.
United Way of Greater Fort Dodge	Support Services,	All	--	Private	Does not provide programming	Transportation to school, summer recreation opportunities, sick child care, flexible child care, quality child care, health care
Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.	SWVVP, Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care Wrap Around Grant, FADSS	0-17	\$3,527,294	State/ Federal	Not enough funding to serve everyone, Transportation, Access to dental services, professional development funds, increase wages for all staff	Lack of jobs that pay a living wage, assistance with removing barriers keeping families in poverty.

Webster County Health Department	Public Health Services*	0-21	\$573,000	State/ Federal	Not enough funding, transportation	Oral health
Webster County General Assistance	General Assistance	All	Varies – entire budget is \$5 million	State/ Federal	Not enough funding, Transportation, community needs educating, community lacks crisis services and needs more employment opportunities for persons with disabilities	Summer child care, Summer programs for children with disabilities, Mobile Crisis Team, Crisis Stabilization Hospital Unit
Y.O.U.R. Head Start	Early Head Start, Head Start & Child Care Wrap Around Grant	0-5	\$1,763,359	State/ Federal	Not enough funding to serve everyone, problems attracting and maintaining good staff, lack of coordination of resources, Transportation is a huge need, need to be able to have stable facilities and establish child care partnership with providers to come to our center to lessen transitions	Transportation, Families don't know where to access services, children/families have multiple risk factors, families in poverty, families need information on nutrition and meal planning, need services available in their own community and jobs that pay a living wage

\*Includes any or all of the following: Immunization, Title V Child Health Grant, Blood Lead Screen, Maternal Health, Well Child Exams, Hawk-I, Medicaid Reimbursement, Dental Hygienist Services.

In summary, while there seems to be significant resources dedicated to the Linking Families and Communities' service area, funds are allocated to provide programs, not systems, and are often reduced, so programs merely maintain core services (decreasing services; often transportation). With existing funding there has been little room for growth in the areas of: Transportation, mental health, resource coordination, improving the quality of the child care, improving transitions between services, parent education and support.

## Collaborative Funding

Many of the programs in the area are not funded by one single entity or funding stream. The Linking Families and Communities area has been quite successful in building relationships and collaborating with partners to build programs. Currently the following collaborative funding arrangements are in place:

- Child Care Nurse Consultants (CCNC) – Calhoun County Public Health, Webster County Health Department and Linking Families and Communities provide funding for CCNC services in the three county area.
- Preschool Transportation and Tuition – Area preschools, Head Starts, Shared Visions and State Wide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) grantees collaborate with Linking Families and Communities to offer preschool tuition scholarships and transportation to families or service providers
- Family Foundations – Calhoun County Public Health, Stewart Memorial and Linking Families and Communities work together to use not only Empowerment funds, but Medicaid and other grant funds to fund visits, parent support groups and the Caring Hands Closet.
- Professional Development – Child Care Resource & Referral and Linking Families and Communities combined their resources to offer two Creative Curriculum classes for child care home providers and child care center staff.

Linking Families and Communities will continue to seek out these types of relationships as it invests its resources in its priorities. Service providers in the area have a long history of collaboration, as it recognized that we must work together to help children and families be successful. During the next three years, the board will seek out new partners businesses, economic development, chambers of commerce, providers of service that typically do not think of themselves as a playing a role in the early childhood field.

## Community Needs/Priorities

Upon review of the data collected from our surveys, published sources and community meetings the following needs are recurring and have been identified as the new Linking Families and Communities priorities:

1. **Quality of Child Care:** Parents, Child Care Providers, and Early Childhood program providers all agree that quality child care is a priority. All agree that registration does not mean that a child care provider is quality and know many non-registered child care providers that they feel are quality. Data indicates that like the state of Iowa, over 71% of children in the Calhoun, Pocahontas and Webster County area have both parents working outside of the home. We will continue to focus on the quality of child care and work with all providers including non-registered and family, friend and neighbor care providers to make quality improvements in the care that they provide.

2. **Parent Education:** Parents and providers feel that more parent education opportunities are needed. While our area has some parenting education classes they are not well attended. The board will explore this need further to see what can be done to better serve parents through this type of program.
3. **Mental Health:** This is a new priority for Linking Families and Communities, which is no surprise as increasingly more reports and calls for help have come from parents, child care providers and the education community. The board will begin to study the topic of mental health and identify strategies in which to address it.
4. **Access to Resources:** Parents and providers alike do not know where to go for early childhood resources. From the surveys completed, early childhood providers and parents indicated that if families do not find what they are looking for with the first phone call they are not likely to call again. Programs are making referrals for their clients and providing follow-up, but what if you're not in a program? Linking Families and Communities will identify how best to link families with community resources using a best practice model. The Board will look to Early Childhood Iowa for guidance.
5. **Transportation:** Transportation has and will continue to be a problem for parents and programs. Programs find it costly to provide and it is often in a time of budget cuts the "first to go". Parents find it hard to transport children to and from school, preschool, child care and etc. on a daily basis because of their work schedules. Due to the rural nature of our counties there is no one solution. The board will work to address this with individual preschools.

With new priorities in place, Linking Families and Communities will begin to focus on our new priorities in FY10 and plan to have programs implemented for all of the priorities in FY11.

## Community Collaboration

### Community Coordination & Collaboration

Collaboration and networking have different forms in each of the three counties that comprise the area. The Calhoun County Interagency Council, Pocahontas Interagency Council and the Webster County Human Service Providers meet bi-monthly to share information about their programs and activities. There are a variety of agencies/organizations that attend these meetings. Below is a list of those that attend the meetings:

- ISU Extension
- Public Health – all counties
- Community and Family Resources
- AEA
- Iowa Workforce Development
- Fort Dodge Community Schools
- Rabiner Treatment Center
- Department of Human Services
- Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.
- Youth Shelter Care of North Central IA
- New Opportunities Inc.
- Y.O.U.R. Head Start
- Family Resource Center
- YWCA
- Fort Dodge Housing Authority
- Mid-Iowa Regional Housing Authority
- General Relief/Veterans Affairs
- Rockwell City-Lytton Schools
- Pocahontas Area Community Schools
- Pocahontas Central Point of Contact
- Boy Scouts of America
- Children and Families of Iowa
- Girl Scouts of Lakota Council
- Pocahontas Home Care Aide Agency
- Boards of Supervisors – all counties
- North Central Home Care Aide
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Fort Dodge Community Foundation and United Way
- Vocational Rehabilitation

These groups serve not only as a way of getting the word out/potential referral sources, but can be used to give input to the board.

In addition to the county groups, an Early Childhood Committee has formed and began to meet to talk about gaps and how to address some of the issues in the area of early childhood. Participants of the group include preschools, schools, human service agencies, child care providers and early childhood service providers.

There are several successful collaborations in our area. They include:

- ❑ Linking Families and Communities has partnered with Trimark Pediatrics to bring Reach Out and Read to Fort Dodge. The program has successfully given age and developmentally appropriate books to all children that receive well child visits. While Linking Families and Communities initially administered the program to get it started, Trimark Pediatrics has taken over the administration and continues the program to date. The program helped to build a positive relationship with the staff at the Pediatric office.
- ❑ Linking Families and Communities in collaboration with Iowa Central Community College and Prairie Lakes AEA has provided professional development opportunities for preschools. Prairie Lakes AEA obtained credit options for the classes and Iowa Central provided space in which to have the classes. This collaboration has existed over many years and continues to date. The partnership has provided many preschool teachers with training on the Creative Curriculum and Creative Curriculum Assessment, as well as classes on behavior issues, early math, science and literacy.
- ❑ Linking Families and Communities, Child Care Resource and Referral (UDMO) and the Family Resource Center planned together on filling the service needs of child care providers. The results included increased communication, less confusion for everyone involved, non-duplication of services and two much needed professional development opportunities for child care providers: Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos and Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care.
- ❑ The Family Resource Center and Child Care Resource and Referral jointly planned and executed the annual Early Childhood Conference and the Child Care Provider Appreciation Dinner.
- ❑ Linking Families and Communities, Family Resource Center, Webster County Health Department, Calhoun County Public Health, Department of Human Services, Child Care Resource and Referral and Building Families have a monthly meeting to share information and plan to meet the needs of providers.
- ❑ Linking Families and Communities in partnership with the Golden Kiwanis provide a traveling library to Webster County area child care providers.
- ❑ The Family Foundations providers (Calhoun County Public Health, North Central Home Care, and Pocahontas Home Care Aide Agency) began the Iowa Family Support Credentialing process in FY09.
- ❑ Calhoun County Public Health (CCPH) collaborates with Stewart Memorial Community Hospital (SMCH) to provide the Caring Hands Closet. The “Closet” is offered to pregnant women and/or parents of children up to age three. Parents can earn points by participating in healthy activities such as prenatal/post partum doctor visits, childbirth education, immunizations, parent support home visits, breast feeding, parenting educational activities etc. Educational sessions are also offered at SMCH. Points earned may be used to shop for items at the “Closet” including baby supplies, toys, books,

bedding, medical supplies, diapers, safety equipment, hygiene items etc. The “Closet” is housed at SMCH and is staffed by both SMCH and CCPH staff. CCPH Family Foundations staff provide child care during the educational classes. A committee of staff from both SMCH and CCPH develop the annual agenda for the educational sessions. SMCH physicians are regular presenters. Funding for the “Closet” is obtained through grants applied for by SMCH, CCPH and Linking Communities and Families.

## Strategic Plan

### Reason for Plan

The first five years in a child's life is critical to future development and long term success. The brain develops rapidly during the first five years, especially in the first three. It is during this time that the brain makes neuro-synapse connections that are critical to long-term successes intellectually, physically, emotionally, behaviorally and socially.

We have the benefit of research to institute programs that assist parents and caregivers to provide that early positive stimulation that sets the tone of a child's life. We know that positive and negative experiences influence the brain's "wiring" and the nervous system. We also know that even once a "connection" is made it must be used to become a permanent connection, thus it is important that programs, parents and caregivers follow these guidelines:

- ❖ Ensure health, safety and good nutrition of children
- ❖ Develop a warm, caring relationship with children
- ❖ Respond to children's clues and cues
- ❖ Recognize that each child is unique
- ❖ Talk, read and sing to/with children
- ❖ Use safe exploration and play
- ❖ Use discipline to teach
- ❖ Establish routines
- ❖ Take care of themselves (parent/caregiver)
- ❖ Become involved in the child's life
- ❖ Limit television

This Strategic Plan is to serve as a guide to the Linking Families and Communities Board for programmatic and funding decisions. The plan will be revisited at least once per year and will be subject to revisions by the Board. This Strategic Plan is broken down into two parts: Current Plan and Year 2 & 3 Plan.

### CURRENT PLAN

Two of the previously defined priorities continued to present themselves as needs/priorities of Linking Families and Communities. The FY10 or Current Plan addresses the needs of our previous priority list and will be a time for the board to study and form strategies to address the needs of Mental Health, Parent Education and Access to Resources.

Programs chosen by the Linking Families and Communities Board will be funded based on their outcomes, which must address the needs, strategies and indicators below.

## CURRENT PLAN - NEEDS AND STRATEGIES

### HEALTHY CHILDREN

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Parent Education

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Mental Health

**Local Indicator:** Low Birth Weight (IDPH)

**Strategy 1:** Family support programs will build relationships with physicians and hospitals to encourage referrals of pregnant women.

**Strategy 2:** Family Support programs will assist pregnant women in accessing prenatal care.

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Parent Education

**Local Indicator:** Rate of children immunized by age 2 (IDPH)

**Strategy 1:** Family Support programs will provide information on Medicaid and/or hawk-i to families that do not have private health care coverage.

**Strategy 2:** Family Support programs will provide information on medical home as well as the importance of immunizations.

### CHILDREN READY TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Quality of Child Care

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Transportation

**Local Indicator:** Percentage of children beginning kindergarten with at least one year of preschool. (School Survey)

**Strategy 1:** Provide preschool scholarships for families who would find paying for preschool a hardship.

**Strategy 2:** Provide transportation services for families that would be unable to pay for and/or arrange/provide transportation.

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Quality of Child Care.

**Local Indicator:** Percentage of preschools that are quality. (Defined as NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited, meets the Head Start program performance standards, Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (Verified) or scores an average of 5 with no sub-scales less than 2 on the ECERS (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale) as assessed by an outside, inter-rater reliable evaluator. (LFC Survey)

**Strategy 1:** To receive tuition and transportation assistance, preschools must meet one of the quality standards.

**Strategy 2:** Assist preschools in meeting the standards through support and education.

## **SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES**

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Access to Resources

**Local Indicator:** Employment Rate (IWD)

**Local Indicator:** Crime Rate (IDPS)

**Strategy 1:** All programs will collaborate to better coordinate child and family services.

**Strategy 2:** All programs will provide general and referral information to program participants and program partners

**Strategy 3:** Media campaign will provide information to the general public about the importance of early childhood and targeted information to parents about programs.

## **SECURE AND NURTURING FAMILIES**

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Parent Education

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Access to Resources

**Local Indicator 1:** Incidence of child abuse (PCAI)

**Local Indicator 2:** Teen birth rate (Under Age 20) (IDPH)

**Strategy 1:** All programs will collaborate to better coordinate child and family services.

**Strategy 2:** Obstetricians/Gynecologists/Hospitals provide information and referrals to programs

**Strategy 3:** Provide opportunities for parent education

## **SECURE AND NURTURING CHILD CARE ENVIRONMENTS**

✦ **Local Identified Need/Priority:** Quality of Child Care

**Local Indicator:** Percent of child care providers participating in the voluntary Quality Rating System (QRS) (CCR&R)

**Strategy 1:** Child Care Nurse Consultants available to provide training and support through the QRS process.

**Strategy 2:** Resources available to promote child care provider registration and quality improvement.

**Strategy 3:** All programs involved with child care providers will promote the QRS and research based curriculum.

## **CURRENT PLAN - PROGRAMS**

The current fiscal year's plan for programs contains a few changes from years past. The following programs have been identified as programs that meet the needs of Linking Families and Communities families and legislation.

<b>School Ready Funds:</b>	Preschool Scholarships
	Preschool Transportation
	Preschool Dental Project
	Family Foundations
	Child Care Nurse Consultants
	Professional Development for Early Care Providers

**Early Childhood Funds:** Child Care Consultants  
Child Care Nurse Consultants

These programs each track program outcomes, implement strategies identified by the board and have a positive effect on the 5 State Result Areas:

- ❑ Healthy Children
- ❑ Children Ready to Succeed in School
- ❑ Safe & Supportive Communities
- ❑ Secure & Nurturing Families
- ❑ Secure & Nurturing Child Care Environments

A brief description of programs follows with the priorities that they address. For specific information on program performance measure please refer to the Linking Families and Communities Annual Report.

### Preschool Scholarships and Transportation

- ✓ *Children will begin school prepared and ready to learn.*
- ✓ *Increase the quality of early childhood environments.*
- ✓ *Increase access to service through transportation assistance.*
- ✓ *Increase the number of healthy children.*

For the past nine years, Linking Families and Communities provided children and families access to preschool through tuition scholarships and transportation assistance. Families that qualified and lived in the service area attended the preschool of their choice and Linking Families and Communities paid for their tuition/transportation (if needed). During that time Linking Families and Communities was also working with preschools on quality improvement through professional development, the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, Creative Curriculum and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS).

Those concerted efforts to improve the quality of preschool programs were made to ensure that children receive quality preschool services. The culmination of those efforts will be demonstrated with changes to the program that require preschools to meet/complete one of the following quality standards in order to be eligible to receive the tuition scholarships and transportation assistance:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation;
- Head Start Performance Standards;
- Verified by the Iowa Department of Education on Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS);
- Scored an average of 5 with no sub-scales less than 2 as evaluated by an independent evaluator (evaluator must have established 85% inter-rater reliability) using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R) evaluation.

## Preschool Dental Screening

- ✓ *Children will begin school prepared and ready to learn.*
- ✓ *Increase the number of healthy children.*

Through local preschool classrooms, the Preschool Dental Screening project makes dental screening and fluoride varnishes available to all preschool children as well as care coordination for those having dental caries/disease. Many children do not have dental care due to lack of pediatric dentists, dental providers unwilling to accept Title XIX and/or treat young children. For many, this program is the child's first exposure to dental care and can fill the dental screen requirement for kindergarten enrollment. The project is conducted through collaboration of the Title V Child Health Agencies (I-Smile Program) of New Opportunities (Calhoun), Upper Des Moines Opportunity (Pocahontas) and Webster County Health Department (Webster) and the local preschools in their respective county. The program is helping to fill the gap in dental services while other work through I-Smile is conducted to increase availability/accessibility of dental care for young children.

## Family Foundations

- ✓ *Increase the rate of children immunized by age 2.*
- ✓ *Increase the number of women receiving adequate prenatal care.*
- ✓ *Children will begin school prepared and ready to learn.*
- ✓ *Increase the number of healthy children.*

Family Foundations, which is based on the Health Families America (HFA) model, has provided supportive home visiting services designed to strengthen families since July 2001 and began the Iowa Family Support Credentialing process in 2009. The program is a result of collaboration between Calhoun County Public Health, North Central Home Care and Pocahontas County Home Care Aide Agency. Family Foundations provides family support/home visitation services to families in the Calhoun, Pocahontas and Webster County area.

Family Foundations assists pregnant women and families to prepare for a new baby and to provide the best care possible after that baby arrives and as he or she grows. Services focus on prenatal care, child development, child health, parenting skills and other aspects of family functioning.

Family Foundations is modeled after Healthy Families America. This model establishes critical elements and practice standards for effective home visitation programs that have been determined by repeated evaluations of early intervention and prevention programs.

The registered nurses and/or social workers that complete HOPES training (Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success), serve as Case Managers. The Case Managers work with families to design an Individual Family Support Plan based on strengths of the family, and support families over an extended period to achieve their goals.

The program uses paraprofessional Family Support Workers who have also completed HOPES training to provide home visits to families. Family Support Workers receive continuous training to provide quality services with the newest information available on children and families. The Case Manager closely supervises the Family Support Workers through conferences and joint visits to the home.

The children involved with Family Foundations are screened using the Ages and Stages Parent Questionnaire. The areas of development monitored with this tool are: Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving, and Personal-Social. Results of the screening are shared with parents as well as activities designed to promote development in areas that may be delayed. Referrals are also facilitated to appropriate agencies to address identified areas of delay.

Services are offered to all families in Calhoun, Pocahontas and Webster Counties at no charge. Staff will visit the family in their home or at a place of their choice.

### Child Care Nurse Consultants

- ✓ *Increase the rate of children immunized by age 2.*
- ✓ *Children will begin school prepared and ready to learn.*
- ✓ *Increase the quality of early childhood environments.*
- ✓ *Increase the number of healthy children.*

Child Care Nurse Consultants (CCNCs) address health and safety issues by integrating performance standards of Healthy Child Care Iowa with child care businesses. CCNCs provide support services to prevent the spread of infectious disease, prevent child injuries, offer technical assistance with emergency protocols, assist with medication administration and care for special health needs. Service goals include improving quality of health and safety practices in child care, thus overall, improving the health status of children.

Nurse Consultants are Registered Nurses with special training to assist providers on-site with health and safety assessment of their Child Care Home or Center. Continuing assistance is based on results of the assessment, which may include: health and safety policies, illness prevention and control, medication administration, maintenance of children's health files, nutrition, playground safety, health education activities, environmental safety, immunization information, and communication with parents. CCNC's offer training to meet the needs of the child care provider and promote the healthy growth and development of children in their care; additional attention is given to children with special needs.

Nurse Consultants seek to develop and implement non-duplicative protocols to assist child care providers to, not only meet minimum compliance requirements, but to exceed the Iowa Department of Human Service requirements for Child Care Provider Registration. A goal is to

increase the number of registered child care providers. Services are provided through face-to-face contact, groups, telephone contact or on-site provider visits.

Nurse Consultants will assist the registered child care providers with application and review procedures, in order to meet standards and criteria for participation in Iowa's Quality Rating System (QRS). Referrals will be accepted from the Department of Human Services (DHS), Child Care Resource & Referral and directly from providers. Child Care Nurse Consultants are positions within Public Health Departments in Calhoun and Webster Counties that use established networks to directly link providers and families with other public health and community-based programs.

## Professional Development

- ✓ *Children will begin school prepared and ready to learn.*
- ✓ *Increase the quality of early childhood environments.*
- ✓ *Increase the number of healthy children.*

Linking Families and Communities is committed to increasing the quality of early childhood environments and knows that the “teacher” is a key ingredient in the environment. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool has been offered every year since 2006 in a concerted effort to support preschools in using a research-based curriculum and assessment. These opportunities were made possible with the assistance of Prairie Lakes AEA who arranged for credit options and Iowa Central Community College that offered space for the classes. The training has been well received and helpful to preschools in their adoption of all facets of the Creative Curriculum for Preschool.

As a result of our community needs assessment, it has been determined that during FY10, Creative Curriculum and Positive Behavior Supports will be offered to early childhood providers.

## Child Care Consultants

- ✓ *Children will begin school prepared and ready to learn.*
- ✓ *Increase the quality of early childhood environments.*
- ✓ *Increase the number of healthy children.*

The Child Care Consultant Project puts early care professionals in touch with each other and works with them to develop an infrastructure and support system. The Project serves not only as a resource for early childhood educators and community human service organizations, but as a liaison between them. The Child Care Project staff works with providers to establish and

maintain safe, stimulating and nurturing learning environments. The primary long term objective for this project is to improve the overall quality of child care, for every child, in every setting.

**The Child Care Project has two components:**

Child Care Consultant Duties include:

- Provides technical assistance, assessment and on site consultation to assist early childhood professionals in meeting and maintaining state guidelines and regulations with extra assistance given to new providers
- Promotes state registration. Assists persons in working through the application process to become a registered child care provider and to receive state subsidy.
- Provides developmentally appropriate information and support to early childhood programs
- Mentors child care providers/educators toward attaining their Child Development Associate (CDA) degree and program accreditation
- Promotes provider and industry professionalism through business practice training, parent and community awareness efforts, providing networking opportunities for early care providers, and advocacy.
- Encourages providers to offer special needs, non-traditional hours, and infant care
- Models and supports developmentally appropriate practice to ensure positive adult-child interactions and learning experiences.
- Recruitment and retention of providers
- Support to providers working on the QRS (Quality Rating System)

Child Care Home Evaluator Duties Include:

- Attempt to conduct unannounced home visits to all registered child care providers
- Assist child care providers in becoming 100% compliant with the DHS checklist
- Revisits non-compliant development homes to ensure that any required changes/improvements were made
- Collaborates with DHS staff regarding the checklist results
- Offer resources to complete compliance
- Refer providers to Child Care Consultants
- Reports out of compliance providers to DHS for them to follow-up

## PLAN FOR YEARS 2 & 3

The Linking Families and Communities Board will focus on the five priorities as outlined earlier from our needs assessment.

The board will continue to support Family Foundations as it completes the Iowa Family Support Credentialing process and add Parent Education services to provide more choices for busy parents.

The board will continue to provide funding for transportation and tuition assistance to provide access to quality preschool. The Board will also provide support for the ECERS process that

preschool programs have completed as well as support school districts as they apply for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four Year Old Children grants. It is our intent that by the start of Year 2 our priorities of Mental Health and Access to Resources shall have strategies for implementation and a best-practice model to initiate. With those things in place the Strategic Plan will be fully implementing the priorities as set by the Linking Families and Communities Board.

In Year 3, the Board will be implementing and evaluating the programs to ensure that the programs are being implemented correctly and having a positive effect on the community.

## Results/Outcomes

### EVALUATION

The following components are currently in place to ensure on-going evaluation and effectiveness of the Strategic Plan and funded programs:

- ❑ All programs are required to submit reports at six months and an annual report, which includes financial, narrative and a performance matrix (inputs, outputs, quality/efficiency and outcome data). Programs are chosen and funded based on their outcomes, which must address needs, strategies and indicators addressed in the Strategic Plan.
- ❑ Programs must present at least once per year to the Linking Families and Communities Board on the status of their program, outcomes and financial standing.
- ❑ All programs at a minimum must assess the state required performance measures as outlined in the Toolkit on the State of Iowa Empowerment website.
- ❑ The Linking Families and Communities Board reviews the funded programs' finances and outcomes at least annually, to ensure the programs are meeting the needs of the families in the service area.
- ❑ The Strategic Plan is reviewed at least on an annual basis by the board to keep them focused and make any necessary changes.
- ❑ The Linking Families and Communities Board submits an annual report to the state of Iowa for review.
- ❑ The Linking Families and Communities Board evaluates themselves through a bi-annual survey.
- ❑ The Linking Families and Communities Board seeks re-designation from the state of Iowa every three years.