

# Linking Families and Communities

**Geographic Area:** Calhoun, Pocahontas and Webster County

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**Vision:** “Happy, Healthy Children”

**Mission:** “Our mission is to empower parents in raising happy, healthy children by providing families with educational, economic and health support by coordinating services with community resources.

**Did you know?** A baby’s brain contains 100 to 200 billion cells at birth. Positive, stimulating interactions with people and objects “grow” the nerve connections between cells in a baby’s brain, helping that child reach his/her full potential. Without those interactions, nerve connections will not be made and cells eventually die.

## Why are the programs we support important to reaching our vision and mission?

- It is important to provide education and support to parents as they are their child’s first teacher and it is important that the child have a safe, positive and stimulating home.
- It is important to increase the quality of child care and preschool to provide children with the best start in life so that all children are ready for school. All children deserve to attend quality child care and preschool programs.

## Strategic Plan Priorities:

- ☐ Quality of Child Care
- ☐ Parent Education
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☐ Access to Resources
- ☐ Transportation

## Services Supported by Linking Families and Communities

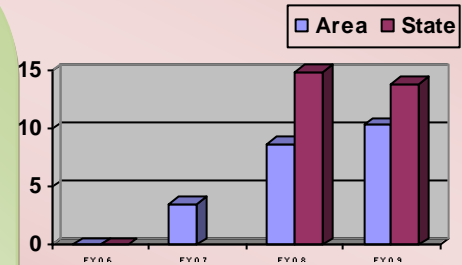
Family Foundations	Preschool Tuition Scholarships
Child Care Consultants	Preschool Transportation
Child Care Nurse Consultant	Preschool Dental Screening
Child Care Quality Project	Preschool Quality Improvement
Services Coordination	Professional Development/Training

# Linking Families and Communities' Progress

## Quality of Child Care

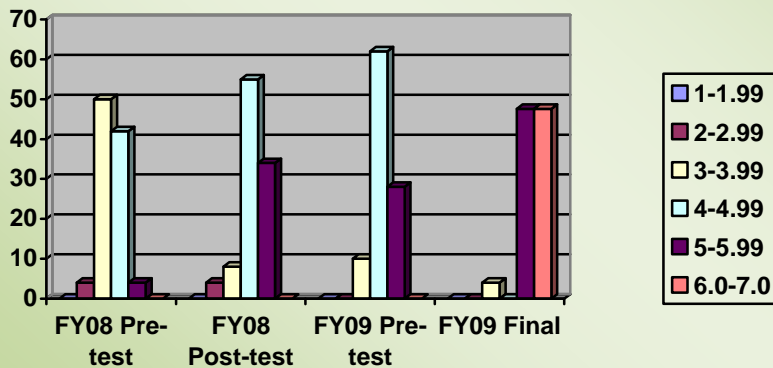
**How are we doing?** We are slowly seeing an increase in the number of child care providers participating in the Quality Rating System (QRS). We have continued to support Child Care Nurse Consultants (CCNC) who promote and monitor the progress of child care providers. Our goal is to have 23% of our registered child care providers participating in the QRS by 2011.

Percent of Child Care Providers in the Quality Rating System



## Quality of Preschool

**How are we doing?** We have seen a significant jump in the quality of preschools during our two year quality improvement project, which used the research-based tool, Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). The goal for each preschool classroom was an average of 5 with no subscales less than 2 by spring 2009. 95% of the preschool classrooms in the project attained the goal.



**Want to get involved or learn more about Linking Families and Communities?**

Visit our website:  
[www.linking-families.com](http://www.linking-families.com)  
 or  
[www.empowerment.state.ia.us](http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us)  
 or  
 email Elizabeth Stanek at  
[estanek@linkingfamilies.com](mailto:estanek@linkingfamilies.com)

## The disparity of Iowa's education system

The current public investment in Iowa is:

Infants/Toddlers (0-2)	\$ 390
Preschool (3-5)	\$ 851
School age (6-18)	\$5,302
College age (19-21)	\$3,347

*Iowa Kids Count*

## Family Support and Parent Education

**How are we doing?** The agencies involved with the Family Foundations Program are currently in the process of attaining the Iowa Family Support Credential. One of the goals of the program is to reduce child abuse/neglect. This is indicated, in part, using the percent of families in the program that improve nurturing and attachment between parent(s) and child(ren).

