

CHILD CARE PROJECT

Supporting Quality Rating System & Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards

Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale

Last year 17 providers participated in the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale in Webster, Calhoun, and Pocahontas counties. The training allowed providers the tool to identify both their strengths and areas in need of improvement within their environments. Our agency was able to offer incentives towards the costs of improvements upon completion of assignments and assessments.

This rating scale with incentives also helped overcome the challenge of affordability for basic care equipment, developmental materials and structural improvements.

Providers in the area were able to purchase fencing, cribs, cots, storage lockers, sinks, outdoor play equipment, and more. One provider commented "Oh my gosh, FCCRS changed my whole world! Our new play space is way more functional. I understand the importance of displays that I never even considered before. My home is safer with new gates and more inviting for parents. The new sink downstairs promotes better hygiene and illness prevention."

Partnership for Families, Building Families & Linking Families

The Family Resource Center's Child Care Project is improving the quality of early school readiness and child care in 10 counties in west-central Iowa. The Partnership for Families covers Carroll, Audubon, Greene and Guthrie Counties, Linking Families serves Calhoun, Pocahontas, and Webster counties, and Building Families provides for the counties of Hamilton, Humboldt and Wright. Each of the units, funded by regional Empowerment grants, are performing similar tasks with common goals:

Each region is staffed with a Home Evaluation Specialist and a Child Care Education Consultant to produce measureable outcomes of more children being developmentally stimulated to enjoy the experience of learning that will return dividends their entire lives to them and their communities.

In one of the project regions, 55% of the registered providers are in 100% compliance with the Department of Human Services' registration guidelines checklist. Public Health Nurse checks of immunizations revealed 90% were up to date.

In all three regions served by Home Evaluators and Early Childhood Educational Consultants, **2506** face-to-face visits were made to 438 providers, preschools, and centers, and the **7,866** children attending those centers and providers' childcare homes are being better served because of program goals being met by those providers working with our agency.

Common goals of Early Childhood Education Consultants include:

- Providing developmentally-appropriate information and support
- Working with Department of Human Services to assist providers in meeting registration guidelines.
- Modeling and supporting developmentally appropriate practices to ensure positive adult-child interaction and learning experiences that promote school readiness.
- Promotion of professionalism through basic "best practices" training and ongoing technical support.
- Serves not only as a resource for early childhood educators and community human service organizations, but as a liaison between them.
- Encourages providers to offer special needs care, non-traditional hours, and infant care to meet the public need.
- Works with providers to establish and maintain safe, stimulating and nurturing learning environments.
- Puts early child care professionals in touch with each other to develop an infrastructure and support system.

Common goals of the Home Evaluation Specialists include:

- Implementation of the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS)
- Conduct unannounced home visits to all Registered Child Development Homes
- Collaborate with DHS staff in the home visit process and checklist results
- Assist child care providers in becoming 100% compliant with DHS checklists
- Provide ongoing technical support to home providers to include the Quality Rating Scale

