

HISTORY OF THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

The Carroll County Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse (CCCPCA) was organized as a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation by parents who recognized a need not being met – help to strengthen the family and improve the safety of children in their area. The Carroll County Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse later shortened their name to Family Resource Center (FRC) to reflect a wider service area. The first grant was awarded in the amount of \$3000 to pay child care providers for children of parents who needed a “time out” from parenting because of stress or crisis. This respite program was later supplemented with a \$500 grant to teach children about “good and bad touches” in an effort to prevent sexual abuse of children and keep them safe from predators. The Board of Directors and the Executive Director, LouAnn Mowrey, donated hundreds of hours to stretch this funding and raise local funding through donations. These two grants were renewed each year, and in 1987 a new grant enabled the agency to hire a second staff member, Jeanie Running, who assisted with coordination of a child care resource and referral program. The goal of this program was to provide parents with a central registry of area child care providers and to give providers opportunities for continuing education in early childhood education and development. This later became a regional state-wide program and the regional offices contracted with the Family Resource Center to be the delivery agency for this program in over a dozen counties in west-central Iowa. These two early leaders of the agency are still employed by the Family Resource Center providing management and direct services nearly three decades later.

In 1989 the Family Resource Center became one of four original sites in Iowa to provide crisis child care services, and it was the first agency in the state of Iowa to use only registered day care homes for these services. An expansion of this Crisis Care and the Parent Time Out programs came from Prevent Child Abuse Iowa in 1991. This program gave parents of children with special needs an option of respite care. However, this was a limited program, and the leadership of the FRC set out to find other funding sources for respite care of special needs children. The Iowa Department of Human Services created a waiver program in 1995 that would provide funding for the care of special needs children and adults. Supported Community Living services were also obtained to enhance the opportunities for home community based services to the disabled population wanting to live in their homes as independently as possible.

The Family Resource Center recognized another support opportunity for families in 1998 when it applied for grant funding to help families on public assistance improve and enhance their ability to become self-sufficient. The Family Development Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program is a competitive grant program with an annual contractual agreement between the FRC and Youth and Shelter Services of Iowa. The goal of the FaDSS program is to work with this sector of the population in overcoming barriers that were interfering with their ability to rise above their circumstances and prevent them from reoccurring.

Empowerment projects were added to the Family Resource Center services in 2000 was needed to serve a community and social need for more uniformity and training opportunities to improve the early childhood education provided in day care and pre-school settings. Under multiple grants and collaborations of various regional empowerment groups, consultants who specialize in early development skills and techniques provide visits and training to child care providers and pre-school teachers so that all children receive the necessary opportunities to be successful lifelong learners.

The Family Resource Center continued the Happy Bear program until the 1990's and recently replaced it with a Care for Kids program to address the needs of healthy and safe childhood sexuality education. 2007-2008 is the second year for this program, sponsored and funded by Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, which is a state-level organization under the National Organization for the Prevention of Child Abuse.