Early Childhood Education and Support

Did you know as highlighted by a Governor’s Task Force and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach COVID-19 Recovery Initiatives, the coronavirus pandemic increased existing challenges to our state’s childcare system? The need to support childcare professionals, especially in their quest for professional development has never been greater - or more challenging.

The demand for quality childcare continues to rise as children are spending more time in care outside the family. Iowa currently ranks third in the nation for the percentage of young children with all parents in the household employed. More than 70 percent of Iowa children from birth through age 6 receive some form of childcare on a regular basis from individuals other than their parents. Evidence indicates that professional training and continuing education for childcare providers and teachers correlate with high-quality care environments for children and improved outcomes for future academic success.

The Family Wellbeing specialists have provided training on quality environments utilizing the Environmental Rating Scale series. The eight-hour course is focused on what infant / toddler / preschool and school age classrooms look like and how quality practices are measured. Health and safety, relationships and interactions between staff and children, and access to quality learning materials are all included on the scale.

Through the training series early educators self-assess their practices related to indicators and create improvement plans based on their personal strengths and areas of possible improvement.

Upcoming Events

Remote Work Certification Program Online More information

A Journey through Parkinson’s Disease (Virtual) More information

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (Virtual) February 8- March 15 More information

Our Bookshelf (Virtual) PEC Linn County- Jan. 12, 19, 26 & Feb. 2, 9, 16 More Information Delaware County- Feb 2, 9, 16, 23 (12PM) More Information

Your Money, Your Goals (Virtual) February 23 More information

Strengthening Families 10-14 Program
Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24, Mar. 3, 10, 17 DeWitt More Information

Youth Mental Health First Aid Virtual: Feb. 25 February 26 – Clinton County

Healthy Relationships Facilitator Training (Open to county staff) March 1 – Urbandale

Elevate Facilitator Training March 2 – Urbandale (Open to county staff)

Stay Independent Series Virtual Starting Feb. 15 More Information
The following are changes that the early educators discussed making because of what they learned in the class:

- My boss purchased more musical instruments
- Have moved around the centers to keep the noisy centers and quiet centers away from each other
- Discussed with staff how important interaction is with children in all centers not just art or dramatic play areas
- More cultural toys have been added
- More positive communication with the children; Mealtime conversations and others that we have with the children have made things very enjoyable

**Upcoming Events**

**ServSafe**  
February 15 – DeWitt, Vinton  
February 22 – Cedar Rapids  
[More information]

**Growing Up Wild**  
February 4-Dubuque (Private)

**The Science of Parenting:**  
Understanding Research and Reality (Virtual)  
February 24 at 7PM  
[More Information]

**The Science of Parenting:**  
Positive Discipline (Virtual)  
March 3 at 7PM  
[More Information]

**What About Me? My Wellbeing**  
February 3, 10, 17, 24 – Muscatine  
[More Information]

**Powerful Tools for Caregivers-Facilitator Training (Virtual)**  
January 31- February 4  
[More Information]

**Strengthening Families Program 10-14 Facilitator Training**  
February 16-18 Cedar Rapids  
[More Information]

**Fresh Conversations**  
February 10 – Vinton or Virtual

**Childcare Provider Trainings**  
February 22 Virtual

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**Human Sciences Resources**

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https://www.extension.iastate.edu/news/

- Science of Parenting podcasts
- Spend Smart. Eat Smart.
- AnswerLine
- Iowa Concern Hotline
- Finding Answers Now
- ISU Extension and Outreach Blogs

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