FY17 Grant Information

Reach for the Stars Quality Improvement Grants
Adair, Dallas, Madison and Warren Counties

We are pleased to announce Iowa State University Extension and Outreach has received grant funding from the Early Childhood Iowa 4RKids Board and United Way Women’s Leadership Connection to support child care programs in quality improvements. You are encouraged to apply if you meet the criteria for eligibility. Grants are limited and will be awarded as funding allows.

New Guidelines. New Process. Read Carefully. Please take time to thoroughly read the grant requirements and process as several changes have been made in order to comply with funder guidelines. Grants will now be competitive, with three grant levels of funding available to qualified candidates. Grants will be reviewed and awards made by a third party committee of early childhood professionals using a scoring method.

Family Child Care Home Eligibility Requirements
- Registered by Department of Human Services.
- Completed the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale training series, unless this is your first Reach for the Stars Quality Improvement grant.
- Serve children 0 – 5 years of age.
- Have a current QRS rating with the Department of Human Services, unless this is your first time to receive a grant.
- Be actively involved in improving the quality of your program and be willing to work with ISU Extension Staff to develop an action plan.
- Provide care for at least 2 children not directly related to the provider.
- Submitted all receipts for previously awarded quality improvement grants and be in good standing with the grant process.

Child Care Center and Preschool Eligibility Requirements
- Full license by Department of Human Services and not be a core program receiving other government funds.
- Completed the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale and/or Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale training series, unless this is your first time Reach For The Stars grant.
- Serve children 0 – 5 years of age.
- Hold a current QRS rating with the Department of Human Services, unless this is your first time to receive a grant.
- Be actively involved in improving the quality of your program and be willing to work with ISU Extension staff to develop an action plan.
- Submitted all receipts for previously awarded quality improvement grants and be in good standing with the grant process.
Levels of Funding
3 levels of funding available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Level 1 Awareness Grant</th>
<th>Level 2 Developing Grant</th>
<th>Level 3 Maintaining Grant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount Available to</td>
<td>Up to $1,000</td>
<td>Up to $5,000</td>
<td>Up to $2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Development Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount Available to</td>
<td>Up to $1,000</td>
<td>Up to $3,000</td>
<td>Up to $2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preschools</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount Available to</td>
<td>Up to $1,500</td>
<td>Up to $10,000</td>
<td>Up to $3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Care Centers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ERS Training needed</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>FCCERS-R, ITERS-R, or ECERS-R or ECERS 3</td>
<td>FCCERS-R, ITERS-R, or ECERS-R or ECERS 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QRS Plans</td>
<td>Intend to apply before 7-1-2017</td>
<td>Current QRS with DHS at level 1, 2, 3, or 4</td>
<td>Current QRS with DHS at level 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool to use to determine Item Request</td>
<td>Steps for Quality Checklist</td>
<td>Level 2 Excerpt ERS score sheet</td>
<td>ERS full score sheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grant Procedure
- Child care providers will fill out a one page Intent to Apply postmarked by Friday, October 14, 2016. Mail to: Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Attn. Myra Willms 28059 Fairground Road Adel, IA 50003-4406
- Upon receiving the Intent to apply, ISU staff will contact each child care provider and set up a visit to ensure providers understand the steps to the grant application, set goals, and determine a plan of action to achieve success. Staff will make as many visits as necessary to help providers.
- At the visit, providers will be given a grant application packet and ISU staff will review the forms and explain the process. The provider will then fill out the grant application and submit it along with supporting documents postmarked by Tuesday, January 31, 2017.
  Mail to: Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Attn. Myra Willms 28059 Fairground Road Adel, IA 50003-4406
- All applications will be given to a third party grant committee made up of early childhood professionals outside the county to review and score. Grant awards will be made.
- Grant applicants will be notified of award and funding distribution timeline in writing.
- Funding will be dispersed by April 2017.
- Purchases must be made within 60 days of receipt of the funding check.
- A follow up visit will be made to pick up receipts, view items purchased, and see how they are being implemented in the program. Staff will also verify an increase in post grant scores on the ERS scoresheet and discuss future goals for the program. Recipients are asked to provide a thank you note to the funder in appreciation along with a success story of how this has made a difference in your program.
Limitations
  o Providers must only purchase approved items with grant funds.
  o ABSOLUTELY NO ADDITIONS OR SUBSTITUTIONS WILL BE ALLOWED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.
  o All grant recipients must turn in receipts for all purchases and it must total up to full grant amount.
  o Recipients must purchase only new items.
  o Any major structure improvement such as a fence, egress windows, or doors, must have a bid/estimate submitted with the grant application. Estimates should be detailed to include all materials.
  o If the recipient’s child care business closes or the license/registration is dropped within three years, ISU Extension staff should be contacted, so grant items can be redistributed to other providers. **Selling of grant items is prohibited.**

ISU Extension staff responsible for child care quality improvement grants have been trained in ITERS-R, ECERS-R and FCCERS-R. These staff are able to offer on-site education about the ERS however have not met the inter-rater reliability standard required for the official ERS observation assessment. To obtain information about the official assessment conducted by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, please contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral Consultant.

Contact your ISU Extension staff with any grant application questions. We are here to help you:

**Myra Willms**  
Early Childhood Quality Enhancement Educator  
(515) 771-9214  
mwillms@iastate.edu

**Val Cameron**  
Preschool Enrichment Coordinator  
(515) 971-2977  
valc@iastate.edu

... and justice for all

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