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**BUILDING ON THE PROMISE:
PROFILES OF STATE INITIATIVES TO
BUILD ON EARLY HEAD START**

INITIATIVE SUMMARY

The Iowa Early Head Start Pilot Project uses partnerships between Early Head Start grantees and family child care providers and family, friend, and neighbor caregivers to expand the reach of Early Head Start for pregnant women and families with children birth to age three. Grantees follow federal Head Start Program Performance Standards for the home-based Early Head Start model, including comprehensive services, home visitation, and regular socialization opportunities for children. The pilot was initiated in 2006 due to an administrative and state agency decision that resulted from collaborative meetings between the state's Head Start—State Collaboration Officer and the state's Child Care Administrator.

APPROACH USED TO BUILD ON EHS

✓ Support Early Head Start-child care partnerships to improve the quality of care by delivering EHS services in family child care and family, friend, and neighbor settings.

PROGRAM

Child and Family Eligibility
- **Family Income**: Children must be from families earning less than 140% of the federal poverty level.
- **Parental Work Status:** No requirements
- **Child Age**: Birth to age three
- **Other Risk Factors**: None
- **Length of Eligibility**: Continuous once enrolled, until age three
- **Expectant Mothers Served**: Yes

Number Served by State Initiative: 54 children birth to age three and 4 expectant mothers in FY 2007.

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Number Served by Federally Funded Early Head Start: In comparison to the state initiative, federally funded EHS served 1,045 children birth to age three and expectant mothers (according to federal Program Information Report data for 2006).

Eligible Providers
- Federal Head Start grantees
- Federal Early Head Start grantees
- Any organization with a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an Early Head Start or Head Start agency

Co-pay
> No co-pay required

Program Standards
- **Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards Required?** All participating agencies must meet the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards for the home-based model, in which care is provided in the home. The family child care providers and family, friend, and neighbor caregivers who are partners in the program are not required to comply with the federal standards.
- **Additional State Standards**: Family child care providers must comply with state child care licensing requirements if they care for five or more children.

Do other children besides those enrolled in the EHS model benefit when services are delivered in child care settings?
> This is dependent upon the nature of the services being delivered and their method of delivery. For example, all children in the child care setting generally participate in group socialization experiences.

Length of Day/Year
> Since the initiative is a home-based model, it does not include a center-based early care and education component. However, the home-based programs must provide one home visit per week per family (a minimum of 32 home visits per year) lasting for a minimum of 1.5 hours each. The programs must also provide two group socialization activities per month for each child (a minimum of 16 group socialization activities each year).

FUNDING AND SUPPORTS

Sources and Budget for Fiscal Year 2007 (unless otherwise noted)
> $400,000 from the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) quality set-aside. In FY 2008, Iowa will use $400,000 of state general revenue to fund the pilot program.

What support and technical assistance does the state offer?

The state provides technical assistance to programs and encourages all participating programs to take the Iowa Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC). Additional technical assistance and networking sessions are provided through the Iowa Head Start Association, as is a yearly networking session for state EHS grantees.

What incentives are there for child care providers to participate?

While funds are not required to be passed through to the partnering home-based providers, the providers do receive focused technical assistance to improve their quality of care, and are connected to the state's system of early childhood services, professional development, and quality rating and improvement system (QRIS).

GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

What state agency administers the funding for this initiative?

Iowa Department of Education

How does the funding flow to local providers?

The Iowa Department of Education contracts with participating agencies that are selected through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Funds are not required to be passed through to the partnering family child care providers and family, friend, and neighbor caregivers.

Can a child in the state initiative also have a child care subsidy?

Yes. The grant received by participating programs is intended to pay for the costs of providing comprehensive services, including technical assistance and site visits to the partnering child care providers. The grant does not pay for the costs of child care. Eligibility requirements for the pilot project are aligned with the child care subsidy eligibility requirements so that families receiving subsidies for home-based care can also benefit from the increased quality of care resulting from the pilot project.

Does the state coordinate with federally funded Head Start agencies to conduct any of the activities?

The state coordinates with federally funded Head Start agencies to provide technical assistance to the state grantees. They also coordinate to encourage the grantees to take the Iowa Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC).

Does the state coordinate with the Head Start-State Collaboration Office to conduct activities?

The pilot project is co-led by the state child care subsidy agency and the Head Start—State Collaboration Office and the offices consequently coordinate to plan the initiative, select programs to participate, monitor program quality, provide

technical assistance and professional development to grantees, and foster relationships between the pilot project and other state initiatives.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

What state agencies are responsible for monitoring, and how often is on-site monitoring conducted in a year?

The Head Start—State Collaboration Office monitors the project. Grantees submit quarterly and annual reports to the Head Start—State Collaboration Office on finances and program output. The state is considering contracting with federal agency reviewers to conduct evaluations of partnering agencies while they are reviewing federal EHS programs.

Each partner home-based child care provider is evaluated by an independent assessor using the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS) at the beginning and end of the program year. EHS programs work with providers to develop a quality improvement plan, which is jointly shared by the child care provider and the grantee.

Are there specific measurement tools used to monitor services provided?

Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS)

Are programs also monitored by federal agencies?

Not at this time

Has the state evaluated the effectiveness of the state EHS initiative?

No. However, the state uses the year-end data collected from programs to assess whether the full array of Early Head Start comprehensive services are being delivered through the program.

Are state funded programs required to report data to the state?

Programs provide quarterly reports and an annual report to the Head Start—State Collaboration Office.

SOURCES

Interviewed
Tom Rendon, Iowa Head Start-State Collaboration Coordinator; April 2007 (updated April 2008)

Online Information
- The Iowa Department of Education has information on Early Head Start programs and initiatives in the state.
- Iowa Early Head Start Pilot Project Request for Proposals.
- The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) has individual state profiles analyzing the Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) data from 2006.