Quality Matters: Moving Iowa’s Early Childhood Programs to Excellence

Iowa AEYC Spring Leadership Institute

April 16, 2011

As leaders in Iowa’s early care and education programs, we are all committed to providing quality services for Iowa’s young children and their families. Our programs are working to achieve NAEYC, NAA or NAFCC Accreditation, to meet the Head Start or Quality Preschool Program Standards, to earn a high level in Iowa’s Quality Rating System, and to support quality improvements—every day in every way in our early care and education work.

Join us as Linda Hassan Anderson, Senior Director of the NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation, leads us through a day of information sharing, dialogue and reflection about our journeys to best practices.

Additional information can be found on pages 29-31.

Who should attend? Anyone who sees themselves in a leadership role: Center directors, teachers, home providers, trainers, and consultants, college instructors, ECI and state leadership.
The theme for this issue of the newsletter is **accreditation**. We welcome your feedback! rhonda@iowaaeyc.org

**Become a fan of Iowa AEYC on Facebook!**

**Iowa AEYC Grants and Scholarships for Members**

To request an application or for additional information, contact Rhonda at 515-331-8000 ext .12 or email rhonda@iowaaeyc.org, or check our website at www.iowaaeyc.org.

**Deadline for submission**
- Accreditation: March 30
- Conference Scholarship: September 1
- Continuing Education: August 1
- Lois E. Dell: July 1
- Tony Lacy Membership Scholarship: March 1

**Is Your Membership Expiring?**

Visit the NAEYC website at http://www.naeyc.org/members/member.asp today and check on your membership expiration date.

**Membership Dues Amounts**
- Regular $55, Comprehensive $95, Student $40

**Do we have your correct email address?**

Please update us by sending it to rhonda@iowaaeyc.org.

Attention all members! Did you know? Now you can give to Iowa AEYC 3 different ways:

1. If you are a state employee you may give through their One Gift Campaign. Just go to the following website: http://das.hre.iowa.gov/onegift/index.html

2. If you are a federal employee there is a Northern Lights Combined Federal Campaign where you will find our agency listed.

3. You may also give to your local United Way designating our agency for donation.

At the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children, our mission is to be a leader, resource and advocate for quality early childhood education.

The Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children Newsletter is published quarterly. Articles published in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of Iowa AEYC as a whole, they reflect the opinions of the authors who have written them. Articles for the Spring 2011 Newsletter are due May 1, 2011 Send articles to: Iowa AEYC 5525 Meredith Drive, Suite F, Des Moines, IA 50310.
Upcoming Events

- **Iowa AEYC Governing Board Meetings**, April 30, July 15-16, November 12. [www.iowaaeyc.org](http://www.iowaaeyc.org)
- **Southwestern Community College and Green Valley Chapter of Iowa AEYC Conference, All American Play**, March 5, Creston
- **Dubuque Chapter of Iowa AEYC Training, Moving & Learning: How My Body Moves**, March 10, Dubuque, to register [https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/](https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/)
- **Iowa AEYC Play Experience**, March 19, Decorah, to register [https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/](https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/)
- **Family Child Care Association's annual Spring Family Child Care Conference- Caring for Iowa's Future**, March 19, Quality Inn and Suites, Iowa City, for additional information [http://www.iowafamilychildcare.org/conference.htm](http://www.iowafamilychildcare.org/conference.htm)
- **Black Hawk Chapter of Iowa AEYC Conference, See How They Grow**, March 26, Waterloo, for additional information brandy.smith@episervice.org
- **4Cs Child Care Resource and Referral and Iowa City Chapter of Iowa AEYC, 4Cs Early Childhood Spring Conference**, April 2, Iowa City, for additional information [http://www.iowa4cs.com/training-calendar/4cs-spring-early-childhood-mini-conference](http://www.iowa4cs.com/training-calendar/4cs-spring-early-childhood-mini-conference)
- **Iowa AEYC Play Experience**, April 9, Sioux City, to register [https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/](https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/)
- **WOYC**, April 10-16, theme Early Years Are Learning Years, [http://www.naeyc.org/woyc](http://www.naeyc.org/woyc)
- **Iowa AEYC Spring Leadership Training, Quality Matters: Moving Iowa’s Early Childhood Programs to Excellence**, April 16, Des Moines, to register [https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/](https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/)
- **Iowa Voices for Quality Child Care & Iowa City Chapter of Iowa AEYC conference, Helping Children Become Global Citizens: Practical Tips and Practices for ECE Teachers**, August 6, Iowa City, to register [https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/](https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/)
- **Iowa AEYC State Conference**, October 14-15, Holiday Inn, Airport, Des Moines, for additional information info@iowaaeyc.org
The 2011 Week of the Young Child will be held April 10-16 and the theme for 2011 is **Early Years Are Learning Years**

**On Your Marks....... Get Set...............GO**

I am always amazed how it can seem that an Iowa winter can drag on and on, and yet before we know it April is just around the corner. Once again, spring is fast approaching and the race is on to finalize our plans for WOYC 2011. The purpose of the Week of the Young Child is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families, and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

This year WOYC will be held April 10-16, and the theme is Early Years Are Learning Years. There is no doubt that this year more than ever that our voices need to be heard about the importance of Quality Early Care and Education. We need to stop and ask ourselves does our community know that approximately 13 million infants, toddlers, and preschool children are regularly in non-parental care in the United States? Does our community know that 80% of all brain development takes place before the age of 5? Do our Early Care and Education providers know how important and valued they are? Do families feel supported and are they aware of services available to them?

If you are in need of additional resources to plan your WOYC, celebrating event planning guides, activity suggestions, and key points can be found at [http://www.naeyc.org/woyc](http://www.naeyc.org/woyc). At Iowa AEYC we would love to know what you are planning. Please take a moment and let us know your plans for the 2011 WOYC. Iowa AEYC looks forward to celebrating with you and would like to thank you for your work dedication, and never quitting the race to quality Early Care and Education.

Anne Plagge
Iowa AEYC
Resources/WOYC Chair
“Save-the-date” announcement

Month of the Young Child Celebration
for children, families and early childhood professionals

Saturday, April 9th, 2011
10 am to Noon in the “Suess Room”
Cedar Rapids Public Library-Westdale

Planned activities:

- Children’s art exhibit
- Music and movement for children
- Light refreshments
- Story Time
- Children's entertainers
- Visit by storybook characters

Sponsored by the Cedar Rapids Chapter of the Iowa Association of Young Children and the Cedar Rapids Public Library.
FREE COMMUNITY CONCERT
Featuring “Chad and Terri”
Chad and Terri Sigafus/Timberwind Records http://www.timberwindrecords.com/

Saturday, April 2nd, 2011
4:30 p.m.
Fairfield Middle School, Fairfield, Iowa
Appropriate for young children and their families.
All children must be accompanied by an adult.

A Training Workshop, “Transitioning using Music and Movement”, for Early Care Providers will be held before the concert from 1:30 – 2:30 at the St. Mary’s Catholic Church, 3100 W. Madison, Fairfield, Iowa. The training will be facilitated by Rolling Prairie Chapter of Iowa AEYC and Chad and Terri will provide music accompaniment.

Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Providers will earn 1 approved training hour. Register on the Iowa Child Care Provider Training Registry at https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/.
Providers are encouraged to attend the concert to see “music and movement in action”.

Sponsors: Rolling Prairie Chapter of Iowa AEYC & Child Care Resource & Referral
Funding provided by: AIM Early Childhood Area of Jefferson & Keokuk Counties
Quality Matters:
Moving Iowa’s Early Childhood Programs to Excellence

April 16, 2011
9:00-4:00
Holiday Inn, Merle Hay Road, Des Moines
Featured speaker:
Linda Hassan Anderson
Senior Director, NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation

Join us if you are employed by or supporting a program seeking NAEYC or NAFCC Accreditation, meeting Head Start or Quality Preschool Program Standards, earning a high level in Iowa’s Quality Rating System, or otherwise seeking to make or support those making quality improvements in an early care and education setting.

Special events will include:

Week of the Young Child Recognition
Recognition for NAEYC Accredited Programs
Celebration of 25 years of NAEYC Accreditation

Iowa AEYC
5525 Meredith Drive, Suite F, Des Moines, IA 50310
info@iowaeyc.org  www.iowaeyc.org
Quality Matters: Moving Iowa's Early Childhood Programs to Excellence
Linda Hassan Anderson

As leaders in Iowa's early care and education programs, we are all committed to providing quality services for Iowa's young children and their families. Our programs working to achieve NAEYC, NAA or NAFCC Accreditation, to meet the Head Start or Quality Preschool Program Standards, to earn a high level in Iowa's Quality Rating System, and to support quality improvements—every day in every way in our early care and education work.

1:00—2:15 Facilitated Breakouts
For the breakout time in the afternoon, you will be able to join one facilitated discussion group. Please pick the group that best fits your program, or the programs that you serve.

1. On the path to NAEYC Accreditation—Linda Hassan Anderson, NAEYC
2. NAEYC Accredited Programs—Leann Andre, Consultant and Trainer, Child Care Resource & Referral of Central Iowa, & Iowa AEYC Governing Board member
3. National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation—Brenda O'Halloran, Accredited Child Development Home Provider
4. Iowa Quality Rating System —Two breakout groups, one for preschool/center programs and one for child development home providers —Emily Brott and Mary Janssen, Child Care Resource and Referral Quality Rating System Specialist
5. Head Start standards —Cathy Swackhamer/Brenda Spurgeon—Iowa Head Start Training & Technical Assistance Office
6. Iowa’s Quality Preschool Program Standards—Penny Milburn/Judy Russell, Early Childhood Consultants, Iowa Department of Education
7. Kindergarten through Grade Three teachers, school age care providers, and administrators—Brian Kingrey, Kindergarten Teacher, Sigourney Public Schools & Iowa AEYC Board Member

2:30-4:00
Where do we go from here? Our charge as leaders moving to quality,
Quality Matters:  
*Moving Iowa’s Early Childhood Programs to Excellence*  
April 16, 2011  
Registration form

**Registration Fee:** Iowa AEYC Members $60  Non Members $85

Please register on the Iowa Child Care Provider Training Registry website [https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/](https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/).

Complete this registration form and mail it with your payment to Iowa AEYC.

- Registration deadline April 11, 2011.
- Refunds of registration will be considered, if received by April 6.
- Refunds will not be given after April 6.
- To request a special diet lunch contact Rhonda at rhonda@iowaaeyc.org or 515-331-8000 ext. 12 by April 7.

Send this registration form and check payable to: Iowa AEYC  
5525 Meredith Drive, Suite F  
Des Moines, IA 50310

Name:__________________________________________________________

Address:________________________________________________________

City:________________________________State:______Zip Code:__________

Daytime Phone: (_____)__________________________________________

E-mail:__________________________________________________________

Position:_________________________Employer:________________________

Please check any or all of the quality initiatives in which your program participates, or that you are considering. If you are not in a program, but rather serve as an instructor or consultant, check all that you support.

- [ ] NAEYC accreditation
- [ ] NAA Accreditation
- [ ] NAFCC accreditation
- [ ] Head Start standards
- [ ] Quality Rating System (homes)
- [ ] Quality Rating System (centers)
- [ ] Quality Preschool Program Standards
Iowa City Chapter of Iowa AEYC
Submitted by Nancy Lilienthal, Chapter President

The Iowa City Chapter met at the Wig and Pen February 8th to socialize and plan the WOYC in April. We had pizza and beverage and talked about the Iowa with regard to the cuts with the preschool and Empowerment. Our Spring conference will take place at the Quality Inn on April 2, 2011 in Iowa City. Our celebration for the Week of the Young Child will be at Sycamore Mall on Saturday April 9, from 10 am until 12 noon. We will have many community helpers there to promote safe child care and should be very informational to parents of small children.

Des Moines Chapter of Iowa AEYC
Submitted by Jennifer Reynolds, Chapter President

The DM Chapter is holding a Cinco De Mayo Networking fiesta at the restaurant, El Chisme, 225 5th, West Des Moines, in Valley Junction on May 5th. Please plan to attend and learn about how to get more involved with your association as a member!

The DM Chapter co-sponsored with the SCI and the Downtown Business and Education Alliance a Teacher Academy has begun planning for a new series of Project Approach training with Dr. Judy Helm. Dr. Judy Harris Helm was the facilitator for the 4 part series on Project Approach.

The Teacher Academy had 35 participants; those participants were program administrators to classroom teachers that reached a range of children from 2 year olds to 1st grade. This effort culminated on December 5th with an Open House for the teachers and their classroom families. The Open House provided an opportunity for the families to visit the Science Center of Iowa and celebrate the learning that happened in their classrooms. There is an outgrowth group from the Teacher Academy attending the Illinois Project Sharing held in Davenport Iowa on April 2nd. Teacher Academy planning committee has begun securing funds to develop a new series of Project Approach training with Dr. Judy Helm.

The following individuals were named as Head Start Region VII Award Winners from Iowa. The awards have been forwarded on to National Head Start Association for consideration at the national level. Region VII Award winners will be recognized at the upcoming R7HSA Annual Meeting planned for Wednesday, April 6th; 1:00pm-3:00 pm at the Downtown Marriott Hotel in Kansas City.

**Administrator of the Year Award—Head Start Program Director**
Dianne Casto
North Iowa Community Action Organization

**Support Staff of the Year Award—Administrative Assistant/Secretary**
Michelle Weepie
Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Inc.

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**Iowa AEYC in new partnership with Iowa Head Start Association**

Iowa AEYC is pleased to announce that we are now providing services to the Iowa Head Start Association, assisting them with facilitation of their training and networking needs, and providing some communication and administrative assistance to their Board and leadership. Iowa AEYC team members Ashley Blake and Kristyn Lemberg will work with others from our staff to provide this support. Give us a call if you have any questions!
Your AEYC Seeks Leadership

The Iowa AEYC Governing Board will be holding elections during the summer of 2011 for two Governing Board positions, President-Elect and Secretary. The President-Elect position requires previous Iowa AEYC Governing Board experience, and is a four-year term (one year as president-elect, two years as president, and one year as past-president). The Secretary position is a three year term. Those elected to both positions begin their terms in October. Other positions, including some local representation to the state board from our 14 chapters, may also become available. Contact Barb Merrill bmerrill@iowaaeyc.org for more information, or to suggest a nominee.

In addition, NAEYC is seeking applicants for the national NAEYC Governing Board positions, for terms beginning in June 2012. To apply or for more information, go to http://www.naeyc.org/gb/2012-election-application

Award Nominees Sought

Every year, the Iowa AEYC Governing Board awards two special honors at the October conference, our Children’s Champion Award and the Friend of Young Children award. Nominations are now being collected - any Iowa AEYC member is welcome to nominate someone! We need your suggestions. Go to http://www.iowaaeyc.org/about-us.cfm for more information.
Planning continues for the new AmeriCorps Project. The goal of this work is to provide AmeriCorps members to child care and Head Start facilities in rural, Western Iowa to support programs on their journey towards higher quality care. December and January were spent doing research about community needs, contacting key partners, and holding meetings in preparation for writing the needs assessment for the implementation RFP due at the end of March.

Initial planning has identified three areas for this project which are clustered around: Northwest Iowa – Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, and Palo Alto counties; West Central Iowa – Crawford, Carroll, Greene, Boone, and Dallas counties; and Southern Iowa – Clarke, Decatur, Ringgold and Union counties. These locations were selected based upon multiple factors such as existing partnerships, participation in the T.E.A.C.H. program, and county median income level.

Meetings were in each area at the end of January to gather input, answer questions, and build enthusiasm for the project. Following the community meetings, a pre-application survey was sent to programs to assess their level of interest and better understand how programs would utilize an AmeriCorps member. Feedback so far has been very positive and communities seem eager to participate in this program.

Ashley Blake
AmeriCorps Coordinator
Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children

News from the Council for Professional Recognition about CDA…

· Revised 3rd edition Competency Standards books are now available for the Infant/Toddler and Preschool settings.
· Applications are now accepted on a rolling basis, and verification visits will occur within 90 days. There will be no more quarterly deadlines.
· Effective Sept. 1, 2011, resource file materials must be consistent with requirements from Competency Standards books dated no earlier than 2006.

Contact Stacie Steveson at stacie@iowaeaeyc.org if you have any questions.

As in life, when implementing a program, it’s important to look back as we continue to plan ahead. This month, we looked at some of our T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA results since T.E.A.C.H. began offering scholarships in May 2003. What we found surprised even us!

Since 2003, over 1200 people (non-duplicated), fully employed in child care and preschool, have entered at least one T.E.A.C.H. contract agreement.

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<th>TYPE OF CONTRACT</th>
<th>OVERALL TOTAL PARTICIPATION</th>
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<td>CDA assessment-only scholarships</td>
<td>548</td>
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<td>Associate degree (enrolled in 9-15 credits annually at a community college, working towards CDA, Associates’ degree, or general education requirements towards bachelors’ degree)</td>
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<td>Bachelor degree (enrolled in 9-20 credits annually at a 4-year college or university, working towards a bachelors’ degree in early childhood education, an elementary education degree with an early childhood endorsement, Birth-age 8 certification (endorsement 100), or a stand-alone endorsement added to an already existing teaching license)</td>
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**ALL PROGRAM RECIPIENTS**

| CDA credentials Earned: | 461 |
| Associates Earned: | 75  |
| Bachelors Earned: | 4   |
| Endorsements Earned: | 29  |
| Associate Credits Taken: | 17,252 |
| Associate Credits Completed: | 15,066 |
| Associate GPA: | 3.49 |
| Bachelor Credits Taken: | 2,404.5 |
| Bachelor Credits Completed: | 1,752.5 |
| Bachelor GPA: | 3.78 |
| Overall Credits Taken: | 19,403 |
| Overall Credits Completed: | 16,819 |
| Overall GPA: | 3.48 |

**NUMBER OF T.E.A.C.H. 12-MONTH AND CDA ASSESSMENT CONTRACTS COMPLETED**

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*Wage increases vary on T.E.A.C.H., as only about half of our recipients earn raises. Home providers earn compensation bonuses of $350—$600 per year, depending on their educational level. We offer centers and preschools a bonus model option, in case providing annual raises is difficult in their Human Resource structure.

T.E.A.C.H. is accepting applications for new participants wanting to earn early childhood degrees, CDA credentials, or early childhood teaching endorsements. Go to our website (www.iowaaeyc.org) for an application, and call us (515-331-8000 ext. 10) with your questions!  T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA is a licensed program of Child Care Services Association.
The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has long been concerned with leadership issues in early childhood. NAEYC has, throughout its history, offered a variety of leadership opportunities to its membership and others through efforts such as participation in advisory groups for position statement development; consulting editors for peer review of journal articles and books; and board service at local, state and national levels. A couple of years ago NAEYC launched the Building a Lasting Legacy Campaign to raise additional funds to further our leadership efforts. The Legacy Leader Fellows Program is an outgrowth of that Campaign. NAEYC is pleased to be able to extend its leadership development work using enrichment fellowships in partnership with existing early childhood leadership development programs around the country. Go to the NAEYC website at http://www.naeyc.org/getinvolved/fellowship for additional information and an application.

**Fellowship Eligibility**

1. Legacy Leader Fellowship applicants must have been accepted into a NAEYC-Recognized Leadership Development Program.

2. NAEYC members in good standing are encouraged to complete the Legacy Leader Fellowship Application.

3. Eligible applicants must provide a letter from their employer approving the applicant’s participation in the year-long Legacy Leader Fellowship.

4. Applicants must have at least a baccalaureate degree and 5 years of experience in the field.

Applicants will be considered not only from traditional early childhood education sources (i.e., teachers, program administrators, child care resource and referral counselors, faculty, and trainers), but also others linked by their endeavors to the field such as individuals from business, policy making, and nonprofit management.

**Legacy Leader Fellowship Award**

1. Fellows will receive a financial award of up to $10,000 for expenses related to participation in one of the NAEYC-Recognized Leadership Development Programs. Fellowship awards may vary in amount due to the unique nature of the leadership development programs and the specific needs of each Fellow. Although financial need is not a condition of eligibility, NAEYC seeks to maximize resources to the greatest extent possible among the leadership development program, NAEYC, and any support the Fellow’s employer may be able to provide.

2. Fellows will receive additional support from NAEYC to participate in NAEYC’s National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development and the Annual Conference.

3. Fellows will receive mentoring support from the Legacy Leader Fellows Program Coordinator, Dr. Martha Munoz.
The Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation

The Terri Lynne Lokoff/Children’s TYLENOL® National Child Care Teacher Awards™ is presented annually to child care teachers from around the country who apply pursuant to an application process. Winners are selected based on an educational, age appropriate project they designed for their classroom.

Each award recipient receives funds to implement the project, plus an individual cash award to acknowledge their dedication to the profession. One teacher is selected from among the recipients who stands out as the best among the best and receives the Helene Marks Award as the National Child Care Teacher of the Year and an additional cash grant. All recipients are invited guests of the Foundation at the awards ceremony held each spring. By honoring our award recipients, we are calling attention to the value these special, caring people add to our society and, in fact, we are honoring all in the field of early care and education.

The National Child Care Teacher Awards are made possible by the sponsorship of McNeil Consumer Healthcare, the makers of Children’s TYLENOL®.

Proudly Announces the 2011 Iowa Recipients of the Terri Lynne Lokoff/Children's TYLENOL® National Child Care Teacher Awards™

Todyanna Frakes, Apple Tree Children’s Center in West Des Moines, her project is Welcome to the World of Science and First Discoveries.

Jennifer Miller, Apple Tree Children’s Center in Urbandale, her project is Fun in the Sun– or Not.

William Morris, Apple Tree Children’s Center in Johnston, his project is The Backup Plan.

Brittney Sharp, Apple Tree Children’s Center in Iowa City her project is Literacy Integration.

Congratulations to all of the winners!

Current demands being made on early childhood programs leave many teachers and program directors feeling overwhelmed as they try to meet the daily needs of the children, keep the parents satisfied and implement all these new programs and standards! Are all these program and standards important? If so, how can they be managed so that they do not distract from the daily work with the children – the last thing any teacher wants is to see “paper work” take precedence over their time with the children.

In our field, the word “accreditation” is, for many, automatically associated with NAEYC accreditation or NAFCC accreditation. However, when one looks up the meaning of accreditation, synonyms such as “certification,” “authorization” and “official approval” are given. I think then, that it is useful to think of accreditation in much broader terms.

One aspect of professionalism is a commitment to accreditation. While accreditation is an external recognition of achievement, the commitment and motivation needs to be an internal drive for excellence if the changes are going to be sustainable. Accreditation provides assurance to parents and the community that a program is engaged in continuous review and improvement of its quality, and that it meets key quality benchmarks in the profession. In Iowa we have a number of options available to programs wanting to get started on the accreditation pathway: Home-based programs may begin by becoming ChildNet certified, then consider the Iowa Quality Rating System and ultimately the National Family Child Care Association Accreditation.

Center-based and preschool programs have the Iowa Quality Rating System, the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, the Head Start Standards and the National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation.

In our work with young children we all know how important it is to break tasks down into smaller, manageable “chunks.” On a daily basis we see the power of ‘baby steps’. I believe we need to apply these principles to accreditation: consider your own unique program and choose a realistic goal and break it down into manageable chunks. Then achieve those goals by baby steps, sometimes called action steps.

While accreditation does take time and commitment, there are also many rewards: the program develops clear goals, improves policies and standards, increases customer trust and enables you to raise your standards of excellence and be recognized as a program that offers leadership to the field. It is definitely a worthwhile endeavour!

I do hope that many of you will be able to join us for the Spring Leadership Day on April 16th. There, we will have the opportunity to engage in a state-wide discussion of both accreditation and how best to lead the Iowa early childhood field forward.

Susan
Many of you who have spent any time at all with me over the past three months know that I have been carrying around a plastic star that lights up when plugged into an electric outlet. It has been in an upper corner of the room during many meetings. You’ve seen a star as a graphic on Power Point presentations and handouts.

For me, a star can represent our goal, our vision, our dream. Stars are way up high in the sky, perhaps seemingly out of reach. Beautiful to gaze at, ponder over, and wish upon.

What is it that we are dreaming about? What do we want for Iowa’s programs, professionals, and the children and families we serve?

Most of us can verbalize our vision: Every child in Iowa, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful. The Iowa AEYC mission supports that, by promising: that we will serve and act on behalf of the early childhood profession, becoming a leader, resource, and advocate for quality early childhood education; that eventually the early childhood professional in our state will be appropriately compensated, recognized and valued; that programs will continue to move towards the highest quality standard possible, be it NAEYC accreditation, Head Start standards, or NFCC accreditation, whether or not they are required by law to do so.

While I’ve gotten a number of knowing looks, I’ve also felt the reluctance of many of you. “It’s a rough year.” “Come on, Barb, we can’t accomplish everything we dream of, when budgets are this tight and staff positions are getting cut.” “Haven’t we got enough to do already?” “Really, does a star represent a meaningful, achievable goal?” THIS YEAR?

At Iowa AEYC, we challenge you: Iowa’s children can’t wait. A whole generation of children has been born, and has moved through early childhood into kindergarten in the past five years alone! We need to continue to make those baby steps towards the dream, towards best practices, our priority. Every young child in Iowa deserves to be served by the highest quality early care and education program we can provide, with the most educated, qualified and effective teacher/provider possible. Whether the program is located in a licensed child care center, a preschool, a child development home, in the primary grade programs in public and private schools, or provided as a service for families in a health, education or family support setting, we must ensure that we are sticking to our dream: High quality for all.

On April 16, please join us for our spring leadership institute, Quality Matters: Moving Iowa’s Early Childhood Programs to Excellence. We are delighted that Linda Hassan Anderson, Senior Director of the NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation, will join us to facilitate this day. We will challenge each other to consider what each of our programs is asking of us as we move towards higher quality, and what might be the next baby steps in our own journey to the stars…..Please join us!

Thanks for everything that you do,

Barb
Accreditation Program Support Webinars

The Accreditation Program Support (APS) Training Center has developed Listen and Learn Webinars which can be found at http://www.naeyc.org/academy/primary/apstrainingresources.

Currently available are:
Overview of the 4-Step Process
Maintaining Accreditation
Transition to 2008 Sources of Evidence

Iowa AEYC Accreditation Grants

Iowa AEYC has accreditation grants available to members. Applications can be found on our website at http://www.iowaaeyc.org/grants-and-scholarships.cfm.

Iowa AEYC will award accreditation grants of up to $2,000 annually to centers seeking accreditation or reaccreditation to be used through the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAEYC).

Iowa AEYC will award accreditation grants of up to $1,000 annually to child development homes seeking accreditation or reaccreditation to be used through the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC).

Iowa AEYC will award accreditation grants of up to $500 annually to programs seeking accreditation or reaccreditation to be used through the National After School Association (NAA).
Congratulations to programs accredited by NAEYC

A Child’s Garden, Spencer
A-H-S-T Community School Preschool, Avoca
Anamosa Children’s Center, Anamosa
Apple Tree Children’s Center, Ankeny
Apple Tree Children’s Center, Clive
Apple Tree Children’s Center, Johnston
Apple Tree Children’s Center, Norwalk
Apple Tree Children’s Center, West Des Moines (2 sites)
Apple Tree Children’s Center, Urbandale
Bloomer Early Childhood Preschool, Council Bluffs
Buena Vista Early Childhood and Family Program, Storm Lake (2 sites)
Busy Buddies Preschool, Bloomfield
Butler County Head Start, Clarksville
Capital Park Early Learning Center, Des Moines
Carter Lake Preschool Center, Carter Lake
Children’s Village – Hayes Monroe, Davenport
Children’s Village Buchanan, Davenport
Children’s Village West, Davenport
Clay Head Start 0-5, Spencer
Clearfield Preschool, Clearfield
Community Action of SE Iowa Des Moines County 1st
United Children of Christ Head Start, Burlington
Community Action of Eastern Iowa Head Start, Davenport (2 sites)
Community Action of SE Iowa North Lee Richardson Head Start, Fort Madison
Community Action of SE Iowa Head Start – Henry G. Tolson, Mount Pleasant (2 sites)
Community Action of SE Iowa South Lee County, Keokuk
Community Action of SE Iowa Flint Hills Head Start, Burlington
Community Action of SE Iowa Louisa Head Start, Wapello
Community United Child Care Centers – Nordic, Cedar Falls
Community United Child Care Centers – Valley Park, Cedar Falls
Creative Beginnings Preschool LLC, Creston
Crittenton Center’s Stella Sanford Child Development Center, Sioux City
Des Moines Area Community College Child Development Center, Ankeny
Des Moines Public Schools Early Learning Centers, (4 sites)
Diagonal Preschool, Diagonal
Discovery Kids Preschool, Creston
Dr. Walter Cunningham School for Excellence Pre-K, Waterloo
Drake University Head Start, Des Moines
Eagle’s Loft Child Care Center, Ames
Early Childhood Education/Day Care, Charles City
Edison Elementary School, Council Bluffs
Edison Pre-Kindergarten, Waterloo
Emmet County Head Start, Estherville
Evelyn Davis Early Learning Academy, Des Moines
Featherstone / Walnut Grove Preschool, Council Bluffs
Franklin Elementary Preschool, Council Bluffs
Grinnell Full Day Head Start, Grinnell
HACAP Coral Ridge Head Start Center, Coralville
HACAP Hayes Head Start, Cedar Rapids
HACAP Head Start, Iowa City
HACAP Inn-Circle Head Start/Early Head Start, Cedar Rapids
HACAP North Benton Head Start, Vinton
Happy Hearts – Smiling Faces Preschool, Edgewood
Hartley Head Start Program, Hartley
Hawkeye Child Development Center, Waterloo
Highland Preschool Program, Waterloo
Hoover Preschool, West Branch Community School District, West Branch
House of Mercy/John R Grubb Child Development Center, Des Moines
ICCSD Preschool Program – Twain, Iowa City
ICCSD Preschool Program – Hills, Hills
Iowa City Family Resource Center, Iowa City
Iowa City Family Resource Center, Coralville
Iowa Falls Head Start & Early Head Start Center, Iowa Falls
Iowa Health Child Development Center, Des Moines
Iowa Lakes Head Start, Emmetsburg
Iowa State University at Veterinary Medicine, Ames
Iowa State University at Child Development Lab School, Ames
Iowa Western Early Childhood Education Center, Council Bluffs
Kiddie Karrasel Academy Inc, LeClaire
Lamoni Early Education Program, Lamoni
Laurens/Marathon Early Childhood Program, Emmetsburg
Lewis and Clark Preschool, Council Bluffs
Lewis and Clark Preschool Kreft Preschool Program, Council Bluffs
Lily Furgerson Head Start, Waterloo
Linn County Child Development Center, Cedar Rapids
Little Dragon Preschool, Johnston (4 sites)
Little Roadrunner Preschool, Truro
Maywood Head Start, Waterloo
Messiah Preschool, Burlington
MICA EHS & Learning Center on High Street, Marshalltown
MICA Head Start & Child Development Preschool, Marshalltown
Mid-Sioux Opportunity Child Development Center, Hawarden
Milford Head Start Program, Milford
Murray Preschool, Murray
Muscatine Community School District Shared Vision, Muscatine (2 sites)
Native American Child Care Center, Sioux City
Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County, Iowa City (3 sites)
Nodaway Valley Preschool, Greenfield
Northeast Iowa Community College Child Development Center, Peosta
Northwood Preschool Center, Ames
Oakridge Early Enrichment Child Care Center, Des Moines
Old Main Children’s Center, Washington
Orient-Macksburg Development Program, Orient
Perry Area Child Development Center, Perry
Peterson Shared Visions, Sioux City
Pleasantville Preschool, Pleasantville
Pocahontas Area All Start Preschool, Pocahontas
Positive Approach Preschool/Kindergarten, Prescott
Project Child Care, Manly
Project High Hopes, Waterloo
Ringgold County Childcare dba Family Resource Center, Mount Ayr
Rivermont Collegiate, Bettendorf
Riverside Preschool, Oakland
Roosevelt Preschool Programs, Council Bluffs
Roundy Elementary Preschool Program, Columbus Junction
Rue Elementary Preschool Program, Council Bluffs
Saint Paul’s FOCUS, Cedar Rapids
SCICAP Early Childhood Prgm Corydon Head Start, Corydon
SCICAP Early Childhood Prgm Albia Head Start, Albia
Science Center of Iowa (SCI) Preschool, Des Moines
Sheldon Head Start, Sheldon
Sibley Head Start, Sibley
Sioux Central Early Learning Center, Sioux Rapids
South Winneshiek Early Childhood Success Program, Ossian
Spencer Child Development Center, Spencer
Spirit Lake Child Development Center, Spirit Lake
St Ambrose University Children’s Campus, Davenport
Stepping Stones Early Learning Center, Knoxville
STEP-UP Preschool - Grant, Harrison and Cleveland, Cedar Rapids (3 sites)
STEP-UP Preschool - Hiawatha and Polk, Cedar Rapids
STEP-UP Preschool - Hiawatha and Polk, Hiawatha
STEP-UP Preschool – Taylor and Monroe, Cedar Rapids (2 sites)
Storm Lake Community Schools, Storm Lake (2 sites)
Successful Beginnings Preschool, Afton
Scholarship Program for NAEYC Accreditation Fees

NAEYC is pleased to have funding available to assist some programs with the fees for accreditation. NAEYC Accreditation Scholarships are awarded to programs primarily on the basis of the program's financial need. Scholarship applications will be reviewed within two months of receipt and programs are notified in three months. An Awards Committee makes decisions about awarding NAEYC Accreditation Scholarships. This committee is independent and separate from the NAEYC Academy for Programs for Young Children and its accreditation decisions.

Additional information and an application can be found on the NAEYC website at http://www.naeyc.org/academy/primary/helpscholarships.
Stepping Stones Early Learning Center believes that a quality early care and education should be family centered, representing a cooperative effort by parents and teachers to provide a stimulating, learning environment. We are fully licensed by the Department of Human Services, receiving the Gold Star Award in 2000. In 1999 we received the torch from the National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation, providing a mark of the highest level of quality for early childhood education. Stepping Stones Early Learning Center continues its commitment to providing quality early care and education becoming re-accredited with NAEYC on September 1, 2010.

The teaching staff works as a team to implement daily teaching and learning activities. They implement a child-centered, hands-on, developmentally appropriate classroom environment that challenges them to be successful and provides the foundation for developing critical thinking skills that will last a lifetime. We believe that children are our future and deserve the best that we can provide by giving them a “step up”.

Preschool Room

4-Year Old Room

2-Year Old Room
Upper Des Moines Opportunity (UDMO) Head Start program is located in the northwest corner of Iowa, and oversees Head Start, Early Head Start, and Shared Vision classrooms. During our accreditation journey, we made the decision to have all of our classrooms go through the NAEYC accreditation process at the same time. This was not an easy choice – we considered cost and the time commitment, but kept returning to UDMO’s long-term dedication to excellence and our belief in the need for quality programs for all children, especially for children who live in poverty.

The year prior to our validation visits was spent re-writing policies and procedures, carefully monitoring classrooms, and developing portfolios. To assist teachers in completing their classroom portfolios, we set up a monthly goal calendar. Small sections of the portfolio were completed each week, and teachers were able to document activities as they happened, compare ideas, and share suggestions. By the end of the school year, most teachers had their portfolios completed and ready for the validation visit. It was an intense year of preparation, but well worth it – all of our centers made it through the validation process, and are currently NAEYC accredited.
The center is staffed with degreed teachers who have backgrounds in early childhood education, child development and other related experiences. Each classroom has a Lead Associate with a Bachelors Degree and an Associate with an Associates Degree in Early Childhood. The center serves as a training laboratory for students studying Early Childhood Education at Iowa Western Community College. An excellent adult/child ratio is maintained in our center by our paid staff and our laboratory students.

In addition to being licensed by the State of Iowa, the Iowa Western ECE Center is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. The Academy, which is sponsored by the National Association for Education of Young Children, awards accreditation to programs, which have demonstrated high quality care and education to children. Our accreditation process is an ongoing daily work in progress. We see accreditation as a way to showcase our center by continually striving to achieve the highest quality standards. Our center works daily to grow and reflect upon the standards set by NAEYC as a way to enrich our program for the education of our children. Daily documentations, classroom portfolio updates and reviewing the standards are ways we keep up to date with the accreditation ongoing process.

Educational Philosophy and Curriculum
The Iowa Western Early Childhood Education Center curriculum philosophy is based on research and a variety of learning theories which form the foundation that young children learn best through play. Our program offers a nurturing child-centered learning environment that meets the interests, ages, developmental needs and the diversity of each child. Children’s learning occurs through individual choices during play, teachable moments and planned activities facilitated by staff and students. The learning environment and interest areas are set up to encourage and foster exploration through hands-on developmentally appropriate materials that ensures access to all children. Each area of development; Social, Emotional, Cognitive and Physical, is considered through planned activities that allow each individual child to develop these skills.

Our center offers a unique learning experience for young children through the partnership with the Early Childhood Studies Academic Program. Each day the ECS students engage the children in one-on-one and group learning opportunities under the guidance of the center’s teaching staff. This affords our center a consistently low child-teacher ratio as well as an opportunity to effectively incorporate current educational theories into everyday practice for the students to experience.
As the newly structured accreditation process rolled out, I was quick to get the self-study materials and dig in to the blue box and begin the exploration process of what it would be like to continue being an accredited program. I was both excited and overwhelmed by what I found. As a NAEYC accreditation validator under the old system, I knew that changes need to occur and the bar had to be raised. But this was going to be a challenge, even for us. I thought of the many programs I had previously visited and had become accredited, and I knew that this was going to be nearly impossible for some programs. What is so exciting for me, as a director of a child development program, instructor of early childhood courses, and facilitator for the accreditation projects, is that it wasn’t impossible! Programs weren’t just scratching the surface of quality. They were fully embracing it. They had to learn it, know it, and live it. And that’s exactly what we did as a team. We dug in with all we had. We chose to create a template for each age group and program portfolio and make it electronic. We found this to be much less time consuming and much less expensive. This was an amazing process. Here are some thoughts and ideas from our team.

Our journey through accreditation:

Process can be long and frustrating at times, but worth it to complete and have the achievement done.
We rose to the challenge of taking our accreditation to the next step and pursuing the completion of it electronically.
We developed the system to use electronically to make the process easier to complete and view. We thought the final product was easier to access and it looked great.
Working through the standards made us realize how much we do to make our place the very best it can be, but it also made us more aware of the things we needed to do better to create an amazing learning environment for children and families.

Why we chose to do it:

To show our dedication to high standards of early childhood education
Because we’ve been accredited in the past
Because we were receiving federal funds for a grant that required accreditation
To show our commitment to early childhood education
To prove we are more than just “daycare”
So families are able to identify us as a high-quality program for their young children

What it has meant for us:

It brings a sense of credibility to our program and our work
We are proud of the hard work we put into the process to become accredited and it has shaped our program to incorporate a variety of standards we meet everyday
Ability to show others (practicum students, student teachers, volunteers, parents, visitors, administrators, community entities, etc.) that come into our program the ways in which we meet the standards and why
Here are some of the ways that we exhibited how we meet standards.

2.F.06 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to understand basic concepts of geometry by, for example, naming and recognizing two and three-dimensional shapes and recognizing how figures are composed of different shapes.

In the picture on the left, this child chose to use magnetic geo shapes to create a 3 dimensional structure. He used different shapes and different sizes of shapes. The structure has shape and purpose that is relevant to his learning about geometry, architecture, and creativity. During the creation of his structure, teachers used open-ended questioning to gather information about his knowledge of shapes and why he was choosing some shapes over others. In the picture in the center, these children created an obstacle course for the classroom pet guinea pig, Carmel. In the picture on the right, this child has used multiple unit blocks to create a multilevel tower.

3.F.01 Teachers use curriculum in all content and developmental areas as a flexible framework for teaching and to support the development of daily plans and learning experiences. The curriculum is individualized to meet the needs of every child. The physical environment is safe, healthy, and contains a variety of toys that are both stimulating and familiar. Look at the amazement on this child’s face as he watches the marble move on the ramp.

2.J.03 Infants and toddlers/twos have varied opportunities to express themselves creatively through freely moving to music. Toddlers/twos have varied opportunities to engage in pretend or imaginative play. This classroom loves doing drum circles
8.B.01 Program staff use their knowledge of the community and the families it serves as an integral part of the curriculum and children’s learning experiences.

The children use the UNI campus as their playground, both indoors and outdoors. Here they are looking out the window of one building on campus to watch the activities outside.

3.D.04 Teaching staff offer children opportunities to interact with children of various ages.
(2 and 3 year olds reading books with second graders)

We are fortunate to be in a building that serves children from birth to 12th grade so we are often able to interact with students of many ages. Even this second grader is showing great questioning and listening skills as she reads a book with a 2 year old.
3.D.11 Teachers create opportunities for children to engage in group projects and to learn from one another. (2 and 3 year olds creating a leaf wreath)

2.D.02 Children have varied opportunities to develop vocabulary through experiences. (During gooey bag activity, teachers say words such as hot, cold, and squishy as children manipulate the bags)

2.E.04.c Children have the opportunity to explore books on their own.  
2.E.04.d Children have access to various types of books, including storybooks, factual books, books with rhymes, alphabet books, and wordless books.

This was their favorite place to look at books.
2.G.04- Children are provided varied opportunities to use simple tools to observe objects and scientific phenomena. (The Teeters Room friends are observing what will happen when they put balls in an upright tube.)

2.F.06- Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to understand basic concepts of geometry by, for example naming and recognizing two- and three-dimensional shapes and recognizing how figures are composed of different shapes. (This Teeters Room friend has created a tower using blocks.)
2.E.07- Children are given opportunities to recognize and write letters. (This Teeters Room friend is using crayons and large chart paper to write.)

Our Journey through accreditation does not end here:

- Ongoing assessment allows for teachers to continually update curriculum
- Digital photos and having the electronic folders for the standards is handy for sorting photographs
- Knowing the standards is critical so that, as teachers, we know what we are looking for
- Because it is electronic, it is easy to update on a regular basis
- It also assists with making electronic portfolios for individual children

On our first visit, the assessor was very excited about the electronic portfolios. She had not ever seen it done this way. Her overall assessment of the electronic portfolio process was very positive and encouraging. However, one of the portfolio discs had some issues with loading the photos. So for this reason, one of our standards came in at below 80% due to technical problems and our program was denied accreditation. All other standards came in at 95-100%. This was gut wrenching. The teachers were devastated. It seemed unfair. Why didn’t she ask us about the problem? They can’t. We almost chose to give up because of frustration and cost. We chose to apply again. The next time, everything worked perfectly. Our results came back with almost perfect scores in each standard. With this, we celebrated! Then we began to take our electronic portfolios on the road. We helped other programs start the process. We gave away about 50 discs with all the portfolio templates ready to go. We continue to get requests for our discs. We’ve had to change the template as NAEYC updates and improves practices as well. We are excited to have made it and to assist others in the process. It’s an achievement that is well worth the effort.
Thank you for being a member of Iowa AEYC. If you wish to become more involved in your Association, contact us at info@iowaaeyc.org. If you have ideas for our next quarterly newsletter, please submit to rhonda@iowaaeyc.org by April 30.