

## Linn County Early Childhood Iowa

### Community Plan Updates- FY 18

Name of Early Childhood Area: LINN COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA

Iowa Code chapter 256I requires that local ECIA boards report progress toward and achievement of desired results identified in the Community Plan. Provide a narrative of the ECIA's progress in the last year towards the priorities and strategies identified in the most recent Community Plan. Success and/or challenges to meeting the ECIA goals may also be included.

#### Linn County ECI Community Plan Priority Areas and Progress Toward Achieving Results

##### Affordable and Accessible Quality Early Learning Environments for At-Risk Children

Community Indicators selected for this priority area:

- 1) Child Care Programs Listed: **Negative trend**. July 2017 data indicates 50% reduction (n=317) in # of Linn Co programs listed with Child Care Resource & Referral. In the same time period the State lost 38%.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: Fund the Paces to Quality program, which provides a menu of supports, training, networking and technical assistance to child care homes and centers. CART responds to provider requests for assistance in serving children with challenging behaviors through on-site TA and training.
- 2) Centers Offer Evening/Weekend Care: **Negative trend**. April 2018 data indicates there are still no licensed child care centers or preschools offering evening or weekend care. The only providers are registered or unregistered homes.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: Awarded funds to Paces to offer incentives to homes or centers that provide evening and weekend care. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that support or provide evening or weekend care.
- 3) Child Care Providers Serve Infants: **Neutral Trend**. April 2018 data indicates 64% of child care providers self-report to Child Care Resource & Referral that they serve infants. One year earlier, it was 65%. Although the majority of providers report they can serve infants, the overall number of child care homes and centers providing any type of care declined considerably.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: Linn County ECI funds full-day full-year year center based infant care through our partnership with Early Head Start. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that support or provide infant care.
- 4) Child Care Providers accept DHS Child Care Assistance: **Negative trend**. The percentage of Linn County providers accepting CCA increased from 2011-2014 and then declined thru 2017 to 75.3%. This is 5% lower than 1 year ago. .
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Board annually collects data on this issue. The ECI-funded Paces program supported child care homes and centers with completion of the federal training requirements so they could remain eligible to receive CCA \$. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awarded extra points (weighted) to applicants that promote child care provider readiness for the Federal Child Care Block Grant requirements.

## Quality Improvement of Early Learning Environments

Community Indicators selected for this priority area:

- 1) Preschool Enrollment: **Positive trend**. Linn County data for 2009-2015 indicates a slow increase in the % of 3-4 yr old children enrolled in preschool. The data for 2016 is 54.2%, which is higher than the 2012 baseline of 52.8%. The Linn County rate is higher than the State enrollment rate of 48.1%.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Board funds 102 slots of free and 6 slots of parent co-pay full-day care in licensed child care centers/preschools. In-home visitation program staff provides parents with information on enrolling child(ren) in quality affordable care. The CART program seeks to reduce preschool expulsion through on-site TA support of child care providers serving children with challenging behaviors.
  
- 2) Kindergarten Reading Proficiency: **Inconclusive/Pending**. In 2017 the statewide % of children entering Kindergarten proficient in reading was 69.5%. Dept of Education has not yet met our request for Linn County data. However, within the 3 largest districts in Linn County the results are varied: Cedar Rapids (61.56%); College Community (80.99%); Linn Mar (69.5%).
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Board funds 102 slots of free and 6 slots of parent co-pay full-day care in licensed child care centers/preschools. The Board supports early identification of hearing, vision, dental and developmental needs through community screening events.
  
- 3) Iowa Quality Rating System (QRS) Participation: **Negative trend**. July 2017 only 9.7% of eligible providers participate in this statewide voluntary rating system, a 4.5% reduction in one year. A shift is noted in ratio of participants. In 2014 home providers were the higher % and in 2017-2018 QRS it is centers. Starting Oct 2016 providers with QRS score of 5 are eligible for higher CCA reimbursement rate from Iowa DHS. Currently only 6 providers in Linn County meet that standard.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Paces to Quality and Child Care Nurse Consultant programs support child care provider enrollment in QRS through on-site TA, equipment grants and professional development. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that help providers meet this state quality standards.
  
- 4) National Accreditation of Centers (NAEYC): **Trend to Watch**. # of Linn County Co accredited centers (16) increased in 2017 for the 1<sup>st</sup> time since 2014. 13% of all accredited centers in Iowa are in Linn County. Provider input indicates the increased cost and requirements of NAEYC may outweigh the benefits of obtaining the credential. The new state emphasis on Level 5 in the QRS, and not accreditation, may impact future participation.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Paces to Quality program provides financial incentives and on-site TA to centers seeking or maintaining their NAEYC accreditation. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that help providers meet national quality standards.
  
- 5) National Accreditation of Homes (NAFCC): **Trend to Watch**. After years of slow decline, the data indicates Linn Co added 2 accredited homes in 2017. Linn County has 6 accredited homes which is 75% of all accredited homes in the State. The new state emphasis on Level 5 in the QRS, and not accreditation, may impact future participation.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Paces to Quality program provides financial incentives and on-site TA to homes seeking or maintaining their NAFCC accreditation. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that help providers meet national quality standards.

## Quality Family Support and Parent Education for At-Risk Families

Community Indicators selected for this priority area:

- 1) Confirmed Child Abuse (0-5 yrs): **Negative trend**. The total # of abuse cases of children under age 6 rose slightly from 2014-2016 (+57). Of all child abuse cases (age 0-17 years) the majority, or 53.5%, continues to be children < age 5. This is less than 2017 but exceeds the state average of 47.4%.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Board funds three (3) in-home visitation and two (2) group based parent education programs. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that strive to reduce child abuse, re-abuse and neglect.
  
- 2) Child (under age 17) Poverty: **Negative trend**. 12.6% of Linn County children live in poverty and that is less than the 2011 baseline (13.8%) but is higher than the prior 4 years. The Linn Co % is lower than the State rate of 14.6%. Of interest is the United Way ALICE Report, which indicates that an additional 31% of families in Linn Co are over the federal poverty level and financially struggling.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Board funds in-home visitation programs that assist families with credit counseling & budget classes and links to other resources. 83% of the childcare slots funded by ECI are full-day which allows parents to work or obtain training/school in pursuit of stable employment.
  
- 3) High Quality Parent Ed and Family Support Programs: **Positive Trend**. Since 2014 the % of Linn County ECI programs that are deemed Evidence Based (EB) or Promising Practice (PP) is 80%. However in calendar year 2018 the remaining non-credentialed ECI program will complete an external Council on Accreditation review. Overall, in the State the % change is more dramatic. In 2013 only 55.27% of programs in Iowa met that standard and by 2016 it is 98.2%.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Board provides financial support for family support and parent ed staff to obtain the Family Support Credential. The TIES program was awarded funds to conduct their Evidence-Based evaluation visit from the RIP program located in Nashville TN. ECI contracts include language requiring programs obtain and maintain EB or PP standard.
  
- 4) Maternal Depression: **Trend to Watch**. In 2013 40% of Linn Co Single mothers report 11-15 days of poor mental health per month (BRFSS = Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System). In 2016 the data point shifted and is now 40.9% of Linn Co Single mothers report 25-30 days of Poor Mental Health in a given month.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that support clients with behavioral or mental health needs. The TIES program collects pre-post Parental Stress Index data to monitor change in parent stress as a result of the training modules. One of the Linn County ECI funded In-Home visitation programs uses the Edinburgh Postnatal Maternal Depression Screening tool.

## Preventative Child Health Services for At-Risk Families

Community Indicators selected for this priority area:

- 1) Children on Medicaid that Received Dental Services: **Trend to Watch**. In June 2018, 62.7% of Medicaid enrolled children received any dental services, which is a 6% increase from prior year. 2017 data was the lowest % since the baseline in 2009. From June 2013-2015 the % remained at or above 65%. Board will monitor this data.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: Since FY 07 Linn County ECI has funded oral health screens, fluoride varnishes and vouchers for treatment. All ECI direct service programs are required to report the % of children they serve that received a dental screening. The Linn County ECI competitive bid process

awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that support early identification of dental needs in underserved populations.

- 2) Prenatal Care in 1<sup>st</sup> Tri: **Positive trend**. 2009-2016 data indicates the majority of women in Linn County report having prenatal care in 1<sup>st</sup> trimester. The 2016 figure (81.9%) is lower than prior years but does exceed the state data of 78.7%. This data should be reviewed again when more current info is released and include prenatal care rates by race/ethnicity.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that reduce barriers to pregnant women can fully participate in health screens and care coordination. The Board awarded an FY 18 new contract to 1st Five, which partners with physician's office to connect mothers with identified needs to local supports.
- 3) Low Birth Weight: **Trend to Watch**. The % of low birth weight babies in Linn County declined again in 2016 after increases in 2013 & 2014. Linn County rate (6.5%) is on par with the State rate (6.7%). The rates of low-birth weight in Iowa range from 4.4% to 8.7%.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: The Board issued a competitive bid to support preventive health services for at-risk families and awarded an FY18 new contract to 1<sup>st</sup> Five, which partners with physician's office to connect pregnant women/mothers with identified needs to local supports.
- 4) Adults with 4 or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): **Baseline only**. The Iowa ACE's research data (2014) states that 11.9% of Linn County adults surveyed had four or more ACE's. The state-wide data indicates 14.5% of adults have four or more ACE's. County level is not available for 2016 but the state % is reported as 16%.
  - **Linn County ECI efforts**: Local trainings on ACE's are shared with all ECI-funded providers. ECI Director serves on local planning committee to increase community and agency awareness of trauma informed care.