

Iowa Code chapter 256I requires that local ECI Boards report progress toward and achievement of desired results identified in the Community Plan. Following is a narrative of the Linn County ECI Board’s progress in the last year towards the priorities and strategies identified in the most recent Community Plan.

Child & Maternal Health Community Plan



Families in Linn County have an array of child and maternal health resources but face challenges with awareness, access, and disparate health outcomes. The Linn County Early Childhood Iowa Board and United Way of East Central Iowa offer the following Child & Maternal Health Community Priority, Strategies, and preliminary action steps.

Community Plan Priority:

Increase Awareness of and Access to Child & Maternal Health Resources for At-Risk Families.

Focus: Cohorts with disparate health outcomes: low-income, single parent households, teen parent, families with limited English proficiency, lower educational attainment, and African American mothers.

Child & Maternal Health Community Plan Indicator Data

Community indicators provide insight into the overall direction of a **community**: whether it is improving, declining, or staying the same. The data below was selected to provide specific measures on strengths or challenges noted in the Early Childhood Needs Assessment. Linn County ECI will update these Indicators annually to assess the effectiveness of the Community Plan to address the identified Child and Maternal Health Priority.

Linn County	2017 unless noted	2018	2019	2020	Linn Co Trend
Health Disparities % Low birthweight babies by Race/ Ethnicity ¹	Black: 10% Hispanic: 6% White: 6%	Black: 10% Hispanic: 6% White: 7%	Black: 11% Hispanic: 7% White: 6%	Asian: 10% Black: 11% Hispanic: 6% White: 6%	Black and Asian data > state average of 7%. White and Hispanic % < state average.
Mental Health Adults report # Poor mental health days in past month(avg) ²	Iowa 3.3 Linn 3.4	Iowa 3.3 Linn 3.4	Iowa 3.6 Linn 3.5	Iowa 3.5 Linn 3.7	Negative
Nutrition and Care Coordination % children < age 5 participate in WIC ³ <small>WIC offers supplemental food resources to low income pregnant/postpartum women</small>	<u>2003</u> Iowa 28% Linn 25% 3,338 children	Iowa 26% Linn: 28% 4,007 children	Data not updated since 2018		Increased. +12.5% change from 2003-2018
Dental Health % of Medicaid-enrolled children < age 3 that received any dental service ⁴	Iowa 34% Linn 52%	Iowa 36% Linn 53%	Iowa 36% Linn 51%	Iowa 24%* Linn 33%*	Negative. *No reason noted in IDPH report. Covid-19 impact on access to dental care is a likely factor.

1. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2021/rankings/linn/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot> (Note: 2021 report is 2020 data) Click on the LBW % in table to access race/ethnicity break out. Source: National Center for Health Statistics- Natality file
2. www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2021/rankings/linn/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot. Poor mental health days Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data.
3. Effective with FY 21 the new source is: <https://www.commongoodiowa.org/data/kids-count/county-data-snapshots> Source: IDPH
4. <https://tracking.idph.iowa.gov/Health/Oral-Health/Child-Dental-Services-Medicaid-Data> On map: Age Groups < 3, Any Dental service

Linn County ECI Board Strategies to address this Child & Maternal Health Priority:

1. Ensure accessible and culturally responsive child and maternal health services.
2. Support early intervention of maternal mental health and child behavioral supports.
3. Promote the importance of preventative early child health screens.

FY 21 ECI Board Activities

- The ECI Board funds preventive child hearing, vision, and developmental screens which occur at WIC clinics, the Eastern Iowa Health Center, child care and various community sites. Linn County ECI, in conjunction with Medicaid, is the only funder of free preschool age hearing screens.
- Linn County ECI funds oral health screens, fluoride varnishes, vouchers, and care coordination for dental treatment. The Board received donated boxes of toddler, youth, and adult toothbrush packages which were provided to funded partners for distribution.
- All ECI direct service programs are required to report the % of children that received a child health or developmental screen.
 - In FY 21 over 90% of all children enrolled in a direct service received a screen.
- Since FY 18 the Board has funded 1st Five, which partners with physician's office to connect pregnant women/mothers, with identified family stability needs, to variety of local supports.
- The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that support early identification of dental needs in underserved populations.
- The CART program addresses child behavior health concerns in child care settings and reduces preschool expulsion through on-site TA support and training.
- ECI staff serves on local groups regarding on child health (5210/County Obesity Action Team), child, youth and adult mental health (Child & Youth MH, ECR & County Mental Health Action Teams).
- Annually the Board supports the Mind of a Child Summit hosted by Paces to Quality, which focuses on early childhood mental health and supports for caregivers.
- In response to COVID, the Board granted exceptional flexibility to programs to alter or change how they deliver services in order to best serve families. Budget and contract revisions enabled programs to purchase needed technology to provide services virtually, purchase PPE, and shift to Take & Make activity kits to distribute. Additional and different layers of flexibility were needed to support program staff, families, and child care providers in response to the unprecedented Derecho disaster. ECI-funded multi-lingual staff were pressed into action beyond normal ECI duties to assist refugee families with accessing emergency resources.
- Board provided grant funds to equip three (3) Sensory Rooms at the Linn County Child Development center to include gross motor, tactile, and sight & sound stimulation. Board provided additional funding for Kimochi tools, which are cuddly but powerful social emotional resources, for children and parents.

Early Child Care & Education Community Plan



Linn County has an array of early care resources but families and employers face challenges with adequate access to quality, flexible, and affordable early care options. The Linn County Early Childhood Iowa Board and United Way of East Central Iowa offer the following Early Care & Education Community Priority, Strategies and preliminary action steps.

Community Priority:

Increase Awareness of & Access to Affordable, Available, Quality Early Care & Education Resources

Focus: Cohorts with disparate outcomes: working parents, low-income, single parent, families with limited English proficiency, lower educational attainment, teen parent, and African American mothers.

Early Child Care & Education Community Plan Indicator Data

Community indicators provide insight into the overall direction of a **community**: whether it is improving, declining, or staying the same. The data below was selected to provide specific measures on strengths or challenges noted in the Early Childhood Needs Assessment. Linn County ECI will update these Indicators annually to assess the effectiveness of the Community Plan to address the identified Early Child Care and Education Community Priority.

Linn County	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Linn Co Trend
Access % of Children ages 3-4 in any type of preschool ¹	Iowa 48% Linn 54%	Iowa 48% Linn 52%	Iowa 47% Linn 53%	Iowa 47% Linn 49%	Not yet available	Recent Decrease
Quality % of beginning Kindergarteners at or above FAST Assessment Early Literacy Benchmark ² (Fall results)		<u>Fall 2017</u> Iowa 69% Linn 80%	<u>Fall 2018</u> Iowa 61% Linn 72%	<u>Fall 2019</u> Iowa 72% Linn 83%*	<u>Fall 2020+</u> Iowa: due Jan 22 Linn 75%	Negative. +Fall 2020 may reflect Covid-19 impact.
Access # of Early Care programs listed with CCR&R (July) ³	362	320	293	287	298**	Improved^^
# of Evening Child Care (6pm-midnight) providers ⁴		34 homes	36 homes	Sept 2020 32 homes	July 2021 29 homes	Negative
# of Weekend Child Care providers ⁴		16 homes	19 homes	9 homes	0 homes	
Quality % of Child Care Businesses participate in Iowa Quality Rating System (July) ³	Iowa: 23% Linn 14%	Iowa: 24% Linn 14%	Iowa: 25% Linn 17%	Iowa: 29% Linn 19%	Iowa: 32% Linn 20%	Positive

- <https://datacenter.kidscount.org> Source: US Census
- <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/document/kindergarten-assessment-tables> for County data (Ave the district %; Includes private) <https://educateiowa.gov/documents/legislative-information/2021/05/early-childhood-assessment-legislative-report-2021> for Iowa results
- Linn County Data Sheets iowaccr.org/data- July 2021 data not yet released
- CCR&R Data Inquiry to Region 5 (THolmes)

Note

*The 15% increase in Cedar Rapids School District Kindergarteners that met assessment benchmark helped improve this community indicator result. (CRSD 47% in 2018 school year; 62% in 2019 school year). CRSD dropped to 52% in 2020 school year, which may reflect Covid-19 impact.

** Increase due to 16 additional registered child care homes and 3 DHS licensed centers, but loss of 8 homes not registered but accepting CCA.

^^Projected decrease in # of providers in July 2021 CCR&R report (not yet available) due to Covid-19 & Derecho.

Linn County ECI Board Strategies to address this Early Care & Education Priority:

- Recruit new child care entrepreneurs and support existing quality child care professionals.
- Increase community awareness of child care impact on workforce development and family success.
- Assist child care providers to serve more children from at-risk families.

FY 21 ECI Board Activities

- Linn County ECI Board funded 63 slots of free, high quality full day/year early care for at-risk infant and toddlers in various licensed child care centers/preschools this FY.
 - 48% of children served were African American, 33% White and 19% Multi-racial.
 - Almost 60% were from families with income <100% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL), 39% are 100-150% FPL and just 2% 150-200%.
- The ECI-funded Paces to Quality and Child Care Nurse Consultant programs to support child care provider enrollment in QRS through on-site TA, equipment grants and professional development.
- Linn County ECI Board and staff, in partnership with Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, HACAP and Child Care Resource & Referral, supports two Child Care Solutions Teams (Child Care Provider Supports and Child Care & Business Teams). ECI Board members and staff actively serve on both.
- ECI Staff serves on Cedar Rapids' multi-lingual refugee community center/child care planning committee. The Board provided grant funds for 20 computers and IT tech support to the CMC refugee Child Care Business program
- The Linn County ECI competitive bid process awards extra points (weighted) to applicants that support or provide evening or weekend care.
- Staff in the YPN and Nurturing Parenting in-home visitation programs provide parents with information on enrolling children in quality affordable care.
- Provided financial support so child care providers could attend the local annual "TCOY Child Care Retreat" conference (virtual) at no cost.
- Since the FY 19 ECI bid cycle the Board emphasized enrollment in the Iowa Quality Rating System, and reaching level 5, to help child care providers obtain the corresponding increased CCA reimbursement. The bid also included incentives to providers that enrolled families using Child Care Assistance subsidy. No bidders selected that option but it will remain a Board priority.
- Submitted grant request to Iowa Women's Foundation, on behalf of the Child Care Provider Supports Team, to provide Child Care Ready events with an emphasis on serving diverse or limited English proficiency person interested in the profession. (Not funded.)
- ECI Director and Board Chair-Elect served on the Cedar Rapids Gazette "Iowa Ideas Conference" panel regarding Child Care and Business. ECI Director was interviewed by KCRG regarding impact of COVID and Derecho on child care availability.
- In response to Derecho, ECI staff successfully authored grant to United Way of ECI, in partnership with Paces to Quality, seeking disaster funds to assist child care providers with replacement of outdoor equipment lost due to the storm. These funds were match to the Save the Children Grant from a national donor. Assisted with distribution of PPE with CCR&R and food boxes to child care providers in partnership with HACAP.
- Supported county wide child care appreciation efforts including delivering of "Careforce behind the Workforce" yard signs and window clings to providers.
- Supported financial incentives or equipment grants to child care center staff (KidsPoint) that remained employed and to in-home providers that remained open during Covid-19 (Paces).
- Upon request, the Board provided its legislative priorities to the Linn County lobbyists and this one was selected for inclusion: "Address childcare and workforce shortages".
- Regularly shared CCR&R monthly data on child care closures, since July 1, 2020-today) with Board, partners, legislators, and area funders.

Family Support & Stability Community Plan



Linn County is home to several resources but families face challenges with basic needs, access to the resources, and institutional barriers to economic stability. The Linn County Early Childhood Iowa Board and United Way of East Central Iowa offer the following Family Support Community Priority, Strategies and preliminary action steps.

Community Priority:

Increase Family Stability, Coordinated Services, and Access to Resources for At-Risk Families.

Focus: Cohorts with disparate outcomes: teen parents, families in poverty/ALICE threshold, parents of low-birthweight babies, single parent households, living in the presence of domestic violence, high ACE scores, mental illness, and families with limited English proficiency.

Family Support & Stability Community Indicator Data

Community indicators provide insight into the overall direction of a **community**: whether it is improving, declining, or staying the same. Linn County ECI will update these Indicators annually to assess the effectiveness of the Community Plan to address the identified Family Support Community Priority.

Linn County	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Linn County Trend
Child Safety Confirmed or founded child abuse cases of children (5yrs or younger) as % of all cases & # ¹	Iowa: 51% Linn 58% 317	Iowa: 47% Linn 54% 372	Iowa: 47% Linn 52% 393	Iowa: 46% Linn 46% 297	Iowa: 47% Linn 49% 373	Negative. Overall # of cases increased
Family Stability Families with no worker in past 12 months and with children (<18 yrs) ²	Iowa: 4% Linn: 2.5%	Iowa: 3% 2.8%	Iowa: 3% 2.1%	Iowa: 3% 4.7%*+/- 3.5 margin of error	2020 census data not yet available	Flat. *2019 Increase in Linn has high margin of error.
Basic Needs *# of Total Households that receive SNAP benefit *% of those HH with children (<age 18) ³	Iowa: 52% Linn: 9,334 55%	Iowa: 52% 8,718 55%	Iowa: 50% 9,855 54%	Iowa: 50% 7,715 47%		Decline. Fewer HH with children on SNAP food assistance

1. Iowa Department of Human Services. Child Welfare Data Report- Age tab <https://dhs.iowa.gov/reports/child-abuse-statistics>
 2. www.Data.census.gov Table S2302 Linn County Iowa, ACS 1-Year, Work Status, Families, No workers in past 12 months, % with own children <18 yrs
 3. www.Data.census.gov/ Table S2201, Linn County Iowa, ACS 1-Year, HH on SNAP, and With Children <18 yrs, % receive SNAP.

Linn County ECI Board Strategies to address this Family Support Priority:

1. Invest in two generation/whole family approaches.
2. Reduce child maltreatment by targeting the risk factors correlated with abuse and neglect.
3. Promote care coordination efforts.

FY 21 Linn County ECI Board Activities

- The Board funds two (2) short term home visit, two (2) long-term home visit, and two (2) group based parent education programs to support healthy family development.
- The home visit programs report 95% of enrolled families did not have a new child abuse report. 82% of families attending group parent ed report they improved/maintained healthy family functioning, problem solving and communication.
- 100% of Family Support programs are Evidence based, have Iowa Family Support Credential or are in final year of Credential process. Programs were invited to include their costs of taking the National Certification exam.
 - As of June 30, 2021 ten (10) program staff or 44% has successfully earned the Certificate.
- Due to closure of long-term services at Horizons the ECI Board actively assisted our two existing short term programs to each add a new long-term service in FY 21. Training on a new risk assessment tool, STAR, was provided along with an advisory team of ECI Board members. By the end of the 1st year these new services had supported 48 families with their long term success.

- 100% of the childcare slots funded by ECI are full-day and/or year which allows parents to work or obtain training/school in pursuit of stable employment.
- Staff serves on an advisory team with United Way of ECI and Linn County Public Health to support a closed loop web-based referral network called Signify, in support of care coordination efforts.
- In response to COVID/Derecho on family support programs the Board provided extensive flexibility in service delivery and budget or contract revisions.
- ECI staff hosted monthly family support networking Zoom meetings to allow program staff to interact with peers on challenges, fears, ideas, and successes.