

Off to a Good Start

Policy Recommendations 2010

Over the last six years, Iowa has become a leader in developing a comprehensive child health system. To continue to lead, the Off to a Good Start Coalition offers specific policy recommendations to improve Iowa's child health services across several areas. The policies outlined in this document are research and evidence-based and demonstrate successful health outcomes for children if implemented. These policies are needed to ensure young children's health, reduce health disparities, and achieve long-term cost savings and health benefits.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Renew Iowa's commitment to establishing Medical Homes for children as a top priority in Health Care reform.
2. Adopt emerging models of human development that recognize a life course perspective for promoting the health of all Iowans.
3. Advance development of care coordination models that assure access to care for all children regardless of health care coverage plans.
Care Coordination: when a child needs services in addition to their regular well-child health and dental care, perhaps they need help accessing a specialist, or a community service. A trained Care Coordinator in their community helps the family with referrals and accessing the right providers.
4. Support collaborative system level inter-agency strategies to advance coordinated care for children that address social determinants of health. At a minimum, these strategies include, but are not limited to, evidence-based family support services, dental home, healthy mental development, and emerging health concerns.
5. Continue to focus on evidence-based interventions for family support.
Iowa currently supports the Family Support Credential to improve the quality of FS programs.
6. Implement creative strategies that will ensure availability of dental services for at-risk children ages 0-5 throughout Iowa, which may include new provider types or scope of practice changes.
7. Sustain the I-Smile program and its focus on building systems of early and regular dental care, focused on preventive services and starting by the age of 1.

OFF TO A GOOD START COALITION MEMBERS

Center for Disabilities and Development
Iowa Department of Public Health
Child and Family Policy Center
Iowa Empowerment Board
Child Health Specialty Clinics
Iowa/Nebraska Primary Care Association
Children's Hospital of Iowa
Iowa Prevention of Disabilities Policy Council
Delta Dental of Iowa
Maternal Child Health Advisory Council
Early Childhood Iowa
Medical Home System Advisory Council
Every Child Counts
State Public Policy Group
Iowa Association of Nurse Practitioners
The University of Iowa College of Public Health,
Institute for Public Health Practice
Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Visiting Nurse Services

ITEMS TO WATCH

- A proposed reduction in TANF funds for Community Empowerment used to support improving the quality of early care environments.
- The proposal to dissolve the Medical Home Advisory Council into the role of the state Board of Health
- The proposal to dissolve the Child Care Advisory Council dissolved into the role of the Early Childhood Iowa Council
- The recommendation from the Empowerment Lean process to restructure the Early Childhood System encompassing Community Empowerment and Early Childhood Iowa.