



# Tama County Empowerment

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**Vision:** All children (age 0—5) living in Tama County will be healthy, have a safe, secure, nurturing home and childcare environment, and be ready to succeed in school.

**Mission:** To enhance the quality of life in Tama County by promoting strong, healthy families. Barriers will be overcome and programs and services coordinated through community collaboration.

**Purpose:** To ensure the collaboration within our community will provide our families with children 0—5 years old the resources and opportunities necessary for their children to be healthy, safe, and secure. Be ready to succeed in school, have available affordable, high quality child care, and access to a preschool opportunity.

**Tama County Empowerment has had several success stories this fiscal year.** One that stands out is a 16 year old pregnant, Hispanic girl who had returned to her parent's home out of foster care when she was 7 months pregnant. She had minimal family support, no role modeling, and no parenting skills. She was referred by DHS for Tama County Healthy Families' education, support and referrals. Empowerment was able to connect her with the South Tama Co. Alternative High School where she will graduate this year. She was connected to Tama Co. Healthy Family's Parents as Teachers Program. She qualified for and has participated in the WIC program and the Stork's Nest education and support program. With our help, she took a driver's education program and was able to get a drivers license. Her daughter was born on 6-10-08, healthy and thriving. Providers were all very impressed with her desire to learn and be a good parent. She quite often was reading materials presented to her before we walked out the door. She had many obstacles to overcome and has shown huge growth in personal and parenting skills. She was connected with Work Force Investment Summer Youth Program and was hired by the Tama Public Library for a summer job. She has applied and been accepted into the Certified Nurse Assistant Program for 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. This is just one example of Empowerment's collaborative efforts that made a difference in this family's life.

## Why are the programs we support important to reaching our Vision and Mission?

- ◆ Home Visits and Stork's Nest offers families parent support and education to provide a safe, secure, nurturing family.
- ◆ QRS Standards have increased the quality of our childcare providers to ensure a safe, nurturing child care environment.

## PRIORITIES:

- ◆ Healthy Children
- ◆ Children Ready to Succeed in School
- ◆ Safe, Secure, Nurturing Families
- ◆ Safe, Secure, Nurturing Childcare

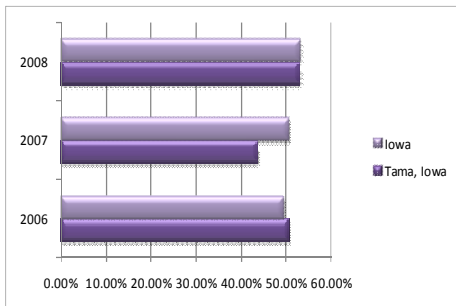
## What services/programs/activities do we support?

- ◆ Child Care Consultant
- ◆ Nurse Consultant & Training
- ◆ Childcare provider trainings/professional development
- ◆ Healthy Families Home Visitation/Coordination with Interpreters for home visits
- ◆ Family Nutrition Home Visitation
- ◆ Stork's Nest Parent Education
- ◆ Preschool Scholarships
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Preschool Expansion
- ◆ Dental Hygienist
- ◆ Care for Kids Child Abuse Prevention Program
- ◆ Lead Care Coordination

## How do we measure our progress?

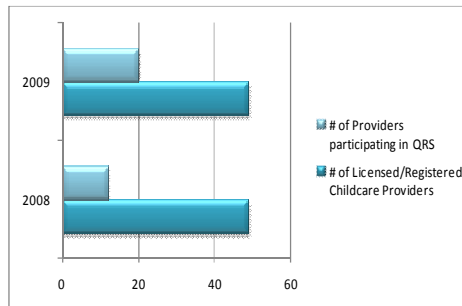
### Incidence of Founded Child Abuse

Data Source: Child Abuse Prevention Services



### Providers in QRS Plan

Data Source: Helen McDay, Nurse Consultant and Child Care Resource & Referral



### How are we doing?

- ◆ Incidence of Founded Child Abuse—the State of Iowa has seen an increase in founded child abuse from FY 07 to FY 08, yet Tama County remained below the state percentage, when in 2006, Tama County was above the state average.
- ◆ Providers in QRS Plan—the number of licensed/registered child care providers have remained the same, yet the number of providers participating in the QRS (Quality Rating System) has increased by 167%.

## What can you do to help?

- ◆ Leave funding decisions locally based on our individual county's needs.
- ◆ Leave access/support for services in Tama county so clients/families don't have to drive 40 miles to access services.
- ◆ Partner and collaborate with Tama County Empowerment Board to assure children in Tama County are receiving adequate services to make sure they are healthy, ready to succeed in school and have a safe, secure, nurturing family and quality childcare environment.
- ◆ Contact your local legislators and let them know how much you appreciate and value Empowerment's services
- ◆ Contact Child Care Resource and Referral for questions regarding local quality childcare providers and support them.

## Did You Know?

**Got a minute to: Eat with me...  
Talk to me...  
Ask me...**

Taking time to do these things with your children are ways to help develop the assets that they need to succeed. Taking a minute and showing interest in a child provides communication, love and support that shows them they are appreciated and "cared" for.

Asset building helps communities and society by building strengths in children, youth, and families which make a community stronger. A community committed to supporting young people can attract new residents who are looking for a good place to raise their children. The positive focus of asset building "rubs off" on all aspects of community life, making everyone feel more positive and connected.

Source: You can Make a Difference for Kids—40 assets all kids need to succeed!

## Others within our community working on similar issues:

- ◆ Tama County Public Health & Home Care
- ◆ Supporting Kids In Prevention (SKIP)
- ◆ Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA)
- ◆ Department of Human Services
- ◆ North Tama School District
- ◆ Meskwaki Settlement School
- ◆ South Tama Co. Comm. School Dist.
- ◆ United Presbyterian Church/Ministerial Assn.
- ◆ Pied Piper Preschool & Childcare
- ◆ Kid's Corner Childcare & Preschool
- ◆ Iowa State University Extension of Tama County
- ◆ Tobacco Coalition
- ◆ Area Education Agency 267
- ◆ Child Care Resource & Referral
- ◆ Child Abuse Prevention
- ◆ Tama County Board of Supervisors
- ◆ Local Citizens