

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.

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

Respite Scholarship Success Story

This success story is about a child using the Empowerment *Respite Scholarship* referred to as “B”.

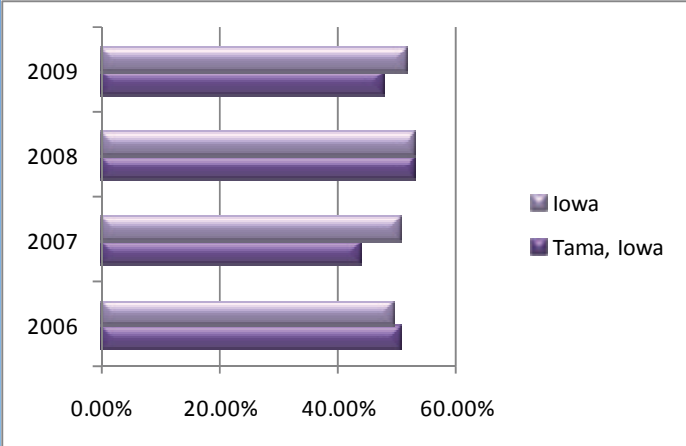
B entered Kids Corner when he was 8 months old. Prior to that time he had been working with the Early Head Start Program on a weekly basis and was involved with AEA 267/Early Access. His Early Head Start teacher voiced the concern that he was not developing as she felt he should be. She said that the mother, a single mom living on her own, didn't know what kinds of things to be doing with him to provide a stimulating environment and that she was overwhelmed with him at times.

With the *respite scholarship* **B** started attending Kids Corner on a regular basis. His mother was a little fearful of working with outside agencies so we were pleased when she agreed to take him to Kids Corner. He came several times a week for 3-4 hours at a time. His mother developed a very good relationship with the teacher in his room and over time the teacher has been able to teach the mother how to interact with **B**, what kinds of activities to do with him, and also give her some basic safety and parenting tips. Collaboration between Kids Corner, MICA, and AEA 267 were key to making this experience a success.

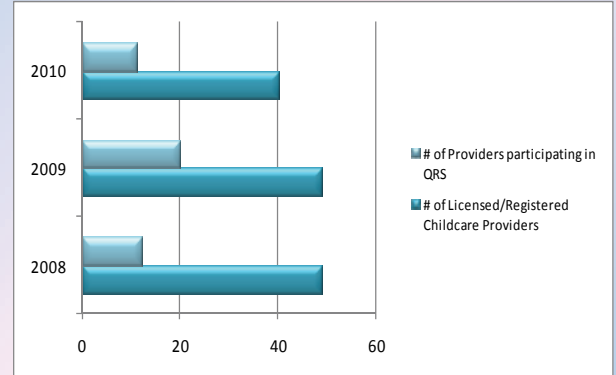
With the help of the *respite scholarship program* and the other agencies involved with him, **B** has made tremendous developmental progress and is ready to move up to the one year old room. His mother has shown a lot of growth in her parenting skills and she is not feeling as overwhelmed as she was several months ago.

What services/programs/activities do we support?

- ◆ Child Care Consultant
- ◆ Nurse Consultant
- ◆ Childcare provider trainings/professional development
- ◆ Healthy Families Home Visitation/Coordination with Interpreters for Home Visits
- ◆ Stork's Nest Parent Education
- ◆ Preschool Scholarships/Expansion Services
- ◆ Respite Scholarships
- ◆ Dental Hygienist
- ◆ Care for Kids Child Abuse Prevention Program
- ◆ Lead Care Coordination
- ◆ Coordinator/Board Support



The number of providers have decreased due to the economy, but the number of child care slots available have increased by higher quality providers.



Our percentage of founded child abuse is decreasing because of the current programming efforts/strategies that are in place.



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.

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 Association
- ◆ Pied Piper Preschool & Childcare
- ◆ 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
- ◆ Kids Corner Childcare & Preschool

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!