

135.106 Healthy families programs — HOPES-HFI program.

1. The department shall establish a healthy opportunities for parents to experience success (HOPES) – healthy families Iowa (HFI) program to provide services to families and children during the prenatal through preschool years. The program shall be designed to do all of the following:

- a. Promote optimal child health and development.
- b. Improve family coping skills and functioning.
- c. Promote positive parenting skills and intrafamilial interaction.
- d. Prevent child abuse and neglect and infant mortality and morbidity.

2. The HOPES-HFI program shall be developed by the department, and may be implemented, in whole or in part, by contracting with a nonprofit child abuse prevention organization, local nonprofit certified home health program or other local nonprofit organizations, and shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following components:

a. Identification of barriers to positive birth outcomes, encouragement of collaboration and cooperation among providers of health care, social and human services, and other services to pregnant women and infants, and encouragement of pregnant women and women of childbearing age to seek health care and other services which promote positive birth outcomes.

b. Provision of community-based home-visiting family support to pregnant women and new parents who are identified through a standardized screening process to be at high risk for problems with successfully parenting their child.

c. Provision by family support workers of individual guidance, information, and access to health care and other services through care coordination and community outreach, including transportation.

d. Provision of systematic screening, prenatally or upon the birth of a child, to identify high-risk families.

e. Interviewing by a HOPES-HFI program worker or hospital social worker of families identified as high risk and encouragement of acceptance of family support services.

f. Provision of services including, but not limited to, home visits, support services, and instruction in child care and development.

g. Individualization of the intensity and scope of services based upon the family's needs, goals, and level of risk.

h. Assistance by a family support worker to participating families in creating a link to a "medical home" in order to promote preventive health care.

i. Evaluation and reporting on the program, including an evaluation of the program's success in reducing participants' risk factors and provision of services and recommendations for changes in or expansion of the program.

j. Provision of continuous follow-up contact with a family served by the program until identified children reach age three or age four in cases of continued high need or until the family attains its individualized goals for health, functioning, and self-sufficiency.

k. Provision or employment of family support workers who have experience as a parent, knowledge of health care services, social and human services, or related community services and have participated in a structured training program.

l. Provision of a training program that meets established standards for the education of family support workers. The structured training program shall include at a minimum the fundamentals of child health and development, dynamics of child abuse and neglect, and principles of effective parenting and parenting education.

m. Provision of crisis child care through utilization of existing child care services to participants in the program.

n. Program criteria shall include a required match of one dollar provided by the organization contracting to deliver services for each two dollars provided by the state grant. This requirement shall not restrict the department from providing unmatched grant funds to communities to plan new or expanded programs for HOPES-HFI. The department shall establish a limit on the amount of administrative costs that can be supported with state funds.

o. Involvement with the community assessment and planning process in the community

served by HOPES-HFI programs to enhance collaboration and integration of family support programs.

p. Collaboration, to the greatest extent possible, with other family support programs funded or operated by the state.

q. Utilization of private party, third party, and medical assistance for reimbursement to defray the costs of services provided by the program to the extent possible.

3. It is the intent of the general assembly to provide communities with the discretion and authority to redesign existing local programs and services targeted at and assisting families expecting babies and families with children who are newborn through five years of age. The department, department of education, and other state agencies and programs, as appropriate, shall provide technical assistance and support to communities desiring to redesign their local programs and shall facilitate the consolidation of existing state funding appropriated and made available to the community for family support services. Funds which are consolidated in accordance with [this subsection](#) shall be used to support the redesigned service delivery system. In redesigning services, communities are encouraged to implement a single uniform family risk assessment mechanism and shall demonstrate the potential for improved outcomes for children and families. Requests by local communities for the redesigning of services shall be submitted to the department and the department of education, and are subject to the approval of the early childhood Iowa state board in consultation with the departments, based on the practices utilized with early childhood Iowa areas under [chapter 256I](#).

4. It is the intent of the general assembly that priority for family support funding be given to approaches using evidence-based or promising models for family support.

[92 Acts, 2nd Ex, ch 1001, §419; 97 Acts, ch 138, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1206, §10; 2004 Acts, ch 1086, §35; 2006 Acts, ch 1157, §15; 2010 Acts, ch 1031, §290; 2011 Acts, ch 129, §84, 156; 2016 Acts, ch 1113, §1; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §143 – 145](#)

Referred to in [§232.69, 256I.13](#)

Subsection 1, unnumbered paragraph 1 amended

Subsection 2, unnumbered paragraph 1 amended

Subsection 3 amended