

January 26, 2015



**Child Development Coordinating
Council
Shared Visions Annual Report**

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INTRODUCTION

The Iowa Child Development Coordinating Council (CDCC) presents this report in fulfilling the requirement to annually submit recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on the need for investment in child development services.¹ The CDCC advises and assists the Department of Education (DE) regarding the administration and implementation of state funded at-risk programs for children ages birth to five. The DE administers two programs: the Shared Visions Parent Support Program and the Shared Visions Preschool Program.

The mission of CDCC is to advocate for Iowa's children and families and support model comprehensive child development and parent support programs for at-risk children and their families. CDCC ensures the development, delivery, and promotion of quality, family-centered comprehensive early childhood services through:²

- Established minimum guidelines for comprehensive early child development services for at-risk 3 - and 4-year-old children;
- Parent support programs targeted to Iowa's most at-risk children and their families which enhance the skills of parents to support the learning and development of their children;
- Cost-effective child development services for at-risk 3- and 4-year-old children;
- Comprehensive services such as child care, transportation, family support and education, developmental screening, and referral to health professionals.

PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The Shared Visions Parent Support programs include:

- Parent support programs for high-risk children in approximately 14 Iowa counties (for families with incomes below 125 percent of the poverty level);
- Nine grantees located in area education agencies, public schools, Head Start, and private non-profit agencies. The grantees collaborate with local Early Childhood Iowa Boards, local child care, area education agencies, and school districts; and
- Individual home visitation and/or group based parent support services focused on parenting skills, child growth and development, building of self-concept, nutrition, positive guidance techniques, family resource management, parent literacy, and accessing the array of supportive services from a network of agencies that are available to families with young children who are at risk.

Funding. In 2013-2014, state funds of \$815,261 supported nine Parent/Family Support Programs serving an estimated 742 families with one or more children from birth to 5 years of age.

¹ IAC 256A, IAC 279.51, and IAC 281

² IAC 256A

Data Reporting. In fiscal year 2013, Shared Visions Parent Support Programs began a collaboration with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV) program. A key element of this on-going collaboration was the implementation of a web-based data collection system, REDcap, which provides reports to state agencies for use in reporting, planning, and system development.

During the 2013 fiscal year, IDPH's MIECHV grant provided start-up funding and technical assistance for any Shared Visions Parent/Family Support Programs that volunteered to participate. Seven of the nine grantees accepted this volunteer opportunity.

The data presented in this annual report represents a continuation of the transition from the previous paper-based year-end reporting and data collection. Eight of the nine programs began using the REDcap system at the beginning of 2013-2014, and all nine programs were using the program at the start of the 2014-2015 program year. A portion of the data continues to be collected using the paper-based report. It is important to note there were also some data definitions not aligned between the previous reporting method and the REDcap system. Therefore, data currently available for FY14 Parent Support Programs is preliminary. Future data collection will provide a higher level of accuracy and quality as the statewide data collection system is improved.

Children Served. Approximately 82 percent of the children qualified for Shared Visions based upon poverty, with the remaining children qualified based upon other risk factors. These risk factors may include developmental delays, being born at biological risk, being born to a parent under the age of 18, or having other special circumstances such as foster care or being homeless. Additional risk factors may include residing in a household where one or more parent has not completed high school, has been identified as a substance abuser or as chronically mentally ill, is illiterate, is incarcerated, or is a child or spouse abuser.

Services to young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays have been shown to positively impact outcomes across developmental domains, including health, language and communication, cognitive development and social/emotional development. Families benefit from early intervention by being able to better meet their children's special needs from an early age and throughout their lives. Benefits to society include reducing economic burden through a decreased need for special education.³ Shared Visions Parent Support Programs assist in identifying children needing early intervention services under Iowa's Early ACCESS system. Last year, Shared Visions Parent Support Programs referred 133 young children for special education services after being enrolled in the Parent Family Support Programs.

Results. The Shared Visions Parent Support Programs contribute to Iowa results.

- **Safe and Supportive Communities.** Shared Visions Parent Support Programs report a decrease in the percentage of children experiencing abuse and neglect.
- **Secure and Nurturing Families and Children Ready to Succeed in School.** Most Shared Visions Parent Support Programs use the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum to support parents learning developmentally appropriate parenting behaviors. Several

³ National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2011). *The Importance of Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families*. <http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/importanceofearlyintervention.pdf>

also use Early Childhood – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (EC-PBIS) curriculum and the Ages and Stages Questionnaires.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

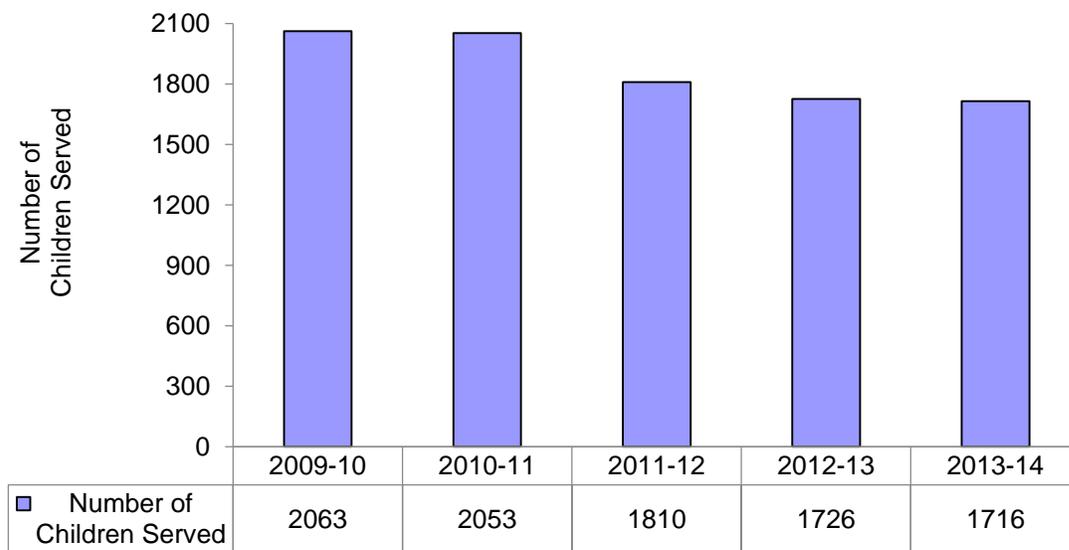
Iowa Shared Visions Preschool Programs include:

- High quality child development programs for at-risk children ages three to five years of age and whose families have an income below 130 percent of the poverty level;
- Collaborative partnerships between local Early Childhood Iowa Boards, Head Start, childcare, and school districts in 48 Iowa counties;
- A high level of accountability, documented extensive data collection, a history of established programming in the community with highly trained staff; and
- Programming in diverse settings to support community need and family choice.

Funding. In 2013-2014, state funds of \$7,716,478 provided 101 preschool grants supporting approximately 124 classrooms (26 fully funded classrooms and 98 partially funded classrooms) for children three to five years of age. The state funding only supports approximately 43 percent of the actual expenses needed to keep programs operating as they are currently structured.

Children Served. Preschool services were provided to 1,716 children in 2013-2014, remaining fairly steady from the prior program year. At this time, the increasing need for preschool services is evidenced as programs reported 1118 eligible children remained on the waiting list. This is an increase of 190 eligible children on the waitlist from the previous year.

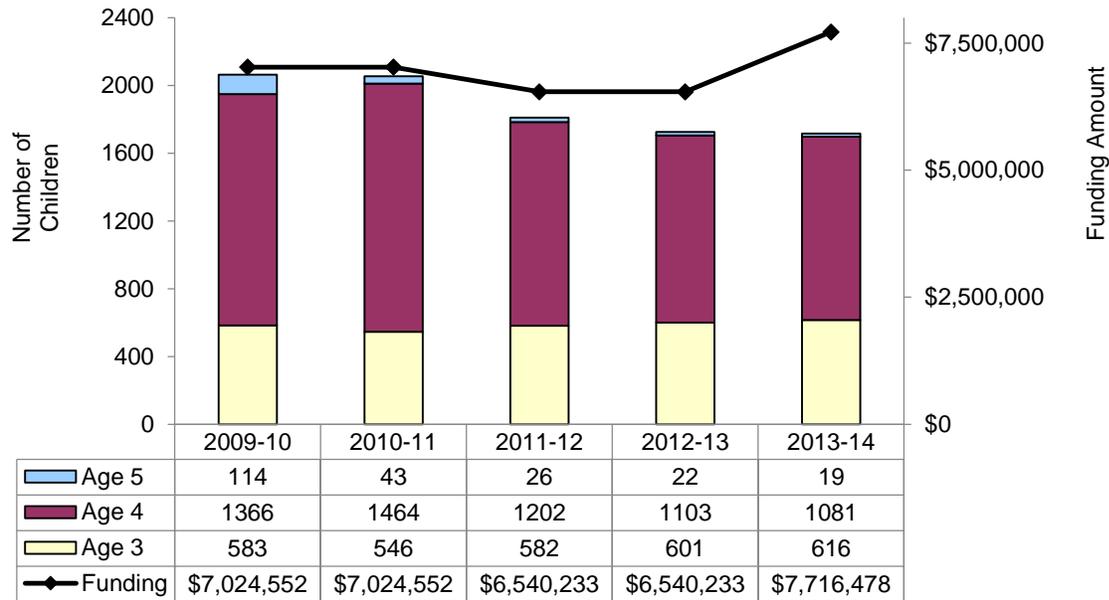
Figure 1. Five Year Trend - Number of Children Served in Shared Visions Preschool Programs.



Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013 -2014 Summary.

Shared Visions Preschool Programs serve primarily four-year-olds (see Figure 2). Overall, the number of three-year-olds served has gradually increased while the number of participating five-year-olds has decreased over the past five years. In 2012-2013, the number of four- and five-year-olds decreased which is reflective of the overall decrease in the number of children served.

Figure 2. Five Year Trend – Annual Funding and Age Breakdown of Children Served in Shared Visions Preschool Programs.

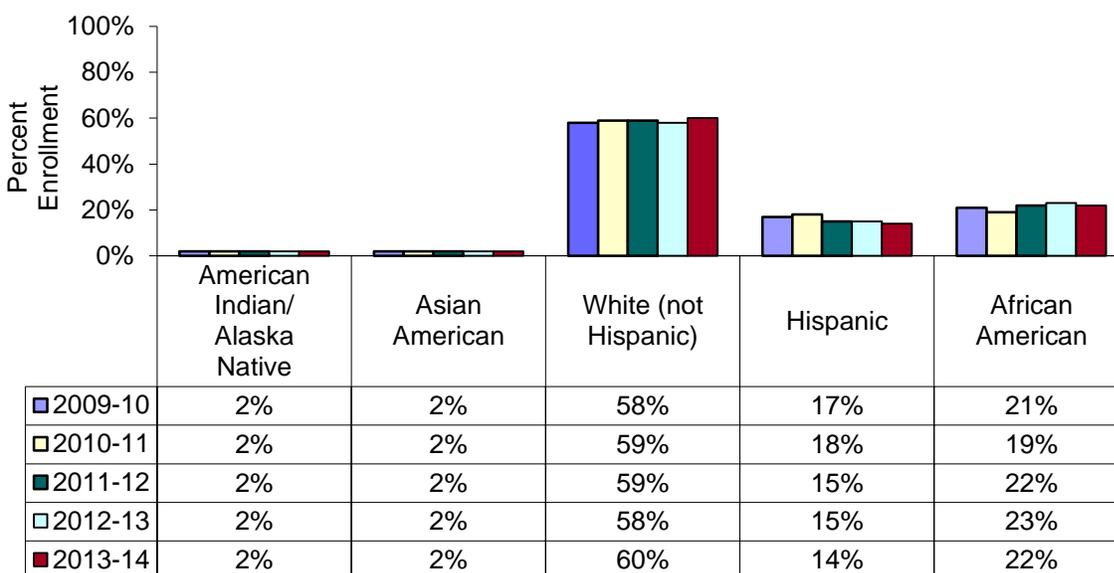


Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013 -2014 Summary.

The majority of the children served in the Shared Visions Preschool Programs are at-risk due to poverty with the remaining children qualifying due to other at-risk factors. These risk factors may include developmental delays, being born at biological risk, being born to a parent under the age of 18, or having other special circumstances such as foster care or being homeless. Additional risk factors may include residing in a household where one or more parent has not completed high school, has been identified as a substance abuser or as chronically mentally ill, is illiterate, is incarcerated, or is a child or spouse abuser. Shared Visions Preschool Programs assist in identifying children needing early intervention services. Last year, Shared Visions Preschool Programs served a total of 210 young children needing special education services with 64 of those children being identified after being enrolled in the Shared Visions program.

Figure 3 indicates enrollment by race/ethnicity. Overall, the ethnic representation of state enrollment for the Shared Visions Preschool Programs has been fairly consistent from year to year. The gender of children served in 2013-2014 was also analyzed and 51 percent were male and 49 percent were female.

Figure 3. Five Year Trend - Shared Visions Preschool Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity.



Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013 -2014 Summary.

Shared Visions Preschool High Quality Services. Providing high quality services to children at-risk has been a distinguishing characteristic of Shared Visions Preschool Programs. All programs are required to achieve and maintain accreditation by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the national standard of highest quality for early childhood programs.

Another element of quality is the requirement that all programs use a common statewide child assessment, the *Teaching Strategies GOLD* Online Assessment System. *GOLD* focuses on 38 research-based objectives for development and learning that are predictors of school success and aligned with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. *GOLD* is also a curriculum neutral assessment so it may be used in conjunction with any curriculum that programs are using. An external evaluation of classroom quality in all Shared Visions Preschool Program classrooms was completed in 2008. The full evaluation report is posted at Shared Visions Preschool Program website, Evaluation:

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/shared-visions-preschool-program#Evaluation>.

Results. The Shared Visions Preschool Programs contribute to Iowa results.

- **Healthy Children.** More than 99 percent of children participating in the Shared Visions Preschool Programs received all of their immunizations. During 2013-2014, grantees reported 98 percent of the children had health insurance. This is a 2 percent increase from the previous year.
- **Secure and Nurturing Child Care Environments.** Shared Visions Preschool Programs are accredited by NAEYC, implement a common statewide child assessment, and maintain a ratio of one adult for every eight children.

Children Ready to Succeed in School. Children enrolled in high quality early learning classrooms will be better prepared to successfully achieve the academic and social challenges of school-age programs. For children to develop these skills, they need opportunities to participate in early learning experiences that produce positive child and family outcomes. By implementing the NAEYC standards, the Shared Visions Preschool Programs are providing early learning experiences for preschoolers that meet high standards of quality.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Future Needs for Shared Visions Parent Support Programs

The Child Development Coordinating Council recommends the following:

- Support Shared Visions Parent Support Programs to achieve accreditation through either a nationally recognized accreditation process or the Iowa Family Support credential. (*Accreditation Standards require the use of family assessment tools and technology to improve the quality and accuracy of data used to support family progress and systems-level decision making.*)
- Support increasing access to more intensive and increased duration of services for at-risk families.
- Support professional development for Shared Visions Parent Support Program staff which leads to achieving or maintaining accreditation.

Future Needs for Shared Visions Preschool Programs

The Child Development Coordinating Council recommends the following:

- Support increasing access and duration of services for at-risk children through the Shared Visions Preschool Program.
- Support professional development in the area of assessment and the implementation of *Teaching Strategies GOLD* Online Assessment System.
- Support program administration and staff to complete the *Teaching Strategies GOLD* Interrater Reliability Certification.
- Support ongoing assistance from area education agency Early Childhood Consultants in the area of professional development and technical assistance to Shared Visions Preschool Programs.
- Support the enhancement of overall classroom quality, curricular offerings, and teachers' competence within the Shared Visions Preschool Programs.
- Support the alignment of curriculum and practice with the Iowa Early Learning Standards.