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**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 programs for children with risk factors and 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 children who are at-risk and their families. The 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 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children who are at-risk;
- Parent support programs targeted to Iowa's children and their families who are at-risk and which enhance the skills of parents to support the learning and development of their children;
- Cost-effective child development services for 3-,4- and 5-year-old children who are at-risk;
- 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 families with incomes below 125 percent of the poverty level and who have children with risk factors in approximately 14 Iowa counties;
- 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 education services focused on parenting skills, child growth and development, building of self-concept, nutrition, positive guidance techniques, family resource management, and parent literacy, as well as accessing the array of supportive services from a network of agencies that are available to families with young children who are at risk.

¹ IAC 256A, IAC 279.51, and IAC 281

² IAC 256A

Funding. In 2014-2015, state funds of \$815,261 supported nine Parent Support Programs serving an estimated 640 families and 960 children age birth to 5 years of age. Services included over 8,100 home visits and more than 1,000 group-based parent education meetings.

Data Reporting. Shared Visions Parent Support Programs have collaborated with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV) program since FY 2013. A key element of this on-going collaboration was the implementation of REDCap. This is a web-based data collection system that provides reports to state agencies to use for reporting, planning, and system development.

In fiscal year 2015, eight of the nine programs used the REDCap system. Due to some differences in reporting capabilities, one program continued to be collected through previous reporting methods. All nine programs also provided additional data for addressing Shared Visions grant requirements.

The data presented in this annual report represents a continuation of the transition and combination of data collection systems. Therefore, data currently available for fiscal year 2015 Parent Support Programs may not fully represent all services provided.

Children Served. Approximately 87 percent of children qualified for services based on poverty level. The remaining children were eligible for services based on secondary 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 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 also assist in identifying children needing early intervention services under Iowa's Early ACCESS system. Last year, Shared Visions Parent Support Programs referred 103 children for early intervention services after being enrolled in the program. This is equal to 16 percent of participating children.

Results. The Shared Visions Parent Support Programs contribute to statewide quality initiatives for supporting families and young children with risk factors.

Secure and Nurturing Families. The intent of the Iowa Family Support Credential is to increase program quality and ensure services for families and children meet quality standards. Six of the nine parent support programs have opted to participate in the Iowa Family Support Credentialing Program and have earned their program credential. Of the three remaining

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>

programs, one reported progress with the intent of obtaining this credential during fiscal year 2016.

Additionally, parent support programs utilize a variety of screening tools to guide services to families. One example is the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) which was used for mothers with a child who is two years old or younger. Of those screened, 26 percent were found to have a positive result for depression which initiated necessary referrals for services.

Children Ready to Succeed in School. The majority of Shared Visions Parent Support Programs use the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum to support parents learning developmentally appropriate parenting behaviors. Several also use health and developmental screening tools, such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. This allows families to increase knowledge about child development and parenting.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

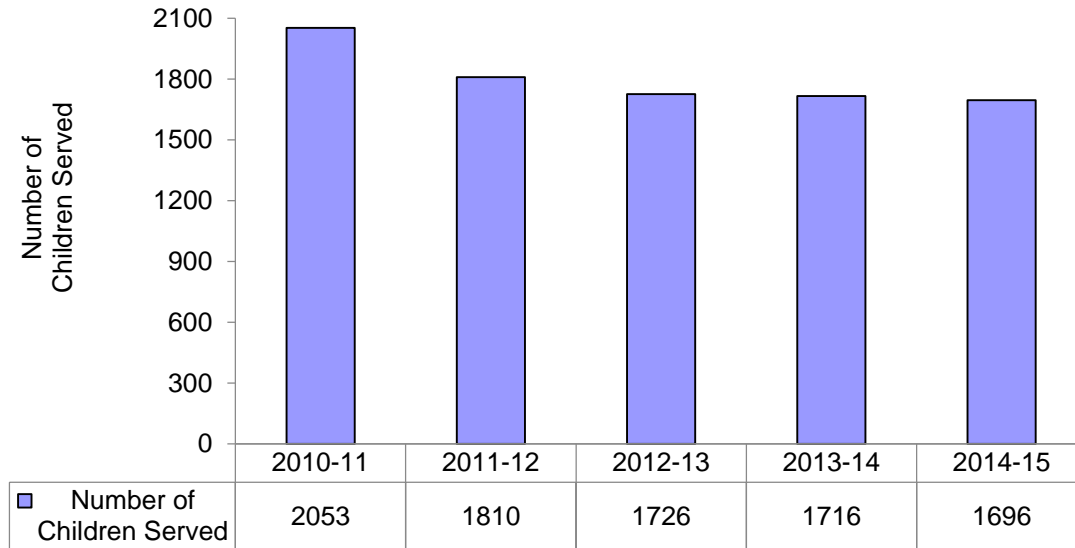
Iowa Shared Visions Preschool Programs include:

- High quality child development programs for children with risk factors and ages three to five years 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 2014-2015, 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 33 percent of the actual expenses needed to keep programs operating as they are currently structured.

Children Served. Preschool services were provided to 1,696 children in 2014-2015, remaining fairly steady from the prior program year. At this time, the increasing need for preschool services is evidenced as programs reported 1,990 eligible children remained on the waiting list. This is an increase of 872 eligible children on the waitlist from the previous year.

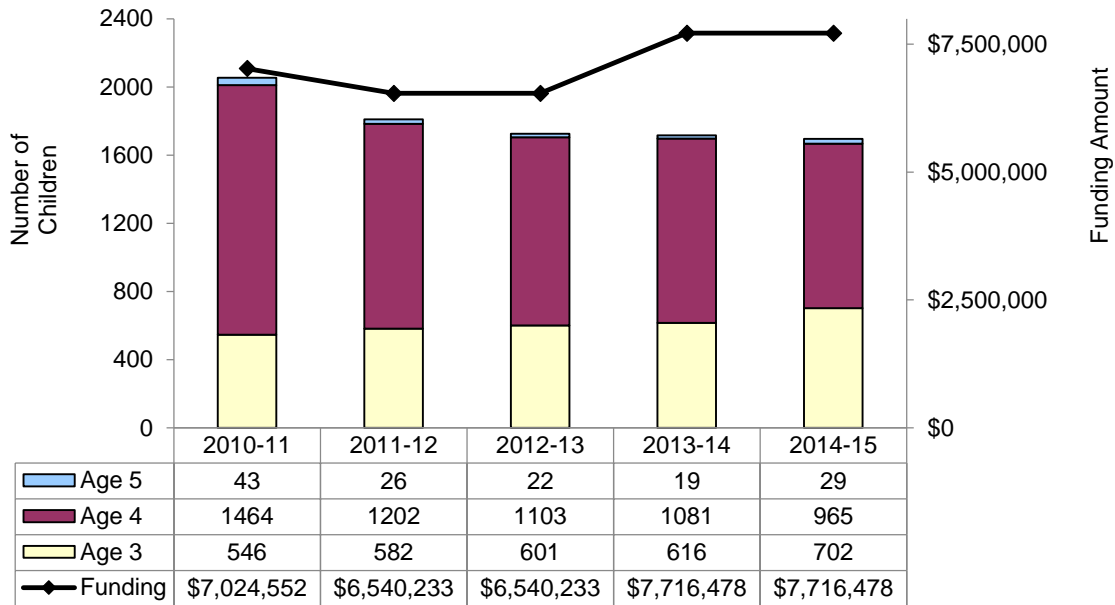
Figure 1. Five Year Trend - Number of Children Served in Shared Visions Preschool Programs.



Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013 - 2014, 2014-2015 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 remains low. There has been a gradual decrease in the number of four-year-olds served which is reflective of the decrease in the number of children served overall.

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

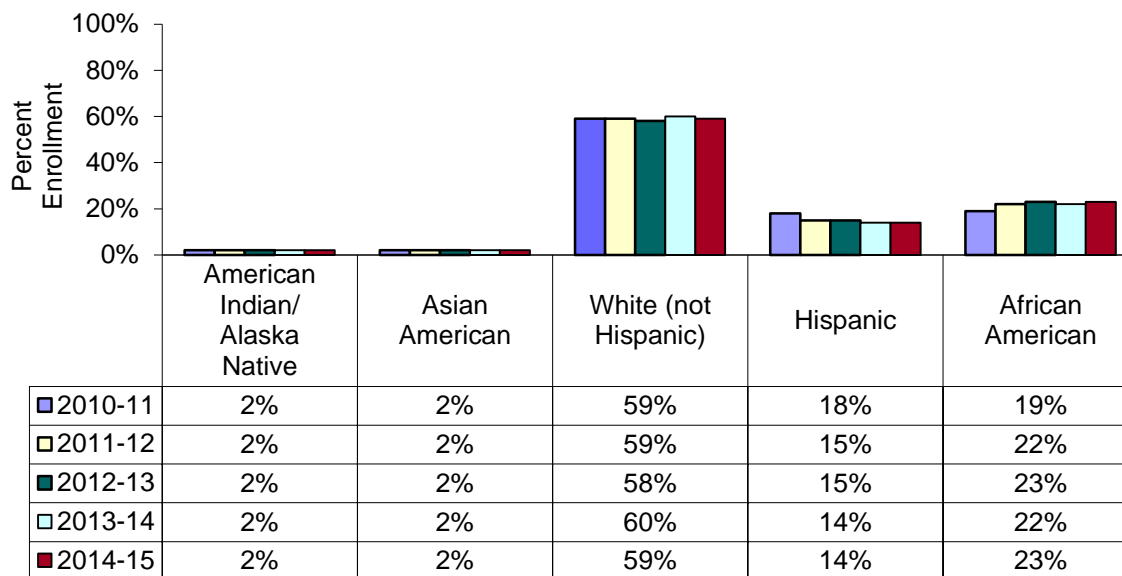


Source: Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013 - 2014, 2014-2015 Summary.

As required, 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 228 young children needing special education services with 81 of those children being identified after being enrolled.

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 2014-2015 was also analyzed and 54 percent were male while 46 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, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013 - 2014, 2014-2015 Summary.

Shared Visions Preschool High Quality Services. Providing high quality services to children with risk factors 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 align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. It is a curriculum neutral assessment so it may be used in conjunction with any developmentally appropriate curriculum that programs are using. Observations relating to all areas of development are used to inform instruction and ensure each child’s development and learning progresses.

Results. The Shared Visions Preschool Programs contribute to statewide quality initiatives for supporting young children with risk factors.

Healthy Children. More than 99 percent of children participating in the Shared Visions Preschool Programs received all of their immunizations. During 2014-2015, grantees reported 98 percent of the children had health insurance which remains consistent from the previous year.

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.

Secure and Nurturing Early Learning 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.

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.
- Support increasing access to more intensive and increased duration of services for families with risk factors.
- Support professional development for Shared Visions Parent Support Program staff to ensure high quality services to families.

Future Needs for Shared Visions Preschool Programs

The Child Development Coordinating Council recommends the following:

- Support increasing access and duration of services for children with risk factors through the Shared Visions Preschool Program.
- Support professional development in the area of assessment and the implementation of *Teaching Strategies GOLD* Online Assessment System to include the completion of 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.