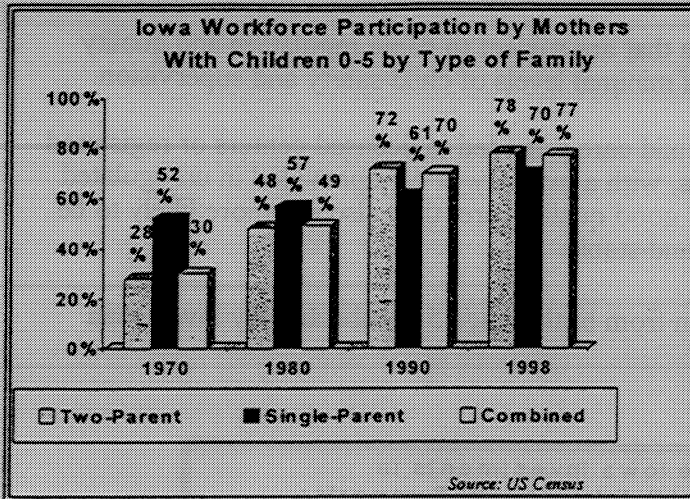


Child Care Keeps Parents Earning and Children Learning

Iowa has one of the highest needs for child care in the country.

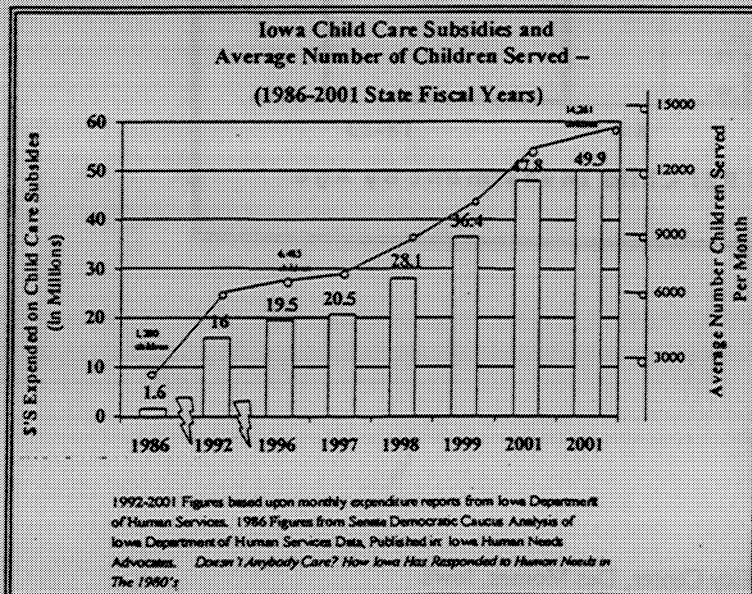
Iowa leads the nation in the number of families where both, or the only parent, works. Over three-quarters (77%) of all families with pre-school children (0-5) have both, or the only, parent in the workforce.



Iowa leads the nation in the number of families where both, or the only parent, works. In the last decade, the increase in parents in the workforce led to the necessity of child care arrangements for at least 30,000 additional young children in these families.

Iowa's child care subsidy system has one of the lowest eligibility cut-offs among all states in the country.

Eligibility for Iowa's child care subsidy program is one of the seven lowest in the country, with eligibility up to only 140% of the federal poverty level (\$21,029 for a family of three), just over half of what is allowable under federal law. Iowa currently covers less than 15% of those that it might cover with a subsidy.



While, through increased federal funding under TANF and CCDF, there has been an increase in the number of children receiving subsidized care, this increase has not kept pace with the growing need and demand for child care subsidies created by the increase in workforce participation of parents with young children

High quality early care and education improves children's development and school readiness.

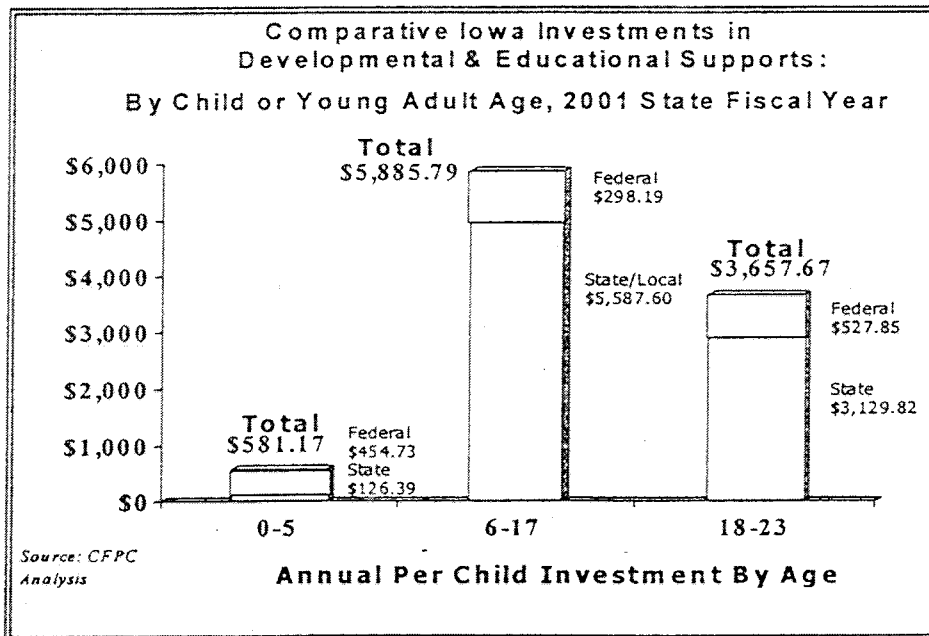
Studies have consistently shown that high quality child care improves child development and school readiness, with particular strong impacts upon low income children. Alternatively, low quality child care has been shown to be damaging to children, particularly low income children.

Iowa's quality of infant/toddler care is significantly lower than Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska, according to the Midwest Child Care Research Study.

Iowa has much lower use of forms of child care that are subject to some regulation and quality control than many other states, raising issues of minimal levels of child safety and supervision.

Iowa has a much lower percentage of child care provided in licensed centers or registered child care homes than many other states, with a majority of care provided in unregulated settings. While many of these represent good quality care, they also are more likely to be substandard and to be less dependable and stable.

The annual public investment for Iowa children from birth to age 5 is substantially lower than for ages 6-17 and for ages 18-23.



Graphs and data prepared by Child and Family Policy Center, Des Moines, Iowa

For more information about child care in Iowa, contact the Iowa Child Care & Early Education Network, 218 6th Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, 515-883-1206, msheffler@iowachildnetwork.org