

FIRST 2,000 DAYS: RAISING IOWA'S FUTURE

The first 2,000 days of life are crucial to a child's future. Decades of brain research show that our earliest experiences in life build our brains, affecting our ability to develop:



COGNITIVELY



SOCIALLY



EMOTIONALLY

WHY THE FIRST 2,000 DAYS?

These first five years will impact a child's chances for success for the rest of their lives. Investments in early childhood are not only valuable to the individual child, but to the entire community. When youth academic achievement is improved, the community's future benefits by having a stronger workforce, lowering crime rates, improving health and ensuring global competitiveness.

In Iowa, we can do more to set children up for success in their first 2,000 days of life:



59%

of Iowa's children experience at least 1 risk at birth that is known to significantly influence kindergarten outcomes.



1 in 7

children struggle with hunger.



96,860

children in Iowa live below the poverty line.

WHAT DOES ECI DO?

With a local board to serve every county in Iowa, ECI informs communities and families about the services available to their children to ensure their complete development. We connect families to supports such as child care, Head Start, home visiting, the 1st Five health program, Early ACCESS for children with disabilities, and so much more.

WHAT CAN FAITH COMMUNITIES DO TO HELP?

Building knowledge around who we are and what services we offer is the best way to grow our impact in Iowa and make sure that all children can thrive in the first 2,000 days of life and beyond. Consider participating in the following:



Offer to house or administer needed early childhood programs for your area



Use your voice and platform to engage others to participate in ECI programs and services



Create a child care provider support system



Use your voice and platform to engage others to participate in ECI programs and services



Advocate for ECI with other community leaders

Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) is a statewide initiative, housed within the Iowa Department of Management, that unites public and private agencies/organizations under one common goal: providing a network to families that ensures the best possible early childhood development for Iowa's children.

Our dedication to Iowa's children is perfectly captured in our vision statement: **"Every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful."**



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