

# Early Childhood Iowa

Harrison, Monona, Shelby Early Childhood Iowa (HMS ECI)

HMS ECI Board Office  
(712)433-9553

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## Preschool Tuition Assistance Grants AVAILABLE

"Every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful"



Preschool tuition grants are available to all families at or below the 200% of the poverty level that live in Harrison, Monona, or Shelby Counties. To see if you qualify, please contact the HMS ECI Office.

Basic qualifications are that your child must be 3 by September 15, 2013, attending a quality preschool, family income at or below the 200% federal poverty level, and complete all necessary paperwork with the HMS ECI office.

For those families that are between the 200% and 250% of the federal poverty level, you may qualify based on a sliding fee scale. To receive an application and for more information please contact Diane Foss at the HMS ECI Office (712) 433-9553.

## IS Your Child in Quality Child Care?

Parents looking for child care want to make sure their child is in a high quality program that will enable their child to be ready for school. How can you find the best program for your child? It's not easy! How can you distinguish what is a quality program instead of what is the cheapest program?

Iowa's child care regulatory rules set a minimum standard of quality that thousands of child care programs have met in an effort to prevent injuries and to protect health. To assist parents to distinguish quality above the minimal health and safety

standards. Iowa has developed a system that assesses child care settings called the Quality Rating Scale (QRS). One of the primary goals is to increase the quality of child care. It is also designed to educate parents as to quality indicators. Iowa is one of more than 28 states with a QRS program.

Iowa's Quality Rating System (QRS) is a voluntary program that child development homes, licensed child care centers and preschools, and school based and operated programs can participate in. QRS uses a rating system geared toward increasing

quality. Participating providers are rated with 1 to 5 stars, depending on how many improvement steps they are awarded. Level 1 star in QRS means the program is meeting standard licensing or regulatory requirements. To reach 2 stars, the provider must meet a set of specific criteria including participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), ChildNet Certification for Child Development Homes, and required trainings for staff.

Levels 3-5 are based on a point system. The points are broken into categories. In order to receive any level 3-5 you need to have at least one point in each category and the remainder of points can be in any category. For Child Development Homes, there

are four categories where providers can receive points. They are Health and Safety, Environment, Family and Community Partnerships and Professional Development. For Child Care Centers and Preschools, it is the same four categories with an addition of Leadership and Administration.

For more information on how you can find quality child care or about the QRS, Child and Adult Care Food Program, ChildNet Certification, please call Child Care Resource and Referral at 800-945-9778.



## NATIONAL DENTAL HYGIENE MONTH

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October is National Dental Hygiene Month. Since 1913, Den-

tal Hygienists have been leading the way to improve and protect your oral health. Join us in celebrating 100 years of the dental hygiene profession. The theme for this year's celebration is "Brush. Floss. Rinse. Chew."

### Brush—2 minutes, 2 times a day

Research shows that brushing for two minutes is the single most im-

portant method for reducing plaque and preventing cavities, gingivitis and other plaque-related diseases. Brushing for two minutes twice a day is crucial to maintaining healthy smiles.

### Floss—Every day

Daily flossing (or other methods of interdental cleaning) removes plaque and food particles that cannot be reached by a toothbrush, particularly under the gumline and between teeth. Plaque that builds up in these areas can lead to tooth decay and gum disease.



### Rinse—With mouthwash

Rinsing your mouth each day with an anti-microbial mouth rinse is another important step you can take to prevent gum disease (gingivitis). Think about it—teeth make up less than half of your mouth. Brushing and flossing cannot get all plaque and germs. Be sure to finish your oral care routine with an anti-septic mouthwash with the ADA Seal of Acceptance.

### Chew—Sugar-free gum after eating

Chewing sugar-free gum after eating is clinically proven to be an important part of good oral health. It stimulates the most important natural defense

For more information on oral health, you can contact your local dental office or your I-Smile Coordinator, Sharon Davidson, at 712-263-3303. The I-Smile Program provides oral health education, screening, fluoride varnish, and care coordination services for children in Harrison, Cass, Crawford, Monona, and Shelby Counties.

The I-Smile Dental Home Initiative is a program that helps Iowa's children connect with dental services. I-Smile was created by the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Iowa Department of Human Services, the University of Iowa College of Dentistry, and the Iowa Dental Association.



**Family Health Services**  
Serving Harrison, Cass, Crawford, Monona,  
& Shelby Counties

HCCMS Family Health Services is a five-county Maternal Health, Child Health, and Family Planning program. We have provided services in Harrison, Cass, Crawford, Monona, and Shelby Counties since 1996. The goal of our program is to promote the health of families by ensuring access to preventive care.

Our Child Health program provides the following services: EPSDT informing (notifying families new to Medicaid about the services they qualify for), care coordination (linking families with medical/dental care and other community services), presumptive eligibility (immediate coverage by Medicaid while DHS process the application), developmental screenings for children, immunizations, lead testing, and well

-child examinations. Through the I-Smile™ Program (which is part of Child Health), we provide oral health education, screenings, fluoride varnish, and care coordination (linking families with dental care). The Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) is also part of the Child Health program. The CCNC works with childcare providers and early childhood education programs to improve the health and safety of the environment.

The Maternal Health program provides services to pregnant women, regardless of their insurance status. Services include presumptive eligibility (immediate coverage by Medicaid for prenatal care), care coordination, health edu-

cation provided by a registered nurse, oral health services (education, screening, fluoride varnish), and home visits during pregnancy and after delivery. Some women may also qualify for social worker services and dietitian services, based on their risk level.

Family Planning provides services for both men and women of reproductive age. Services are based on income and a sliding fee scale is available. We can also bill Medicaid and most private insurances for services. Services are provided in each county by an advanced practice registered nurse (ARNP) at varying times each month. Some of the services we provide are physical examinations (for both men and women); sexually transmitted infection education, testing, and treatment; pregnancy

testing and counseling; Pap tests and HPV testing; blood pressure screening; client education on abstinence, birth control methods, responsible decision-making, self-breast exams, self-testicular exams, nutrition, talking with parents and partners about sexual issues, HIV education and risk assessment; school and community-based education; and referrals for other community services as needed.

All of the services discussed above are available in each of our counties. If you are interested in any of our services, please call us at 712-263-3303. We look forward to hearing from you!

