Creating a Family Support State System

Stretching your dollars while increasing quality – it can be done!

NCSL Early Learning Fellows Meeting
May 2014
The Iowa Family Support Landscape

Strengths

• Began state financial support in 1988
• In 2014, approximately $28,000,000 in state, federal and local government funding.
• Received a MIECHV competitive expansion grant.
• History of strong bi-partisan support
• Capacity to serve a minimum of 5% of the 0 – 5 child population
• Tracking common performance measures for six years across program models and types
• Have a strong early childhood system embedded in state government with private partnerships.
The Iowa Family Support Landscape

Challenges

• Ensure access and maintain quality programs in rural areas and not short-change the urban areas

• Tension between local control and accountability controls

• Meeting the diverse and changing needs of the population (language, cultural, relocation to urban settings)
How is family support different than other early childhood services?

• A family support professional does not provide direct care or instruction to children. They work with the parents to care for and instruct their own children.

• Best used within a comprehensive array of supportive services for children and families.
Which model is best?

• Iowa promotes an array of models based on community needs.
• The federally funded HomVEE study gives you solid data on which model/s are effective at mitigating which risk factors.
• Using data and research takes the political pressure off on model selection.
Build it and they will come

• Common definition and understanding of evidence-based and promising family support

• Room at the table for all –
  – Create a pathway for any program to successfully meet the definition of a promising program (*Iowa Family Support Credentialing Program*)
  – Create low-cost training solutions to increase the competency of the workforce (*Iowa Family Support Competency Assessment System, Iowa Learning Management System, Specialized Endorsements*)
  – Adapt successful strategies for the workforce to increase their formal education (*Iowa TEACH Scholarship program*)
Casting a Wide Net

• Ensure participants get referred to the family support program that can best meet their needs *(Iowa Family Support Coordinated Intake System – web and phone)*

• All parents can benefit from the services but not enough funding to serve all, so who gets served? *(Virtual Home Visitor System)*

• The parents that most need the services are the ones most likely to not receive or drop out early *(Provider reimbursement for missed home visits. Supervisor conference versus an automatic 3 strikes and you are out. Family Support Professional Q Score)*
Working Smarter

• Move to electronic records and web-based reporting (*Iowa Family Support Statewide Data System*)

• Bringing specialized services to under-resourced rural communities (*Adapting tele-health for non-traditional health services pilot project*)

• Use technology to deliver training and hold meetings to remove access barriers (*GoTo meeting account, Online Learning Management System*)
Resources

• HomVEE Study:  http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/
• Iowa family support guidance:  
  http://www.state.ia.us/earlychildhood/files/toolkit_tools/Tool_FF.pdf
• Iowa Family Support Credentialing Program:  
  http://lsiowa.org/index.php/services/credentialing-program/
Resources

• Iowa TEACH:  
  http://www.iowaaeyc.org/teach.cfm

• Coordinated Intake:  
  http://www.earlychildhoodiowa.org/files/state_system/quality_services_programs/family_leadership/CoordinatedIntakeBestPracticeGuide.pdf

REDCap: http://project-redcap.org/?3e3ea140
For More Information

Janet Horras, State Home Visiting Director
Iowa Department of Public Health
Bureau of Family Health
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Janet.Horras@idph.iowa.gov
515-954-0647
Thank you!