

## Reasons to Invest in Early Childhood Development!

[www.readychildren.net](http://www.readychildren.net)

**Families** need tools for ***literacy***.

The human brain develops more rapidly between birth and age five than during any other subsequent period. Children develop essential academic and social skills in their early years that affect lifelong success. Affordable, quality childcare is essential to a child's health and future college potential.

**Children** must start school ***ready to learn***.

School readiness is about children's ability to adjust to the demands of school. Children need to be able to interact with others positively, pay attention, remember lessons, follow a teacher's directions, finish tasks, and practice what they have learned.

### Vision and Mission of CEA:

The vision of Clinton/Jackson Early Childhood Iowa is that every child beginning at birth will be healthy and successful. The mission is to develop and maintain a collaborative system of needs-based services, implemented at the earliest point of intervention that strengthens families and communities.



# Clinton/Jackson Early Childhood Iowa

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[http://www.clintoncounty-ia.gov/Page/Clinton\\_Jackson\\_Early\\_Childhood\\_Iowa.aspx?nt=636](http://www.clintoncounty-ia.gov/Page/Clinton_Jackson_Early_Childhood_Iowa.aspx?nt=636)

**2000  
Days**

## Ask the Clinton/Jackson Early Childhood Iowa Board!

There are approximately 2000 days between birth and the first day of kindergarten. The first 2000 days of a child's life can have a profound and lifelong impact on physical and emotional wellbeing, readiness to learn and succeed, and ability to become a productive citizen.

How do Clinton/Jackson Early Childhood Iowa funds support children 0-5? We provide a variety of resources and support for healthy parenting with a focus on home visitation programs, parent education and access to quality preschool. We improve the availability and access to quality health care services, with a current focus on dental care and healthy nutrition for children 0-5. We support efforts to increase access and opportunities for quality childcare experiences. We partner and collaborate with area schools, preschools, agencies and businesses to provide these services.



The State of Iowa devotes federal and state funding to the Clinton/Jackson Early Childhood Iowa Board with strict guidelines established by the Iowa legislature. Research shows that Iowa's investment in the first 2,000 days of a child's life lead to a more productive workforce, citizens who are lifelong learners and are more engaged community members. Our children are our greatest resource and investments now will lead to a brighter Iowa future. For more information contact Jenny Kreiter, Clinton/Jackson Early Childhood Iowa Coordinator at 563-659-3651.

### Clinton / Jackson Early Childhood Iowa Board

Jack Willey, Board Chair, Jackson County Supervisor

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# Lutheran Services in Iowa New Parent Program

LSI's (Lutheran Services in Iowa) New Parent Program is a free and voluntary home visitation program funded primarily by Clinton and Jackson Early Childhood Iowa. It is an evidence-based and accredited program that follows the policies and procedures of Healthy Families America, and it is designed to help families make the most of the important early years of a child's life. In the past year, LSI made 1,456 home visits and served 82 families. Through these regular visits in the home, the family support worker builds on a family's strengths and teaches strategies for parenting in areas of positive discipline, parent-child interaction, healthy development and much more. Questions are answered and encouragement and information is provided to help families become stronger, nurturing and caring parents. It is known when parents and children have strong, warm feelings for one another, children develop trust that their parents will provide what they need to thrive, including love, acceptance, positive guidance and protection.

Watching a child grow and develop is a very exciting time for families. LSI helps families track milestones in development using regularly scheduled screenings in communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, personal-social skills and in social-emotional development and can refer families to other resources if concerns or delays show up. In the past year, 76 children were screened for delays. 100% of the children who showed delays were referred to community resources or were already working with early intervention services.



LSI's New Parent Program understands that families face many stresses, so support workers assist them in making contact with local community resources. Families can benefit by improved healthy functioning, problem solving and communication. 96% of the families served were able to improve or maintain healthy functioning in their family during the past year. In addition, families are encouraged to develop social supports by participating in community events and group parent education opportunities where other parents can be met. Parental resilience can be developed by having community supports and social networks available to families. This helps the families handle everyday stressors and recover from the occasional crisis. These parents are aware of their own challenges - for example, those arising from inappropriate parenting they received as children - and accept help and/or counseling when needed.

The support worker also assists the families to make concrete supports. There are so many factors beyond the parent-child relationship that affects services that address family specific needs, such as child care and health care, to ensure the health and well being of their children. The support worker provides that support to make those connections. The efforts made by the support worker help families to cope with stress and prevent situations where maltreatment could occur.

Goal setting is another important factor of the New Parent Program. Goals are made by the parent for themselves and for their child. The adult goals usually are made with a need in mind such as education, employment or housing. When goals are broken down in steps and with support, the family is more able to meet those goals. Goals are set for the children that promote development in one area, such as gross motor skills. Working on gross motor activities helps the child move to that next step whether it be sitting up, crawling or walking.

The support of the New Parent Program is just a phone call away. Call LSI at 563-243-8200, and ask for the New Parent Program. We'll see that a support worker contacts you.

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**Quality** pre  
kindergarten ***cuts crime.***

Adolescents whose mothers received quality home visitation programs when those youth were infants were 55% less likely to have been arrested and 80% less likely to have been convicted of a crime. Expanding quality educational childcare and after school programs is the most effective strategy for reducing youth violence and crime.

**Investing** in children's  
early care makes  
***economic sense.***

Investing money in early childhood development programs is perhaps the best form of economic development. Investing in human capital is smart economic development – and it leads to a satisfying life. You get the most payoff the earlier you invest. For every \$1 invested in early childhood development programs, there is a \$7 - \$8 public return.