

# Linn County Early Childhood Iowa



Counties in Area: Linn County

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**Vision:** *Every child will have access to quality services empowering them to be healthy and successful.*

**Mission:** *To provide and support quality education, health and human services through community partnerships and collaborations, for children prenatal-age 5 and their families, resulting in healthy, safe and school ready children.*

## Comments from Child Care Quality Improvement Program Participants

***“I am a better all-around provider...because continued training improved my communication and relationships with children and families in my care.***

***“Our center has improved so much and **we are now a Level 4 in the Quality Rating System!**”***

***“When I started in the child care field **I did not know where to start...**but through training and support I expanded my child care curriculum, provided safer sleeping and enhanced the play equipment.”***

## Did You Know?

- Iowa is in the bottom 10 of states in a ranking of state’s child care provider regulation and oversight (National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies , We Can Do Better 2013 Update).
- 74.3% of Iowa families, with children under age 6, have both or the only parent working outside the home (2010 US Census).

## Why Are The Programs ECI Supports Important to Reaching Our Vision &Mission?

- The Linn County ECI Board understands that investment in quality early intervention services is the key to **healthy, safe and school ready children.**
- And we are not alone in this belief: *“Although education and the acquisition of skills is a lifelong process, **starting early in life is crucial.** Recent research has documented the high returns that early childhood programs can pay in terms of subsequent educational attainment and in lower rates of social problems, such as teenage pregnancy and welfare dependency.”* (Fed Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, 2007).

## Linn County Community Plan Priorities

- ✓ Early Care and Education
- ✓ Child & Family Resources
- ✓ Child Health
- ✓ Mental Health

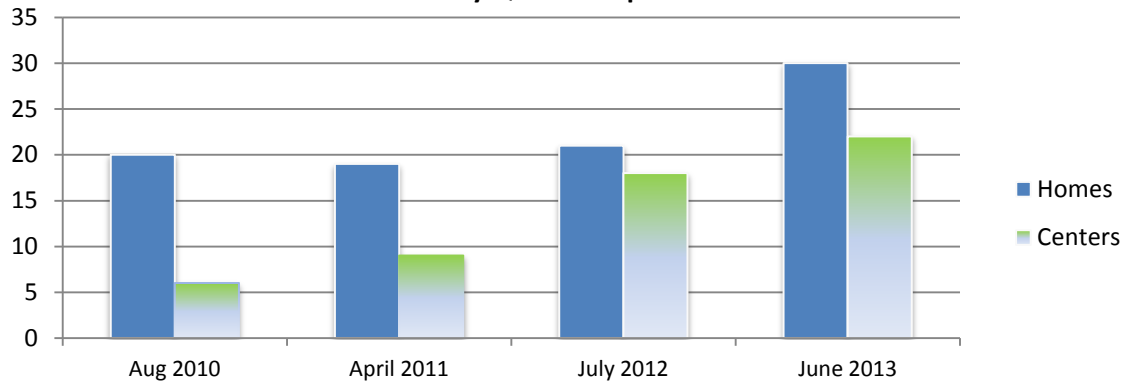
## Types of Services supported by Linn County Early Childhood Iowa FY 13

- Child Health Services and Screenings
- On-Site Technical Support for Care Providers
- In-Home Visitation & Family Support
- Part Day Preschool for 3 yr olds
- Full-day Wraparound Child Care
- Quality Improvements (NAFCC, QRS, ERS)
- Group Parent Education
- Child Mental Health & Behavioral Supports
- Child Care Nurse Consultant
- Health & Developmental Screens
- Parent-led Behavior Interventions
- Child Care Home & Center Consultants

## How Do We Measure Community Level Progress in Linn County?

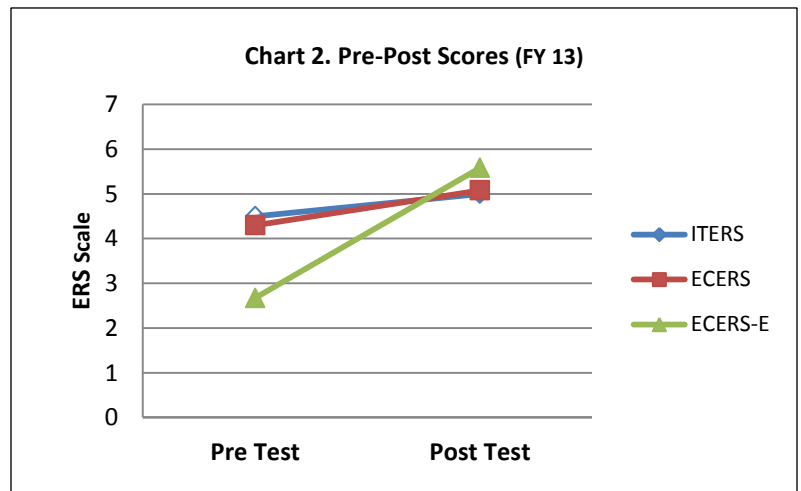
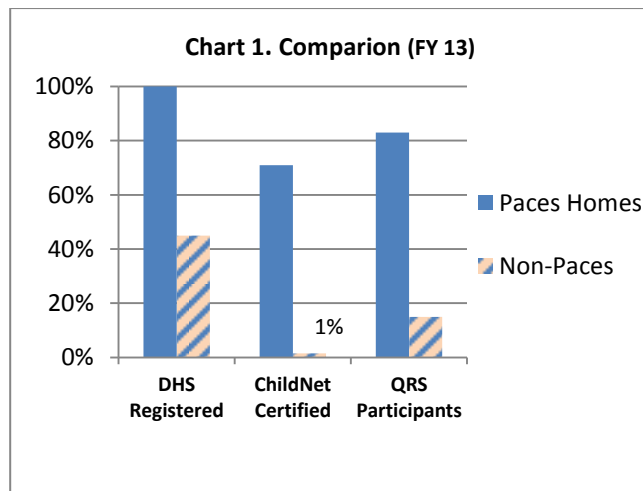
Linn County data indicates an annual increase in **Quality Rating System (QRS)** participation by early childhood providers with child care homes comprising the majority (58%) of those enrolled. (Source: Iowa DHS website). The Iowa QRS is a voluntary rating system for child development homes, licensed child care centers/preschools, and school district child care programs and serves as an objective measure of quality.

Linn County QRS Participation 2010-2013



## How Do We Measure Program Progress in Linn County Early Childhood Iowa?

The **Paces to Quality** Program provides a menu of support services to increase quality in local early childhood programs. Chart 1 shows the disparity of participation in various quality measures for programs enrolled in Paces and those that are not. Chart 2 illustrates the increase in the infant/toddler (ITERS) or early childhood (ECERS) environmental rating scores of early care providers enrolled in Paces.



### What Can You Do To Help?

- Ask your child care provider if they participate in a Local, State or National quality improvement effort and be sure to acknowledge those that do!
- If your provider is interested in receiving quality improvement support or training please have them contact the Linn County Early Childhood Iowa office at [www.linncountyearlychildhoodiowa.org](http://www.linncountyearlychildhoodiowa.org)
- Obtain a checklist of what to look for in quality childcare at [www.qualitychildcarechecklist.org](http://www.qualitychildcarechecklist.org)

### Other Partners in Linn County that Support Child Care Quality

- Child Care Resource & Referral
- United Way of East Central Iowa
- Child Care Nurse Consultant
- Cedar Rapids AEYC
- Iowa DHS, Cedar Rapids Office
- Linn County Decategorization
- Iowa State University Extension, Linn County