



Department of
HUMAN SERVICES

Child Care Newsletter

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Surviving Winter in Child Care

With winter comes colder weather and lots of extra clothes! Sometimes the time that it takes to get everyone bundled up is **more** than the time spent playing outside!

Below are a few tips to help:

Where will it all go? Think about where to store all the children’s ‘snow clothes’ before the snow comes. A pile of soggy clothes on the floor is no fun for anyone. Is there a place that snow pants can hang? Where will the boots, gloves and hats go? Maybe a glove/mitten clothesline would help? As much as possible make sure the children can reach these places on their own to foster independence.

Use it as a teaching experience!

Getting ready to go outside offers lots of opportunities to practice independence and fine motor skills like zipping. Allow children plenty of time so they can practice these skills. Give a “head start” to children that you know will take longer by sending them a few minutes before others. If you have children who are older or excel at these skills ask them to help others who are still learning.

Supporting Families Experiencing Homelessness

An estimated 2.5 million children per year experience homelessness in the United States. Caregivers and teachers may often be the first people to recognize when a family is experiencing homelessness. You might notice the child is falling asleep in the middle of the day, or their clothes are not washed or maybe they are just distracted and not acting in a typical manner.



What is homelessness? Not having a permanent place to stay looks different for every family. It could mean:

- Staying with relatives or friends
- Staying at a shelter
- Sleeping in a vehicle
- Staying at hotels or campgrounds
- Staying in places not intended for living/sleeping (i.e. park shelter)
- A combination of any of the above



What can I do? Families experiencing homelessness face many challenges from practical matters like where to shower to dealing with feelings of fear and loss of security. There are many ways to support families experiencing homelessness.

Go to Page 2 to see some ideas...

Interested in How Early ACCESS Can Support Infant/Toddler Caregivers?

See page 3 for more information!



Find CCR&R Services in your county:

Visit www.iowaccrr.org or call: (855) 244-5301



Regional Offices:

Northwest Iowa Region 1

Mid-Sioux Opportunity Inc.
Remsen, IA

Northeast Iowa Region 2

Exceptional Persons Inc.
Waterloo, IA

Southwest Iowa Region 3

West Central Community Action
Harlan, IA

Central Iowa Region 4

Orchard Place
Des Moines, IA

Southeast Iowa Region 5

Community Action of Eastern Iowa
Davenport, IA

Reminder:

Child Care Assistance rates changed January 1, 2019.

If you need to update your CCA Provider Agreement you may call 1-866-448-4605 or use the provider portal at

<https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/providerportal/Default.aspx>

Ideas for Supporting Families Experiencing Homelessness



The creators of Sesame Street recently released a new resources devoted to supporting families experiencing homelessness.

Below are some highlights for child care providers but check out the full page for additional activities and tips.

<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/family-homelessness/>



Provide a safe space. If the child/ren can talk, provide them a safe place to talk about the “big feelings” they may be having. Listen carefully to what they say and be sure to reassure them that all their feelings are okay and that they are loved. This [article](#) gives examples of words to use when talking with children experiencing homelessness.



Provide predictability. Children without a permanent home experience a lot of uncertainty. They may not know where they will sleep that night or if they will be able to have any of their possessions with them. Providing consistent routines helps them feel a sense of safety and can allow them the opportunity to relax in a known environment.



Rethink your activities. Do any of your activities assume children have a permanent place to stay? For example you could change “draw a picture of your home” to “draw a picture of your family” or “who lives in your neighborhood” to “who are important people in your life”.



Approach behavior problems with curiosity. Not having a permanent home is stressful for both adults and children. Is that stress contributing to the behavior you are noticing? If so how can you help decrease stress for the child? Does the child have a favorite toy or activity that can help soothe him or her?



Early ACCESS Can Support Infant/Toddler Teachers and Childcare Providers

What is Early ACCESS?

Early ACCESS is Iowa's early intervention system that helps infants and toddlers with or at risk for developmental delays or disabilities. Early intervention focuses on helping the caregivers of eligible infants and toddlers (birth to age 3 years) learn how to support their child learn the basic and brand-new skills that typically develop during the first three years of life, such as: physical (reaching, rolling, crawling, and walking); cognitive (thinking, learning, solving problems); communication (talking, listening, understanding); social/emotional (playing, feeling secure and happy); and self-help (eating, dressing). Early ACCESS is for families and caregivers with infants and toddlers who have a:

- health or physical condition affecting their growth & development, or
- delay in their ability to play, think, hear, see, eat, talk or move.

What should I do if I think that a child in my care has development delays?

If you sense that an infant or toddler in your care needs extra developmental support (see the [Iowa Early Learning Standards](#) (IELS) to understand what infants and toddlers should know and be able to do), first have a conversation with the family to share your concerns (again, you can use the IELS as the foundation for the conversation). Share information about Early ACCESS with the family and ask them for permission to submit a referral via the [Iowa Family Support Network/Early ACCESS](#) website (click [here](#) for the referral form). Once Early ACCESS receives a referral, a service coordinator will be in contact with the family within a few days to ask the family if they would like to have their child evaluated for Early ACCESS services.

What do Early ACCESS services look like?

Children's families who qualify for Early ACCESS work alongside a team of professionals to create an Individualized Family Service Plan or IFSP (the childcare provider can be on this team if the family wishes). The IFSP contains outcomes that are developed based on the family's priorities, needs and the services to be delivered to help meet these outcomes. Services in the IFSP vary according to the specific needs of the eligible child and family. Regardless of the services a child receives, Early ACCESS service providers get to know the child's daily activities and routines as well as the family's priorities and hopes for the child. Together, service providers and caregivers plan and practice interventions that can be used throughout the day in routines and activities that the caregiver already does such as snack, bath time, getting dressed, and going in the car. Families and caregivers are with their children all day every day,

so coaching them to support the child's growth and learning is essential. Including you in the planning and implementation of Early ACCESS services is crucial for the child's development! Click here to watch a [video](#) (10:50 min) of what Early ACCESS services look like.

How will the Early ACCESS provider and I work together?

If the family agrees to include you in services and the IFSP team meetings, then it is important to participate because you spend many hours with the child each week and know the child well. You also can describe the routines and activities you typically do throughout the day, which is when you can best support the child. Recently, guidance and a self-assessment was created to support Early ACCESS and their community-based partners work better together. Visit the [Early ACCESS](#) website to access the two documents.