

# North Liberty Family Resource Center

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## **JOHNSON COUNTY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM Family Support Program**

**Reporting Period:  
January - June 2008**

**Submitted by:  
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North Liberty Family Resource Center Director**

## 1. IMPLEMENTATION

### Activities and Events

Empowerment Families are encouraged to come to the monthly NLFRC Playgroups which are held on the second Thursday of each month. This event is a great community builder which encourages/fosters the parent-child relationships, networking with other families and agencies, and builds play skills. Playgroups are not held in June, July, August, or December. The NLFRC had five playgroups in this reporting period. In January the Playgroup was held at the North Liberty Library. Library staff provided a story time and craft and we again provided dinner and a book bag decorating activity along with a book to take home. March's Playgroup was held at the Children's Museum. Families who qualified were provided yearly family passes to the Children's Museum. We tied in our incentives with the Museum's theme of BLOCKS by providing age appropriate blocks to take home along with literature to extend play. These two Playgroups were held outside of Penn Elementary after last year's surveys showed interest extending our playgroups to outside venues.

### Materials and Curricula

The FSWs are implementing Parents as Teachers curriculum with the majority of their clients. The FSWs have been implementing it for just a year and are extending the curriculum into all families as we become more familiar and comfortable with it. The NLFRC finds the parent hand out section of the PAT very useful in covering numerous topics that parents are asking for. The NLFRC still uses other curricular materials and continues to implement the "Partners for a Healthy Baby" curriculum. This curriculum has proven to be relevant and informative for families. NLFRC Staff uses "Parenting Your 1 to 4 year Old," as parents state it is easy to understand and relate too which makes it a nice compliment to the Healthy Baby curriculum.

### Participant Profiles

The unduplicated number of families served through the JC Empowerment program at the NLFRC is 24. The number of children five and younger served was 35. English is the primary language spoken with all our families. As of the end of the reporting period only one mother is pregnant. The NLFRC has 8 children from the Empowerment program who will be entering Kindergarten in the fall. This kept our staff busy with Kindergarten registration and Round up and Orientation. Only 2 of these 8 children did not have complete follow through. Births this reporting period is 1. Families terminating with Empowerment during this reporting period are 5. Two families moved from the area and two families decided they were no longer in need of Empowerment services. One unfortunately had to be dropped due to a DHS removal.

### Program Successes

The NLFRC continues to have a positive relationship with Head Start and have all children in our Empowerment program who are eligible or need the services enrolled.

We have many families who have been with the JC Empowerment Program for numerous years. We feel that the connections we have made are positive and, therefore, are keeping families enrolled in the program at a longer rate. We rarely need to advertise for open spots due to the “word of mouth” from our current clients. We have had a waiting list most of this year.

Obstacles

As always, transportation is an on going challenge. Even though North Liberty has established a bus route running morning, noon and evening hours it only goes to the Coral Ridge Mall and back. The FSWs are sometimes the only transportation a family has available especially since Johnson County Public Health is NO LONGER giving cab rides to qualifying clients. This program has been discontinued due to clients abusing the program. This new development is a real concern for families who heavily relied on this free taxi service.

The NLFRC distributes \$10 gas vouchers to drivers that have a current driver’s license and auto insurance. Due to rising gas prices the NLFRC capped the number of gas vouchers provided to families. However, exceptions are made for clients who would otherwise not get to school or doctor appointments. We have been known to give clients with valid driver’s licenses and extra gas voucher to help transport clients with absolutely no transportation.

This reporting period brought recording flooding in Johnson County. Although none of our Empowerment families had property damage, we had some families indirectly affected by becoming unemployed. We directed these families to apply for more food stamps and any other assistance they were eligible for.

The NLFRC staff have on going mental health issues with numerous Empowerment families. The FSWs continue consultation services with Dr. Beth Troutman from the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Iowa. She is available for consultation when there are concerns about mental health issues or postnatal depression. The NLFRC staff really appreciates her expertise since mental health issues are beyond the FSWs scope. Although no referrals have been made this reporting period, this continued partnership is beneficial to our program. The NLFRC staff sees Dr. Troutman’s Advanced Infant Mental Health Seminars informational and beneficial. The FSWs will continue to meet with Dr. Troutman by meeting at Penn on a monthly basis for more specific consultations.

**2. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Below are the FY 07-08 outcomes.

	July-December 2007	January-June 2008	Total Year (unduplicated)
<b># of families</b>	22	24	27

# of <b>children 0-5</b>	36	35	44
# of <b>children 0-3</b>	25	23	30
# of <b>Early Access</b> referrals for 0-3	0	1	1
# of <b>face-to-face</b> home visits	201	219	420
# of <b>ASQs</b> completed	41	42	83
# of <b>children</b> having ASQ	27	28	40
# of <b>referrals</b> from ASQs	0	2	2
# of those referred <b>receiving services</b>	0	1	1
# of <b>ASQ:SEs</b> completed	1	3	4
# of <b>children</b> having ASQ:SE	1	3	4
# of <b>referrals</b> from ASQ:SEs	0	0	0
# of those referred <b>receiving services</b>	0	0	0

### Staff and Trainings

Currently there is two NLFRC staff trained as Family Support Workers. Trainings attended during this past reporting period by one or more family support workers include: “Interventions to Address Disruptive Behavior: Reducing Disruptive Behavior during child-directed interactions,” “Interactions to Address Disruptive Behavior/ Approaches to Disciplining Young Children: Reducing Disruptive Behavior during parent-directed interactions,” and “Interventions to Address Insecure Infant-Caregiver Attachments in 1- to 3-year-olds (parts 1 &2)” with Beth Troutman. One staff member attended CPR. The three staff members at the NLFRC participated in the “Parenting While Depressed” staff training this reporting period.

### Resources

The FSWs continue to access the parent library which consists of books, CDs, videos, manipulative and large/small motor toys. The NLFRC is still receiving many book donations to support the continued efforts to take a book to every home visit. The FSW selects books appropriate for each child and then models reading skills while on home visits. Since pre-literacy is so important the books are left with the child for the family to enjoy. The FSWs often leave literacy information for the parent to read as well.

The NLFRC continues to collaborate with the Free Medical Clinic, Family’s Inc., Systems Unlimited, Grant Wood AEA, HACAP, Ask a Nurse, Crisis Center, Salvation Army, Community Mental Health, St. Anthony’s Bread, Local Businesses, 4Cs, Iowa

City Housing Authority, The NEST, JC Public Health, DHS, Early Access, The North Liberty Library and Recreation Center, First United Methodist Church here in North Liberty, Infant Mental Health Consultation, CART Program and other Family Resource Centers in the district. The NLFRC helps families that are dealing with crisis situations to problem solve and connect to resources. Funding is limited for families who are relocating to North Liberty when deposits for rent and utilities are required.

Ages and Stages Results

An “Ages and Stages” was administered to a total of 28 children this reporting period. The total number of “Ages and Stages” completed was 42. One referral was made and the child is currently being seen by a speech and language pathologist.

Below are the Family Support Evaluation Outcomes.

Family Support Program Evaluation

	July - Dec. 07	Jan. - June 08
# of families completed survey	16	16
# of children indicated on survey	28	26
# of surveys compiled	17	16
# of families in program...6 months	2	3
# of families in program ...12 months	0	0
# of families in program... + 12 months	15	13

Anecdotal information

A 4-year-old child did an Ages and Stages and scored a 15 on Fine Motor. I was concerned and spoke with his mother about a possible referral to GWAEA.. She agreed and I spoke directly with an Occupational Therapist as I wanted to skip another Child Check and save the mother time. The child would be going the Kindergarten in the fall and I was hoping to get some services started as soon as possible. The OT said she could come out to the child’s in home day care center but the provider would not agree. I sent a copy of the Ages and Stages to the OT. The mother got off of work early one day and met the OT at home to do an assessment. The OT said she could put a kit together for me/mom to do work with the child at home. I began providing fine motor activities when I came every two weeks and mom was working with the kit. In 3 months at age 5 on the next Ages and Stages he scored higher, his cutting was better, his pencil grip was coming along and he was having more confidence in writing letters. The OT said she will forward a referral to the school he will be attending and I will send the Ages and Stages. I will touch base with the child’s school and teacher in the fall to make sure follow through has been done.

**3. FEEDBACK**

The NLFRC continues to find Empowerment funding extremely helpful in allowing the staff to make positive connections with families who are pregnant or have children birth through age five. Building relationships early is critical in fostering the parent-child

relationship and empowering families. One major goal is helping families support their children in developing age appropriately through developmental milestones. The NLFRC hopes this will help children become school ready and ease the transition into kindergarten. As North Liberty continues to grow, the need for services will most certainly grow also. The NLFRC hopes the Empowerment Board recognizes the positive effect that their support has had in empowering families in this community. We truly are glad of the partnership Empowerment has had with the NLFRC in the past!