



## **Iowa Community Empowerment**

### **Overview**

Community Empowerment was established by legislation during the 1998 session in an effort to create a partnership between communities and state government with an emphasis to improve the well-being of families with young children. Community Empowerment Areas enable local citizens to lead collaborative efforts involving education, health, and human services efforts on behalf of children, families and other citizens residing in the area.

### **Purpose / Mission**

The purpose of Community Empowerment is to empower individuals and their communities to achieve desired results to improve the quality of life in communities in Iowa. It is believed that individuals in local communities working together will identify and implement the best means to reach the desired results. The role of the Iowa Empowerment Board and the State is to support and facilitate growth of individual and community responsibility in place of the directive role that the public has come to expect of government.

By the end of the year 2005, every community in Iowa will have developed the capacity and commitment for achieving these results:

- Healthy Children;
- Children Ready to Succeed in School;
- Safe and Supportive Communities;
- Secure and Nurturing Families; and
- Secure and Nurturing Child Care Environments.

Community Empowerment is an example of the most effective role of state government – the role of partner. Community Empowerment leverages local resources; supports local efforts; generates comparison data among areas and focuses on results.

The initiative is provided oversight by the Iowa Empowerment Board, which includes citizen members appointed by the Governor, the directors of the departments of Education, Public Health, Human Rights, Human Services and ex-officio legislators.

Community Empowerment Areas are collaborative bodies consisting of citizens, elected officials, and representatives of education, health, human services, faith, business and consumers charged to reach the desired results to improve the quality of life for young children (0-5 years) and their families.