



ECI Designation
 Summary and Recommendation
 4RKids (Adair, Dallas, Madison, Warren counties)
 Site Visit: December 17, 2020
 2:00pm -3:00pm via Zoom with community partners
 6:30pm-8:00 pm via Zoom with board members

Name of ECI Area: 4 R Kids
 Counties/Area Served: Adair, Dallas, Madison, and Warren
 Materials Received by October 31st? Yes
 ECI Board Members Present at Site Visit: Jean Bosch, Justin Terry, Dena Owens, Janice Jensen, Kevin Howe, Rita Martens, Debra Blazek, Lois Hoger, Justin Terry, Khristan Kaufman, Paul Millhollin
 Others Present at ECI Board Review: Deb Schrader (4 R Kids ECI Area Director), Brittany Shin, Michelle Greenough, Joy Rouse
 Attendees of Community Partner Meeting: Sheena Sullivan, Kristie Nixon, Tony Reed, Michelle Greenough, Ann Torbert, Myra Willms, Laurent Linnenbrink, Dawn Walton, Nancy Krause, Karen Goff, Debb Franz, Joyce Westphal, Val Cameron, Karen Goff, Janette Luthrink
 State TA Team Reviewers: Amanda Winslow and Shanell Wagler

Reviewer Summary

Strengths

- There was 100% board member attendance throughout the designation meeting. There are three new board members joining the 4 R Kids board and the board discussed their recruitment and orientation processes. Board members help recruit their replacements when their terms are coming due. All members are appointed to a committee where additional work is supported so board meetings are reserved for community partner updates, full board member discussions, and action items. 4 R Kids identified their board as a “working board.”
- Mental health was identified as an emerging need within their counties. The board has dedicated funds to support mental health reflective supervision and consultation in child care and family support.
- The board and community partners commented on the organization of reporting (performance measures and data collection) and fiscal processes. There was a consensus that documentation and processes were clear, consistent, and well organized. They utilize Google sheets for on-going quarterly reports which allows for transparency, consistency, and a common and shared collection of data.
- Transparency is a priority of the board and community. This is demonstrated through the 4 R Kids website, discussions, and experiences shared such as RFP processes, data collection with expectations linked to quarterly reports, and fiscal responsibilities.

Areas for Improvement

- The board and community partners discussed the need for on-going “thinking outside of the box.” The public health pandemic has created a stronger need for new ways to connect with families and extend the reach of services. Previous in-person fairs and events were popularly attended by the communities which are now on pause due to the pandemic. Both the community partners and board members reflected upon a popular Toddler Fest that was previously held prior to the pandemic which served as a way to reach families and increase awareness of early childhood system efforts.
- Board members discussed their concerns about limited child care in Adair county. There are many parents who drive quite a distance for work and many work in the Des Moines area. At the time of data collection for the current community plan, child care slots were not as high of a concern as the cost of the available child care slots across these four counties. Community partners shared the need for increased wages for the early childhood workforce as turnover is a big concern.
- Translation services and translated documents are a need for these counties. There is an increased population of refugee families. Community partners shared about the increased coordination efforts of local food pantries to get families what they need during these difficult times.

Technical Assistance Offered or Requested

- WAGES has not been offered in Adair county because there are no child care programs that have reached a level 3, 4, or 5 in the Quality Rating System. *Coffee with Dawn*, is a new monthly way to connect virtually from 8:30am -9:00am via Zoom on the first Tuesday of the month, which is a new opportunity to discuss current and on-going child care challenges. To learn more and get connected contact dawn@iawf.org or ann@iawf.org.
- The board and community partners discussed that reaching families has been a challenge and finding new ways to reach families during the pandemic is a new challenge. Building relationships virtually is different. Recruiting pre-natal families has been a challenge since birthing hospitals are limited to Dallas county. There are Snack and Shares (Mondays at 3:00pm) and Lunch and Learns (a Thursday and Friday set per month) that occur via Zoom. These are open to all stakeholders and are focused on family support service delivery with resources for family support professionals.
- Resources to support mental health remains a priority. The Mid-Iowa Health Foundation received a grant to implement Sesame Street in Communities which offers a wide-range of resources to help families and providers support children’s mental health.
<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/>

Recommendation to the ECI State Board

Rationale for Recommendation

- The 4 R Kids board has met the area board duties identified in Iowa Code section 256I.8.

Recommendation: Designated

Signature of ECI State
Administrator

Date

Signature of Local Board Chair
Person

Date