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## Early Childhood News

*From Dubuque County Early Childhood - a nonprofit that builds collaboration around the needs of families with young children.*

Shared Vision: "All Children in Dubuque County are Healthy and Successful."

February 2016  
www.dcearlychild.org

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[Dubuque County Early Childhood](#)

[First Years First](#)

[Early Childhood Iowa](#)

## Visit DCEC at the Community Block Party on Friday

Come on down to the Roshek Building on Friday, February 5, for a celebration of area nonprofits. The event runs from 4-7 p.m.



Dubuque County Early Childhood (DCEC) will host a booth. We will be giving away treats, bookmaking kits, children's books, crayon boxes, and other fun items to celebrate reading to young children.

Visitors can vote for their favorite booths and help some lucky nonprofits win a \$1000 grant or a Kindle Fire. It should be a fun and informative night. Hope to see you there!

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

## Upcoming Meetings



**Long-Range Planning Committee** - February 4, 11:00 a.m., Archdiocese Pastoral Center

**Early Care and Education Committee** - February 8, 1:00 p.m., Keystone AEA

**Executive/Finance Committee** - February 11, 11:00 a.m., Keystone AEA

**Dubuque County Early Childhood Board** - February 25, 12:00 p.m., Keystone AEA

**NOTE:** Meetings are subject to change. To obtain meeting agendas, minutes, or location/directions - contact DCEC at (563) 588-1620, [sedward24@aol.com](mailto:sedward24@aol.com). All meetings are open to the public and are held at locations reasonably accessible to the public. Submit questions or requests for special accommodations to (563) 588-1620.

## Celebrating Family Storytime

Do an internet search, and you'll find a wonderful assortment of upcoming dates to promote reading this spring. In 2016, "Read Across America" is on March 2, and "Drop Everything and Read" is on April 12.



Dubuque County Early Childhood (DCEC) wants to help our community recognize the value of reading to young children.

What are the benefits? According to Marilyn Jager Adams, a child development expert, "Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read."

This year, DCEC is hosting two "Family Stories" themed activities to celebrate reading, and everyone can participate.

- Children's Drawing Contest - Running until April 30, children age zero-kindergarten can enter by drawing a picture of their family reading. Entry forms are going home in backpacks or can be obtained by calling the number below. Incredible prize packages will include toys, books, craft activities, and more.
- Early Reading Book Drive - DCEC is accepting donations of new children's books to be distributed to child care providers (homes and centers) that serve children in need and that host guest adult readers at their locations. Drop off books at DCEC's office, 2310 Chaney Road (inside Keystone AEA building, 1st floor).

For more info on these activities or early reading, contact DCEC at (563) 588-1620. Find more ideas at the "Dubuque County Early Childhood" page on Facebook.

## Watch The Raising of America

Why do we as a nation make it so hard for children to thrive? How can we do better? "The Raising of America" is a five-episode documentary series that examines the connections between how we raise our children and how we support our parents and future of our nation.

There is a unique opportunity to watch the entire series for free from today until Feb. 15 only. Go to the following site:



<http://www.raisingofamerica.org/>



After viewing, you can use the web site to do the following:

\* Learn more about national partner organizations and what they are doing to promote care for young children.

\* Join the campaign and host your own screenings and discussions.

If you are inspired, check out the Action Toolkit, designed to spark discussion around strategic ways to use the series, potential partners to connect with, and more.

## Developing a Child's Language



Language skills are important because they help everyone communicate and express ourselves. Babies develop their language before they even begin to say words and can start developing their language as early as birth. Here are a couple tips to help encourage a child's language skills.

- Talk with your baby
- Respond to your baby
- Introduce new words to your baby
- Read to your baby

For more information on the importance and tools to develop children's speech and language visit the link below.

<http://www.icommunicatetherapy.com/child-speech-language/child-speech-language-development/activities-strategies-help-develop-speech-language-skills/>

It's important to remember that each child develops at their own pace; however, children do develop in predictable ways. If you have questions or concerns on a child's development, contact Iowa Family Support Network at 1-888-IAKIDS1.

*Article reprinted courtesy of Iowa Family Support Network, February 2016 Newsletter.*

## Check Out Your County's Status for Children

For each county in Iowa, the Child and Family Policy Center has released a snapshot of data measures of progress for children and youth. These are easily accessible at the following link.

[http://www.cfpciowa.org/en/data/kids\\_count/county\\_data\\_snapshots/](http://www.cfpciowa.org/en/data/kids_count/county_data_snapshots/)



This is a new service. Reports include valuable info on child poverty, infant health, teen births, preschool and literacy factors, and more. Look it up and learn more about how your community is addressing important child matters.

### For More Info

Dubuque County Early Childhood (formerly Empowerment), 2310 Chaney Road, Dubuque IA 52001, Phone (563) 588-1620, fax not currently available

[www.dcearlychild.org](http://www.dcearlychild.org), [sedward24@aol.com](mailto:sedward24@aol.com)



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