

# FAMILY

**Organization Description/Mission:** To assure that children zero to five years of age and their families have the resources they need to succeed.

FAMILY serves families with children prenatal to school entry in Pottawattamie County. Services are provided in homes, shelters, and other community settings. FAMILY assists parents becoming their child's first and most important teacher through education and empowerment.

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FAMILY, 2600 South 9<sup>th</sup>, Council Bluffs, IA 51501

## **Project Details:**

- Assist with developmental groups for children under age five and their siblings Read or play with children during groups—this is fun especially if you like babies, toddlers, or preschoolers
- Assist parents in checking out appropriate developmental toys, music, and books for their child by helping staff our lending library so that parents can checkout items, use die cut machine, or computers

**Dates:** You can help one evening or morning a week for a couple of hours all year OR sign up for one 12 week session in fall or spring.

**Time Commitment:** See above.

## **Benefit to the Community:**

Children are ready to enter school, long term parent involvement is increased, and dropout rates are decreased.

- Cognitive and non cognitive abilities are important for a productive workforce, and gaps that emerge early are difficult to change.
- “Skill begets skill and learning begets more learning.” Because skills are accumulated, starting early and over time, investing in young children is an investment in future productivity and public safety.
- Family environments are important in determining education and skills. Growing numbers of children face adverse environments that restrict the development of these skills. Early interventions such as home visits can mitigate the effects of poor family environments. Key workforce skills such as motivation, persistence and self-control are developed early. Heckman concludes that K-12 schooling comes too late, and other remedies are prohibitively costly as well (e.g., job training programs and second-chance GED programs).
- In an April 2007 report by Dr. Ed Ziegler, Parents as Teachers programs have been shown to increase school readiness and have even a stronger influence than preschool alone. Parents who are involved in their children's early care and education have children who are better prepared for school and this parental involvement continues on through high school completion