

IN THE KNOW

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026 EDITION IN THIS ISSUE

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Compliance, Reporting
1st Five
Early Childhood
Services



**ALL OUTREACH
OFFICES WILL BE
CLOSED
JULY 20-24.**

**Do you want to be
In The Know
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This amazing group from Valero, Fort Dodge has dedicated the year to volunteering at local agencies. They have compiled 1,200 hours so far and over 300 hours at UDMO!

They help us unload our food trucks and help work our drive-thru mobile pantry that serves 240 households every third Thursday of the month.



A huge THANK YOU to Iowa Select Farms for donating ground pork through the Haul Out Hunger program to help feed families in need in Wright County! We're also grateful to the Deb & Jeff Hansen Foundation for their generous donation of baby products to support local families with young children. Your generosity is making a real difference in our community. Thank you for helping UDMO strengthen families and fight hunger!



OUTREACH
happenings



Thank you to Valero for collecting these items for the Webster Outreach!



From the Desk of Executive Director

Julie Edwards

July 2026

🌟 Agency Highlights

Strategic Planning:

UDMO leadership continued developing the agency's new Strategic Plan and has begun implementing action steps to move key priorities forward.

Iowa Retirement Investors' Club (RIC):

UDMO will soon offer an optional supplemental retirement savings benefit to help employees build additional retirement income alongside Social Security and IPERS. More information will be shared this fall as the program becomes available.

In-House Training:

Head Start welcomed nationally recognized presenter Barbara Sorrells in June for training on strategies to support children with challenging behaviors. Staff from Head Start, other UDMO early childhood programs, and community partners participated in this valuable learning opportunity.

Gallagher Safety Site Visits:

In June, safety assessments were completed at the Eagle Grove, Humboldt, and Pocahontas locations. These visits help identify opportunities to improve workplace safety and reduce workers' compensation risks.

Cybersecurity Training:

UDMO leadership continues to strengthen the agency's cybersecurity efforts. Three key areas of focus have been identified: phishing, ransomware, and password security. Additional training details will be shared during the September All-Staff In-Service.



UDMO Advocacy

OMB Review & Response:

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released proposed revisions to the Uniform Guidance governing federal financial assistance. UDMO submitted comments to OMB and our legislators' outlining concerns about the potential impact on Community Action Agencies and the families we serve.

Our primary concerns included:

- Increased subjectivity in federal grant administration.
- Greater administrative complexity and uncertainty for nonprofit organizations.
- Additional compliance requirements that would divert staff time and resources from direct client services.
- The need to strengthen accountability while preserving the flexibility needed for local organizations to effectively serve their communities.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): Several federal bills have been introduced that would strengthen CACFP if enacted.

Child Care Nutrition Enhancement Act (H.R. 2859/S. 1420)

- Increase reimbursement by 10 cents for each meal and snack served.
- Eliminate tiering for family child care homes.
- Allow providers to claim reimbursement for meals served to their own children.

Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act (H.R. 2818/S. 1447)

- Reimburse providers open more than eight hours per day for an additional meal (up to three meals and one snack).

- Update reimbursement calculations for family child care homes.
- Allow annual eligibility determinations for for-profit child care centers.
- Require a review of the CACFP Serious Deficiency process.
- Establish an advisory committee focused on reducing paperwork.



ICAA Annual Conference

The Iowa Community Action Association Annual Conference will be held July 14–15 in the Des Moines area.

Educational tracks include:

- Clarity: Data, Strategy, and Measurable Impact
- Growth: Funding, Friends, and Future Alliances
- Innovation: Designing Programs that Ignite + Connect
- Strength: Building Teams and Cultivating Culture



Grant Updates

Taylor Family Farms Grant:

See Shakira's section for exciting news about this funding opportunity!

Child & Adolescent Health (CAH) Grant:

Preparations are underway, including finalizing the budget, executing the state contract, and beginning the interview process.



Monthly Activities

Head Start & MIECHV Enrollment:

Both programs are actively enrolling eligible children. If you know families who may qualify, please encourage them to visit www.udmo.com for enrollment information.



Upcoming Board Meetings

Finance Committee: Tuesday, July 21 @ 1:00 PM

Board of Directors: Tuesday, July 28 @ 5:00 PM



Kyle Dietrich
Weatherization Director

Number of Families Served in June 2026: 12

Number of Families Served in FY 2026: 60

Goal for 2026: 110 Homes

During the month of June, our Weatherization team successfully completed 12 homes, helping us get back on track with our production goals.

From a financial standpoint, we are still awaiting approval of our FY26 funding, which has been submitted to the federal government but has not yet been finalized. In the meantime, we will continue operating with our remaining FY25 funds, which are expected to sustain program operations until the new budget is approved.

Several important program updates are also on the horizon. Beginning August 1, a new Lead Safe Protocol and updated State Weatherization Standards will take effect to align with the latest U.S. Department of Energy requirements. In addition, the state has revised the Flat Rate Pricing Sheets and updated the NEAT Audit software to improve consistency and financial accuracy when developing work scopes for client homes.

As many of you know, comprehensive program updates occur approximately every three years, and this is one of those transition years. Over the coming months, our team will be working diligently to implement these changes, ensure compliance with all new requirements, and continue providing the highest quality services and best possible outcomes for the households we serve.

Thank you to everyone for your continued hard work, flexibility, and commitment as we navigate these updates together.



Human Resources MONTHLY NEWS

Tiffany Harris, HR Director

Key Updates:

- **Insurance Renewal Season:** Insurance renewal meetings are underway. Thank you for continuing to be mindful of your healthcare utilization and taking advantage of preventive care opportunities, which help us manage overall plan costs.
- **Now Hiring:** Several positions are currently being advertised as a result of newly awarded grants and recent staff transitions. Help us spread the word by sharing our employment opportunities with friends, family, and community members who may be interested in joining the UDMO team.
- **UKG Enhancements:** We continue to expand our knowledge and use of UKG to maximize its capabilities. As new features and processes are implemented, step-by-step instructions and guidance will be shared with staff.
- **Christmas in July Returns:** By popular demand, Christmas in July is back! We look forward to once again showing our appreciation for our hardworking staff with this fun annual tradition.



Program

INFO



Shelly Charapata
Energy Director

- **ECIP/CRISIS:** For June, 148 households received ECIP/CRISIS funds in the amount of \$46,400.27.
- In July or when we receive the needed information from State, we will be working on our AE letters (Automatic Eligible households) and instructions for staff will be distributed to all Outreach offices sometime in August.



Ashley Cooklin
FaDSS Coordinator

We are fully staffed again and are excited to welcome Mindy to our team!

We continue to train and work on building our capacity back up. We are currently at 47 families and have many in recruitment.



OUTREACH

Heather Lundberg
Administrative Coordinator

Back to School Apps are still available-Most counties will begin handing backpacks out in August.

Webster Outreach opening has been filled. Mindy Baughman moved out of Outreach and into FaDSS leaving a vacancy.

Stacie Coppinger in the Humboldt Office has taken the Webster position. We now have an opening in the Humboldt Office.

The last summer shutdown is July 20th-24th

Head Start & Early Head Start Director Sarina Smith



Head Start is
preparing for
August In-service
for staff.
Plenty of surprises
to come! Just in
time for
“Back to School”

Enrollment:

Early Head Start with 183 children and Head Start Preschool with 254 children.

Disabilities:

Early Head Start students served on IFSP's: 15

Head Start Preschool students served on IEP's: 36

Total served: 51 Target: 47

TEACH – CDA, 2 year or 4-year Degree:

CDA certification completion: 1

Associates degree in progress: 3

Bachelor degree in progress: 0

Coaching:

Teachers – 4 and Home Base Teachers – 5

It Takes a Community:

Barbara Sorrels delivered a wonderful training for Head Start on June 17 in Milford on scripted stories, puppet practice, guided discipline, and self-regulation strategies.

Pictures and videos to come on the UDMO Facebook page.



**Shakira Meyer –
Director of Program Development, Compliance & Reporting**

Brief Grant Updates

UDMO Funding Requests Update:

Recent Foundation/Organizational/Trust Grants Submitted & Status: June 2026	County	Program	Submitted/ Pending	Amount Awarded	Not Funded
O'Brien County Community Foundation	OB	Hartley HS Shade Structure			X
Teresa Treat Stearns	HA	Client Services		\$6,000	
POET	HA, OS, PA, WE	POET-Community Impact			X
Sheldon United 2026 – TBD Spring 2027	OB	Client Services – Sheldon	X		
Dickinson County Endowment Fund	DI	1 st Five – Newborn Support Kits	X		
United Way	BV, CL, OB	Client Services	X		
Still Pending from Summer/Fall 2025 – Award Spring 2026					
Belmond Area Community Trust	WR	Client Services Belmond	X		
Program Grants Submitted and Status: June 2026	County	Program	Submitted/ Pending	Funded	Not Funded
Head Start 1303 - Resubmitted w/ updates	Emmet	Roosevelt Heating System	X		
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	All	Housing	X		
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	All	Outreach and Program Support	X		

✨ DID YOU KNOW? ✨ How 1st Five Strengthens UDMO's Work Across our Counties

July 2026



1st Five connects families directly to UDMO programs.

Warm handoffs link families to Early Childhood programs, FaDSS, maternal health supports, crisis assistance, and community resources.



Many 1st Five referrals align with UDMO's core services.

Housing stability, childcare needs, food access, transportation, and basic needs are common areas where UDMO already provides strong support.



We reinforce maternal health pathways.

Partnerships with Lakes Regional OB, Best Care for Better Babies, and Public Health ensure families receive early postpartum education, home visiting, and ongoing support.



UDMO staff play a key role in identifying families.

Frontline teams often see early signs of stress or unmet needs. Sharing information about 1st Five activates a coordinated support network



1st Five reduces barriers for providers AND UDMO staff.

We coordinate referrals, follow up with families, and ensure they reach the right UDMO or community program — preventing gaps in care.



Our 1st FIVE 4-Part Model mirrors UDMO's mission.

Screening → Referral → Care Coordination → Follow-Up



National recognition strengthens UDMO's visibility.

AMCHP recognition highlights UDMO's leadership in maternal and child health innovation across Iowa.

UDMO + 1st FIVE = Stronger Families!!

Questions:

Teresa Ball, (712)298-6751 | tball@udmo.com

Meredith Mickelson, (712)298-6292 | mmickelson@udmo.com

UDMO 1st Five:



Iowa HHS 1st Five Program:



UDMO
Helping People. Changing Lives.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

JUNE 2026

JESSIE HANSEN

KIDS-MIECHV

THE MIECHV TEAM ATTENDED A TWO-DAY RETREAT IN DES MOINES AND, WITH THE HELP OF FIRST FIVE, HOSTED A LAUNDRY OF LOVE EVENT, PROVIDING FREE LAUNDRY SERVICES, HEALTH SCREENINGS, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES.



ECI HOME VISITATION



CONTRACTS HAVE BEEN SENT TO UDMO FOR EMMET, PALO ALTO, KOSSUTH, AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES, AND SUBCONTRACTS HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH ENTITIES.

THE NEXT STEP IS TO SCHEDULE A TEAM MEETING TO BEGIN IMPLEMENTING THE PARENTS AS TEACHERS (PAT) MODEL.

THE ANNUAL PAT REPORT IS DUE IN THE COMING MONTHS. ADDITIONALLY, DAISEY 2.0 WAS IMPLEMENTED ACROSS ALL HOME VISITING PROGRAMS ON JULY 1ST

CARES



WE ARE CONTINUING TO RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS AND SETTING UP TIMES TO GO OTHER OUTREACH OFFICES FOR RECRUITMENT.

IN ADDITION, WE HAVE ATTENDED TRAUMA-INFORMED WEBINARS TO ENHANCE OUR KNOWLEDGE AND STRENGTHEN OUR ABILITY TO SUPPORT FAMILIES IN NEED.