

About IFLTI

The Iowa Family Leadership Training Institute offers training for Iowa parents and primary caregivers of children with special health care needs to develop their leadership skills and become better advocates at the individual, community, and policy levels.

This four-session, in-person training helps participants learn:

- How to work with partners
- Individual paths to leadership
- Strategies for advocacy
- How to impact communities and systems

Community Service Projects

Trainees work with individual mentors to create to Community Service Projects, giving participants an opportunity to apply lessons and skills learned during the in-person training. These projects encourage growth in leadership by providing real-world experience.

Examples of Community Service Projects.:

- Advocacy plan to install adult changing tables in public spaces
- Parent support group with sensory-friendly family activities
- Special-needs safety presentation for first responders
- Social event for siblings of children with special health care needs



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University of Iowa
Division of Child & Community Health
Child Health Specialty Clinics
100 Hawkins Drive, 247 CDD
Iowa City, IA 52242
www.chsciowa.org/iflti

For more information contact:
Diane Brenneman
diane-brenneman@uiowa.edu



Iowa Family Leadership Training Institute

What Graduates Have Said:



It's a really good model that offers unique bonding with other parents, because you get to step away from real life for a few days."

"The IFLTI is a great opportunity to learn about yourself, disabilities, and systems."

"The institute opened so many doors for me."

"I've learned that I'm more of a leader than I thought and that I have the ability to make great change."

"It was wonderful to connect with other special needs Parents. I have learned so much and now have some ideas of how things work."

"Knowing that I can make a difference moves me to continue forward."



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Why is Family Leadership Training Important?

While parents and caregivers of children with special health care needs have significant life experience, they may not have the training and experience to partner with professionals at all levels.

Family leadership training increases the capacity of caregivers to communicate better with providers, work with community partners, and make health care systems more family-centered and culturally-competent.

Regional Trainings

Not every parent or caregiver of a child with special health care needs is able to take time for an overnight, multi-session training. IFLTI also offers regional trainings during evening sessions on leadership topics of interest to trainees.

Training Topics

The Maternal and Child Health Leadership Competencies are the framework for IFLTI. As leaders develop, the move from "self" to "others" to the "wider community."

Training in the following topics supports that movement"

- The History of the Disability Movement
- Servant Leadership
- True Colors
- Storytelling
- Communication and Conflict Management
- Health Information Resources
- Advocating with Policymakers
- Working with Data to Support Storytelling
- Transition to Adulthood
- Self-Care and Resilience