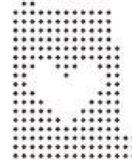


827 W 14th Ct
Bloomington, IN 47404
PHONE: 812-339-3429
FAX: 812-339-2912
www.mcum.org



Monroe County United Ministries



Media Contact: Katie Broadfoot
Development Associate
812-339-3429 x 18
fundraising@mcum.org

For Immediate Release

Announcement of Renewal of MCUM's High Standards of Care

Bloomington, IN – June 18, 2014

Last week, Monroe County United Ministries (MCUM)'s high-quality, affordable childcare program earned renewal of its accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and was also awarded a renewed "Level Four" in the Paths to Quality voluntary assessment program. Both NAEYC and Paths to Quality are voluntary quality-focused standards of achievement. Monroe County United Ministries is a non-sectarian nonprofit organization that provides basic needs assistance to families in crisis and affordable, high-quality childcare to children from low-income families.

MCUM's childcare program, licensed by the State of Indiana, is the only NAEYC-accredited center in Monroe County that primarily serves low-income families. NAEYC accreditation is based on programs' comprehensive quality of care, demonstrated by meeting standards based on the latest research on development of young children. Standards include the promotion of positive relationships between children and adults, teachers, and the community, the program's incorporation of an age-appropriate curriculum with effective teaching approaches, assessment of each child's development and progress, and others.

"We're proud to be recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards," said Meri Reinhold, Executive Director. "NAEYC Accreditation lets the community know that children in our program are getting the best care and early learning experiences possible." And parents agree. "I love that my child attends MCUM," said a childcare parent. "MCUM has and continues to be a good environment for my child. I highly recommend this facility to other parents."

To renew NAEYC Accreditation, MCUM's childcare program went through an extensive self-study process, measuring the program and its services against ten NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related Accreditation Criteria. MCUM's NAEYC accreditation will be current through 2019.

The Paths to Quality (PTQ) voluntary assessment program through the Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR) demonstrates MCUM's ability to meet the health and safety needs

to each child (Level 1), provide an environment that supports children’s learning (Level 2), support curriculum that guides school readiness (Level 3), and sustain National accreditation (Level 4). Level Four status means that MCUM has achieved each of the levels of quality. Tina Burress, MCUM’s Education Coordinator, says that having Level 4 status “shows parents that we are passionate about the quality of early childhood experiences of each child in the program.” In fact, high-quality early childhood education programs, like MCUM’s, have been proven to provide long-term benefits to the individuals and families as well as the community at large well into the future, including: increasing high school graduation rates, reducing incarceration rates, leading to better employment and wages as adults, and returning up to \$7 on every \$1 invested¹.

Both Reinhold and Burress reiterate the importance of high-quality early childhood education, especially for children from low-income families, arguing that MCUM’s program removes a major barrier to parents’ employment. MCUM provides full-time, full-year affordable care for children ages two through six, and has the capacity to care for 97 children at one time. MCUM has been serving Monroe County since 1939 – this year marks the agency’s 75th anniversary.

MCUM also provides basic needs assistance for households in financial crisis in the form of food, clothing, rent and utility assistance, hygiene products, and other basic items needed by local families striving to get back on their feet.

Each year, more than 200 volunteers and 500 donors support MCUM’s efforts to improve the quality of life for Monroe County’s most vulnerable residents. For more information about MCUM and how you can join in supporting families on their endeavor to self-sufficiency, contact Katie Broadfoot, Development Associate, at fundraising@mcum.org or at 812-339-3429 x18.



¹ Children’s Learning Institute. <http://www.childrenslearninginstitute.org/library/publications/documents/Effective-Early_Childhood-Programs.pdf>