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Spotlight On Success: A Successful Transition

A Child and Family Connections Agency shares with us a letter received from a local school district's Early Child Assessment Team attesting to the value of empowering parents to be active participants in their child's development and success. Below are excerpts of that letter...

The therapists worked with her mother to share strategies for developing her daughter's ability to calm in a variety of settings.

...After evaluating a little girl who will be turning three and leaving early intervention for school district support, I would like to share some observations about her remarkable progress in early intervention. The expert interventions provided by her team profoundly impacted her ability to demonstrate her abilities in our evaluation process and, more importantly, provided a foundation for her successful participation in preschool and other learning activities.

We were able to enjoy the results of your team's hard work; she was able to engage in a variety of play activities including challenging adult structured tasks. After a few minutes to warm up, she was friendly and willing to try all activities presented. For a young child to progress from extreme distress in all unfamiliar settings to eagerly engaging in play activities with a variety of evaluators is an unfamiliar setting is truly remarkable. For our evaluation, this means that we were able to much more accurately assess her skills and needs for developing an educational plan with her school district. For this child, this means that she is prepared for successful participation in preschool and is ready to develop friendships.

We met with this child and her mother twice this week. She worked with an audiologist, vision specialist, certified audiometric technician, speech and language pathologist, physical therapist, and a school psychologist. Her early intervention team of service providers had noted that she was very distressed in all settings outside of her home and was unable to engage with less familiar people even in her home setting. Her therapists worked with the family to arrange sessions in community settings... Her mother reported that during the first attempt, her daughter cried very hard and was not able to calm. Her mother was very concerned that her daughter would have difficulty making friends and going to school.

In addition, she started early intervention with significant overall weakness... By the time of our evaluation, she had not only developed functional skills for walking and running, but also was using both hands together ...

I asked her mother if she had any idea how her daughter had made such rapid progress.

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Relationship of Quality Practices to Child and Family Outcome Measurement Results *Part 2 of 2*

The previous edition of the EI Training News introduced a document released by OSEP (the Office of Special Education Programs) and developed collaboratively by NECTAC, ECO and the RRC Program presenting eleven key quality practices that were determined to have direct impact on specific family and child outcomes. The Child and Family Outcomes Work Group of Illinois is reviewing the document to identify and implement strategies to support its use as it relates to Illinois Early Intervention.

Of the eleven key quality practices reflected in the OSPE document, one key practice along with its effective practices is presented in the table that follows on page 3. Findings show that the implementation of this particular key practice and the subsequent quality practices listed have the overall greater direct impact on family and child outcomes. Those practices marked with a ★ have been shown to have the most direct impact on the specific outcomes. Those marked with a ✓ have a lesser, yet still direct, impact on specific outcomes. The other ten key practices can be found in the complete document available at:

http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/docs/QualityPracticesOutcomes_4-29-11-Final.doc

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IL Early Intervention Ombudsman Receives National Recognition

The IL Early Intervention Training Program is proud to announce that Chelsea Guillen, Illinois' Early Intervention Ombudsman, is The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) 2011 recipient of the Rose C. Engel Award for Excellence in Professional Practice. Given in honor of Rose Engel, DEC's first President whose leadership has shaped DEC as an organization, this award is given to a member who is a practicing professional and whose primary role is serving young children with special needs and their families. Nominees must also have also made significant contributions at the local level that have improved or will improve the lives of young children with special needs and their families and have provided evidence of knowledge/skills consistent with recommended practices in the field through their work.

Chelsea began her work in early intervention in a small, home-based program in Southern Illinois. Her experiences as a college intern shaped her future schooling and career path. Her undergraduate training in psychology led her to seek work in community based agency for people with developmental disabilities, but her experiences in the agency's early intervention program led her to focus on developmental psychology. Chelsea credits much of what she knows about families and children with developmental difference to her experiences as a nanny for a family whose daughter had multiple medical and developmental needs. She witnessed the struggles that this family encountered as they attempted to find a diagnosis and maneuver through medical and state systems. This firsthand knowledge of the obstacles many families face made her determined to improve the way early intervention providers address and support families.

Joining Oak Leyden Developmental Services as the Early Intervention Program Director in 1997, then serving as the Division Chief of Children's Services, Chelsea played an active role in Oak Leyden's switch from a child-centered, grant-funded center-based provider of services to a family-centered program primarily delivered in families' homes. She has also been an active member of her Local Interagency Council, having served as chairperson, and was appointed as a family representative to the Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention in 2004. Chelsea's continued interest in the family's role in early intervention led her to the role of project coordinator for Illinois' general supervision enhancement grant. In this capacity, Chelsea has helped develop a survey designed to measure early intervention family outcomes. Her work in this project provided much national exposure for the State of Illinois as one of the groundbreaking states in developing and implementing a family outcomes survey process.

Chelsea remains hopeful that through reviewing current policies, practices and data, working to integrate system resources, improving consistency via training and technical assistance, and utilizing evidence-based practices, the early intervention system's ability to meet the needs of children and families will continue to improve.

A special awards luncheon will be held, this November, at DEC's 27th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, honoring Chelsea and other DEC award recipients.

Congratulations Chelsea Guillen, IL Early Intervention Ombudsman!

Spotlight On Success Continued...

She told us that the early intervention therapists had shown her what she needed to do to help her daughter and that her family had worked very hard to follow through with their suggestions.

I know that many early intervention teams work hard and are successful in supporting outstanding progress for the children. The impact of this teams' work was so obvious and significant that I needed to contact you to share this experience. Please extend my congratulations and thanks to her excellent team...

RECIPES FOR SUCCESS...

What you learn through your experiences in early intervention is important to us! Not only does your various levels of knowledge and broad ranges of experiences help us in the planning and development of training curriculum, we want to share what works when working with children and families receiving your services. We believe in the 'ripple effect' and know that you are out there making a difference; therefore the Training Program is devoting this space to share some of your proven "RECIPES FOR SUCCESS" in your work with children and families. . .

"The first question when meeting a parent for the first time should be, "What do you want me to know about your child? What would you like to tell me?" And then LISTEN...." -Barbara C. Hocking, MA, DT-H

"Family involvement is essential and a key component in the provision of family centered care. It is not enough to have the parent watch and discuss the intervention and strategies. The parent needs to participate with direct hands-on interaction with their child to see what works and what will be effective and meaningful for them." -Karen Blackwell, PT, PCS

"When working with families, be yourself, be down to earth and use your heart as your guide." -Rachelle Cotton, SC

"It's not our job to stop people's pain, our job is to sit with them and their pain." - Myrna Perez, DT

"Focus on the relationship, and the rest will flow naturally!" -Baila Friedman, SLP

"Always treat the families you work with as if they were your own family. You'll relate to the parents and children in a more compassionate manner and they will see you as someone who cares." -Colleen Chorazyczewski, ST

"Most of the times, mother does know best..." -Lois Jean Wenkel, SLP

"Look at the child and family's strengths first to build a foundation for strategies for your work." -Alma Tan Torres, PhD, OTR/L, OT

Do you have a favorite strategy, or "Recipe for Success", that you would like us to share? Please add it to the evaluation form at the next EI Training Program event you attend OR fax it to us at 708.444.8570 OR e-mail to lgimble@illinoiseitraining. Please make the subject line Recipe for Success.

Relationship of Quality Practices to Child and Family Outcome Measurement Results Continued

<i>During each intervention visit, participate with the family/caregivers and the child in activities and/or routines as the context for promoting new skills and behaviors.</i>	Family Outcomes			Child Outcomes		
	Know Rights	Comm. Child's Needs	Held Child Develop & Learn	Relate to Others	Use Knowledge & Skills	Meet Needs
◆ Apply knowledge of current research and evidenced based practices in early intervention to the development and implementation of strategies and interventions with the child and family (e.g., participatory learning, strength and asset-based interventions, coaching practices, resource-based interventions, relationship-based intervention, responsive care-giving).		★	★	★	★	★
◆ Plan and match learning experiences, strategies and adaptations to individual characteristics of the child and family (e.g., work with Jason's aunt to help her feel more comfortable with him during bath time, so Mom can give his twin, Jack, more attention).			★	★	★	★
◆ Identify and implement strategies that enhance the child's participation in natural learning opportunities across routines and community settings.		✓	★	★	★	★
◆ Use toys, materials, interactions and locations that are familiar, of interest to, and motivating for the child and family during intervention			★	★	★	★
◆ Support and facilitate family and child interactions as primary context for learning and development			★	★	★	★
◆ Support parents' and caregivers' ability to implement strategies and activities within everyday routines and activities.			★	★	★	★
◆ Incorporate family strengths into strategies and activities that the family is comfortable implementing or put in place plans how to build those skills.			✓	✓	✓	✓
◆ Implement different strategies to support parents and caregivers, including modeling, problem solving, coaching and demonstration, based on individual child needs and parents' priorities.			★	★	★	★

Changes In Early Intervention Credit Request Process Coming

Since July of 2002, the Illinois Early Intervention Training Program has reviewed over 20,000 activity requests for early intervention credential credit with more than 60% of those activity requests having been submitted independently by providers. A significant portion of the requests received are for events that have been previously submitted for review by other sources, such as other providers and in some cases, the sponsors of those same events. The multiple requests for early intervention credit of the same activities have raised confusion and concerns for many, including the IL Bureau of Early Intervention, Provider Connections, the IL Early Intervention Training Program, as well as providers in all disciplines and all levels of expertise. Training entities, sponsoring agencies, as well as professional trainers from local, state, national, and international levels have also expressed concern over numerous translations and representations of a particular event. In order to protect the integrity of the Illinois Early Intervention System, which includes the Bureau of Early Intervention, the Early Intervention Training Program, Provider Connections, as well as the 6000+ providers enrolled in this System, and to assure the high quality and standards associated with Illinois Early Intervention and the Training Program, new procedures for obtaining Illinois Early Intervention credit for training activities will be put in to place.

The current review process has been a 'paper process' in which the information requested for review is documented on paper using a required paper form. These requests are accepted from providers working toward their own credential and/or credential renewal, from sponsoring agencies wanting to attract early intervention providers to their event(s), or from early intervention sponsoring agencies wanting to offer early intervention credit as a courtesy to their particular staff and/or clientele. The end result has been that the Training Program's credit review team either awards or denies early intervention credit to a particular request based on the information submitted. Then, as a courtesy to the broader field looking for continuing education/professional development appropriate to their Illinois Early Intervention credential, approved events have been posted on the Training Program's website calendar of events. The required form has been revised over the years as the EI Training Program continues to seek a level of quality assurance in the events that it does review and approve for early intervention credit.

In an effort to expedite the credit review process, provide a more efficient method of tracking early intervention activity credit request information, and to keep up with the growing technological trends as well as to move towards a greener use of its resources, the Training Program recently launched an online submittal process for early intervention credit. However, whether processed on paper or online, the Training Program continues to receive requests from multiple sources for the same events, with conflicting information. *Therefore, effective March 1, 2012, the IL Early Intervention Training Program will ONLY accept and review EI Activity Credit Requests received from sponsoring organizations and submitted through our online process.* Sponsoring Organizations are those qualified entities that host training workshops and/or conferences for learning purposes. Sponsoring Organizations can be non-for-profit entities or for profit businesses.

The Training Program does understand that this is significant change in process. To help with the transition into this new process, the Training Program is encouraging sponsoring agencies that have requested credit in the past to strongly consider using the EI Activity Credit Request online process for their future events. We also ask that providers contact the organizations that you are associated with and encourage them to submit for Illinois Early Intervention credit as well. The benefits are:

- ★ There are 6000+ early intervention professionals in Illinois. Offering early intervention credit will open their doors to a large number of clientele.
- ★ Events approved for early intervention credit are posted on the www.illinoiseittraining.org event calendar with sponsoring organizations choosing their desired post date.
- ★ www.illinoiseittraining.org is viewed by a large pool of providers in Illinois, nationally, and worldwide seeking professional development opportunities.
- ★ Unlike other state departments of professional regulations requiring discipline specific continuing education units towards licensure, there is no cost for IL Early Intervention Credit hours.

We do ask that sponsoring organizations make their registrations and attendance rosters available to Provider Connections, when needed, to corroborate early intervention credit for specific providers. Provider Connection also requires printed name of a participant to be on their Certificates of Attendance and will not accept blank certificates.

"...Therefore, effective March 1, 2012, the IL Early Intervention Training Program will ONLY accept and review EI Activity Credit Requests received from sponsoring organizations and submitted through our online process"...

Pointers For Parents...

Charting Your Child's Development from 24 to 36 Months

The following chart describes many of the things a baby is learning between 24 and 36 months and what a parent can do to support their child in all areas of development. As you read, remember that children develop at their own pace and in their own way. Understanding who your child is, what his strengths are and where he needs more support, is essential for promoting his healthy development.

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT: 24 TO 36 MONTHS

What's going on:	What you can do:	Questions to ask yourself:
<p>Two year olds typically can speak between 200 and 250 words. By the age of 3 years, their vocabulary is much larger still an they are able to put together 3 and 4 word sentences. Despite all of this word power, 2-year-olds often lack the verbal skill to describe their emotions. This can leave them powerless and frustrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Have lots of conversations with your child. This will boost language skills. Introduce him to the pleasure of conversation and make him feel important. Also, read to your child as often as you can. ▶ Let your 2-year-old know that you understand what he's experiencing by saying, for example, "I know you are upset that you can't find your magic cape." Acknowledging his feelings will help calm him and make it easier for him to tackle the challenge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What does your child like to talk about? How do you and your toddler enjoy conversations together? ▶ How does your child manage difficult feelings and situations? What helps him cope?
<p>Play is essential for the 2-year-old. It builds all areas of development. Through play, your child interacts more with friends, uses pretend play to understand things in more complex ways and learns important concepts such as big and small and up and down.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encourage pretend play and get involved. This will build a strong connection between you and your child, and help encourage creativity. You can do this in many ways. For example, ask what will happen next in the story he is acting out. If he is 'cooking', you might say, "What are you cooking? It smells good. Can I have some?" ▶ Make plans for your child to spend time with other children. He will learn about the pleasure of making friends. And the more opportunity he has to interact with peers, the more he will learn about how to get along well with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What kind of play does your child most enjoy? How do you know? What does this tell you about him? ▶ How does your child use his imagination? What do you think he is learning through his pretend play?
<p>Two-year olds are very active. Their motor development allows them the freedom to explore in new ways as they run, jump, and climb.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Spend time outside, where there is plenty of room to safely run, jump, and climb. Visit a neighborhood part where there are other children to play with. Include your child in family sports, like swimming together or kickball. ▶ Create a safe place in your home where your child can actively explore. Take walks with your child and use them as opportunities to teach him important concepts such as big and small as you compare the houses on your block or leaves on the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How active is your child? Does he seem to be in constant motion or is he happy to sit and play quietly for long periods, or somewhere in between? ▶ What do you think your child is learning when he is playing actively? How do you know?

This is one of a series of handouts made available from ZERO TO THREE, the nation's leading resource on the first three years of life, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. For more information on this and other family and provider resources, go to: www.zerotothree.org or www.aap.org

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IL Dept of Human Services Bureau of Early Intervention
<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/ei>



Provider Connections
www.wiu.edu/ProviderConnections/



Early Intervention Clearinghouse
www.eicclearinghouse.org



Early Intervention Monitoring Program
www.eitam.org



Early Intervention Central Billing Office
www.eicbo.info