



Philadelphia Teaching & Learning Collaborative

Quarterly News

Fall 2001

Families – the Essential Ingredient in Successful Early Intervention Services

At the end of the team projects for last year, team members were asked to describe the “ideal family.” Respondents wrote that the “ideal family” would be at home for appointments, ask questions, participate in sessions done by EI personnel, and carry over activities done by therapists and teachers into the home. They wanted parents to participate as a team member, discuss their goals with EI staff, and report about their child’s progress. EI staff want parents to be active participants in their children’s EI services.

How do EI staff make this happen when parents are not “natural” active participants? What are some ways for EI staff to work productively with families to promote their participation? A first step is to **actively fit EI to the family’s life – not expect families to fit therapy or education services and activities into their routines.** What are some ways to accomplish this?

! Each therapist or teacher should
ask families to talk about their

routes & activities at the very first home visit. In this way, the EI person learns about what families may do during the week and can make suggestions for carry over of goals and activities into family routines. Instead of wishing that the family will provide a child with, for example, opportunities to grasp objects, when the therapist/teacher knows about family routines, specific suggests can be provided. Sarah’s therapist knew that she spent a lot of time in her car seat in the car since Sarah’s mom went a lot of places during the week. The therapist then suggested toys and materials to put near Sarah’s car seat so that she had opportunities to grasp and feel objects – a goal that was on her IFSP. Sarah’s mom didn’t have to think up the situation or come up with the materials all by herself – the therapist created ways for carry

over.

! At the **end of each session**, summarize what has happened and discuss what families can do during the week. Ask families how they think a particular opportunity might be provided. Mikela's teacher talked with the family at the end of a session about ways to promote independent play -- an outcome on her IFSP. Together, they designed the chart which the teacher wrote out and clipped to the contact sheet. The family was left with reminders of ways to provide learning opportunities during the week.

! At the **beginning** of each session, ask families what the child did during the past week and ask them to describe anything "notable" that happened.

Mikela's Chart

When you are cooking dinner, Mikela can:

- Stand in her stander next to the sink and play in water
- Be positioned in her high chair with a few toys that make sounds like rattles, etc. tied with string onto the chair

When you are watching TV, Mikela can:

- Be propped on the sofa in a corner next to you with toys. Hold the toys out away from her body to get her to reach and play.

When you are talking on the phone, Mikela can:

- Sit by herself in her floor chair or high chair – Give her toys that she can easily hold onto and tie them with very short strings so that if she loses them, she can try to get them back again. Make sure these are toys that she likes. Ones that make noises seem to be

Save the Date!!!!

International Parent to Parent Conference
In the Spirit of Sharing: Making the Connections

April 5-7, 2002

(Pre-conference day April 4, 2002)

Pennsylvania Parent to Parent is proud host of the 2002 International Parent to Parent Conference which will be held in Philadelphia. This exciting conference acknowledges and celebrates Parent to Parent models and philosophies and will provide an opportunity for participants to broaden networks, gain new and innovative information and ideas. It will be great for families from Philadelphia to experience this conference since it is being held in our own backyard. **Parent scholarships are available through a variety of sources. Please let families know about this conference. For additional information log on to P2P web site @ www.parenttoparent.org.**

Opportunities for Families:

What is Families First?

Families First is a great parent empowerment and learning opportunity for parents of children in Early Intervention in Philadelphia. The training curriculum was developed for parents by parents. Content is based on Pennsylvania's C2P2 training program. Families First is affiliated with the PICC (Phila. Interagency Coordinating Council) and is supported by the MAWA (Elwyn Institute) and MRS, through TLC and in collaboration with the Institute on Disabilities/UAP at Temple University.

Families First is a free training with lunch, travel and child care reimbursements provided. It is held at various community locations across the city. Most trainings are held 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays or weekdays at Temple. Some evening sessions are also provided.

It is great information to share with all of the families that you see. The families will learn more about the EI system. They will have the opportunity to meet and network with other families who are also receiving services. They will walk away with the ability to build a vision for their child and family that will ease their fears about the future. The families will learn how to become more participating and collaborative members

of their child's IFSP/IEP team. Some the topic areas covered are:

- T How Laws define EI services
- T B e s t Practices in EI services
- T Creating a Vision- Future Plans
- T Building your Child's Team



How Can You Help?

Getting information about opportunities such as Families First, the Philadelphia Interagency Coordinating Council (PICC), C2P2 training or conferences such as the Early Childhood Conference, or the upcoming national Parent-to-Parent meeting can be difficult. Some families are not interested in or able to participate in these opportunities – but far more never hear about them to even make a choice. You can be aware of these possibilities and talk with your families about participating. You can help them deal with issues that they may see as barriers to attending – like child care or transportation.

For more information or to get brochures to share with families, call Mary Mikus @ 215-204-1772

A Report On TLC Accomplishments for 2000-2001

T A total of **70 three-hour group training sessions** and **one web-based learning course** were provided between July 2000 and June 2001. **2196 persons** (duplicated count) participated in one or more TLC training activities. TLC provided **6535 contact hours** of group training.



T A total of 36 interdisciplinary, inter-agency teams were formed for the team projects; **276 individuals** (staff and supervisors) fully participated in the projects (attended a minimum of two team meetings) and **36 additional people** participated in at least one meeting.

T Newly hired staff (hired after 8-01-01) were required to complete the **core training requirements**. A total of **115 personnel** began work in the system during FY 2000-01. 32% completed all core requirements. 40% completed all 12 hours of natural environments and 43% completed all 12 hours of policies and procedures. An additional 15% of newly hired staff completed some but not all of the core requirements.

T **216 personnel** were working in the EI system before 8-01-01. 80% of these staff who are still working in the EI system have fully completed all core requirements.

T These 216 personnel were required to complete 18 hours of group training requirements in addition to participating in the team projects. 45% completed all required training.

T 62 individuals provide supervision within the Philadelphia EI system. Training activities for supervisors included participation in 6 full-day meetings spaced throughout the year, functioning as a team leader for the team projects, and attending the DHS (6 hours) and Policy and Procedure 2110 Update (3 hours). Approximately 50% of supervisors completed all required activities.

T Core Policies & Procedures were offered experimentally in June and July 2001 as a self-directed, **web-based training program**. Participants who completed the Core Policies and Procedures in June were given a test. For Parts I and II, 24 people attended and 23 returned their tests. The average score was 69% (mode = 80%; range 40-90). For Parts III & IV, 23 tests were collected from the 25 people who attended. The average score was 61% (mode = 70%; range = 40-100. These results were compared with 11 participants who completed the on-line course and who completed both the Part I/II and Part III/IV tests. The average score was 80% (mode = 85%; range = 55-95).

T A variety of ways of evaluating activities were used including standard "satisfaction" ratings, knowledge or attitude assessments, focus groups, and reflective analyses. A majority of participants across all group training sessions **rated the sessions positively** on satisfaction measures. **Changes in beliefs about service provision** were demonstrated in several areas by participants who completed the team training sessions (3 sessions; 9 hours), and participants who completed Core Policies and Procedures **demonstrated knowledge about application** of basic policies and procedures regarding timelines, IFSP, participation & discharge, and transition.



Reflective analysis was used to assess changes in participant interactions with families and children by reports from team leaders, TA advisors, and practitioners following completion of the team training projects. As a whole, groups reported changes in both interactions with families and with children although a greater number of changes were reported in family interactions than in interactions with children.

T A committee/work group was formed and met six times during the year to discuss issues related to **annual MDE's** and to the coordination of annual MDE's in the Birth through Two system with MDE/CER requirements for children aged three years and above. Recommendations made by the committee to MRS and to Elwyn Institute PPEI were adopted in May 2001. A train-the-trainers workshop was held during June 2001 to train 20 people as trainers. Training of all MRS and Elwyn PPEI staff will occur during July, August, & September.

T **A Draft Professional Development Record (PDR)** has been completed and reviewed by members of the PICC Training Committee. The PDR was reviewed, also, by the supervisors who will use this instrument with their staff and was revised based on their suggestions. Supervisors then actually used the revised version with staff and submitted comments. The instrument was revised for the final time in June and will be used by supervisors with staff and independent contractors during FY 2001-02.

T Families First (a C2P2-modeled one day training for families) provides activities that target families of children with disabilities, birth through age of beginners through a collaborative effort between Temple University Institute on Disabilities and TLC. During 2000-01, Families First trained 100 families through seven training sessions in neighborhoods throughout Philadelphia. In addition, regional parent coordinators were established to assist in recruitment/advertising for course sessions. A formal written curriculum was developed and three additional parents completed training as trainers. Families First trainers provided a number of different "outreach" sessions to parent and to professional groups in order to inform them further about Families First.

T Quarterly reports about staff attendance were distributed to MRS, all provider agencies and to contract providers. Annual, end-of-the-year reports were prepared for MRS and distributed to the providers and contract agencies by TLC and through the Program Analysts.



Tips for Teaming: Results of the Teaming Training 3 Survey

Last year, over 200 therapists, special instructors, & service coordinators shared their ideas about teaming during the Team Training Sessions.

Ways of functioning as a team when no meetings are held and/or when you are unable to attend team meetings

Ideas & Solutions To Try

- advanced planning and notification of meetings
- everyone should have cell phones provided by and paid for by the agency
- Pay for all meetings
- Decrease case loads
- email
- monthly luncheons
- weekend retreats
- two - three hours made available to consultants and staff to interface
- mandatory designated time for all professionals to meet on a monthly basis

Barriers To Overcome

- poor lines of communication
- overall service delivery is limited
- family is jeopardized in the long run
- conflicting information
- confusion
- coordinating schedules
- lack of passion for families (Burn out)
- high caseloads

Ways of learning from/sharing information with other team members when you don't physically see them and/or may have never met them

Ideas/Solutions To Try

- Use TLC time to "team"
- help from other agencies
- make initial session a cooperative session
- updated employee contact list including disciplines and who works with which families
- set a specific requirement in the I FSP for cooperative sessions
- asking parents questions
- interagency team meetings
- call other providers periodically
- use Childlink
- communication journal/binder
- official team meeting day
- create a highly visible phone list of

- all the providers (ie magnetic phone list)
- videotape sessions

Barriers To Overcome

- people work individually
- not everybody has the same schedules
- differences in communication resources
- differences in transportation resources
- full schedules
- don't always know who they are
- time limitations
- different schedules
- different philosophies
- different agencies.

What's New for 2001-02?



MRS has established the following training requirements for 2001-02 for all Philadelphia Early Intervention staff and independent contractors:

- i Completion of Core Requirements**

- i** On-Line Policies & Procedures Course
 - i** Natural Environments

These courses have been scheduled for October-November 2001 so that staff who have not previously completed these requirements may do so. Additional sessions will be offered during Spring 2002 so that staff hired during 2002 may complete these requirements within the fiscal year.

- i Professional Development Record**

Each staff person is responsible for determining areas of training interest to pursue during 2001-02. Supervisors have copies of the PDR for staff and independent contractors to complete. This year, with approval of their supervisor or agency contact person, staff and independent contractors may complete a training experience that relates to an area of interest specified on their PDR. This training session does not necessarily have to be a training provided by TLC.

- i Discipline-Specific Training Sessions**

Sessions for service coordinators, PT's, OT's, special instructors, speech and language pathologists, etc. will be offered this year. EI staff & contractors may complete the discipline-specific session for their discipline or, with approval of their supervisor or agency contact person, may substitute a training session of their choice. Attending the 2-day February Early Childhood conference also can be used to meet this requirement.

- i Team Training Projects**

Back for this year are the team training projects – but with a new emphasis. Contact your supervisor or agency contact person to be sure that you are included on a team. Agency supervisors will again serve as Team Leaders for the projects.

- i Topic Specific Courses**

New this year are 10 topic-specific courses. EI staff and contractors may select ANY TWO sessions of their choice to meet this requirement. Topics were identified by EI personnel through completion of the Team 3 evaluations, submitting of ideas to TLC, and by the supervisors.

- i Transition AND Policies and Procedures 2002 Updates**

During Spring 2002, two separate and required training sessions will be offered. One focuses on helping families with transition and the second will provide an update on new MRS policies and procedures.

- i MDE Training**

Training Program	Month(s) to be Scheduled
i Complete Core Requirements	
i Core Course: Policies & Procedures (original)	October & March On-Line
i Core Course: Natural Environments	October & Spring (sessions)
i Complete Requirements from 2000-01*	November - February
i MDE Training (3 credits)	June, July, Aug., September
i TLC Team Projects (6 credits)	October/November through April
i Focused Topical Sessions (6 credits) - select 2 sessions to attend	November through April
i Training for Disciplines (3 credits) - attend TLC sessions or a replacement session outside of TLC with approval of supervisor/agency contact person. Or, attend the February Early Childhood Conference.	January- March
i Policies & Procedures 2002 Update (3 credits)	April - May
i Transition (3 credits)	May - June
i Complete PDR/Training Plan with Supervisor/Agency Contact Person	Final review complete by April 1 st

* A number of staff/contractors who were working in EI during 2000-01 did not complete the FY 2001 training requirements during FY 2001. These staff have until February 2002 to complete these requirements [Policies & Procedures 2001 Update (will be offered on line); Team Training (9 credits/3 sessions; Foster Families session; & DHS Mandated Reporting session]. These sessions are required ONLY for staff who were employed in EI during 2000-01 and who did not complete the sessions during that year. These sessions plus the sessions for 2001-02 must be completed by June 30, 2002 so be sure to watch for and enroll in training sessions during the months listed above.

