

Interagency Coordinating Council

April 14, 2008
9 AM – 1:30 p.m.

CAFAP
2189 Silas Deane Highway
Rocky Hill, CT

Minutes

Laurel Ross, ICC Chair
ARC, Greenwich
Elayne Thomas ICC Vice Chair
Parent
Timothy Bowles
Dept. of Social Services
Deborah Pagano
Parent
Jose Centeno
Office of Protection and Advocacy
Dona Ditrio
New Opportunities Early Head Start
Rita Esposito
REACHOUT, Inc.
Linda Goodman
Dept. of Developmental Services
Mark A. Greenstein, M.D.
Pediatrician
Clara Gutierrez
Parent
Jeanette Haines
BESB
Richard Fisher
Dept. of Insurance
Cynthia Jackson
Children's Therapy Services
Robert LaCamera, M.D.
American Academy of Pediatrics
Joe McLaughlin
McLaughlin and Associates
Elise Minor
Parent
Kathleen Bradley, PhD
Dept. of Children and Families
Maria Synodi
State Dept. of Education
Patrick Ruddy
Parent
Louis Tallarita
SDE- Educ. for Homeless Children
Rep. Jack W. Thompson
CT legislator
Robin Tousey-Ayers
Dept. of Public Health
Melissa Van Buren, alternate
A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence
Myra Watnick
Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.
Diane Wixted
Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired

ICC Members Present: Tim Bowles, Dona Ditrio, Rita Esposito, Linda Goodman, Dr. Mark Greenstein, Jeanette Haines, Cindy Jackson, Dr. Robert LaCamera, Joe McLaughlin, Deborah Pagano, Lolli Ross, Patrick Ruddy, Maria Synodi, Louis Tallarita, Elayne Thomas, Rep. Jack Thompson, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Melissa Van Buren, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted

ICC Members Absent: Kathleen Bradley, Richard Fisher, Clara Gutierrez, Elise Minor

The meeting began at 9:15 AM.

Introductions:

Lolli Ross, ICC Chair, welcomed everyone to the State ICC meeting. Council members and ten members of the public introduced themselves.

Approval of February Minutes

Dr. LaCamera made a motion to approve the February minutes as written. Patrick Ruddy seconded the motion. The Motion passed unanimously.

Lead Agency Update

Please refer to the "Lead Agency Update posted on the B23 website- under State Interagency Coordinating Council

Budget

The eligibility and referral numbers statewide for FY08 were discussed. Our projected deficit of \$713,000 will be covered by transferring monies from the department's personnel services account. This will occur in May. The draft Appropriations Committee budget, released at the end of March, included a 1% COLA for providers and \$28,961,511 to pay contracted providers. This is a \$1.2m budget increase over FY08 which will hopefully mean that we won't have a deficit next year. We won't know the final outcome of the budget or the COLA until the legislature passes the Appropriations Act which typically happens in May.

Enrollment

Each day, Eileen McMurrer monitors the names of children waiting for assignment to a program for initial evaluation. She and the programs have been doing a terrific job of cutting down the delay for hundreds of families.

An RFP for general programs to serve towns in the Northeast and Fairfield County was posted on February 21, 2008. The bidders conference has been held and proposals are due April 30. Start-up will be by July 1. The priority towns are those in the Northeast (eg: Putnam) and those in the Southwest (eg: Norwalk). This may allow two programs currently serving the Northeast to concentrate on the Southeast (eg: Sprague)

A screening study has begun to determine whether administering the ASQ and M-CHAT for children that have been referred to Birth to Three will be cost-effective (i.e. decrease the number of full developmental evaluations) once the Part C regulations are changed. Approximately 100 children in the Greater Hartford area will be screened and the screening results will be analyzed and will also be compared to the evaluation results. Only children without diagnosed conditions or those not already screened prior to referral will be involved.

Effective May 29, 2008 Therapy Solutions Center will no longer be a Birth to Three provider.

Personnel Update

Lynn Skene Johnson has been appointed as Assistant Director for the Birth to Three System. Lynn's primary area of responsibility is now provider relations, LEA relations, and Procedures. Aileen McKenna joined Birth to Three in February as the new Family Liaison. William Spokes joined the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDS) in March as a new IT staff member. Half of Bill's position is funded by Birth to Three and he will be assisting Sandy Booth in supporting the data network and assisting programs with data issues. Ilka Torres will be joining Birth to Three on April 25th as a new Assistant Accountant in the fiscal unit. Having the fiscal unit back to full strength will help tremendously in processing provider invoices. Lynn's position in the Personnel and Practice office will be refilled. When Tom Coakley retired March 1, the Rocky Hill Service and Support office was closed and the toll-free support line was transferred to Hartford.

Provider Meeting

The Birth to Three system held a meeting on January 9, 2008 for all of the Birth to Three program directors and supervisors to give us their input in four areas: data system, personnel development, quality assurance, and child find.

IDEA

Dispute Resolution Activity FY08

Complaints (one new written complaint since February)

One formal written complaint was received in mid-March. The complaint alleges that Greenwich ARC should have provided various evaluations and services to an eligible child and should now reimburse the parents who purchased those evaluations and services outside of the Birth to Three System. The response will be issued by mid-May.

Mediations No mediations have been requested in FY08.

Hearings No hearings have been requested in FY08.

Monitoring and Accountability

The Annual Performance Report has been summarized and analyzed by OSEP. Although Birth to Three did not yet have their conclusions, the summary data looks very good and we will await their final conclusions and their determination. Last year's determination was "meets requirements" which is the highest rating a state can receive.

The Annual Performance Report data by program is posted on the Birth to Three website, as required by OSEP. As required by the IDEA, determinations about each program will be made in this month, although they will not be posted on the website. Again, "meets requirements" is the highest rating a program can receive.

The Northeast Regional Resource Center will, at the Department's request, be completing a third-party evaluation of the Focused Monitoring process. Their first step is meeting with the focused monitoring stakeholders group (which includes the entire ICC) and then they will be gathering information from everyone else through interviews and focus groups. This is actually the last step of the department's focused monitoring implementation plan.

Committee Reports

Quality Services Committee: Cindy reported on programs providing services in unsafe urban areas and referenced the motion made at the last ICC meeting. The QA Committee discussed four solutions: 1. Birth to Three system providing the design for stickers/magnets for provider's vehicles 2. Identify police liaisons in cities 3. Using a justification page on the IFSP for services that cannot be provided in a natural environment 4. Putting together materials such as safety tips to support programs.

Cindy made a **Motion** for the ICC to draft a letter to Elaine Zimmerman, of the Commission on Children, stating the issue of safety in home visiting as it refers to "First Words, First Steps: The

Importance of the Early Years” . Dr. Greenstein seconded the **motion**. The Motion passed unanimously.

Help Me Grow networking breakfasts are held around the state and may be an opportunity to see what other agencies are doing. A suggestion was made to partner with the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut.

More Speech & Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists are needed in the community and within Birth to Three. Discussion ensued around Birth to Three being one of the sites for clinical experience/practicum for students enrolled in universities. Myra sits on an advisory board for speech programs at Southern Connecticut State University and offered to provide feedback to the board if ICC members would like to get information to her.

Legislative Committee: Joe reported on various financial issues and made a **motion** to write a letter to Denise Merrill and the Governor thanking them for their continued support and reminding them of the increasing cost of gas and heating prices. Myra seconded the **motion**. Joe also offered to draft the letter. A request was sent to all programs asking them to provide information as to how many children had met the maximum on their insurance limit. Programs did not report a strong response.

Communications Committee: Patrick reported the committee is looking to develop a mission and vision for the ICC as well as a brochure. The committee has been researching other state Councils by-laws to look at their process for choosing a Chairperson and amend the current ICC by-laws.

Dona Ditrio and Rita Esposito are on the Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) taskforce and gave an update. The taskforce is responsible for rating all childcare organizations that accept public funding and was created by the Governor’s Early Childhood Cabinet.

The Council took a lunch break.

Presentation: Focus Monitoring Evaluation

Alice Ridgway, Accountability & Monitoring Manager, described the focused monitoring history and a review of the process. Alice also discussed the general supervision system which includes: State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Plan, Determinations, Biennial Performance Reports (BPR), Parent concerns/complaints, and Focus Monitoring (FM).

Kristin Reedy and Vicki Hornus, from the Northeast Regional Resource Center, presented their proposal of the evaluation of FM in the Connecticut Birth to Three System. They presented the purposes of the evaluation which include:

1. To promote broader awareness, increased capacity, sustainability, and stakeholder “buy-in” of the CT FM system by reviewing the goals, methods, and intended outcomes of the FM system through the collaborative development, by a multi-stakeholder group, of evaluation questions, and agreement on methodology and instrumentation.
2. To gather useful and timely formative evaluation data and information about the CT FM system that will validate the breadth and scope of the system, obtain information regarding client satisfaction, solicit feedback on the effectiveness of the program and inform future program planning.

3. To make suggestions to enhance the process of completing on-site visits to all local programs within a State Performance Plan cycle.
4. To facilitate broad sharing of the evaluation findings and to collaboratively develop data-based recommendations for FM system improvement and development.

They also presented their overarching evaluation questions. They will be collecting data in a variety of ways: telephone interviews, focus groups and surveys. Upon completion of the evaluation they will draft a final summary and present it to the Birth to Three system.

Reports and Announcements

McLaughlin & Associates is starting a parent support group for parents whose children are newly diagnosed on the autism spectrum. Cheryl Sanderson will be having an auction on Saturday, May 3 to raise money for autism.

Maria Synodi mentioned "Together We Will" which was held on April 10, and next year will be on April 2, 2009.

Robin mentioned a lecture series focusing on disability issues sponsored by the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities every other week for 16 weeks. Yale emergency preparedness is also conducting two-day training on emergency preparedness on vulnerable populations.

Dr. LaCamera mentioned the annual school health conference which is open to anyone involved with schools. The Spina Bifida association conducts an annual meeting and Dr. LaCamera will collect the info and inform ICC members via Anna Gorski.

Elayne mentioned the Early Intervention Family Alliance, with more information to follow.

A motion to adjourn was made by Myra and seconded by Patrick. The meeting ended at 1: 40PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anna Gorski

NEXT State ICC MEETING

Monday, June 9, 2008 at CAFAP, 2189 Silas Deane Highway, Rocky Hill, CT
Please RSVP to Anna Gorski at 860-418-8716 or via e-mail at: anna.gorski@ct.gov

FUTURE MEETING DATES:

August 11, 2008
October 20, 2008
December 1, 2008

Please plan to attend.