

Interagency Coordinating Council

February 27, 2005
9 AM – 1:20 p.m.

CAFAP
2189 Silas Deane Highway
Rocky Hill, CT

approved 4-10-06

Minutes

Laurel Ross, ICC Acting Chair

ARC, Greenwich

Timothy Bowles

Dept. of Social Services

Anita Cella

Parent

DeAnna Lia

Dept. for Children and Families

Elizabeth Daly

Office of Protection and Advocacy

Dona Ditrio

New Opportunities Waterbury

Rita Esposito

REACHOUT, Inc.

Linda Goodman

Department of Mental Retardation

Mark A. Greenstein, M.D.

Pediatrician

Clara Gutierrez

Parent

Jeanette Haines

BESB

Moirá Herbert

Dept. of Insurance

Cynthia Jackson

Children's Therapy Services

Robert LaCamera, M.D.

American Academy of Pediatrics

DeAnna Lia

Dept. for Children and Families

Deborah List

Parent

Jeannie Mazzaferro

Parent

Joe McLaughlin

McLaughlin and Associates

Elise Minor

Parent

Maura Provencher

Parent

Maria Synodi, alternate

State Dept. of Education

Louis Tallarita

SDE- Educ. for Homeless Children

Elayne Thomas

Parent

Rep. Jack Thompson

State Representative

Robin Tousey-Ayers, alternate

Dept. of Public Health

Melissa Van Buren, alternate

A.J. Papanikou Center for Excellence

Myra Watnick

Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.

Diane Wixted

*Commission on the Deaf and
Hearing Impaired*

ICC Members Present: Tim Bowles, Anita Cella, Elizabeth Daly, Dona Ditrio, Rita Esposito, Linda Goodman, Dr. Mark Greenstein, Jeanette Haines, Cindy Jackson, Dr. Robert LaCamera, DeAnna Lia, Joe McLaughlin, Maura Provencher, Lolli Ross, Maria Synodi, Louis Tallarita, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Melissa Van Buren, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted

ICC Members Absent: Clara Gutierrez, Moira Herbert, Jeannie Mazzaferro, Elise Minor, Deborah List, Elayne Thomas

The meeting began at 9:20 AM.

Introductions: Lolli Ross, Acting ICC Chair, welcomed everyone to the State ICC meeting. Council members and 12 members of the public introduced themselves.

Approval of December Minutes

Bob made a Motion to approve the minutes as modified. Cindy seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Linda Maude, Child and Family Network director, discussed the severe difficulties her agency and other approved Birth to Three agencies are experiencing in their efforts to provide high quality services and supports to families. She shared that there is sometimes a need to wait to provide some services, phasing in services more slowly, and using staff with lower qualifications in order to reduce costs. Ms. Maude noted that she is placed in a position of questioning her own ability to adhere to best practice, and asked that the ICC make an effort to facilitate the provision of fiscal relief to all Birth to Three programs

ICC Vice Chair Selection

Nominations have been accepted for appointed ICC members willing to serve as State ICC Vice Chair. A motion was made by Lolli to accept Jeannie Mazzaferro's nomination to this seat, seconded by Cindy, and votes were cast unanimously in favor of this motion. Jeannie was not able to be present to accept her selection, but Lolli will notify her later today.

Lead Agency Update Linda distributed information (*atts. 1 and 2*) detailing budget issues including a 2% COLA for providers, and expenditure projections indicating completion of FY06 within budget. The legislative session has begun, and Raised Bill 201 was heard by the Select Committee on Children on February 23rd. It proposed a broad expansion of eligibility matching that of Massachusetts and creation of a credential for all Birth to Three providers. Testimony provided mostly favored the eligibility expansion, but was mostly opposed to the credential.

Referrals are down 2% and the percentage of referred children found eligible has decreased to 60%. Families in the West and North Regions continue to experience delays of more than two days in assignment to a program for evaluation. One family from Canton has been waiting since before Christmas; all others were referred in February. Families residing in Canton may be served by any of three programs, but none of these has been in rotation since December.

IDEA: OSEP is planning a data verification visit to Connecticut on June 5th.

Dispute Resolution Activity: There has been one hearing (decision posted at www.birth23.org), one mediation with no agreement reached. And three complaints that are under investigation.

QA: Five programs will receive on-site monitoring visits before the end of FY06.

System Changes: Tammy Garris and Pietro Rosato have assumed other roles within the Department of Mental Retardation. Birth to Three is undergoing a reorganization to improve services to families and providers beginning with the creation of a new Service and Support Office. The phone number is 203-294-5168 and a toll-free number is expected soon. Fiscal and contracting will be handled by the DMR Central Office beginning in FY07. A new "Best Practice" unit is planned. An additional expert in data systems will be recruited, and ICC support may become a separate part-time position to be discussed with the ICC Executive Committee. Other improvements and possible office changes will be announced in the future.

Everyone broke out into Committees.

Committee Reports

Legislative members include: Jeannie Mazzaferro, Moira Herbert, DeAnna Lia, Tim Bowles, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Myra Watnick, Joe McLaughlin, Diane Wixted, and Bob LaCamera. Joe volunteered to be the new chair of this committee now that Jeannie has taken on the responsibilities of ICC Vice Chair. Joe reported that ICC representatives had met with Secretary Genuario and Ann Foley in 2005 and were pleased with his first offer to improve funding, if not then, then during the legislative session. Since the Governor's draft budget was silent on increasing funds for Birth to Three, the committee would like to request a new meeting to understand why that did not happen. Additional discussions with local legislators will be undertaken by Cindy (Senator Chris Murphy) and Joe (Representative Edith Prague). Points to be made include:

- The ICC's strong support for implementation of the Rate Study recommendations,

- Ongoing fiscal crisis experienced by provider programs, including closure of three programs last year
- No responses to RFP to increase the number of approved programs (that might alleviate the need for families to wait for eligibility evaluations) due to an inadequate rate structure

Communications members include Elise Minor, Lolli Ross, Anita Cella, Jeanette Haines, Maria Synodi, Clara Gutierrez, Maura Provencher and Eileen McMurrer. Maura agreed to serve as Committee Chair. The group continued revision of the 1996 ICC By-Laws and expects to present the draft to the full Council at the April meeting for discussion, final revision, and approval.

Quality Services members include: Cindy Jackson, Melissa Van Buren, Mark Greenstein, Rita Esposito, Elayne Thomas, DeAnna Lia, and Linda Goodman. Cindy reported four primary points. Cindy agreed to serve as Committee Chair. Cindy announced that representatives from this committee participated in the development of the Birth to Three Family Survey that will be administered later this fiscal year. Follow-up discussion of the Autism report commissioned by Birth to Three resulted in the Committee requesting implementation of the recommendations. Families and providers are experiencing ongoing frustration re. obtainment of a timely diagnosis for children suspected to have an autistic spectrum disorder. Cultural Competence was cited as a continuing barrier to effectively supporting families. Questions re. the qualifications, reliability and competence of interpreters' understanding of Birth to Three philosophy and their ability to embrace it while working to interpret for families are significant. It was proposed that Birth to Three offer training to interpreters specifically to sensitize them to family-centered services. It was also proposed that the Orientation DVD that is mailed out to all new families after referral be made available in additional languages.

Rate Study

Linda distributed attachments 3 and 4 including copies of the Rate Study recommendations. The rate study was already given to the Chairs of the Public Health Committee and Appropriations Committee as required. Recommendations include an increase in provider reimbursement statewide, with a 6% differentially higher increase for providers in Fairfield County to reflect their higher inherent costs of doing business. Discussion ensued at length. Diane made a motion and Myra seconded it to state: The ICC supports the recommendations of the Rate Study and requests that the Health and Hospitals and Appropriations Committees implement all recommendations. All votes were in favor. The Executive Committee will send a letter to express this request. It will include the key points listed above as need in order to stabilize the System, not even expand it.

Focused Monitoring Update

Alice Ridgway, Birth to Three Quality Assurance Manager, announced having piloted provider participation in on-site reviews that was deemed successful by those involved and therefore will be continued. Any interested Birth to Three program directors should contact Alice for a schedule of opportunities. It was noted that the family's perceptions are most important regarding whether or not transitions are smooth, not necessarily the completion of a transition conference within a certain period of time. However, the timelines for transition are federally established and required as a system compliance measure.

Half of the June 12th ICC meeting will be used as a Focused Monitoring Stakeholders meeting.

Reports and Announcements

Lolli announced that an ICC representative is still needed to participate in the September 18-19 National Accountability Conference on Special Education and Early Intervention in Denver, Colorado. Please contact her for more information.

Melissa Van Buren discussed the Early Childhood Specialist (att. 5) on-line program offered by the University Center for Excellence. A new group of participants will begin in June with all competencies now being offered on-line in response to past participants' feedback. There will be a Consumer Forum on April 5th; more details are available at www.uconnedd.org. Additionally, tool kits on Evidence-Based Practices are now available for providers. Contact the UCE at 679-1500 for more information.

Lolli then called for a motion to adjourn. Myra made the motion to adjourn; Bob seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 1:20 PM

NEXT SICC MEETING

Monday, April 10 at CAFAP, 2189 Silas Deane Highway in Rocky Hill.

Please RSVP to Kathy Granata at 860-418-6146 or via e-mail: kathy.granata@po.state.ct.us

FUTURE MEETING DATES:

April 10	State ICC meeting	9 -- 2	CAFAP
June 12	State ICC // Focused Monitoring	9 – 4	CAFAP
August 14	State ICC	9 – 2	CAFAP
October 16	State ICC	9 – 2	CAFAP
December 11	State ICC	9 – 2	CAFAP

*CAFAP -- the CT Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents – volunteers their meeting room to accommodate the State ICC meetings. They are located at **2189 Silas Deane Highway, Rocky Hill, Connecticut**. Take Exit 24 off of I-91 North or South. Turn South off the exit (away from Wethersfield). CAFAP is on the right next to Chuck's Steak House. Meetings take place on the ground floor and are handicapped accessible.

PLEASE PARK in the rear of the building or behind the adjacent building, Chuck's Restaurant.