

Interagency Coordinating Council

June 11, 2007
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
Anita Cella
Parent
Elizabeth Daly
Office of Protection and Advocacy
Dona Ditrio
New Opportunities Early Head Start
Rita Esposito
REACHOUT, Inc.
Linda Goodman
Dept. of Mental Retardation
Mark A. Greenstein, M.D.
Pediatrician
Clara Gutierrez
Parent
Jeanette Haines
BESB
Moirra Herbert
Insurance Department
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
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. Papanikou Center for Excellence
Myra Watnick
Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.
Diane Wixted
Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired

ICC Members Present: Rita Esposito, Kathleen Bradley, Moira Herbert, Cindy Jackson, Dr. Robert LaCamera, Elayne Thomas, Clara Gutierrez, Myra Watnick, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Tim Bowles, Dr. Mark Greenstein, Lolli Ross, Linda Goodman, Rep. Jack Thompson,

ICC Members Absent: Louis Tallarita, Maria Synodi, Elizabeth Daly, Dona Ditrio, Anita Cella, Diane Wixted, Jeanette Haines, Melissa Van Buren, Elise Minor, Joe McLaughlin

The meeting began at 9:40 AM.

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

Approval of April Minutes

Dr. LaCamera made a Motion to approve the minutes as written. Myra Watnick seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

1. Lynn Fogg-Cornelio, Early Connections-North Director, discussed pediatricians writing prescriptions for Birth to Three services. Lynn would like this matter to be explored further. Dr. LaCamera offered that he and the Academy of Pediatrics can work with Eileen McMurrer, Birth to Three public awareness coordinator, to resolve the issue. Dr. Greenstein stated that he would work with the pediatricians in the northern region with Eileen. Lynn also stated that physicians "have been telling families that they should not be involved with direct service" when therapists are in the home.

Public Comment (Continued)

2. Christina Rao, physical therapist with Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital, and previous Birth to Three therapist, discussed over-differentiation of "developmental" versus "medical" interventions in some Birth to Three programs, limited experience of some therapy providers, and premature practice autonomy. She felt that Birth to Three programs are not consistently supportive of necessary medically-oriented interventions and instead may be focused exclusively on being a developmental program. She also shared that programs often hire new graduate therapists who have a lot of autonomy of practice which "can severely limit professional development unless the therapist is and continues to be an active learner and has structured supports available". Ms. Rao offered specific recommendations to the ICC which included the following:

- Generous support of relevant continuing education
- Refocused training to clarify previously overstated distinction between medical and developmental intervention
- Mentorship and meaningful QA/QI activities among same discipline providers within and between programs.
- Support of evidence-based practice, such as exploring the possibility of a virtual private network (VPN) access to University of Connecticut Health Center medical library.
- Disclosure of scope and limitations of Birth to Three therapy services to all CT hospitals and physicians as well as to families and child's physicians at eligibility determination and with annual IFSP's.

Lolli deferred the discussion to the Quality Assurance committee work.

Invited Speaker: Help Me Grow

Joanna Bogin, Program Supervisor at the Children's Trust Fund, described the Help Me Grow program. Help Me Grow is designed to identify children at risk for developmental or behavioral problems and to connect these children to existing community resources that can help. Help Me Grow employs the concept of developmental surveillance, pioneered in Great Britain and championed here in Connecticut by Dr. Paul Dworkin, Vice President and Chief Medical Officer of Connecticut Children's Medical Center and a driving force behind the creation of Help Me Grow. Critical to developmental surveillance is the input of parents.

Help Me Grow consists of four primary components:

- Training of child health providers in effective developmental surveillance.
- Creation and maintenance of a resource inventory of community-based programs supporting child development and families.
- Development of a coordinated, statewide system of referral that links young children and families to existing services and support.
- Collection of data and analyses of children's developmental status and statewide resources.

With one phone call to the Child Development Infoline, a child health provider or parent with any type of concern about a child's development or behavior can access professional assistance and a database of community-based support services. Child Development Infoline is a collaborative

effort of the Children's Trust Fund, United Way/Infoline, Connecticut Birth to Three System and State Department of Education Preschool Special Education.

Housekeeping

ICC members photos and quotes of are posted on the Birth to Three website at <http://www.birth23.org/State%20Council/default.asp>

Myra and Lolli drafted a letter on behalf of the ICC to the Attorney General's office after a hearing decision rendered in March 2007 that ordered as many as 40 hours of service per week. The letter requests that the State provide a staff attorney with a strong background in and knowledge of the Connecticut Birth to Three System and Part C of IDEA or to consider the option of allowing the Department to enter into a separate contract with a private law firm that has expertise in this area of the law.

Update: CT Family Support Network

Lisa Sheppard, Southwest FSN Coordinator, provided an updates on FSN activities statewide. The CT Family Support Network is a network of families who have children with disabilities who work to help other parents find the supports they need. The Network was created by the Connecticut Family Support Council, a legislatively established partnership of parents and professionals working to improve supports for families of children with disabilities. The council is planning an annual retreat for members and plans on starting legislative groups to advocate on their behalf. FSN is also starting a support group in Shelton with the assistance of Linda Maude of the Child and Family Network. Lisa also informed the group that Spanish speaking support groups are offered statewide with the assistance of translators.

Lead Agency Update

Please refer to the "Lead Agency Update posted on the B23 website- <http://www.birth23.org/State%20Council/default.asp>".

In May, Toni Brancia Maxon, director for the New England Center for Hearing Rehabilitation's Birth to Three program, was killed in a car accident on Long Island. In addition to being a tireless cheerleader for the Birth to Three System, Toni was an internationally known pediatric audiologist with a specialty in cochlear implants. We will all miss her. A memorial fund has been established in her name: Antonia Brancia Maxon Memorial Fund
Liberty Bank- Storrs Branch
1132 Storrs Rd.
Storrs, CT 06268

We do not have an FY08 budget yet and have no date for when a special session will start. We are seeking permission from OPM to begin the eligibility changes 7/1 even without the budget, but are uncertain of their response.

Referrals for May were at an all time high compared to previous years. The Service and Support Office has been monitoring the list of children pending assignment to a program for initial evaluation daily. As of June 8, 2007, there were 561 children pending assignment to programs. Birth to Three issued an RFP with the intention of increasing capacity, and received six proposals. Based on the large number of referrals in the North Region and anticipating eligibility changes for July 1, three new programs were selected. Those are:

Building Bridges (accepting referrals 7/1/07)
REM (accepting referrals 8/1/07)
CIB/Oak Hill (accepting referrals 9/1/07)

The Birth to Three System just hired a new secretary to assist Heather Phillips. Her name is Ruby Trapp and she started June 8th. Her phone number is 418-6035.

2007 Legislative Bills 7007, 1220, 6723, 683, and 7144 were discussed.

Bill 7144 – Establishes a “Board of Education and Services for Citizens with Autism Spectrum Disorders”. This was sent to the House calendar, but did not come for a vote before the session ended since they wanted to pass it after the budget. We don’t know whether it will be raised in the special session or whether it will be included in a budget implementer bill.

IDEA-Annual Performance Report

Determinations were made in May and each program received a letter. We have 5 programs that are “in need of assistance”.

Federal Application

We finally received approval of our new indirect rate of 2%. The U. S. Department of Education requires each state to have a restricted indirect rate in order to receive funding. Our rate agreement had expired. The indirect rate increase is now good for five years.

Dispute Resolution Activity FY07

Complaints (one new complaint since the last meeting)

One formal written complaint was received at the beginning of April. The complaint alleges that Project Interact did not provide an autism evaluation as an early intervention service and subsequently did not provide appropriate services. The parents spent \$52,000 out-of-pocket for evaluations and services and they requested reimbursement. The child turned three in October, 2006. The complaint response acknowledged that the family should have been offered an autism diagnostic evaluation but that appropriate services were offered and the family chose to use an outside agency for most of their services. Project Interact was instructed to reimburse the family for any portion of the first autism evaluation obtained by the family that was not covered by insurance.

Mediations No mediations have been requested this fiscal year, although we used one of our mediators to facilitate a complicated IFSP meeting for the Early Connections West program. Birth To Three is currently recruiting more mediators to assist in mediations as well as facilitate IFSP meetings.

Quality Assurance

On June 25th there will be a training session to go over the revised QA manual. There will also be a “Webinar” on July 9th to review the performance dashboard and revised BPR data system.

Focused Monitoring FY07 upcoming on-site visits:

STAR Rubino in the area of service delivery –Done
Reachout in the area of Transition- Done
Education Connection in the area of Child Find- June 25-29
CREC Soundbridge in the area of Child Find - Yet to be scheduled in July

Linda highlighted the proposed changes to the IDEA Part C regulations. The ICC has until July

23, 2007 to post comments. This is the first time in over ten years that changes have been proposed.

The Council took a lunch break.

A question about the public comment process was raised since there had not been enough time for the commentators to present their ideas and receive feedback. It was also felt that the ICC may have been defensive in their response to the public comment. In the future, those giving public comment will be made aware that they should limit themselves to five minutes. This issue will be discussed and clarified at the next ICC meeting in August.

Committee Reports

Legislative Committee members include: Joe McLaughlin (chair), Louis Tallarita, Moira Herbert, Tim Bowles, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted, and Bob LaCamera. Myra reported that she and Lolli completed the letter on behalf of the ICC to the attorney general's office and will be sending that out. They also discussed the public comment that was raised in the morning and wanted to explore scholarships for PT/OT students to go into Birth to Three programs as well as loan forgiveness.

Quality Services Committee members include: Cindy Jackson (chair), Melissa Van Buren, Mark Greenstein, Rita Esposito, Elayne Thomas, and Kathleen Bradley.

Cindy reported that the committee also discussed the public comment that had been raised and would like to invite Christina to take part in the making of the video on Birth to Three services which will model best practices. The committee also proposed that Focused Monitoring should include identification of programs that may be misrepresenting the role of therapists.

Communications Committee members include Elise Minor, Lolli Ross, Anita Cella, Jeanette Haines, Maria Synodi and Eileen McMurrer. Lolli reported that the ICC needs to recruit three parents and 1 state senator chair. The ICC resource manual has been started and is currently under construction. The committee is also looking to develop a mission and vision.

Reports and Announcements

Linda announced that public comments on the Part C regulation changes are due by July 23, 2007 and can be filed electronically through e-filing. Lolli proposed an Executive Committee conference call to discuss how the ICC would like to comment.

Lolli announced that she recently spoke with Theresa Bologna about a training opportunity called SpecialQuest Training of Trainers to include children with disabilities in early care and education. SpecialQuest Leadership Teams will learn about the Hilton/Early Head Start Training model, explore the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library, and create training plans using the SpecialQuest model and materials. SpecialQuest Leadership Teams will be composed of: an individual responsible for training related to inclusion at the state level; a family member of a child who has a disability; a member of the SpecialQuest Community; and two additional leaders for inclusion training in the state. Lolli discussed the possibility of having ICC representation on a CT state team. Cindy Jackson expressed interest in volunteering. Members were directed to please contact Lolli Ross if interested.

Linda announced that Department of Education just went through reorganization and representation on the ICC may change as a result.

A motion to adjourn was made by Lolli and seconded by Elayne. The meeting ended at 1:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anna Gorski

NEXT State ICC MEETING

Monday, August 13 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@po.state.ct.us

FUTURE MEETING DATES:

October 15

December 10

Please plan to attend.