

# Interagency Coordinating Council

June 12, 2006  
9 AM – 1:25 p.m.

CAFAP  
2189 Silas Deane Highway  
Rocky Hill, CT

Approved as amended 8/14/06
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## Minutes

### **Laurel Ross, ICC Acting Chair**

*ARC, Greenwich*

### **Jeannie Mazzaferro, Ph.D.**

**ICC Vice Chair**

*Parent*

### **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*

### **Moira Herbert**

*Insurance Department*

### **Cynthia Jackson**

*Children's Therapy Services*

### **Robert LaCamera, M.D.**

*American Academy of Pediatrics*

### **DeAnna Lia**

*Dept. for Children and Families*

### **Deborah List**

*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, Dona Ditrio, Rita Esposito, Linda Goodman, Dr. Mark Greenstein, Clara Gutierrez, Cindy Jackson, Dr. Robert LaCamera, Joe McLaughlin, Maura Provencher, Lolli Ross, Maria Synodi, Rep. Jack Thompson, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Melissa Van Buren, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted

ICC Members Absent: Anita Cella, Elizabeth Daly, Jeanette Haines, Moira Herbert, DeAnna Lia, Jeannie Mazzaferro, Elise Minor, Deborah List, Louis Tallarita, Elayne Thomas

The meeting began at 9:20 AM.

**Introductions:** Lolli Ross, ICC Chair, welcomed everyone to the State ICC meeting. Council members and 8 members of the public introduced themselves.

### **Approval of April Minutes**

Cindy made a Motion to approve the April 12<sup>th</sup> minutes as written. Myra seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment offered.

### **By-Laws**

An updated version of the State ICC By-Laws was distributed. After some discussion, the Council asked to have the strikethroughs and new copy in bold type reinstated and e-mailed prior to the next Council meeting.

### **Family Support Council and Network**

Jennifer Carroll, Statewide Coordinator distributed brochures in English and Spanish describing the purpose, activities, and contact information on the Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN). They were established ten years ago as a partnership of parents and professionals

working to improve supports for families of children with disabilities. The Network is also a resource for Birth to Three providers and families enrolled in Birth to Three, and their brochure is sent out in the welcome packet from Child Development Infoline to all families whose children have been referred and are awaiting evaluation. The FSN partners with other family and parent support initiatives, with each enhancing the work of the others through their respective areas of specialization. Jen invited Council members to e-mail her for more information or brochures at any time: [jtcarroll@cox.net](mailto:jtcarroll@cox.net).

### ***Legislative Update***

Representative Jack Thompson, who was appointed to the State ICC last November and has served in the General Assembly for the past twenty years representing Manchester, shared information from the legislative session that just ended. The Rate Study that was sent to the Office of Fiscal Analysis resulted in increased funding for Birth to Three provider reimbursements during the coming fiscal year. All of the Rate Study recommendations were adopted except for a proposed differential rate for Fairfield County that was rejected. Rep. Thompson serves on the Select Committee on Children that heard a proposal to restore eligibility to children with certain diagnoses that were cut in 2003. He noted that he voted against the cut at that time and would welcome reinstatement of the prior eligibility criteria. The bill proposed this past session by the Commission on Children would have expanded eligibility, thereby increasing costs by \$14 million. The bill died in Committee due to concerns over funding and questions regarding the advisability of adopting an early intervention credential, but can be resurrected in the future. Rep. Thompson noted that the Nurturing Families program was expanded statewide to provide support for first-time parents exhibiting risk factors. He encouraged everyone to continue to lobby for support of all children from the prenatal period through ultimate independence.

### ***Lead Agency Update***

Linda distributed information detailing the Appropriations Committee's plan to implement portions of the rate study recommendations including a \$338 unit rate, 1 unit for initial IFSP meetings, and increases to the supplemental rates effective January 1, 2007.

FY06 expenditures through April were comprised of net invoices (\$21,343,467) including supplemental payments (\$1,195,377). Insurance revenue totaled \$2,356,018 during that same time. Parent fees collected each month ranged from a low of \$48,050 in September to a high of \$59,717 in February after subtraction of collection administrative costs with a total to date of \$645,066.

Reorganization: Staff positions continue to be posted and filled. The Service and Support Office will move from Wallingford to Rocky Hill by the beginning of July. After that, invoices will be sent to Central Office for payment.

Procedures: Revisions to the Birth to Three Procedures to reflect centralization of the system and other updates are extensive, so entire new printed sets and electronic files on CD will be issued to all programs.

Early Childhood Cabinet: A draft report to the Governor is being prepared that is expected to include a recommendation to expand Birth to Three eligibility.

IDEA: Connecticut's application for federal funding has received verbal approval.

OSEP: Connecticut's Data Verification Visit has been scheduled for August 9 and 10<sup>th</sup>.

Dispute Resolution Activity: A facilitated IFSP meeting was successfully completed in May. This approach uses a trained mediator to facilitate the IFSP review process to encourage agreement

early in the process rather than allowing differences between the family and program to reach the point of needing mediation or an administrative hearing. Additionally, there were no formal complaints, three mediations, and no administrative hearings since the last ICC meeting.

Quality Assurance: Five programs will receive on-site monitoring visits before the end of FY06 concerning activities related to Child Find, Service Delivery and Transition.

Tenth Anniversary: July 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 marks the tenth anniversary of the Connecticut Birth to Three System as administered by the Department of Mental Retardation. A new logo has been created and a formal celebration may take place in the Fall.



Children with diagnoses on the Autism Spectrum (ASD): Birth to Three is exploring a move toward designating a number of ASD specialty providers from among current providers. Nineteen programs have expressed preliminary interest in obtaining this designation. Discussions will be continued on June 29 with guidance from Tracy Osbahr, the contractor who completed a statewide review of early intervention services for children diagnosed with ASD last year. In addition, Gerry Mahoney met with providers to share his relationship-based parent coaching approach. Responsiveness Teaching offers a viable alternative to intensive behavioral services. A SERC workshop will be scheduled to increase the pool of providers that are trained in this approach.

LICCs: The annual Local Interagency Coordinating Council Chairs meeting was held in May and included representatives from Danbury, Waterbury, Fairfield, Torrington, Meriden/Wallingford, and Middlesex County. One person came to explore establishment of a new LICC. Birth to Three continues to provide financial support for LICCs and has reframed their focus over time based on changing community and System needs. As an awareness of the importance of school readiness has increased, there are a growing number of local, regional and statewide groups working to provide enriched developmentally appropriate experiences for young children ages 3 to 5. Infants and toddlers are sometimes overlooked, and those with delays are sometimes seen as separate from those without. In response to this, LICCs have been asked to serve as "the voice" for infants and toddlers with developmental delay or disabilities within the multitude of early childhood initiatives. Meeting participants embraced this idea and gave rich examples of how they already serve this function and will continue to expand this important role.

Families awaiting eligibility evaluations: Tom Coakley, Birth to Three Manager, explained that the System has returned to a more structured rotation cycle for assigning families to a program when the family does not have any preference. Although the rotation process that was established in 1996 has continued, the practice of going out of rotation, then only accepting certain referrals based on geographic location or reason for referral had grown significantly. Programs are encouraged to designate sub-regions for rotation purposes if that will allow them to stay in rotation (i.e., accept incoming referrals) more regularly. Parent request is still the first priority for program assignment. Other circumstances may also warrant flexibility, such as a child who is referred close to their third birthday, or a child who is homeless. Early Connections will no longer serve every town statewide, but will focus on geographic areas of greatest need. Discussion ensued. The possibility of implementing a town-by-town rotation option was raised and Linda agreed to explore this strategy.

The Council took a break to pick up lunch, then regrouped for Committee work.

## **Committee Reports**

- **Legislative** members include: Joe McLaughlin (chair), Jeannie Mazzaferro, Moira Herbert, DeAnna Lia, Tim Bowles, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted, and Bob LaCamera. Joe reported that this Committee is planning a two-pronged follow-up to legislators' generous support:
  1. Notecards were purchased that ICC provider representatives will give to families, asking them to add their own note of thanks and perhaps a photo, then mail to legislators on the Appropriations Committee and others who supported Birth to Three during the legislative session.
  2. Local meetings with legislators were proposed so that parent voices and experiences may be shared with their elected officials. This was recommended over a larger, less-focused legislative breakfast.
- **Communications** members include Maura Provencher (chair), Elise Minor, Lolli Ross, Anita Cella, Jeanette Haines, Clara Gutierrez, Maria Synodi and Eileen McMurrer.
  1. The Council was presented with the latest revision of the 1996 ICC By-Laws. It was requested that strikethroughs and bold new copy be reinstated so that changes would be obvious. These will be e-mailed to the Council prior to the August meeting.
  2. The possibility of developing an ICC Mission was explored.
  3. The committee recommended that an ICC brochure be developed once the new ICC staff person has been hired.
  4. The ICC meeting schedule will be more widely publicized, including among parent advocacy groups.
  5. A new LICC Liaison from the State ICC is needed. The FY07 focus on establishing connections with emerging "local governances" and representing infants and toddlers with developmental delays was reiterated. No one stepped forward to volunteer.
  6. The list of tasks developed during the September, 2005 ICC Retreat have been mostly accomplished. Updating the ICC Member Resource Manual has been tabled until the new ICC staff person is hired.
  7. The FY06 Annual Report is expected to be published and available by the October ICC meeting. In concert with the tenth year anniversary theme, the ICC may wish to issue a press release at that time.
- **Quality Services** members include: Cindy Jackson (chair), Melissa Van Buren, Mark Greenstein, Rita Esposito, Elayne Thomas, DeAnna Lia, and Linda Goodman. The Committee focused their discussion on diagnosing and serving children with a possible Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). They recommended
  1. further development of the specialty program concept, and
  2. training an in-house evaluator to provide a diagnosis as appropriate.

## **Focused Monitoring Update**

Alice Ridgway, Quality Assurance Manager, distributed updated program groupings by size. Recent reviews included Rehabilitation Associates. Myra reported that her agency's experience was mostly positive, with the parent team very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities. They noted areas needing improvement and also commented on positive practices. Alice shared a sample program profile incorporating new visual symbols. She reported an 18% return rate on

Parent Surveys, including 56 web-based completions in English and one web-based completion in Spanish.

### ***Reports and Announcements***

Melissa Van Buren announced the Early Intervention Specialist program operated by the A.J. Pappanikou Center. New applications are being accepted, and the Center will consider accepting applications from individuals who choose to opt out of the competencies. More information about this web-based professional advancement program, including a fiscal incentive for completion, is available by contacting the Center at 860-679-1500 or via e-mail: vanburen@uchc.edu.

Melissa also reported that their April Forum was well-attended and she thanked those who participated in the Early Childhood, School-Age, and Adult focus areas.

Robin Tousey-Ayers reported that the Department of Public Health's five Regional Medical Home Support Centers are continuing to build interagency circles of support for children and youth with special health care needs. The Medical Home Advisory Council meets monthly to advise DPH on this and other issues.

Lolli then called for a motion to adjourn. Dona made the motion to adjourn; Diane seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 1:25 PM

### ***NEXT SICC MEETING***

**Monday, August 14 from 9 – 1:00** at CAFAP, 2189 Silas Deane Highway in Rocky Hill. Please RSVP to Lana Raymond at 860-418-6035 or via e-mail: lana.raymond@po.state.ct.us

### ***FUTURE MEETING DATES:***

October 16	Focused Monitoring//State ICC	9 – 4	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**.