

# Interagency Coordinating Council

December 13, 2004  
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Infoline – 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
1344 Silas Deane Highway  
Rocky Hill, CT

Draft 1-04-05
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## Minutes

**Laurel Ross, ICC Acting Chair**  
*ARC, Greenwich*

**Timothy Bowles, acting**  
*Dept. of Social Services*

**Carmina Cirioli**  
*Parent*

**Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald**  
*Dept. of Children and Families*

**Elizabeth Daly**  
*Office of Protection and Advocacy*

**Mary Eberle, alternate**  
*A.J. Papanikou Center for Excellence*

**Maria Engborg, alternate**  
*Parent*

**Rita Esposito, acting**  
*REACHOUT, Inc.*

**Ann Gionet**  
*Parent*

**Linda Goodman**  
*Department of Mental Retardation*

**Mark A. Greenstein, M.D.**  
*Pediatrician*

**Clara Gutierrez, acting**  
*Parent*

**Jeannette Haines, acting**  
*BESB*

**Moirra Herbert, acting**  
*Dept. of Insurance*

**Melvette Hill, acting**  
*Parent*

**Cynthia Jackson**  
*Children's Therapy Services*

**Robert LaCamera, M.D.**  
*American Academy of Pediatrics*

**Joe McLaughlin**  
*McLaughlin and Associates*

**Lisa Penick, acting**  
*Stamford Early Head Start*

**Maria Synodi, alternate**  
*State Dept. of Education*

**Robin Tousey-Ayers, acting**  
*Dept. of Public Health*

**Myra Watnick**  
*Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.*

**Diane Wixted**  
*Commission on the Deaf and  
Hearing Impaired*

ICC Members Present: Maria Engborg, Rita Esposito, Linda Goodman, Dr. Mark Greenstein, Clara Gutierrez, Jeanette Haines, Moira Herbert, Cindy Jackson, Dr. Robert LaCamera, Joe McLaughlin, Lisa Penick, Lolli Ross, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted

ICC Members Absent: Tim Bowles, Carmina Cirioli, Elizabeth Daly, Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald, Mary Eberle, Ann Gionet, Melvette Hill, Rep. Denise Merrill, Maria Synodi, Robin Tousey-Ayers

The meeting began at 9:20 AM.

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

### ***Approval of September Minutes***

Mark made a Motion to approve the minutes as written. Cindy seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

### ***Public Comment***

Jill Cotter and Melissa VanBuren from the University Center for Excellence spoke about their agency's web-based credentialing course that was recently completed by eight Birth to Three providers. They expressed gratitude for the feedback provided by participants in this first web-based offering, and look forward to incorporating suggestions as they shape future web-based curricula. They also noted that anyone who began but did not complete a previous version of the course, perhaps due to the inherent travel required by a classroom-based program, might contact Jill at 860-679-1552 to inquire about on-line completion of the remainder of the course competencies. Ensuing discussion included the fact that completion of an early intervention credential

is recommended but is voluntary at this time, that completion of the UCE course would allow an individual to apply for approval of the credential by the Birth to Three System, that funds are available from the UCE to participants upon satisfactory completion of all competencies and an agreement to work in the field for at least four years, and funds are available from the Birth to Three System to the participant's program to offset costs associated with the supervision aspects of credential completion.

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

Linda distributed the Lead Agency Update (*att. 1*) and directed Council members' attention to two completed products at their seats: the final Parent Fees brochure that had been requested by the State ICC, and the FY04 Performance Report which serves as the ICC's annual report to the Governor. The letter from Lolli on behalf of the ICC to Governor Rell was distributed (*att. 2*).

Linda reported data on invoices paid this fiscal year and a graph detailing direct service expenditures for the past three fiscal years. The ICC met with DMR Commissioner O'Meara and DMR Deputy Commissioner Kathryn duPree in October to request that a budget option be sought to restore eligibility for children with speech delays and for very low birth weight infants and to restore funding for programs when a family receives no services in a month. Taken together, these measures were expected to ameliorate some of the fiscal impact on programs this fiscal year. Commissioner O'Meara's response letter was distributed (*att. 3*) indicating uncertainty regarding the agency's ability to absorb the associated costs at that time. Since then, the fiscal outlook has become more favorable. The Birth to Three administration will meet this afternoon to formulate fiscal compensatory strategies and intend to announce their plan by the end of this week. Regional managers will speak directly with programs. Several ICC members commented on the importance of an equitable menu of supports across all contracted programs.

A budget option to revise eligibility regarding infants born at a very low birth weight is still under review. Data were provided to the DMR fiscal officer last week and updates will be provided as they emerge. FY06 budgetary timelines were discussed including release of the Governor's budget in early February followed by the Appropriations Committee review and solicitation of public commentary two weeks later. It was noted that development of a lobbying plan during the February 7<sup>th</sup> State ICC meeting would be extremely important.

Linda's report continued with gross and net parent fee collection results since July. On December 1<sup>st</sup> there were 23 families across 13 different programs whose services were suspended for non-payment of a three-month balance. Linda noted that approximately 40 letters go out to families each month alerting them that they will have services suspended if payment in full is not received within two weeks. Usually about half of the families pay their balance and continue to receive services. The remaining families have their status changed to receipt of only those services available at no cost or notify their service coordinator that they will withdraw. The topic of scholarships was discussed.

Linda provided data showing referrals and eligibility having slightly decreased this year. A question was raised regarding children receiving follow-along visits if eligibility is revised as requested. Linda said that data would be reviewed before any decision is made, but that if two of the three groups of children receiving these visits are converted to being eligible for Birth to Three, then the System may decide to streamline by omitting the follow-along procedure entirely.

Delivery of intensive services was discussed in light of both increased numbers of children requiring intensive services and the increased costs per child of those services. Cindy called for a review of this cohort of children and the associated costs for possible ways to better manage the increasing costs. A comparison across programs and across geographic regions was requested. Discussion ensued regarding different models, including home-based, center-based, and having the local educational agency (LEA) provide school-based services. Each model has inherent challenges. Birth to Three has offered to pay any school district that would begin working with a child before age three in order to minimize the negative effects of transition. Birth to Three can co-fund with the LEA until the child turns three, e.g., to cover transportation costs. Discussion continued regarding logistical and staffing challenges. Various recommended approaches focus on parent training, communication, and relationships. Prevalence reports vary, but seem to be approximately 1:500-600 within the first three years. It was agreed to look at the legal parameters then balance meeting the needs of children and programs within those limits to arrive at recommendations that may come from the Council.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was reauthorized on November 19<sup>th</sup> with minimal changes made to Part C that governs the Birth to Three System. Linda distributed a summary produced by the Infant & Toddler Coordinators Association (*att. 4*) that includes referral of children who experience a substantiated case of trauma due to exposure to family violence, or are homeless or are wards of the state. Early intervention service strategies should be based on peer-reviewed research findings. A new focus on early literacy was also included. The need to provide services in natural environments was unchanged. Transition conferences may now be held as early as nine months before the child turns three. Language in Part B states that school districts must now consider a child's IFSP when planning for preschool special education service delivery. Part C also contains a new emphasis on identifying children who are homeless, and creates four new seats on the ICC. Connecticut already has three of those four seats among its current membership. Some of these changes will need to be reflected in the FY06 federal application that will go out for comment. The ICC will further review these issues on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion then segued to serving children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. A proposal was made to ask several current Birth to Three programs to serve as ASD specialists. This would include the comprehensive aspects of early intervention according to the Connecticut model as well as Applied Behavioral Analysis. Other autism programs generally have not been interested in providing the non-ABA services. Models exist in other states to have institutions of higher education collaborate to increase the numbers of trained service providers. Southern CT State University has a specialty program for teachers. Linda offered to share legal information derived from a workshop she attended last week. Mark was asked to provide information on collaborative models from other states regarding parent training.

The quality assurance re-design is almost complete. A rollout session for programs is set for January 26<sup>th</sup>. Linda shared proposed changes to regulatory language regarding LICCs that is designed to reduce some burdensome aspects while maintaining the strength of LICCs.

### ***Review of Draft APR (Annual Performance Report)***

The Birth to Three APR is due on March 31<sup>st</sup> and draft contents are under development. The reporting format will probably be electronic due to federal encouragement to file via their website. This will require elimination of many of the graphs and lengthy descriptions and is not as reader-friendly as past reporting formats. Alice shared a sample page (*att. 5*), which was described as difficult to read with charts/visual information included as a separate attachment. Several ICC members (Diane, Cindy, Myra, Lolli) agreed to meet in January to review a more complete draft APR with full Council review at the February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Connecticut Continuous

Improvement Planning Team was disbanded by joint decision with the State Department of Education.

### ***Focused Monitoring Update***

Alice Ridgway ran data used to define the program clusters according to size (number of children served at a point in time) on December 1<sup>st</sup> and will finalize the cohorts this week. A meeting with Parent members of the Focused Monitoring Team will meet with Alice tomorrow to craft the parent interview protocol. Next week the four programs will be selected for spring, 2005 focused monitoring. The comprehensive manual for focused monitoring will be prepared with dissemination to all programs on January 26<sup>th</sup> during a rollout session.

The Council then dispersed into committees.

### ***Announcements***

The Family Involvement Committee reported out on planned activities:

1. Review and revise the current ICC handbook
2. Repeat the previously successful training for Parents in collaboration with the LICCs
3. Post ICC parent vacancy notice on the Birth to Three website along with the ICC article written for the *Birth Through Five News* describing Maria Engborg's ICC experiences as a parent member in order to recruit a new parent ICC member and increase the knowledge of and interest in ICC activities by parents enrolled in Birth to Three.
4. Write and distribute a letter for service coordinators to distribute to parents with whom they work advertising ICC involvement opportunities
5. Lolli will contact current parent members who have been frequently absent to check their current interest level and ability to commit to ongoing ICC responsibilities.

The Community Learning Opportunities Committee reported the following:

The community playgroups that were funded last year achieved some level of success. Eight out of the ten received full funding of \$2,500 based on their mid-year progress reports. Two did not submit a report or a request for the second payment. The ICC Community Learning Opportunities subcommittee will review the reports, follow-up with those that did not report, then make recommendations to the full Council and Lead Agency regarding whether this initiative should be continued next fiscal year or not based on its achievement of the stated objectives.

The Lead Agency will convene a group to discuss insurance billing the first week of February.

BESB is expending resources to enhance teacher recruitment for the birth through five age range to work with preschoolers with visual limitations.

The Department of Insurance has continued to work with the Birth to Three Director to review program data regarding insurance reimbursements that are declined.

The Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired office has moved to 67 Prospect Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06106. Diane Wixted's phone number is now 860-231-8756. Their TDD has changed to 860-231-8169. Their toll-free number remains the same: 800-708-6796.

ICC members interested in participating in the February 2005 OSEP conference in Washington, D.C. need to notify Eileen no later than the end of December to make the arrangements.

The Legislative Committee expressed ongoing fiscal concerns and recommended development of a one-page information sheet for distribution to legislators. Discussion took place regarding what message to give, timing, and other logistics. This will be discussed again on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Maria announced that 12 parents are being trained by Padres Abriendo Puertas on understanding special education.

Lolli then called for a **Motion** to adjourn. Cindy made the Motion to adjourn; Myra seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 1:15 PM

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

**Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup>** at Infoline in Rocky Hill, 1344 Silas Deane Highway, fourth floor conference room. If weather concerns arise, please check Eileen's outgoing voicemail message for confirmation or cancellation instructions. Ph. 860-418-6134 after 7 AM.

Please RSVP to Kathy Granata at 860-418-6146 or via e-mail to Eileen at [eileen.mcmurrer@po.state.ct.us](mailto:eileen.mcmurrer@po.state.ct.us).

Respectfully submitted by Diane Wixted, Recording Secretary  
With the assistance of Eileen McMurrer, lead agency staff support to the State ICC