

# Interagency Coordinating Council

August 13, 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*  
**Moira 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: Tim Bowles, Kathleen Bradley, Dona Ditrio, Rita Esposito, Linda Goodman, Clara Gutierrez, Dr. Robert LaCamera, Joe McLaughlin, Lolli Ross, Maria Synodi, Elayne Thomas, Rep. Jack Thompson, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Melissa Van Buren, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted

ICC Members Absent: Louis Tallarita, Elizabeth Daly, Dr. Mark Greenstein, Anita Cella, Cindy Jackson, Jeanette Haines, Elise Minor

The meeting began at 9:20 AM.

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

### ***Invited Speaker: CT State Attorney General's Office***

Attorney Richard Lynch and Attorney Jane Comerford from the State Attorney General's Office responded to letters they had received from the ICC in regard to a hearing. Atty. Lynch described the role of the Attorney General's office in providing legal counsel and services to state agencies. The Attorney General's Office per state law has to represent state agencies and only through a conflict of interest can outside legal representation be sought. They offered some suggestions to prepare the Birth to Three System for future hearings. The following was suggested:

- Develop a pool of experts in the state that are available to consult when needed
- Provide training to hearing officers on Birth to Three
- Develop a "trial book" that contains information from past hearings
- Set-up "mock trials", where experts are questioned and prepared for a hearing
- Train providers on how to present a case

***Invited Speaker: Attorney General's Office (cont.)***

Lolli suggested the legislative committee follow up with the action steps that were discussed during Atty. Lynch's presentation.

***Approval of April Minutes***

Dr. LaCamera made a Motion to approve the minutes as written with one correction that was noted to change "resolve" to "address" on page one under Public Comment, fifth line. Rita Esposito seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

***Public Comment***

There was no public comment.

***Housekeeping***

Lolli asked for volunteers to review and edit this year's "Data Report". Rita and Myra volunteered and the group also nominated Mark in his absence to assist.

***Lead Agency Update***

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

The budget that was passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor on June 26, 2007 did include the additional funding (almost \$1m in FY08 and a little over \$2m in FY09) to restore eligibility for preemies and children with speech delays. In addition, we added mild and unilateral hearing loss as diagnosed conditions, which make a child automatically eligible.

**Dispute Resolution Activity FY07**

One formal written complaint was received mid-June. The complaint alleged that Project Interact did not provide appropriate services, that there was disagreement about an OT evaluation, and that the program refused to attend the child's transition conference with the school district. The complaint response did not find any IDEA violations related to the services or OT evaluation, although part of the complaint had to do with the issue of how "hands off" services should be. There was, however, a violation related to the refusal to attend the transition meeting. Even though the parent had specified that they no longer wanted services from their current service coordinator and the program was actively encouraging the family to transfer, the family was still enrolled as of the day of the transition conference and the mother specifically asked that someone from the program attend the meeting. The program director refused to do so. Based on that and other similar formal and informal complaints over the past years, the program has been asked to complete and sign a compliance agreement with the Department by August 23<sup>rd</sup> that includes restructuring of administrative duties between the two co-directors and offering various training opportunities to its staff. The family was transferred to another program immediately after the transition conference had been held without any Birth to Three participation.

## New Dispute Resolution Activity in FY08

One formal written complaint was received mid-July. The complaint alleges that Therapy Solutions failed to provide appropriate services. The child was transferred to another program but the investigation of the complaint itself is in process.

## Quality Assurance

Focused Monitoring FY08 to date:

CREC Soundbridge in the area of Child Find is done

Four of the five programs that were determined to “need assistance” have corrective action plans that include technical assistance. The Birth to Three Policy and Practice office and Quality Assurance staff are working together to monitor these plans and provide TA.

## Early Childhood Cabinet

The Cabinet met on 7/30. Beginning in September, the meetings will be held monthly at the State Education Resource Center in Middletown. Upcoming dates are 9/10, 10/15, and 11/12. The Cabinet has considerable resources to spend this year on areas specified in the State budget. In terms of Birth to Three, the infant/toddler plan that will be issued sometime in the Fall will most likely include a recommendation to expand eligibility to children with mild delays and those at environmental risk. We have suggested that the recommendation should say something like: “In partnership with local school districts, expand eligibility.....” because with an expansion of that magnitude, we would have to have more local districts participating as providers, especially priority school districts. There will be one or more infant/toddler meetings and an infant/toddler summit held this Fall and Winter.

The Birth to Three service guidelines are being updated and new ones are being developed.

<b>Title</b>	<b>New or Revised</b>	<b>Status</b>
Children with Speech Delays	Revised	Revised for 7/1 change in eligibility. Printed and distributed. Reviewed by ICC Rep. Myra Watnick.
Children with Complex Medical Needs	New	Comment period complete. Almost ready for printing. Robin-Tousey Ayers was ICC Rep. on the committee.
Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Revised	Revised for 7/1 change in eligibility for mild and unilateral hearing loss. Sent to printer.
Multi-cultural competence	New	Final draft issued to programs for comments 8/13. Public comment period to begin November 1.
Autism	Revised	To be revised to cover autism-specialty programs. Will be ready for comments by 11/1/07 and finalized by 1/1/08.
Natural Environments	Revised	Revised as part of the video on making home visits. Bonnie Kielty primary author. Will be ready for comments by early September.
Infant Mental Health	Revised	To begin Fall, 2007. ICC Rep. Lolli Ross. Margaret Holmberg primary author.

		Anticipating completion by Winter, 2008
Evaluation	New	To begin Fall, 2007. ICC Rep. Needed Melissa Van Buren primary author. Anticipating completion by Winter, 2008

## RFP for autism specialty programs

Due to the State of Connecticut contracting rules anyone involved in the design of an RFP cannot submit a proposal thus Lolli excused herself and left the room for this part of the meeting.

The Connecticut Birth to Three System is seeking providers of comprehensive Birth to Three services for eligible children with autistic spectrum disorders and their families living anywhere in Connecticut. The following three scenarios demonstrate how a child would become eligible for the autism-specific programs:

1. A child may receive a diagnosis of ASD prior to referral. In that case, the family will be offered a choice of one of the autism-specific programs or one of the general programs serving their town of residence. Since the child is already known to be eligible because of a diagnosed condition, whichever program receives the referral will perform an initial multi-disciplinary assessment in all five developmental domains and a family assessment prior to developing the IFSP.
2. A child may be referred directly to an autism-specific program from Child Development Infoline because the referral source is concerned that the child may have ASD, but there has not been a diagnosis. In that case, the autism-specific program must determine 1) whether the child is eligible based on developmental delay and/or 2) whether the child has a DSM-IV diagnosis of ASD or meets the educational classification of autism under the IDEA. If a child is determined to have the DSM-IV diagnosis of ASD or meet that educational classification of autism, the parent will be offered the choice of remaining with the program, choosing a different autism-specific Birth to Three program that serves their town, or choosing one of the general Birth to Three programs that serves their town, as long as the program they choose is open to accepting new referrals.
3. A child who has already been determined eligible by a general program may be referred to an autism-specific program that serves the child's town of residence to determine whether the child has a DSM-IV diagnosis of ASD or meets the educational classification of autism under the IDEA.

While agencies that operate Birth to Three programs already have a track record of providing comprehensive services, their proposals will have to delineate how those same types of services will be provided by another program within their agency and they will have to show evidence that they have the required expertise in evaluating and serving children on the autism spectrum. Autism agencies submitting proposals should be able to demonstrate their expertise in evaluating and serving children on the autism spectrum, but will have to be very specific about how they propose to provide services such as speech, OT (including sensory integration), PT, nutrition, and others in order to operate a comprehensive program.

The service unit rate for FY08 will be \$407 per unit. There are also supplemental hourly rates paid for services in excess of 13 hours per month. The RFP is being issued on August 17, 2007 and is posted on Dept. of Administrative Services website as well as the Birth to Three website. Proposals are due back by October 17, 2007. The contract is expected to be effective by November 1, 2007 with the first referrals accepted no later than January 2, 2007.

## **Birth to Three system capacity**

Discussion ensued around the pending program assignment list and capacity of the Birth to Three System, the availability of qualified staff around the state and lack of public higher education programs to train them. Offering scholarships and loan reimbursement incentives may be a way to encourage students. This issue is tabled until the next ICC meeting.

## **Focused Monitoring**

Alice Ridgway of the Birth to Three system asked the ICC if they would like to continue being the primary stakeholders group and whether to continue identifying programs through three key priority indicators: child find, service delivery and transition. Alice also proposed changing program profiles and including family outcome data. Alice asked the ICC to consider these areas and the issues are tabled until the next ICC meeting.

The Council took a lunch break.

## **Committee Reports**

Committee work was postponed.

## ***Reports and Announcements***

Melissa Van Buren announced that the University of Connecticut will be running another year of an on-line Early Intervention Specialist certificate program.

Maria announced that Department of Education just went through reorganization and new Bureaus were created.

Robin announced that the Dept. of Public Health- Child with Special Health Care Needs Unit-Medical Home Project is changing from five centers in five regions to five service contractors who will provide care coordination services in pediatric practices.

A motion to adjourn was made by Myra and seconded by Clara. The meeting ended at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anna Gorski

## ***NEXT State ICC MEETING***

**Monday, October 15** 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](mailto:anna.gorski@po.state.ct.us)

**FUTURE MEETING DATES:**

**December 10, 2007**

**February 25, 2008**

**April 14, 2008**

**August 11, 2008**

**October 20, 2008**

**December 8, 2008**

**Please plan to attend.**