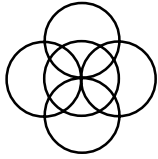


Birth to 6 EVENTS



A BULLETIN FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT EARLY INTERVENTION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Issue XLIX—January 2005

Change in a New Year

Even without New Year's resolutions, many of us in the field of early childhood are making major changes in 2005. Sometimes change is a result of research in best practice or new regulations. Other times change is brought on by budget constraints. Regardless of the impetus, change can be difficult and exciting at the same time.

In this issue of *Birth to 6 EVENTS*, you'll learn about changes in Federal law related to children with disabilities as well as new service delivery on the preschool front in Wisconsin. This is a budget year for Wisconsin's legislature, so you'll also find a brief summary on early childhood budget priorities and opportunities for advocacy.

You'll notice we're continuing with change in our *Birth to 6 EVENTS* format as we've moved almost entirely to an on-line edition. We hope this change will allow you to more easily distribute this information to others and focus on articles that are of most interest to you.

As always, we welcome your feedback. Please contact me at pugh@waisman.wisc.edu or 608.890.0144. Happy New Year!

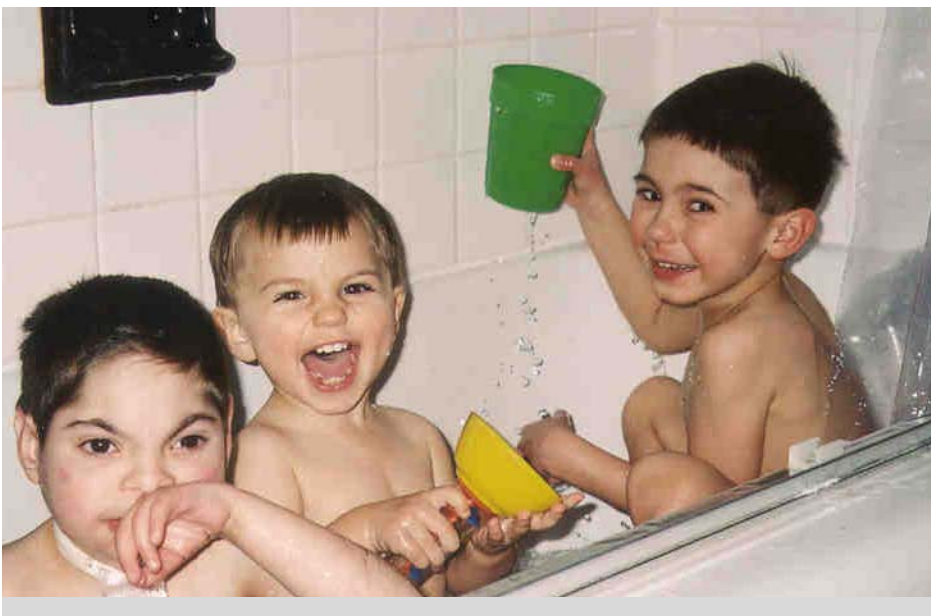
Stay Informed in 2005

To receive periodic Birth to 3 information updates or to receive a personal link to issues of the *Birth to 6 EVENTS* newsletter, send a blank e-mail to b3etn-subscribe@yahoo.com.

You can always access the latest issue of *Birth to 6 EVENTS* and other Birth to 3 news by logging on to www.waisman.wisc.edu/birthto3/.

Coming Soon

- on-line service coordination training
- journal articles for discussion
- family newsletter template



John (7), Luke (2), and Joseph (5) Foye from Muskego enjoy bathtime. The boys' parents, Brent and Mary Jo, participated in Wisconsin's Parents As Leaders (PALs) program. Through PALs, families learn about resources, how to advocate for their children, and consider ways to bring about systems change.

For more information on PALs - www.waisman.wisc.edu/cedd/ecfr.html

Included in the on-line issue of EVENTS:

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Ready to Go – Transitioning From Birth to 3

By Lisa Pugh



When Noah Van Vooren was five-years-old, his mother Kara was surprised when he didn't receive an invitation to attend kindergarten visitation at his local public school.

"I went to school and they said, 'We keep all children in early childhood through age 6,'" recalls Van Vooren, who ultimately moved because she felt strongly that her son, who has Down Syndrome, should be educated alongside his typical age peers.

Van Vooren is hoping other parents won't have to take such drastic measures in Wisconsin anymore. She also wants parents to have a better understanding of special education services when they leave Birth to 3. That's why Van Vooren, as a representative of Wisconsin FACETS, and other statewide collaborators including the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), the Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative (WSPEI), and the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS), have recently unveiled a tool to help increase preschool options for children with disabilities in communities statewide.

"I think parents have always known that their children with special needs are more like other kids than not," says Van Vooren. "I think this will open doors for families. If our children didn't have special needs, where would they go? I would like teams to more strongly address that."

This new endeavor is called *Ready...Set...Go... - Transitions and Options: Educational Considerations for Young Children with Disabilities*. It was created as a training tool to help facilitate partnerships with families in the transition from Birth to 3 services to early childhood special education – a transition which many parents of children with special needs say is extremely difficult.

The training was built upon a fundamental belief that a strong network ensures that each community is ready with a continuum of placement options to meet a child's individual needs as required in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

"It will help families and providers work together to create a plan for kids with special needs that fits families' values better and extends what Birth to 3 is doing," says Van Vooren.

Facilitators were trained on the *Ready...Set...Go* tool in September at a statewide conference in Wisconsin Rapids and are currently taking the information to all corners of the state. The materials include excerpts from the law, practical ideas on how to expand opportunities for children with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 5, and hands-on materials to assist in preparing for a child's transition.

It also provides parents and professionals with a comparison between the sometimes complicated Birth to 3 and educational systems to help both parties better understand the similarities and differences between an IFSP- Birth to 3's Individualized Family Service Plan and an IEP - a school's Individualized Educational Plan.

"Theoretically it should be the passing of the baton instead of starting over," says Lauri Malnory, Parent Facilitator for the Eau Claire Area School District and WSPEI Parent Liaison. "A few faces change. The IFSP is reviewed. A few possible revisions are made to fine tune goals to produce an IEP. But most importantly, services continue uninterrupted as that youngster transitions to becoming a student of the public school system."

Over the last several months, Malnory has been presenting this tool to parent organizations and groups in the western region of the state while other facilitators are taking the message directly to school districts (read more about the *Preschool Options* Project on page 3.)

Malnory says her personal goal is to empower parents to take an active role in transition planning in a collaborative

way. She says the bottom line is services should be provided in a preschooler's natural environment to the maximum extent possible.

"I hope the parent will gain specific knowledge of what this transition process could look like, what Early Childhood Special Education is and what the placement or delivery options could look like. They should begin to understand the role of the school district, the IEP and special educational services going forward for that young child."

Van Vooren says when these goals are realized, family's lives will change.

"It will require more time and energy, but the kids will really benefit from it. We will look back down the road and see the changes."

If you would like to learn more about the Ready...Set...Go trainings or to find a facilitator in your area, contact Kara Van Vooren at 920.419.1236 or tnkvannooren@prodigy.net or Lauri Malnory at 715.852.3075, lmalnory@ecasd.k12.wi.us.



Kara Van Vooren is the Northeast Center Coordinator for Wisconsin FACETS. She is pictured here with her son, Noah, age 9.

Easing the Change in Early Childhood

By Lisa Pugh

Early childhood special educators and administrators in Wisconsin have long struggled with the language in Federal IDEA law which states that preschoolers should be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE.) In a state where local control is valued, school districts can vary widely on how LRE is interpreted. Many times the stumbling blocks to providing a variety of placement options for this age group involve finances, personnel and simply not having enough information on how to make it work.

However, just as teams of parents, educators, service providers and community partners sit around the table at a child's IEP, this same group of collaborators has been working statewide to simplify the issue.

Two ongoing projects – the *Preschool Options* grant and a new training tool – *Ready...Set...Go - Transitions and Options* (discussed on page 2) are now available to districts which are eager to make a change.

Mary Joslin, Early Childhood Program Support teacher in CESA 10, has seen her share of change in her career as a teacher in nearly every possible avenue – from Head Start and kindergarten to Title One and early childhood special education.

These days, she's working to help early childhood programs, administrators and teachers make the shift from a self-contained classroom-only option to serving children ages 3 to 5 in a variety of community settings.

"For districts and professionals that have been writing IEPs for a really long time in a traditional test-based way, it's a difficult change to make,"

says Joslin, who along with Sue Albert – Program Support Teacher in Madison Schools, coordinates the statewide *Preschool Options* grant. "Our brains

Federal law and national research supports the shift in services for preschoolers. A recent article in the *Journal of Research in Special*

Educational Needs concludes that inclusive settings for children with disabilities produce positive outcomes for both the child and their typically developing peers.

"Benefits for children with disabilities were preparation for the real world, independence, and promotion of learning. The benefit most often identified for typically developing children was the opportunity to learn about individual differences." Preschool inclusion in the United States: A review of research from an ecological systems perspective; Odom, Samuel L.; *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, Volume 4, Number 1, 2004 17-49.

Yet, despite research support, the shift to inclusive preschool options has not come without its difficulties in Wisconsin.

"One of the challenges has been districts began to develop inclusive classrooms so they went from one option of self-contained to all inclusive, but they still didn't have a range of options. They didn't really have good functional IEPs based on the child's needs," says Joslin.

Joslin insists that learning to write functional goals can help staff to better understand where an individual child's needs should be met. (See examples in box.) "Once they write more functional goals, it's really rewarding and it (the IEP) becomes a living document, not just a piece of paper that you put on a shelf."

Since Joslin and Albert started their work on creating preschool options in 1997, they have seen many programs make dramatic change. And they too have had their share of revelations along the way.

HIGH QUALITY IEP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ARE...

- Developed from a comprehensive assessment process
- Directly linked to intervention and ongoing evaluation
- Likely to contribute to
 - Individualization of services
 - Improved outcomes for young children

Pretti-frontczak, Bricker, 2000

EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONAL MEASUREABLE IEP GOALS

- While engaging in pretend play with at least one adult or child, Samuel will use both hands to play with toys for five minutes 9 out of 10 opportunities.
- When presented with a choice of two actions, objects, or toys, Susan will make a choice from a set of two or three options 4 of 5 opportunities (may use vocalization or an augmentative switch activated device.)

For examples of other functional Birth to 3 outcomes, log on to www.waisman.wisc.edu/birthto3/

are like children's brains. We've built these straight pathways and we've dug ourselves into a rut. It's difficult to change."



Devin Maier (3), is from Thorp, Wisconsin.

(continued on page 8)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Understanding The Budget Process

By Lisa Pugh, WPDP

Wisconsin's two-year budget cycle means funding decisions for 2005-07 that directly affect children with disabilities are being made as early as January. State agencies have already submitted their budgets with a mandatory zero percent increase and in February, the governor is expected to provide his budget priorities to the legislature's Joint Finance Committee.

Also in 2005, the federal budget process begins early in the next session of Congress. It could be the first step toward changes to programs such as Social Security, child care, Head Start, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families - TANF, Medicaid, and others.

Federal dollars supporting Wisconsin's Birth to 3 Program for 2005 have been cut due to a formula based on census figures and Wisconsin's slower growth compared to other states. However, the Department of Health and Family Services reports this should not affect counties directly in 2005 since other funds will fill the gap. The state does expect a further reduction (.8 percent) in federal Birth to 3 funds for calendar year 2006.

To better understand the budget process and opportunities to advocate for children with disabilities, check out these resources:

Disability Advocates of Wisconsin Network (DAWN)

Overview of the budget process: www.dawninfo.org/advocacy/budget/2005_2007_budget.cfm

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (WCCF)

New WCCF Report, "Connecting the Dots," shows links between federal policies and state fiscal strain, October 6, 2004.

The Wisconsin Legislature plans early this year to consider a Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) – an amendment to the state constitution that would significantly change the way state government raises and spends public money. For more information on TABOR as it relates to children with disabilities, log on to:

DAWN: www.dawninfo.org/advocacy/leg/tabor_info.cfm

WCCF : www.wccf.org/whatsnew/tabor_testimony.htm

More Advocacy Information

Several Wisconsin organizations that serve children with disabilities provide

regular legislative updates by e-mail and give suggestions on how to get involved in the political process. For more information, check out:

Wisconsin Early Childhood

Association: www.wecanaeyc.org/advocates.asp

The WECA Advocates in Action E-News Network is a communication tool for child care advocates who are prepared to take action on behalf of children and families, the child care workforce, and the profession as a whole. To join, send your email address to actionnetwork@wecanaeyc.org. The e-newsletter is sent out whenever there is a need to call the network to action or to share important updates.

The DAWN Email Alert System:

www.dawninfo.org/ea

DAWN Email Alerts let people know about disability advocacy opportunities. These opportunities might include notices of public hearings, legislative debates, advocacy meetings, rallies, etc. DAWN alerts either provide information to the disability advocacy community by alerting members to new information on the website or the alerts ask members to take an advocacy action.

Professional Associations & Advocacy

Many professional associations submit position papers during budget years in order to help their constituents better understand public policy. Check with your organization to stay informed. Here are some helpful links:

- Division for Early Childhood (DEC) – www.dec-sped.org/publicpolicy.html
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW) – Advocacy - www.naswdc.org/advocacy/
- Wisconsin Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Association (WSHA) – Hot Topics - www.wisha.org/hot_topics.php
- Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Association (WOTA) – Legislative Action - www.wota.homestead.com/files/legislative_action.html
- Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association (WPTA) – Call to Action - [www.apta.org/bulletin?&id\[1\]=71647#80275](http://www.apta.org/bulletin?&id[1]=71647#80275)
- The Wisconsin Dietetic Association (WDA) – Update on Legislation - www.eatrightwisc.org/legislation/legislation.htm



During each budget year, advocates for people with disabilities gather at the capitol to ensure that the governor and legislators understand policies related to children, adults and families. This year's People Can't Wait Rally is scheduled for May 11, 2005.

Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

Federal law governing programs for children with disabilities will be changing, in some ways significantly, as early as July 2005. This change is due to the Reauthorization of IDEA – the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - which has implications for both Part C (Birth to 3) and Part B (including Early Childhood Special Education) services to children ages birth to 21.

Reauthorization of IDEA was completed and passed by Congress in late November 2004. The bill was signed by the President and will now be the new special education law in the country. Since its passage, advocates, professionals and administrators have been discussing its merits and drawbacks and determining what it will mean in the classroom and for infants and toddlers.

In the coming months, the Department of Education will develop regulations to further explain IDEA and clarify how it should be put into practice. For a brief summary of IDEA: www.dawninfo.org/advocacy/national_issues/idea_updates.cfm

IDEA Implications for Birth to 3

There are several changes to IDEA that affect Birth to 3 providers including a renewed focus on serving infants and toddlers who are homeless. Additionally, optometrists and ophthalmologists have been added to Birth to 3's list of providers. Also of interest, states are now given the option to serve children with disabilities in programs that continue through age 6.

IDEA also changes wording related to Birth to 3 eligibility. Since the beginning of IDEA, states have set their own eligibility criteria. (Wisconsin's eligibility is set at 25%.) The final IDEA language states that "A rigorous definition of the term developmental delay that will be used by the State in carrying out programs under this part in order to appropriately identify infants and toddlers with disabilities that are in need of services under this part."

The new regulations to be written by the Department of Education are expected to provide additional interpretation of this statement.

For a copy of IDEA Reauthorization in Part C, log on to: www.nectac.org/idea/idea2004.asp

Council for Exceptional Children Response to IDEA

The Council for Exceptional Children has been involved in the reauthorization of IDEA. Some of CEC's recommendations that were incorporated into the new law include:

- Ensuring students with disabilities are included in accountability systems.
- Reducing the special education paperwork burden by deleting short-term objectives and benchmarks from IEPs (except for students who take alternate assessments), initiating a 15-state paperwork demonstration project, and piloting the three-year IEP.
- Establishing methods to reduce the number of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are inappropriately placed in special education.
- Ensuring the discipline provisions for students with disabilities continue to protect the rights of these students to a free, appropriate public education.
- Providing funding for professional development for special educators.

For more information on the Council's reaction to this legislation, log on to: www.cec.sped.org/

Information on IDEA Reauthorization was compiled from the following sources: Disability Advocates of Wisconsin, The Council for Exceptional Children, CESA 7, and the National Early Childhood TA Center.

Other Agencies' Reactions to IDEA

In line with the CESA 7 Department of Special Education Legislative website's purpose (facilitating the exchange of legislative ideas among educators, parents and other special education stakeholders), the organization has compiled different agencies' perspectives on IDEA 2004, including those of:

- NSBA (National School Board Association)
- NAPAS (National Association of Protection & Advocacy Systems)
- CEC (Council for Exceptional Children)
- NASP (National Association of School Psychologists)
- NEA (National Education Association)

These are posted on the following site: www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/sped/issues-2003IDEA/legupdates1.htm

Opportunity for Public Comment on IDEA Regulations

The Secretary of Education is now soliciting recommendations from the public prior to developing the proposed regulations which will further explain the recently amended IDEA. You are asked to comment specifically about what is needed to clarify a provision in the new law or to facilitate its implementation.

Comments and recommendations should be received on or before February 28, 2005. Address all comments and recommendations to: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Potomac Center Plaza, Room 5126, Washington, DC 20202-2641. Or you may send your Internet comments to the following address: comments@ed.gov You must include the term "Comments on IDEA-2004" in the subject line of your electronic message. For further information, contact Troy R. Justesen at 202.245.7468.

Find more information at: www.regulations.gov/freddocs/04-28503.htm

Bringing a Medical Home to Children With Autism

Improving services through a medical home and enhancing early identification and intervention for children with developmental disabilities, specifically those with autism, is the focus of a new grant awarded to the Waisman Center at UW-Madison. The purpose of the four-year effort is to develop strategies that will demonstrate how the principles of the medical home can be applied. A medical home is not a building, but rather an approach to providing comprehensive primary care. A medical home is defined as primary care that is accessible, continuous, comprehensive, family centered, coordinated, compassionate, and culturally effective.

The project – the National Medical Home Autism Initiative - will be implemented in collaboration with many partners at the state and national level. Initial support for this project has been given by several Wisconsin partners including: Autism Society of Wisconsin, Family Voices of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics, WI Child Care Resource & Referral Network, WI Department of Health and Family Services, WI Department of Public Instruction, WI Early Intervention Program, Birth to 3, WI Head Start State Collaboration Project, WI Initiative for Infant Mental Health.

Christine Breunig, M.S., is the Project Coordinator for this new initiative. Prior to coming to the Waisman Center, Ms. Breunig spent four years as the Executive Director of Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc (child care resource and referral agency), 14 years in public school administration as a Principal and Community Education Director and four years as an elementary teacher.

For more information about the Medical Home Autism Initiative please contact Christine at 608.890.0145 or breunig@waisman.wisc.edu .

Birth to 3 ICC Provides Testimony on Autism

Wisconsin's Birth to 3 Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) has submitted comments regarding the Report of the Governor's Task Force on Autism. The ICC letter asked that the recommendations consider and continue to support the Guiding Principles of Wisconsin's Birth to 3 Program, emphasizing the important role of the service coordinator in assisting families and children to meet individualized outcomes, and the equitable distribution of funds regardless of diagnosis or disability. For more information on the ICC, log onto: b3icc.state.wi.us .

Birth to 3 Autism Workgroup Meets

Birth to 3 providers continue to problem-solve on how to best support children with autism in Wisconsin. A Birth to 3 Autism Workgroup facilitated by Donna Miller, Birth to 3 Program & Policy Specialist, has recently developed guidelines on how the Birth to 3 Program might interact with autism in-home services for children. Look for these guidelines to be released in coming months.

The workgroup's secondary focus involves considering the role of early intervention services for children with autism. They plan to focus on communication, social skills and engagement needs in the context of Birth to 3 guiding principles and current literature on the topic. The workgroup plans to release its recommendations this summer. For more information on this workgroup, contact Donna Miller at milledm@dhfs.state.us .

Governor to Respond to Task Force

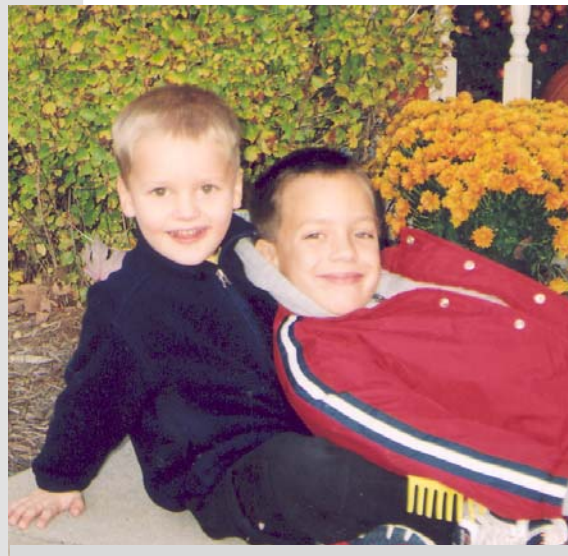
As of this writing, Governor Doyle has not made a directive to the Department of Health and Family Services regarding the recommendations issued by his State Task Force on Autism. Those recommendations could result in significant changes to the provision of autism services to young children. Families and providers participated in hearings on the issue in November. The full revised task force recommendations, now including testimony summary, is available at: dhfs.wisconsin.gov/bdds/autism/index.htm .

TODDLER TALK: Autism Research Project

Investigators from the Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison are currently seeking participants for a new research project examining early language and communication skills in the autism spectrum. The purpose of the Toddler Talk project is to characterize language development in young children, including those who are slow to begin to talk and those with autism spectrum features. These findings will have important implications for early differential diagnosis and designing more effective language intervention programs.

Toddlers (under 3 years) with suspected or confirmed autism spectrum features, who are native English speakers, are invited to participate. Toddlers who have no spoken words are being recruited, as well as those who have already started talking.

Children are scheduled for participation in the three phases of the study at the family's convenience. Families receive up to \$140 compensation for their time, depending on the amount of participation. Childcare during the sessions for participants' siblings is available. If you know of a family who is interested in participating, please contact the project coordinator, Chris Hollar, by phone at 608.263.3123 or via email at chollar@wisc.edu for more details.



Michael (5) who has Autism, and Matthew Robbins are from Appleton.

Wisconsin Birth to 3 ICC Recommendations to DHFS

An important role of the Birth to 3 Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) is to advise the Department of Health and Family Services in implementing Wisconsin's Birth to 3 Program, to answer the question, "How are we doing?" and to represent the positive work being done in local programs. To accomplish these goals, the ICC prepared a comprehensive annual report of the status of the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Outcomes for 2002 and 2003. The ICC Quality Assurance workgroup, chaired by Julia Herwig, and supported by State Birth to 3 staff, gathered and examined multiple data sources to support the program outcomes. The following recommendations were carefully crafted to continue to strengthen the Birth to 3 Program and assure that all young children and their families receive high quality services and supports. Furthermore, the ICC intends to track strategies implemented to address these recommendations and re-evaluate progress toward meeting program outcomes. Concurrently, the Department is reviewing and responding to these recommendations.

From the Interagency Coordinating Council's (ICC) Annual Report Issued August 2004

- The Birth to 3 Program should study the factors related to ages at referral, promote increased linkages with Neonatal Intensive Care Units, and increase outreach to physicians and clinics.
- The Department should study enrollment and staffing patterns in Birth to 3 programs to determine whether there is decreased utilization of services without insurance reimbursement, such as special instruction, and a concurrent increase in insurance and Medicaid billable services.
- The Department, in cooperation with other early childhood programs, should provide technical assistance to local Birth to 3 programs to promote participation in community capacity-building activities so that community programs and services can accommodate young children with developmental delays.
- Birth to 3 programs should increase participation in community capacity-building activities so that community programs and services can accommodate young children with developmental delays.
- State Birth to 3 staff should gather more accurate data regarding utilization of private insurance to support early intervention services. The State Birth to 3 staff should review billing history in counties and providers to determine if programs are billing for all possible reimbursement of covered services.
- DHFS should:
 - 1) insure that providers are well trained through both preservice and inservice efforts.
 - 2) through the training and technical assistance contracted agencies, develop a system for license renewal for staff holding licenses through the Department of Public Instruction.
- The state Birth to 3 Program staff and Birth to 3 programs should continue to emphasize transition planning as a required component of service coordination services for all families. Transition discussions and/or planning should begin soon after the child's enrollment in the program.

Birth to 3 Wisline Schedule

Informational Birth to 3 teleconferences are held monthly. Call in to participate from 1:00 – 2:30. For More Information log on to: dhfs.wisconsin.gov/bdds/b3etn or contact Jean Nothnagel at 608.266.5442 or nothnjl@dhfs.state.wi.us

- January 20: "Expanding Your Knowledge of Resources for Families"
- February 10: Topic T.B.D.
- March 10: Topic T.B.D.
- April: No Wisline

April Regional Meetings

- April 5 Southeast Region, Milwaukee Center for Independence
- April 6 Northeast Region, Appleton
- April 7 Southern Region, Juneau-Dodge County DHS
- April 12 Northern Region, Tomahawk-CESA offices
- April 13 Western Region

Birth to 3 ICC Meetings

- February 17 Stevens Point
- April 29 Circles of Life Conference, Madison

County Highlights

New, innovative ideas that result in better service to families, cost savings and efficiency are continuing to be developed by Wisconsin counties. Often, these great ideas go unrecognized and are not shared among colleagues. In Birth to 3 EVENTS, we would like to introduce a regular feature – County Highlights – to accomplish this purpose. Please consider submitting your own ideas to benefit others in the Birth to 3 field by e-mailing pugh@waisman.wisc.edu.

Sharing from Crawford County

by Meredith Green, Birth to 3 RESource

Crawford is a very rural county in the southwest corner of the state. One of the things that is working very well for their county is the contract they have with the local hospital to access the full therapy staff for evaluations and for services. This has allowed them to schedule evaluations promptly, which in turn speeds up the initial IFSP process. Therapists that are serving Birth to 3 meet weekly and see each other informally between visits so information is readily exchanged. The hospital also has several therapy assistants (i.e. OTA, PTA) on staff and these professionals are also seeing families, with required supervision. For more information contact Deb Check, Program Coordinator, at 608.326.0248 or dcheck@mhtc.net.

RESOURCES

Your Child:

www.med.umich.edu/1libr/yourchild/

The first website to guide parents through the tangle of Internet information on kids' development and behavior. Information and links are based on current research and expert opinion.

Genetic Alliance - NCHPEG Survey:

www.nchpeg.org/SFGC_Survey/Survey.asp

The Genetic Alliance is requesting the help of families of children with genetic disorders. As consumers, families often have concerns about what providers know (and don't know) about genetics, but often don't have a chance to describe what they think providers need to learn. This survey gives families an opportunity to be heard by an organization that teaches health care providers about genetics, the National Coalition for Health Professional Education in Genetics (NCHPEG).

P.L.A.Y. Project

www.playproject.org

Waukesha County's Lutheran Social Services recently hosted a training by Dr. Richard Solomon highlighting the Play and Language For Autistic Youngsters (P.L.A.Y.) Project as a successful intervention model for children. LSS is currently preparing a pilot project under Dr. Solomon's supervision to provide this Developmental, Individualized and Relationship-based model of service to families. The P.L.A.Y. Project CD-Rom is now available for checkout from the Wisconsin Personnel Development Project - contact Mary Shaw at 608.265.9852 or shaw@waisman.wisc.edu or log onto www.waisman.wisc.edu/cedd/library/. For more information on Waukesha County's P.L.A.Y. intervention, contact Terri Enters at 262.567.4177 or tenters@lsswis.org.

First Signs

www.firstsigns.org

First Signs, Inc. is a national non-profit organization dedicated to educating parents and pediatric professionals about the early warning signs of autism and other developmental disorders. The First Signs screening kit (video and screening tools) is currently available for loan from the Wisconsin Personnel Development Project - contact Mary Shaw at 608.265.9852 or shaw@waisman.wisc.edu or log onto www.waisman.wisc.edu/cedd/library/.

Wisconsin's Parent Consultant Directory is Now Available!

Families with children with special needs provide unique and valuable insight into caring for and supporting their children. The Parent Consultant Directory, a project funded by the Wisconsin State Improvement Grant, is a resource that helps share the unique perspectives of these families by bringing parents into a classroom or professional development setting to tell their family stories. The directory includes a brief introduction to each family, the region in which they live, and contact information. Faculty members and other professionals are encouraged to use the directory to contact families and spread the "family perspective". For more information or to order a directory copy, contact Lynn Havemann at 608.263.5947 or havemann@waisman.wisc.edu or check out our emerging website at www.waisman.wisc.edu/SIG/.

WSB Mini-Grant Awards

Congratulations to these counties for writing successful Wisconsin Sound Beginnings Birth to 3 Mini-Grants: Eau Claire & Chippewa (collaborative), LaCrosse, Langlade, Marathon, Portage, and Sauk. Each application included unique ways to build the community's capacity to serve infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. Projects ranged from the development of resource libraries for families, preschools, and other community members, to the purchasing of equipment (e.g., a digital camera to prepare communication booklets about the family, FM units), to training and networking within the county. Sally-Ann Anderson, DPI Deaf/Hard of Hearing Birth to 6 Services Coordinator and other members of the Sound Beginnings team will provide technical assistance to each county in carrying out their projects. We look forward to learning about the outcomes of these projects in 2005. For more information, contact Sally at sally.anderson@dpi.state.wi.us or 608.266.7032.

Early Childhood

(continued from page 3)

"You can stand up there and lecture someone and all that happens is they come back with the 'ya buts.' But when you work with them in their community and they face their own barriers, they begin to dismantle them," says Joslin.

In response to this realization, Joslin and Albert have taken their show on the road and moved from presentations to a technical assistance format. *Preschool Options* staff now make personal visits to districts to facilitate discussion, problem-solve and help implement a range of service options for young children with disabilities. Joslin says this type of roll-up-your-sleeves work has helped significantly.

"In an ideal world, you would need to have staff willing and available to work in community settings as well as public school settings. And not just willing, but excited to work with community partners."

Research also endorses the notion that community collaboration is the key to inclusive preschool option success. Joslin has seen successful collaboration begin with the simple sharing of phone numbers.

"That's when really powerful change happens - when you're working with all the staff in a community, working with families and parent educators, Head Start and all your community partners to make change that meets the needs of the families and children in that community."

*You can contact Mary Joslin at CESA 10 at 715.720.2158 or mjoslin@cesa10.k12.wi.us. Check out the *Preschool Options* website at www.preschooloptions.org.*

**For the Latest
Birth to 3 Information**

Log on to

**The Waisman Center
Birth to 3 Training and
Technical Assistance website:**

www.waisman.wisc.edu/birthto3/

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thanks to Amy



December marked change in Wisconsin's Northeastern Birth to 3 region. Amy Wilson, Birth to 3 REsource facilitator and former service coordinator with Fond du Lac County's Birth to 3 program, has left the program due to a family move to Eau Claire. Amy has made a tremendous contribution to the Birth to 3 system in that region and has become a trusted resource to many. Thank you, Amy, for your time. We will be watching for how you continue to be involved from the Northwest corner of the state.

DEC Recognizes Sheila Behrendt

By Marianne Daw

On Sunday, December 5, 2004, Sheila Behrendt, of Prescott, Wisconsin, was the recipient of the Rose C. Engel Award at the International Division for Early Childhood Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and their Families held at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, in Chicago. The Rose C. Engel Award for Excellence in Professional Practice is given to a DEC member who is a practicing professional and whose primary role is serving young children with special needs and their families. This special award is given to honor Rose Engel whose leadership was instrumental in forming DEC. Rose was the first president of DEC and was a true believer in inclusive services for children with special needs. Nominees for the Rose C. Engel Award are expected to meet the high standards of professional practice set by Rose.



Sheila being presented the award by Laurie Dinnebeil, College of Education, University of Toledo, DEC Awards Chairperson.

Sheila's nomination left no doubt to the selection committee that she meets the high standards of professional practice set by Rose Engel. Sheila has been an Early Childhood Special Education teacher for 29 years and still approaches her job and children and families with enthusiasm and a fresh perspective daily. Her classrooms are always stimulating, fun learning environments where children benefit from positive interactions and support from skilled adults and where positive results are achieved. For years Sheila worked very hard to come up with inclusive settings for her children. Her successful solution has been to provide a reverse mainstream environment for her afternoon children by having families pay tuition to attend her class and then use that tuition to buy slots in a local high quality preschool at the local university for her morning group.

Sheila has been co-teaching in a high quality, inclusive preschool program with Angela Kaiser, Director of the University Preschool, for fifteen years. The initiative that Sheila demonstrates in the field of Early Childhood Special Education, especially in the area of inclusion, goes far beyond the walls of the university preschool program. The University of Wisconsin-River Falls also benefits from her expertise as a lecturer in the Department of Education. She is truly viewed as the "local expert" in her field and works with Birth to 3 programs and local child care centers as well. Sheila wrote and facilitates the Annual State Preschool Discretionary Grants and State Improvement Grants for 2003-04 and 2004-05. The monies from the grants are used for projects that benefit inclusive programming such as teaching others the benefits of

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DPI's Peters Picked for Child Abuse Prevention Leadership Program



Mary Peters, early childhood special education consultant with the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) Special Education Team, has

been selected to participate in the 2005 Supporting Teachers, Strengthening Families national leadership program of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Peters is one of 24 participants nationwide who will be working to prevent child abuse and neglect through activities to coordinate efforts of the early education and care system and disseminate resources and information to promote healthy social and emotional development of young children.

Peters coordinates IDEA preschool discretionary grant projects and provides training and technical assistance on service delivery models for young children with disabilities, the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, and several state conferences. She is a founding NAEYC local affiliate member and past president of the Wisconsin Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. Peters has been a classroom teacher in general and special education for 22 years and has served as a classroom teacher, program support teacher, adjunct faculty, and past board president of Family Resources in La Crosse.

For more information on this NAEYC initiative, log on to: www.naeyc.org/ece/supporting.asp.

Early Childhood Courses Available

Interested in expanding your knowledge base about working with young children with disabilities and their families? Maybe you would like to...

- learn more about best/evidence-based practices for application to your work,
- gain information for application to your child and family,
- take a few classes without enrolling in a degree program,
- increase career options beyond those offered on your own campus, or
- learn more about entering a Master's degree program.

If so, check out a complete list of early childhood special education courses being offered statewide either on-line or campus-based.

www.waisman.wisc.edu/cedd/SIG/ECC_Intro.html

Higher education faculty in Wisconsin are also responding to a mini-grant opportunity to promote collaborative early childhood professional development. General questions may be directed to Linda Tuchman, Program Director, Waisman Center Early Intervention Program, at tuchman@waisman.wisc.edu or 608.263.6467.

Social Emotional Development Course Offered in Wisconsin

The Waisman Center, in collaboration with numerous state partners, will sponsor a course this summer entitled *Social Emotional Development in Children Ages Birth to 6: Nurturing Relationships and Recognizing Concerns and Boundaries*.

This regional early childhood video conference, supplemented with on-line learning experiences, will cover content on nurturing healthy social emotional development in all infants and young children through relationship-based approaches to intervention, recognizing early signs of behavioral and emotional disturbances in young children, understanding professional roles and boundaries, and learning how to access additional resources and supports for treatment. Practical applications will be supported by presentation and discussion of theory and research (e.g., attachment, brain development, family support, mental health).

The course is being co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Personnel Development Project, Birth to 3 REsource, the DPI State Improvement Grant (SIG), WI Infant Mental Health Initiative and the UW-Madison Dept. of Psychiatry. It will be held this summer and will offer two University of Wisconsin-Madison course credits through the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. (Course 501 as listed in the UW-Madison Summer school timetable). Specific dates will be announced soon. For additional information contact: Lynn Havemann at havemann@waisman.wisc.edu, 608-263-5947.

Social Emotional Training Offered

The Center for Social Emotional Foundations for Learning from the University of Illinois will offer a learning track at the National Head Start conference in February. This track will focus on enhancing and supporting the social emotional development of children through classroom practices and help professionals promote the social and emotional development of children as a means of preventing challenging behaviors. You can find the full conference brochure on the Wisconsin Head Start Association (WHSA) website - www.whsaonline.org.

Orientation to Best Practices in Birth to 3-Southeast

Thursday, January 27, 2005
Olympia Resort & Conference Center
in Oconomowoc
Orientation Flyer
Orientation Registration Form
Parent Invitation
Parent Invitation in Spanish

Orientation to Best Practices in Birth to 3-Northern

Wednesday, May 11, 2005
Best Western Midway Hotel in
Wausau
Registration Materials Coming Soon

Behrendt

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inclusion, including childcare providers, parents of young children, professors and students. Angela says, "A more passionate and dedicated teacher of young children would be hard to find. Her professionalism, commitment and determination toward on-going education in inclusive programs are hard to match."

Barb Wolfe, Ph.D. ECSE Program Coordinator at the University of St. Thomas states, "I cannot imagine a person who more closely reflects the criteria set out in this distinguished award." Barb has known Sheila for twelve years and Sheila has served as a supervising teacher/mentor for dozens of undergraduate and graduate students in teacher training programs. Sheila willingly accepts student teachers and practicum students and provides excellent modeling, mentoring and support while maintaining rigorous standards for these teachers in training. Barb states, "Sheila has helped turn out some of the best practicing professionals I know."

Sheila is currently serving as a liaison between programs in an innovative cross-university effort that will allow students enrolled in two separate universities to earn a combined EC/ECSE license. Sheila is a member of NAEYC, CEC, and WDEC. She was president of WDEC 2000-2001 and continues to serve as an executive board member. She was chosen as Teacher of the Year by the WDEC in 1998 and the Outstanding Cooperating Teacher in Early Childhood from UW-River Falls in 2000. She attends a variety of early childhood conferences and presents at many as well.

WDEC President Marianne Daw was also a student teacher of Sheila's. Marianne shares, "The opportunity to learn from Sheila is one that has been never-ending for me as we continue our professional and personal friendship. The WDEC is very proud of Sheila and congratulates her on this much deserved award." A number of Sheila's colleagues were able to be with her at the awards ceremony, as well as her daughter, Kelly Behrendt, a school psychologist in Minnesota. While the field of ECSE has benefited greatly from her work, more importantly, the children and families she serves have benefited from her distinguished career.

Orientation to Mentoring:

For Early Childhood/ Special Education & Care Professionals

This training opportunity is sponsored by: Cooperative Educational Service Agency #8 and funded by a Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Preschool Discretionary Grant.

Spring 9-week online course/training session: February 7th - April 8th, 2005

Course Description: This is foundation training for the professional educator wishing to mentor the initial educator. This training will support mentors in their important role of working with beginning teachers. The purpose of this course is to define mentoring roles and responsibilities, establish an effective mentor relationship, identify the initial educator's needs and support

strategies, facilitate learning-focused communication and interactions, utilize reflective practices, and coach the initial educator in supporting families with young children in natural settings. This course includes an overview of Wisconsin's teacher licensure rules (PI34), Professional Development Plans, and the Wisconsin 10 Teacher Standards. Cooperating teachers working with student teachers would also find this training very valuable!

Who is eligible to take this course/training?

Teachers/service providers who hold a WI Department of Public Instruction license with a minimum of three years

(past or current) experience working in the field of Early Childhood Care and Education, such as Birth to 3 Early Intervention, Head Start, Child Care, Early Childhood Special Education and 4-5 year old Kindergarten.

For questions contact: Nancy Pfankuch at npfankuch@wi.rr.com, 920-893-9592.

To view the course online – contact: Jayne Baumgart at jbaumgart@new.rr.com, 920-434-9162.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Circles of Life

Wisconsin's Annual Conference for Families of Children with Disabilities



Circles of Life 2005

The 2005 Circles of Life Conference

www.wfv.org/circle/2005index

April 28 & 29, 2005
Madison Marriott West

This conference is for families who have children with disabilities and the professionals who support and provide service for them. Parents and professionals will be representing their own perspectives, sharing experiences and approaches they have found helpful.

The 2005 OSEP National Early Childhood Conference



Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
Washington, DC

www.nectas.unc.edu/~meetings/national2005/splash

February 7-9, 2005

Optional Pre-Conference Meetings: February 5 and 6, 2005
Post-Conference Meeting: February 9, 2005

Mark your calendars: February 15-17, 2005 for the...

Wisconsin Head Start Association 3rd Annual Training Conference "Celebrating the Spirit of Head Start"



Kalahari Resort Convention Center
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

www.whsaonline.org/WHSA2005ConfRegBklt.pdf

For a Complete List of Professional Development Events

Log on to

The Waisman Center

Community Training calendar:

www.waisman.wisc.edu/cte/

JOB POSTINGS

Occupational Therapist

Marathon County Birth to Three is seeking a Pediatric Occupational Therapist with sensory integration experience. We offer: competitive salary; benefits; team-based, family focused environment. Please call: Deborah Miller, Director Marathon County Birth to Three/Rehab Services, Tel: 715.848.4583. E-Mail: dmiller@norcen.org

Speech Language Pathologist

North Eastern Wisconsin Rehabilitation Corporation is seeking a Speech Language Pathologist for a full-time position in Waupaca County.

We are looking for a strong candidate who is able to work closely with team- members, family and community members to provide comprehensive team based interventions. Benefits include flexible

hours, paid time off, retirement, continuing education, medical, dental, short-term disability and life insurance.

Qualifications: Must have license to practice Speech Language Pathology from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing and ASHA Certification. Eligible for Wisconsin Medicaid Certification. Please fax, email or send resume to N.E.W. REHAB Company, 307 Smith Street, New London, WI 54961; Fax: 920-982-0444; Phone 920.982.5440; email: newrehab@athenet.net Attn: Becky Parker.

Speech Language Pathologist

Cooperative Educational Service Agency #12 is seeking a Wisconsin licensed Speech and Language Pathologist with their Certificate of

Clinical Competence (CCC) to work in Ashland and Bayfield County with children and families who participate in the Birth to 3 Program. Send a letter of interest, resume and credential file to Gail Syverud, Birth to 3 Coordinator, CESA #12, 618 Beaser Avenue, Ashland, WI 54806.

Occupational Therapist

Cooperative Educational Service Agency #12 is seeking an Occupational Therapist to work in Ashland and Bayfield County with children and families who participate in the Birth to 3 Program. Send a letter of interest, resume and credential file to Gail Syverud, Birth to 3 Coordinator, CESA #12, 618 Beaser Avenue, Ashland, WI 54806. CESA #12 is an Equal Opportunity Employer and will make reasonable accommodations for applicants.

Birth to 6 EVENTS

Wisconsin Personnel Development Project

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For additional information, call 608-263-5022, 1-800-532-3321, or email sankey@waisman.wisc.edu
Deadline for submissions to next EVENTS: May 2, 2005.

WPDP website: www.waisman.wisc.edu/birthto3/