

# OFFICE OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

## Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia

### Technical Assistance



October 2007

#### INDEX OF FEATURES

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Revisions .....	1
The Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives .....	1
Infant and Child Mental Health.....	2
Solutions, Inc. Update.....	3
Infants and Toddlers with Hearing Loss.....	4
Integrated Training Collaborative .....	5
News From the Field.....	6
Conferences, Trainings, or Workshops.....	6
T/TAC Online.....	7
Resources .....	8

#### Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Revisions

(Contact Person: Kyla Patterson)

Eleven pilot sites are using the revised IFSP form and instructions for all initial and annual IFSPs developed during October. Pilot sites will provide input to the IFSP Stakeholder Group and the Part C staff on recommended adjustments to the form and/or instructions and will continue using the new IFSP form following the pilot period. Statewide implementation of the new IFSP form will occur as soon as possible following the pilot period and is targeted to begin no later than January 2, 2008.

Note: The Targeted Case Management (TCM) version of the IFSP has been reviewed by DMHMRSAS staff, including Licensure, but is still awaiting final approval by the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS). Therefore, this version of the IFSP is not

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being piloted at this time. Since there are few differences between the TCM version and the regular IFSP form, we still anticipate beginning statewide implementation of both forms at the same time.

#### The Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives

(Contact Person: Mary Ann Discenza)

Governor Kaine established the Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives to coordinate executive branch efforts on early childhood programs and strengthen public and private programs. The working group, chaired by the Secretary of Education, brings together high-level staff from cabinet offices and state agencies in the areas of Education, Health and Human Resources, Economic Development, Finance and Policy.

<http://www.education.virginia.gov/Initiatives/EarlyChildhood/GovWorkingGroup.cfm>

## **Infant and Child Mental Health (Contact: Bonnie Grifa)**

A statewide stakeholder committee has been developed to address infant and child mental health in Virginia for children birth through five years of age. The committee began as a sub-committee of the Virginia Head Start Collaboration Project and now, in partnership with the Office of Child and Family Services of the DMHMRSAS, has been charged with addressing Goal 4B (2) of “Virginia’s Plan for Smart Beginnings.” Goal 4B of this statewide strategic plan addresses social-emotional development and atypical social-emotional-behavioral development and access to behavioral health services for families and children in need of supports and services in this area.

The statewide stakeholder committee includes representatives from Health and Mental Health Administration including two pediatric psychiatrists, 4 psychologists, 1 pediatrician and 2 social workers. In addition, representatives from Child Care services (Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Daycare Director, Family Daycare Director and DMAS); Part C (TA Consultant, Local System Manager, State Coordinator and Monitor); Virginia Department of Health (Director for Early Childhood Health, Resource Mothers, Policy Analyst and Office of Minority Health); Head Start (2 Directors, Disabilities Specialist, Technical Assistance Specialist and President of HS Association); Virginia Department of Education (T-TAC Administrator, Preschool Psychologist, Special Education Specialist and Psychologist); Virginia Department of Social Services (CPS Specialist, Childcare & Development Director, Foster Care Specialist and Head Start Collaboration Project Director); 4 Parents including the Family Involvement Project Manager, Universities (JMU, VCU and UVA); Community Services Boards (Blue Ridge, Wise County, Mount Rogers and Chesterfield); the Partnership for Persons with Disabilities; Virginia Autism Resource Center; and a private Consultant are part of the committee.

The committee has approved the formation of five work groups to address Professional Development and Parent Education, Service Delivery/Practice, Policy, Systems Collaboration and Public Awareness. Each committee member serves on one of the five work groups, which is most closely associated with their education and experience.

The Policy Work Group is charged with addressing the laws, regulations and financing governing prenatal and early childhood services that respond to the unique developmental needs of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families. This also includes recommending options for how data can be readily available and used to identify the need and demonstrate the effectiveness of prevention and intervention programs.

The Professional Development and Parent Education Work Group will look at having a skilled and trained workforce of early childhood and mental health professionals; and parents who are comfortable and competent in meeting the needs of their child. This work group will consider training, resources, parent support, provider support and connecting with Universities including research and development of the workforce.

The Service Delivery/Practice Work Group will look at the various early childhood systems that offer mental health services; promotion of mental wellness, prevention of potential problems in children growing up in “risky” environments and treatment of children that are exhibiting mental health problems. This group will make recommendations for a model and implementation that includes best practices, evidence-based methodologies and culturally competent standards of care.

The Systems Collaboration Work Group is charged with looking at the ability of existing early childhood service systems to collaborate and work together to address structural, administrative barriers that have historically made it difficult for young children and families to receive the full range of mental health services and supports. This work group will evaluate existing coordination with other initiatives, provider capacity, what agency could serve as a central point of entry, development of “communities of practice”, access to appropriate services that are coordinated with the medical home, linkages with home visiting programs and interface with professional boards.

The final work group is Public Awareness, which will address how to make the general public aware of young children’s mental health, the relevance of the issue and the ways that the public can support it. This group will make recommendations for the availability and distribution of public awareness materials.

A consultant funded by the Head Start Collaboration Project has been hired to develop a State-by-State comparison of existing infant and child mental health systems and to report this information to the committee at the December meeting. This information will be used to guide the work of the committee.

States were invited to participate in a new early childhood professional development opportunity, which will provide training and technical assistance to a set of selected states and designed to support the social and emotional development of children birth through five. The grant is funded by the Office of Head Start and the Child Care Bureau, the Administration for Children and Families and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and provided by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. An application was submitted on behalf of Virginia and the Infant and Child Mental Health Committee on October 12th.

The Head Start Collaboration Project has funded the purchase of the DC:0-3R manual for each member of the committee as a guide for our work. It stands for the Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood, Revised Edition. It is a “developmentally based classification system for mental health and developmental disorders of infancy and early childhood”. Per Zero to Three, “it is a good diagnostic classification system that provides a common language in which clinicians, researchers, family members and health care policy makers can communicate”. Zero to Three is willing to provide technical assistance to the committee once our needs have been defined.

Bonnie Grifa, Part C Monitoring Consultant, serves as the facilitator of the committee and lead on this project. The Part C Local System Manager representative on the committee is Nancy Bailey. If you have any questions or would like to provide input to the committee, you can contact Nancy at (276)-523-8378 or email her at [Nbailey@frontierhealth.org](mailto:Nbailey@frontierhealth.org) or Bonnie at (804)-786-4301 or email her at [bonita.grifa@co.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov](mailto:bonita.grifa@co.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov)

Look for additional information in future Part C Updates!

## **Solutions, Inc. Update**

### **Service Coordination and Provider Qualifications**

The Service Coordination and Provider Qualifications worksheets are coming in. A total of 22 responses have been received. These responses will be collapsed for the Medicaid Stakeholder Group to review before the next meeting. Some private agency providers are included in the total response group.

### **Concept Paper Update**

Sue Mackey Andrews has completed considerable research about the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) regulations and is modifying the concept paper in collaboration with the Department of Medical Assistance Services and DMHMRSAS. The outcome remains essentially the same as services are still proposed through EPSDT, with the same configuration as originally proposed. What has changed is that the approach to increasing the FPL participation is now proposed through implementation of the Family Opportunity Act (FOA) which permits families of children with disabilities to purchase Medicaid coverage. This new configuration will be sent once the next iteration is finished.

### **ITOTS**

Sue Mackey Andrews has participated on at least one stakeholder call related to ITOTS and has also met with David Mills about the ITOTS system in general. The evaluation of the system is continuing with the assistance of Karleen Goldhammer.

### **Rates and Reimbursement Survey**

This Survey has being distributed to all Local Lead Agencies with a return date of 10/31. Information will be consolidated and presented to the Medicaid Stakeholder Group in November.

### **Identification of Medicaid State Match**

In reviewing the ITOTS data, it was determined that there were considerable problems with the Medicaid numbers recorded for individual children. With the plan being to do a data swap with DMAS, which we believe will help to identify state match currently in the system, it is imperative that these data are accurate. A memo has been sent to the field about this with instructions and a timeline for completion.

## **Family Cost Participation/Family Involvement Project Survey**

A Family Survey has been designed and distributed through The Arc of Virginia, Family Involvement Project. The purpose of the survey is to gather information related to families' experiences in early intervention including family costs. The survey has been mailed to all families receiving early intervention services at the last December 1 count. The survey will also be made available to list serves, parents in the communities, and to those early intervention families attending the "Circle of Support" Conference on Nov. 3rd.

### **Fiscal Study Update:**

#### IFSP Collection is Complete

The original selection process included 250 children. Information was received on about 230 children. The service providers for these children were then asked to participate in an Encounter survey. The quality of the information received looks quite good.

#### Encounter Survey is Underway

About 280 practitioners identified in the IFSP collection process were asked to look at services retrospectively for the month of September if the data exists or prospectively for three weeks in October if the data did not exist. Data is currently being received and data entry will begin October 19, 2007. This provides a) actual direct service information for children, b) the relationship between total work time and direct service, c) travel time, and d) service coordination time.

#### Salary Survey is Underway

Employers were asked to provide compensation information for those practitioners identified through the IFSP data collection process. Data is due October 31, 2007.

Rate Survey is Underway with all Local Lead Agencies and data is due October 31, 2007.

The Revenue Survey has not been distributed. The target distribution date is November 1, 2007.

### **ITOTs Data Analysis:**

A full data extract has been done and the files received by the Consultants. Evaluation of existing data and structures is currently underway.

## **Infants and Toddlers with Hearing Loss (Contact Person: Beth Tolley)**

All children with hearing loss are eligible for Part C early intervention by virtue of the diagnosed condition. Please refer to the document Early Intervention for

Infants and Toddlers with Hearing Loss and Their Families, <http://www.infantva.org/documents/pr-HearingFactSheetReference2007.pdf>, for information.

- Parental permission is not required to refer a child to Part C.
- Local Part C Systems must accept referrals from any referral source.
- Part C Service Coordinators should routinely obtain permission to communicate with the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (EDHI) Follow Up Coordinator from families whose children have hearing loss.

## **Joint Commission on Infant Hearing Position Statement**

The Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) endorses early detection of and intervention for infants with hearing loss. The goal of early hearing detection and intervention (EHDI) is to maximize linguistic competence and literacy development for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Without appropriate opportunities to learn language, these children will fall behind their hearing peers in communication, cognition, reading, and social-emotional development. Such delays may result in lower educational and employment levels in adulthood (Holden & Diaz, 1998). To maximize the outcome for infants who are deaf or hard of hearing, the hearing of all infants should be screened no later than 1 month of age. Those not passing screening should have a comprehensive audiologic evaluation no later than 3 months of age. Infants with confirmed hearing loss should receive appropriate intervention no later than 6 months of age from health care and education professionals with expertise in hearing loss and deafness in infants and young children. Regardless of previous hearing-screening outcomes, all infants with or without risk factors should receive ongoing surveillance of communicative development beginning at 2 months of age during well-child visits in the medical home (American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP] Medical Home Initiatives, 2002). EHDI systems should guarantee seamless transitions for infants and their families through this process.

## **Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) Medical Formula Policy Update**

The Durable Medical Equipment (DME) manual has been updated to include the coverage of medically necessary formula and nutritional supplements because of Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment

(EPSDT) policy requirements. For full coverage criteria please refer to the DME manual in chapter 4 of that manual.

[http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/downloads/pdfs/mm-DME\\_Chgs\\_Upds.pdf](http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/downloads/pdfs/mm-DME_Chgs_Upds.pdf)

### **Integrated Training Collaborative (Contact Person: Cori Hill)**

Communities of Practice in Autism (CoPA) Training  
The Integrated Training Collaborative (ITC) in collaboration with DMHMRSAS, Part C and the Virginia Department of Education's Special Education Instructional Services sponsored a Communities of Practice in Autism (CoPA) training on September 24th, 2007 at the Omni Charlottesville Hotel. This advanced level training focused on strategies to support families with young children, birth to four years of age, with Autism Spectrum Disorders in natural environments. Dr. Maureen Conroy from VCU and Dr. Brian Boyd were the featured speakers. Approximately 220 early interventionists, early childhood educators and family members participated in the training.

Following the conference, Communities of Practice in Autism (CoPA) regional leaders were trained to lead Communities of Practice in their regions. The CoPA leaders developed a mission statement, identified first year outcomes, and made plans for the nine regional meetings. The first meeting in each region should be scheduled by early November.

The CoPA leaders and their regions are:

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### **Kaleidoscope, New Perspectives in Service Coordination**

The first Kaleidoscope I (KI) for this contract year was held in Danville on October 3rd and October 4th at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research. Nineteen service coordinators participated. The third day of the training will be held on November 8th.

The second KI for this contract year will be held on January 17, 18, and February 11, 2008 at the Hampton Healthy Families Partnership building in Hampton. Contact Cori Hill at (540) 943-6776 or [corihill@ntelos.net](mailto:corihill@ntelos.net) to register or visit the Integrated Training Collaborative website and click on the KI icon for further details.

### **Local System Managers' Training**

A Local System Managers' Training was held on October 16th and October 17th at the Verona Government Center. The ITC would like to thank the Part C staff and all of the Local System Managers who assisted with the planning and training for making this event a success.

### **Integrated Training Collaborative Website**

Members of the field are encouraged to utilize the ITC website to search for valuable information such as postings for the next available Kaleidoscope training, brochures, registration forms, agendas, etc. Each of these training events has a logo and information is posted and updated as soon as the information is available. The ITC website is available by going to [www.infantva.org](http://www.infantva.org) then to "Information for Providers"

then going to the link for the Integrated Training Collaborative.

### **The 6th Annual Creating Connections Conference**

Plans are underway for the 6th Annual Creating Connections Conference, which will be held on April 30th and May 1st at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center. The ITC explored many location options and the Part C office has determined that partnering with the Hotel Roanoke best meets the physical space needs as well as the fiscal requirements for the following reasons:

- Free meeting space for all functions of the conference. This compares to other hotels which charge from \$1,500-\$5,000 per day.
- A "meeting planner's package" per person which includes continuous break service for all food (breakfast, snacks, lunch) at one cost versus paying for each meal and snack. This is a significant cost savings for food.
- Free audiovisual equipment included in the "meeting planner's package."
- A COTA grant through Virginia Tech, which allows us to receive a 5% reduction off of the total revenue from the bill.

### **Integrated Training Collaborative Meeting**

The next Integrated Training Collaborative meeting will be held January 28, 2008 from 10:00-12:00 at Kluge Children's Rehabilitation Center. If you are interested in attending the meeting or would like further information regarding the ITC, please contact Cori Hill at (540) 943-6776 or [corihill@ntelos.net](mailto:corihill@ntelos.net).

### **News From the Field**

#### **Using Laptops and Portable Printers to Complete IFSPs in Families' Homes**

Hanover County has been successful in completing IFSP documents electronically in the field, including the parent signature on the electronic document. The laptop computer they use to accomplish this is the Compaq tc4200 HP tablet. They use a Pentax pocket jet 3 printer to print the IFSP document for the family in the family's home.

### **Conferences, Trainings, or Workshops**

The 2007 Workshop on Blindness and Visual Impairments will be held December 5 - 7, 2007, at the Holiday Inn Select Koger South Conference Center in Richmond, Virginia.

Workshop topics include - "Tools for Selecting Appropriate Learning Media;" Tactile Graphics; Severe Disability Assessments; Severe Disability Instruction; O&M for Pre-school Children; Functional Vision Assessments; Reading Eye Reports; Rehabilitation Teaching Techniques and Tips; Virginia Alternative Assessment Program; Assistive Technology in Schools; Panel – Benefits of Knowing Braille; and Exhibits of DBVI Services.

The workshop is designed for individuals interested in enhancing their knowledge, skills and abilities in serving infants, children and youth who are blind or deaf blind. This list includes, but is not limited to all Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired; Orientation & Mobility Specialists; Early Intervention Service Providers; Parents; OTs; PTs; School Administrators; and Medical Personnel.

### **T/TAC Online**

T/TAC Online (<http://www.ttaconline.org/>) is a web-based resource that includes information about upcoming trainings, resources on a variety of topics, and online trainings. You can find information about a series of 2-day trainings, Auditory-Verbal/Oral Intervention in an Academic Setting by clicking on your region, then clicking on Events, then Disability, then Hearing Impairment.

### **Online Masters Degree Program in Speech Language Pathology**

Distance Learning In Virginia Education SLPs (DLVE-SLP) is a collaboration of universities in Virginia (Hampton University, James Madison University, Longwood University and University of Virginia) offering a part-time program for individuals interested in becoming speech language pathologists.

Courses will be made available through distance education technologies. Tuition support may be available through the Virginia Department of Education. The development of this project is supported by a grant from the Virginia Department of Education. Offering of the degree program is pending funding. Visit the website at [www.dlve-slp.org](http://www.dlve-slp.org).

### **Information about Vision Courses Offered through George Mason University**

Following are the proposed Vision Impairment courses being offered through George Mason University for Spring and Summer 2008. Please note that while these

are the courses that will be offered, the meeting days and times are still tentative and are subject to change (this is merely for informational purposes). The courses are to begin the week of January 21st and May 19th. Please note that as of this time, have waiting lists for courses have not been established:

Spring 2008 Courses (w/ tentative schedule)  
First Day of Classes: Week of January 21st

Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments (1 cr.)  
Tuesday, 4:00pm-6:40pm (Online/Breeze ONLY)  
Instructor: Kristine Neuber, GMU

Consultation and Collaboration (3 cr.)  
Tuesday, 7:20pm-10:00pm  
Instructor: Fred Orelove, VCU

\*Curriculum & Assessment for Students with Visual Impairments (3 cr.)  
Thursday, 4:00pm-6:40pm  
Instructor: Kristine Neuber, GMU  
\*Note that this is the 5th course required for the Add-on Endorsement (per the listserv announcement sent out on October 17, 2007)

Braille Reading & Writing (3 cr.)  
Thursday, 7:20pm-10:00pm  
Instructor: Kristine Neuber, GMU

Summer 2008 Courses (w/ tentative schedule):  
First Day of Classes: Week of May 19th

Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments (1 cr.)  
Tuesday, 4:00pm-6:05pm (Online/Breeze ONLY)  
Instructor: Kristine Neuber, GMU

Orientation & Mobility for Students with Visual Impairments (2 cr.)  
(TBD)  
Instructor: Kristine Neuber, GMU

Teaching Methods for Students with Visual Impairments (3 cr.)  
(TBD)  
Instructor: Kristine Neuber, GMU  
Positive Behavior Supports (3 cr.)  
Wednesday AND Thursday, 4:00pm-6:40pm  
Instructor: TBD

**The Family, Infant and Preschool Program** in Morganton, North Carolina is pleased to announce the opening of the FIPP Center for Professional Development and the Winter Workshop Series.

- Using an Evidence-Based Practice Approach in Early Childhood Intervention, November 8-9, 2007 with Speakers: M'Lisa Shelden, PT, Ph.D. & Dathan Rush, Ed.D, CCC-SLP
- Tools and Strategies for Assessing Evidence-Based Early Intervention Practices, December 10-11, 2007 with Speaker: Sarah Sexton, M.Ed.
- Advanced Coaching for Early Childhood Practitioners, January 17-18, 2008 with Speakers: M'Lisa Shelden, PT, Ph.D. & Dathan Rush, Ed.D., CCC-SLP

For more information visit the FIPP website at <http://www.fipp.org> or contact the conference concierge, Devonna Ijames, at (828) 430-7955.

### **Professional Preparation in Cochlear Implants (PPCI)**

Professional Preparation in Cochlear Implants (PPCI) is an intensive program for professionals providing early intervention (0-5) and transition services for children with cochlear implants. It is specifically designed for teachers of deaf children, speech-language pathologists and educational audiologists with beginning-to-limited experience in providing (re)habilitation services to children with implants. Professionals who are currently in supervisory or leadership positions and who are responsible for making decisions regarding children who are 0-5 and present with hearing loss will also benefit from this program. PPCI on-site course work is supplemented by rigorous advance study and long-term follow-up culminating in a three-day summer meeting to fulfill requirements of the program. Nine graduate credits from Smith College are awarded upon successful completion of all elements of PPCI.

<http://www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/division/generic.jsp?id=73440>

### **World of Possibilities Expo**

Caring Communities is holding their "World of Possibilities Expo" in Richmond on December 7-8, 2007. The Expo focuses on Abilities, Healthy Aging and Independent Living and is dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with disabilities, seniors, their families and caregivers, as well as health care and education professionals. Check out the website for

more information.

<http://expo.caringcommunities.org>

### **Resources**

#### **New Position Statement on Infant Hearing**

Pediatrics: Year 2007 Position Statement: Principles and Guidelines for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs:

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/120/4/898> and (<http://www.asha.org/docs/html/PS2007-00281.html>)

#### **Articles and Commentary about a Possible Relationship Between Hearing Loss and SIDS**

"Dr. Daniel Rubens Shines a Light on the Mystery of SIDS", Interaction Research News, Seattle Children's Hospital Research Institute, September 2007.

"Newborn Hearing Abnormalities May Signal SIDS," Pediatric News, September 2007.

Comments on 08/09/2007 emailed articles: From Leslie Ellwood, MD, Co-Chair VEHDIP Advisory Committee (with permission).

#### **The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has released a new Public Health Notification, Importance of Vaccination in Cochlear Implant Recipients.**

<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/safety/101007-cochlear.html>

Two children, ages 9 and 11, with the cochlear implant including a positioner died from infections within the past year. Neither child was fully immunized according to the CDC recommended vaccination schedule. At least one of these children had meningitis caused by a serotype of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* that may have been prevented by proper vaccinations.

A survey of parents of cochlear implanted children showed nearly half of them did not know whether their child had been fully vaccinated.

Information for caregivers/patients with cochlear implants appears on the web at

<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/medicaldevicesafety/atp/020606-cochlear.html>.

Advice to Patients with Cochlear Implants can be found at

<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/medicaldevicesafety/atp/101007-cochlear.html>.

## **Infant-Toddler Language and Early Learning Literacy Activities-Free and Reproducible**

New birth-to-three age range parent-child activity materials are now available for downloading on the Washington Learning Systems website. These materials are free and reproducible.

These materials include twenty home and community activities for adults and children birth to three that encourage early language and literacy development. They are appropriate for children with disabilities as well as children who are developing typically. The materials are specifically designed to address the three key skills of 1) language development, 2) sounds and rhythms, and 3) general book and print awareness.

Grant H324M020084 from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, supported the development of these materials. Developed by Angela Notari-Syverson, Ph.D, and Judy Challoner, M.S.  
Illustrations: Don Syverson

To download materials go to [www.wlearning.com](http://www.wlearning.com) and click on the purple button that says "Free Parent Education Handouts" on the home page.

## **Spanish Interactive Milestone Checklist**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed new Spanish Interactive Tools to help Spanish-speaking parents gauge the progress of their child's individual development. The Spanish Interactive Milestone Checklist gives parents a general idea of the changes they can expect to see as their child gets older. This checklist is a great way to record the milestones a child is reaching and to share a child's progress with his or her doctor or nurse at checkups.

Additionally, the Spanish Interactive Milestone Chart allows parents to view how a developmental milestone category (social and emotional, cognitive, language, etc.) changes as a child grows. Online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/spanish/interactive/index.html#top>

## **TECSNews - For the Allied eHealth Resource Network**

The "Team for Early Childhood Solutions" (TECS) is an organization contracted by South Carolina through federal grant monies from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to manage the

comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD) and to provide training & technical assistance to the early intervention system. This includes all system personnel (providers of special instruction, service coordination, therapy services -PT,OT,SP, etc.), as well as families, family support systems, and community program providers. Their recent Newsletter contains a wealth of information about:

- Practice recommendations, examples, and ideas for involving families in IFSP services
- Information for involving families throughout the early intervention process
- Perspectives from therapy providers on involving families

The current newsletter can be found at: <http://uscm.med.sc.edu/tecs/alliedhealthresources2newsletter.htm>.

## **Federal Programs Focused on Serving Young Children**

The ZERO TO THREE Policy Center recently published a chart entitled Tracking Services for Infants, Toddlers and their Families: A Look at Federal Early Childhood Programs and the Roles of State & Local Governments. The chart provides a summary of the primary federal programs currently focused on serving very young children. It is available online at <http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/FedITPr ogramsAug07.pdf?docID=4041>.

Research on Early Childhood Education Outcomes The Public Policy Forum in Wisconsin, a nonpartisan "government watchdog," has created an online chart that summarizes the findings of more than 20 early childhood education studies. Longitudinal studies, reviews and meta-analyses, and cross-sectional analyses were examined for outcomes in cognition, behavior, sociability, education, external benefits to society, and benefit-cost ratio. The chart is at <http://www.publicpolicyforum.org/Matrix.htm>.

## **Early Learning Standards: It's More than Content**

Early childhood education continues to rise to the top of federal, state, and local policymakers' agendas as a "tool" to improve children's academic performance in the later grades. At the same time, many researchers and experts within the field are raising cautionary flags to ensure that policymakers understand the unique opportunities for learning and development that the early childhood years offer. These stakeholders want to ensure that policymakers do not simply push down K-12 education reforms for the early years. A new Early

Childhood Research & Practice article investigates repackaging of the K-12 standards within early childhood education through a case study of the formulation and implementation of Wisconsin's Model Early Learning Standards.  
Read the article at  
<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v9n1/brown.html>.

Sign Language Interpreting  
Sign Language Associates' website provides information for consumers and for sign language interpreters including video interpreting. The website is <http://www.singlanguage.com/>.