

Early Intervention Autism Initiative 2/17/05 Meeting

Attendance: Linda Hutton; Pat Accardo; Lynn Sykes; Karen Durst; Beth Tolley; Debra Holloway; Donna Rimmel

The December Minutes were reviewed and approved as written.

Announcements:

Donna announced that Chesterfield County has hired a new person, Kathy R. Beasley, whose job includes some of the functions that Beth Sarrett's job included. She will be invited to join the EI Autism Initiative.

Linda distributed an email she received about Autism research titled: *Focus Narrows in Search for Autism's Cause*.

MSNBC and associated networks will begin a series of programs on Autism beginning next week. Members of the group have not heard of any plans for local media activity related to the series. Sharon and Pat will talk with the individuals at Children's Hospital who work with the media and Beth and Karen will check to see if any public awareness plans have been made by the Infant & Toddler Connection. Pat reported that coincidentally, he is doing grand rounds next Tuesday at MCV on Autism. The title of the presentation is "*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*". Rounds are geared to medical personnel, but are open to the public. Media people can be referred to attend the rounds to learn more about autism.

Lise Fox will be presenting a workshop on addressing challenging behaviors May 13, 2005 in Richmond. This full day workshop is sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education T/TAC at VCU and the cost for the full day workshop is \$10.00. For more information, contact Cheryl Bishop at 804-828-6947.

Fact Sheets

There is no new information to report on the fact sheets.

Competencies

Draft competencies have been sent to stakeholders, including national representatives for review. Very positive comments have been received. Pat has reviewed them and provided input.

Letter to Part C

Carol Burke drafted a letter to Mary Ann Discenza regarding the recommendation of the EI Autism Initiative to collect information via iTOTS on the specific atypical development characteristic of ASD. Carol Schall and Carol Burke have been communicating via email about the next steps.

Parent Survey

Purpose: To obtain families' perception of the state of supports and services for children 0-3 with ASD or symptoms of ASD and their families

Members of the subcommittee reported the following information to the full group:

- The questions on the survey are basically ok
- The committee may need to include more information for demographics
- They need to decide age group to target
- They need to determine how to get it out to families
- Need to know what distribution and number of surveys will give information that is statistically reliable information

The full group discussed the age group/range to target and methods of dissemination. A subcommittee member commented that it is unlikely that any one method for dissemination will fit all of Virginia. Also may make a difference about what age is targeted. Options include going through school systems, parent groups, Autism registry, etc. for mailing list, etc. to name a few. In addition, it was suggested that consideration be given to putting the survey online for parents to answer/enter it online. Attendees agreed that the 3-5 age group would be the desired range to target. A suggestion was made to leave the age range broader, then do analysis that considered the answers according to age groups.

Pat will approach the LEND faculty to see if they have a researcher who could work with the subcommittee to help answer questions about age group, ways of collecting info, identification of other questions that should be considered, ways to collect the data, and computer resource information. He will also talk with Susan Stevens, Research and Marketing Director at CH.

The Education and Data Subcommittees did not meet today.

The next meeting is March 17, 2005 from 1:15 PM to 4:15 PM.