

Family Support & Advocacy Committee Update

September 12, 2002

Committee:

- < Although the FS&A Committee has not formally met since March, many projects continue. We welcome 2 new parents to the committee this year.
- < From the July FS&AC workplan development meeting, priorities have been established and a workplan developed that includes supporting CIMP efforts.
- < Shelly Walker and Cori Hill have resigned as providers from the FS&A - we wish them well in their new endeavors and will miss their leadership.

Membership:

- < Calling Cards are available for members working on FS&A workplan projects.
- < Cori Hill assisted the ITCofVA office and the FS&A in collecting parent applications for nomination to the VICC. A slate has been presented to the Governor's office.
- < The FS&A Orientation Guide is available for new members. Please contact Dana Yarbrough, parent co-chair, for a copy.

Conference Committee:

- < The 15th Annual Families are Special, Too! Conference will be held in Charlottesville in the spring of 2003. Watch your mail for details.
- < The FS&AC provided funding to the Circle of Support and New Horizons conferences enabling more EI parents to attend. Funding was used for registration fees, travel costs, and childcare fees.
- < Rather than fund a statewide respite conference, funding was used to develop the FS&A Respite Tool Kit which was distributed to all 40 councils in early summer. We hope LICCs are finding them useful.

Publications:

- < The Family Guide to EI (formerly the Welcome Book) will undergo major revisions this fall based on feedback from parents and LICCs. The FS&AC workplan calls for sections of the book to be split into mini books. The original family guide will still be available to parents and LICCs on a CD which will be available from the ITCofVA office this fall. Sharon Wallace is in the process of completing scanning and formatting of the book.
- < The "Beginning with Families" publication has been translated into Spanish and is available from PEATC and will be translated in Vietnamese this year.
- < Sharon Wallace is coordinating efforts to gather information from specialty hospitals in Virginia and neighboring states. A speciality hospital guide will be published in the fall of 2002. The guide will include information such as directions, visitor rules, accommodations, parking, typical meal rates, social worker contact information, etc. in an effort to decrease families stress when traveling to a specialty hospital for the first time.