

EARLY INTERVENTION

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ECE & EI Collaboration: A Direction for the Future ■ VOLUME 17, NUMBER 1 / WINTER 2006

Early Care and Education: Partners with Early Intervention

— *Deb Daulton, Director EI Technical Assistance*
In collaboration with Kelli O. Thompson, Community Initiative Project Manager, Pennsylvania Key

If you are in the early intervention field in Pennsylvania, you have noticed a new and intentional emphasis on coordinating early care and education services and an increased focus on collaboration with early intervention. Information about changes in the organization of early care and education resources has been made widely available through list serves and conferences. Many early interventionists are asking; what do I need to know? How can I understand and utilize these important resources to support the families with which I work?

Under the direction of Harriet Dichter, Deputy Secretary of the Office of Child Development in the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and Policy Director at the Pennsylvania Department of Education, a number of activities have been designed to better organize an array of childcare supports and training initiatives. At the core of

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Inclusion Forums a Huge Success in Bucks County

— *Sarah Shoffler, SICC Chairperson*

Bucks County hosted its first-ever inclusion forum this past May. We brainstormed the day's events and the list of invitees with our early childhood services director and staff from PaTTAN, the new Office of Child Development, and the Department of Education. A small group volunteered to invite those with whom we already had relationships. The guest list included parents from our Local Interagency Coordinating Council, early intervention providers from both birth to three and three to five, several school district superintendents, child care teachers and directors, Head Start staff, representatives from Bucks County Association for the Education of Young Children, and more. Our intermediate unit did a great job of hosting the event. It was great to have Esther Beck from the Bureau of Special Education, Maureen Cronin from the Office of Child Development, and Sharon Brumbaugh from PA Department of Education's Office of Policy Planning.

The full day experience was enjoyed by everyone! New relationships were formed that later resulted in some of us taking quick steps to submit a letter of intent for a PreK Partnership Grant for our county. Many who attended were re-energized and made a renewed commitment to inclusion in their child care, preschool, elementary education, or community based programs that day.

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The mission of the Pennsylvania State Interagency Coordinating Council is to advise and assist the Departments of Health, Education and Welfare to ensure that a comprehensive delivery system of integrated programs and services is available in Pennsylvania to all eligible infants, toddlers and young children and their families.

PENNSYLVANIA EARLY INTERVENTION

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FROM THE CHAIR

It's exciting to be the new State ICC Chairperson! We begin our year long study of inclusion with many important issues before us. The Medical Assistance premium was the key discussion topic at our October 6th meeting. This year we are also looking at how the MAWA (Mutually Agreed Upon Written Arrangements - the regional entity providing preschool early intervention services) agencies are funded to deliver services to our 3 to 5 year olds in preschool programs. We will develop plans to increase communication with local ICCs and reach out to determine technical assistance needs. It's going to be a year that is all about developing relationships, both within our State government and across the counties.

I hope that you will choose to be a part of these efforts. With our new Office of Child Development providing greatly increased program coordination and enhancements for all children ages birth through eight, the coming years will enable Pennsylvania to take leaps in the areas of infant/toddler and early childhood education. These improvements are vital to building a quality system of early intervention where including ALL young children is no longer a dream, but a reality.

Sarah Shoffler

Chairperson

State Interagency Coordinating Council

While many copies of this newsletter are sent throughout the state, it is impossible to know of everyone interested in receiving it. Please remember that this newsletter can be copied and shared with others.

—Thank you!

The *Pennsylvania Early Intervention* Newsletter is produced by Contract Consultants, Inc. through Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11.

We learned that we need to do this sort of thing more often. We realized that we did not invite anyone who wasn't already practicing inclusion, and agreed to do so next time. We talked about what has been working in our county, what we would like to do in the future, and concluded that we will meet again as a group in the coming year. More than anything, we value the new relationships that developed.

Emphasis on Embedding Goals in Everyday Activities

To kick off the event, a short video about Routines Based Early Intervention (RBEI) was shown. RBEI is about embedding a child's IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) or IEP (Individualized

Education Plan) goals into every day activities. When I became a parent of a newborn baby girl with a disability, I was working on my masters in elementary education. I learned about RBEI in 1997 from my birth to three EI providers. As an educator, I knew that incorporating teachable moments into classroom instruction was a great way to make learning meaningful and lasting. I latched on to the RBEI



concept. I started using it with my daughter Annie during her early years. I began teaching the many people who touched Annie's life how to incorporate her goals into her everyday activities. This included her early childhood teachers, our church nursery caregivers, her music teacher, family members, and more.

Annie is nearly nine now and in an inclusive third grade classroom. We all continue to use this intervention method every day - intervention is still critically important, especially when we need to meet new challenges. RBEI continues to be one of the keys to Annie's success as a life long learner.

In the coming months many of our counties will be holding inclusion forums. I hope that your experiences are as rich as ours in their own distinctive way. I hope that new relationships for building inclusive communities develop among you. Perhaps you, too, will include a discussion of Routines Based Early Intervention, where nearly everyone who touches the lives of young children can learn to become their teachers.

Early Care & Education *(Continued from page 1)*

this reorganization is the newly designated Pennsylvania Key (PA Key). Gail Nourse is the Director of PA Key. The PA Key is located in Harrisburg just blocks from the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Public Welfare.

Pennsylvania Key

The Pennsylvania Key provides statewide leadership. In collaboration with the Office of Child Development, an integrated and coordinated system of program quality improvements and professional development supports have been initiated for early care and education providers. The PA Key is creating comprehensive statewide approaches and recommendations for professionals who provide care in infant/toddler/preschool, school age, and relative/neighbor care settings. The Head Start Collaboration Project and the Pre-K Partnership for

Quality Child Care are also located at the PA Key.

PA Key and Keystone Stars

The PA Key also oversees statewide administration of the Keystone STARS. The STARS is a voluntary quality evaluation process for early care and education settings. This includes reviewing and revising STARS standards; training and employing Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) Assessors; and providing professional development and technical assistance.

PA Key Develops a Career Lattice

The PA Key manages statewide initiatives related to professional development; including the development of a career lattice for professionals in early care and education. The PA Key is creating a career lattice that would define the professional development requirements for each position in the childcare field. They

will review all current curriculum materials for training modules, current Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate and Director's Certificate, and, to the extent possible, develop policies and procedures to ensure that these become credit bearing courses.

Coordinate Other Early Care and Education Professional Development

The PA key is charged with coordinating all of the various professional development activities available for early care and education providers. In this capacity they will assess training and technical assistance offered by other entities, such as Head Start, ECELS, Better Kid Care, T.E.A.C.H., and TQAS eligible training to ensure that it is aligned with and supports Keystone STARS participation.

And finally, the PA Key will oversee an outreach campaign to inform consumers, policy makers, and the childcare community about Keystone STARS, professional development opportunities, and statewide quality benchmarks.

Regional Keys

The PA Key provides supports in community engagement and regional planning through the creation of Regional Keys. To implement the activities and recommendations locally, six Regional Key Offices were established.

The Regional Keys:

- Lead inclusive regional planning
- Develop and implement a regional quality improvement plan and funding for professional development, technical assistance and resources for programs
- Encourage participation in Keystone STARS through outreach campaigns
- Administer Keystone STARS standards and offer guidance through the self-study process
- Assist programs in accessing financial supports for STARS quality improvements
- Contracts with Community Engagement Groups.

Why It's Important to Early Intervention

It's an exciting time in Pennsylvania. The administration of the Infant/Toddler Early Intervention Program moved to the Office of Child Development, which is the same office where childcare is administered. In addition, the

Infant/Toddler Early Intervention Program and the Preschool Early Intervention Program have increased efforts to work together seamlessly to collaborate with early care and education to support families in early intervention. National trends indicate more families than ever are accessing childcare. Early intervention providers are always looking for affordable and accessible early care and education sites where they can provide inclusive services and supports in the family's community.

The following are examples of state partnerships with early intervention and early care and education:

- EITA (Early Intervention Technical Assistance) and professional development staff recommended by Regional Keys are being trained to partner and implement the *Mind in the Making* Professional Development Program (see web site for more information www.familiesandwork.org).
- The Department of Education and the Department of Public Welfare collaborated to sponsor the Annual Early Childhood Conference in October in Hershey, PA. This conference was designed for everyone involved in early childhood/early intervention. An earlier conference in September focused on improving community connections in early childhood.
- The Bureau of Special Education funded 10 Performance Grants to special education preschool agencies. These grants are to support collaboration with community early care and education providers to increase inclusive opportunities for preschool age children with disabilities.
- The Bureau of Special Education and the Office of Child Development are sponsoring 10 Inclusion Forums, hosted locally, across the Commonwealth in the fall. These Forums involve all stakeholders in early intervention and early care and education. (For a list of sites contact mhuntsman@tiu11.org)
- EITA has assigned one EITA consultant to be the link with each Regional Key to help develop coordinated professional development plans.

How You Can Get Involved

You can partner locally to improve supports and resources for early care and education.

- Get to know the professional development staff at the Regional Key in your area.

- Find out what their regional training needs are and offer to partner in training initiatives, host a training, be a trainer, and attend trainings offered through the Regional Key. Develop a joint training calendar.
- Model mutual respect for early care and education professionals. Professionals in both early childhood and early intervention fields have valuable skills and expertise needed to support all children.
- Find out if the childcare agencies in your area are part of the Keystone STARS Program. If not, encourage them to participate.
- Tell the families you support about the Keystone STARS Program.
- Join the BUILD listserv and stay current on new developments in early care and education as well as early intervention. To join, email ccarretti@state.pa.us.
- Get your Local Interagency Coordinating Council involved!

Together we make a difference.

Helpful Terms

Community Engagement: An initiative sponsored by the Office of Child Development to assist local communities in improving knowledge of and commitment to an early care and education system at the local level.

Early Childhood Education Linkage Systems (ECELS): ECELS is operated by the PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP), and provides consultation to the Office of Child Development (OCD) and practitioners in the field regarding national best practices for health and safety in child care settings.

Environmental Rating Scales (ERS): General term for assessment tools used to measure the quality of early childhood and school-age programs. There are four environment rating scales: Infant/Toddler, Early Childhood, School-Age and Family Day Care. Each scale evaluates: *Physical Environment; Basic Care; Curriculum; Interaction; Schedule and Program Structure; and Parent and Staff Education.*

The Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program: This is a state-investment to support the provision of comprehensive pre-kindergarten Head Start to additional children in Pennsylvania. The program was

initiated in FY 04/05 and is funded through PA Department of Education.

Keystone STARS: A system of continuous quality improvement for childcare through Standards, Trainings/Professional Development, Assistance, Resources, Support. Keystone STARS is an initiative of the Office of Child Development to improve, support and recognize quality child care programs in Pennsylvania. Keystone STARS works to support the capacity and quality of programs through performance standards, financial incentives and STAR designation awards.

Pennsylvania Child Care Association (PACCA): PACCA is a statewide, non-profit organization dedicated to facilitating the provision of quality early care and education to the children of Pennsylvania. For more information visit www.pacca.org.

Pennsylvania Pathways (PA Pathways): A component of Pennsylvania's professional development system serving practitioners in family homes, centers, and school-age settings. Professional development is provided through several options, which include non-credit workshops, conferences, satellite downlinks, video learn-at-home units and college courses.

Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.): T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Pennsylvania scholarship program provides funding to assist staff, who work in a regulated child care setting, to attain a CDA, an Associates Degree or, in some cases, a Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood. The model requires a partnership between the scholarship recipient, the sponsoring child care center and the scholarship management organization (PACCA).

Trainer Quality Assurance System (TQAS): TQAS is designed to ensure the quality of professional development provided to child care professionals in Pennsylvania. Approved trainers/training entities are required to maintain established qualifications, including educational achievements and experience. In addition, the TQAS approves training/Professional Development offered by selected organizations that offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs), Act 48 credit, Head Start, Intermediate Units (IUs), Early Intervention Technical Assistance (EITA), the International Computer Driver's License (ICDL), Public Librarians and the PA Key.

Promoting participation in activities and routines at home and community settings is important for all children but essential for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities. Often, it is not the developmental skill that a child is unable to do (i.e. the child is able to walk, talk, or eat with a spoon); it is the impact of the developmental limitation on a child's participation in everyday life. Early intervention professionals have the expertise to assist families to promote their children's participation.

When promoting participation, the focus of intervention shifts from skill-building to using strategies that ensure maximal participation as quickly as possible. Adaptation includes strategies such as environmental modification, assistive technology devices, or other strategies to allow children to participate in the absence of being able to perform skills required in the activity or routine.

Meliza is unable to participate in art activities at her child care center because she is unable to grasp objects such as art materials, brushes, or crayons without adult assistance. The requirement of an adult to help her hold and manipulate objects would likely alter Meliza's participation in art activities by isolating her from other children. It might limit natural opportunities for interaction with other children, communication, or "unplanned" learning opportunities. Providing Meliza with adapted brushes, crayons, or other materials or having her child care program choose art activities that did not require high levels of manipulation of objects allowed Meliza to participate without adult assistance, thereby providing natural opportunities for communication and social interaction.

Participation Outcomes

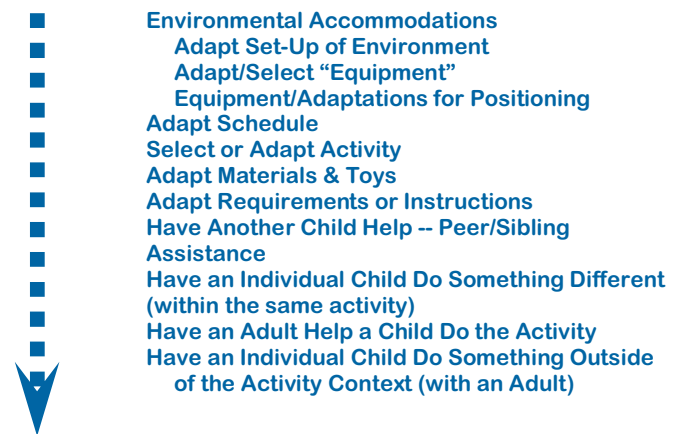
Framing outcomes in language that emphasizes participation rather than skill development can help families and early intervention professionals focus on reducing the impact of developmental limitations and promoting children's independence. Rather than stating an outcome as "increase fine motor skills so that Meliza can do art activities at her child care program," participation-based outcomes are stated as "increase participation in art activities at child care." By re-framing outcome statements, the focus is on the child's participation rather than on promoting fine motor skills.

Objectives break the outcome statement down into components. For example, there are many ways by which Meliza's participation in art activities at child care could be increased including providing her opportunities for engaging in the activity, for communication, or for socialization with other children and adults. With a participation-focus, the emphasis is on how to promote a child's participation in a variety of ways.

Adaptation Hierarchy

One way in which engagement in a particular activity may be promoted is through the use of adaptation interventions. These interventions include use of environmental adaptations, modifications, assistive technology devices, and other strategies. Strategies that allow a child to participate as independently as possible with the least amount of adult assistance are viewed as least intrusive. The adaptation hierarchy illustrated below lists the ranges of possibilities from those that are least restrictive (listed at the top) to those that are most restrictive (listed at the bottom).

Figure 1: Adaptation Hierarchy



The hierarchy is used to make decisions about possible adaptation strategies to try in order to help a child successfully participate. Modifying the environment in some way that allows a child to participate or providing a child with specific types of equipment are the least intrusive types of adaptation strategies. Removing a child from the typical environment so that the child is doing something different with an adult, generally in a one-on-one situation, is the most restrictive. The framework is not meant to suggest that more restrictive options are never needed in particular situations or with certain children but rather that restrictive interventions

should not be tried as a first solution. They should only be used when other categories of adaptation have been tried with no success.

Examples of strategies for each of the adaptation intervention categories on the hierarchy are listed in Table 1. Many of the activities and routines in which infants and young children participate can be easily adapted to allow children with disabilities to participate without any greater amounts of adult assistance than would be provided for a child of the same chronological age. Items used within an activity such as specific materials (e.g., books) or toys often require no adaptation if well selected or minimal adaptation to accommodate developmental skill limitations.

All of these adaptation strategies can allow a child with a disability to be successful without requiring above-average adult assistance. Obviously, young children require considerable assistance from adults when they are infant or toddler-aged and the amounts and types of assistance decrease as children get older. Children with disabilities are viewed frequently as needing a lot of adult assistance in order to participate in settings that are designed for typical children. A goal in using adaptation interventions is for children to be as independent as other children of the same chronological ages.

Table 1: Examples of Adaptations at Each Level of the Hierarchy

Adaptation Hierarchy Level	Examples
Adapt Set-Up of Environment	Moving furniture within the family care home to allow a child to walk with a walker; placing all unsafe materials (such as cleaning solutions) in a locked cupboard.
Adapt/Select "Equipment"	Using boppies and bean bag chairs in a child care program so that children can sit with support; purchasing a particular brand off-the-shelf stroller or off-the-shelf toilet chair in which a child can sit comfortably and safely.
Equipment/Adaptations for Positioning	Using a stander so that the child can work with others at the sand table; obtaining a customized chair that positions the child.
Adapt Schedule	Allow longer times for mealtime so that a child who needs more time to self-feed will have enough time to complete the meal; plan an art activity where children complete two projects to provide enough time for a child with a disability to complete one project.
Select or Adapt Activity	Reading a story using props so that children may participate actively while listening; incorporating a variety of riding toys into outside play so that all children can ride; making sure that one riding toy can be used by the child with a disability either through selection or adapting existing toys.
Adapt/Select Materials & Toys	Purchasing an off-the-shelf puzzle with knobs so that the child can complete the puzzle independently; attaching a switch to a toy so that the child can play with the toy independently.
Adapt Requirements or Instructions	Allowing a child to self-feed for the beginning of the meal and then feeding the child for the remainder; Read 2 very short stories and require a child who has difficulty attending to attend for one story only.

The information in this article was modified from Campbell, P.H., Milbourne, S., Wilcox, M. J. (2005). Adaptation interventions to promote participation in natural settings. Under review *Infants and Young Children*.

Dr. Philippa Campbell is Professor, Thomas Jefferson University, Jefferson College of Health Professions where she directs a number of research, training, and demonstration projects through Child and Family Studies Research Program. Suzanne Milbourne is a Research Assistant Professor at Child & Family Studies and coordinates a number of research and training projects including programs for child care offered through PIN: The Philadelphia Inclusion Network. For other related articles, please visit <http://jeffline.jefferson.edu/cfsrp>.

Elizabeth is a one of a kind good kid, says her mother, Lisa Bean. "Like all four year olds, Elizabeth is always on the go. When she hits the bed at night, she just falls into bed. She just learned how to ride her Dora bike without training wheels." What an accomplishment for her. She learned on her brother's bike first. Following in her brother's footsteps is nothing new to four year old Elizabeth. She is also attending the same preschool where her older brother attended. She even has the same teacher.

Elizabeth began receiving early intervention services when she was 3 years old. Her family's initial concern was a delay in her speech development. They did not want her to fall behind and didn't want other kids to tease her because of how she spoke. And they knew if they needed to pay for a therapist, the cost was prohibitive. They turned to the intermediate unit for early intervention services. They later learned their daughter had a minimal hearing loss.

Kim, a speech/language pathologist with the preschool program, sees Elizabeth at her preschool. She observes what Elizabeth is doing and gives the teacher ideas about how to get her pronunciation better and slow down. "When I visit, I try to blend into the classroom and be as unobtrusive as possible. During designated play times, I interact with the children individually or in small groups, trying to incorporate speech/language IEP goals within the context of the classroom experiences. I see my role as a consultant to the teaching staff, as just as important." says Kim. Her role involves not only direct support to Elizabeth, but one of support and a resource to the teachers. They discuss Elizabeth's many strengths and strategize ways to address her needs. Kim helps the teachers look at what worked/what didn't and why. She provides information and resource materials. "I try to be as available as possible to meet with teachers when they have the time to talk, such as during naptimes. I feel it is important to respect their busy schedules and responsibilities. After all, those teachers have more opportunities to support Elizabeth than I do."



Collaborating with early childhood programs is not new to this preschool early intervention program. "Our early childhood program has been offering inclusive programming to preschoolers for well over 11 years." says Cindy Snyder, preschool supervisor at IU #5. The staff at this IU started out small and now is collaborating in well over 93 child care programs, preschools, Head Start programs and 16 school districts.

Ms. Snyder reiterates the point made by the speech/language pathologist, "We know that flexibility is the key and some centers have different strengths. We have been privileged to watch as typical preschool programs have grown professionally. Several are now NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) certified and many more are involved in Keystone STARS."

When early intervention collaborates with early childhood, the benefits to children are many. Children receive early intervention services within their immediate community. Many times, they are attending a center with children they will go to school with. Since therapies are integrated into the regular preschool program, children and staff view these as part of the regular routine. The child is surrounded with peer models to develop appropriate social skills. Peers learn to be accepting of others and see that children with disabilities can have strengths, talents and can be a good friend. Teachers learn to adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate children with different needs, so that every child can experience some success in their classroom.

In the best of programs, you can not tell the early intervention staff from the regular preschool staff. They become true partners after many years of working together. EI staff is included in the classroom routines. "In my observations, the regular preschool programs know when our staff will be coming and they often will include them to work with small groups of children with IEPs and without," reports Cindy Snyder.

Mrs. Bean certainly has no second thoughts about contacting early intervention. "Because my other sons

attended this center, we already knew it was an excellent center. Having early intervention support Elizabeth helped guide us in the right direction so that Elizabeth learned through her play."

Kim Agnew is a speech/language pathologist. She has worked at Intermediate Unit #5 since March of 1982. She has seen many changes over the years, yet the emphasis of the program in IU#5 has always been to serve young children with special needs in typical settings.

Lisa Bean lives in Crawford County. She has four children. Her oldest attends Clarion University. She has a child living in Las Vegas, Nevada and another in 2nd grade. Elizabeth is four.

Cindy Snyder is the Preschool Supervisor for Intermediate Unit #5. She has been both an Itinerant Speech Therapist and an EI classroom teacher. Inclusion remains a priority and the continuation of collaboration with The Early Childhood community is invaluable. There continues to be issues that must be considered but the challenge is worth the result.

Q & A with a Center Director

— *Melissa Hankin, Carlow University Child Care Center*

What is your center's philosophy on including young children with disabilities and other special needs? Our center's philosophy on inclusion is simple. We include all children! We provide the best appropriate environment that we can for all children with and without disabilities. The children that have been diagnosed with disabilities are also supported by early intervention specialists that come to our center to work with the child and the teachers to provide the best appropriate environment possible.

Some children may not be diagnosed with a developmental delay but have behavior issues. We often deal with this situation. We do not believe in "kicking children out" for behavior problems. Our center believes that all children deserve a chance. The child and their family needs help in resolving the issues that are behind the behavior problems. We work with the family to get through the behavior issues. We will call on other specialists to help us make sure the children get what they need to succeed in life.

Have the teachers been concerned about including young children with disabilities and how have you dealt with that? It does depend on the teacher and how comfortable they are with children with disabilities. If it is the first child that they have taught, it can be overwhelming for them. I always let them know that they have the support of the early intervention professionals and my support as well. If a teacher has already dealt with the situation, they are definitely more at ease and trust the early intervention system more. Overall we have had a lot of success in including children with disabilities in our center. I provide the teachers with extra help in the classrooms if they do have children in the class that need more attention than the others. And not just young children with

disabilities, it also includes the children with severe behavior issues.

What has proven effective as you have collaborated with early intervention professionals? How has your staff and EI worked collaboratively? Having early intervention professionals help our staff has always proven effective. Most of them have been wonderful and have taught the staff a lot about early intervention. We usually wish they could come more often and lead us through the tough times. The collaboration has had mostly positive outcomes. The teachers sometimes are not used to using the modifications, the charts, the picture references, etc., but in time they learn why they are using them and why they are effective for these children.

What has been an experience you remember? We had a child with autism for the first five years of his life. He came to us as a baby, but was not diagnosed with autism until he was almost three. We had a lot of collaboration with all of the early intervention specialists and his parents were amazing. He did not have a TSS (therapeutic staff support) stay with him at the center until he was preschool age. That was really good for everyone. He excelled at reading and his letters, but everything else came together as we watched him grow into a kindergarten boy. It was amazing to see that with the collaboration of his teachers, his parents and the early intervention professionals, the strides he made. He began his school age years with confidence.

Melissa Hankin M.Ed. is the Director of Carlow University Children's Center. She has been at Carlow since 1991. Ms. Hankin was an Infant/Toddler teacher until 1997 and became the Director in November of 1997. She received her Bachelor in Child Development at Indiana University of PA and her Master in Early Childhood at Carlow College.

The Cambria County Community Engagement for Early Care and Education was established to assist the Cambria County Community in addressing the challenges that affect children in a detrimental manner. It evolved from the Early Childhood Task Force which was formed in early 2000. The mission of this team is to promote the wellness and appropriate development of children, birth through age 13 in Cambria County.

Many agencies partner and collaborate in this effort. Among them are county agencies, private child care and child care providers, early intervention providers, MAWA representatives, education, community members, and health service agencies. These various entities come together to ensure the availability of quality services to area children. This is accomplished through several priority areas. These include:

- Career Development
- Parent/Consumer Education
- Employer Education.

Variety of Activities Undertaken

Career Development: Career development efforts have focused on promoting the expansion of Keystone STARS, the T.E.A.C.H. program, and PA Pathways. Child care providers were encouraged to participate in the Better Kid Care Spring Conference where 3,500 copies of educational booklets with vital information were made available. Public relations efforts were made around the issue of professional development opportunities at Pennsylvania Highlands Community College through the T.E.A.C.H. program.

Parent/Consumer Education: As of May 2005, approximately 4,600 copies of the Cambria County Parent Resource Guide, A Guide to Services for Parents & Children have been distributed to childcare providers, school districts, Head Start and other human service agencies. Several partnering entities created videotapes of workshop topics. The tapes were made available to child care facilities. The child care facilities, in turn, are able to offer these tapes to parents and guardians of children enrolled in their program. Tapes were also given to Cambria County Child Care Information Services for their provider lending library.

Employer Education: Efforts in this area are directed at increasing the awareness of the importance of quality early care and education within the business community. This was addressed in two ways. The ECE (Early Childhood Education) Program Coordinator was invited to participate in an employer symposium sponsored by the Office of Community Health. The team also provided technical assistance to the business community in the development of on-site parent resource libraries. As of spring 2005, 3% of our employers have created these libraries.

We developed a Birth Packet Program for distribution at area hospitals. Each new mother is given a canvas tote bag. Inside is educational information regarding newborn infants, developmental growth information, a videotape, and several infant/toddler books. Thus far, over 100 packets have been distributed.

Early Intervention is Key Member

From the beginning, the early intervention program has partnered with the team. Early intervention professionals collaborate with area child care and day care providers. EI staff is available for technical assistance around the issues of including children with special needs in child care and day care. EI has contributed to the videotapes that were created for parent/consumer education. Around the issue of community awareness, we participate in any networking/training efforts sponsored by the team. We have also provided in-kind contributions. Early intervention embraces the importance of quality child care and day care programs for all children.

For additional information, contact Nancy Cassisi at ncassisi@co.cambria.pa.us. Ms. Cassisi is the Early Intervention Coordinator for Cambria County.

Here are some great low-cost resources to support the inclusion of young children with disabilities.

Blended Practices for Teaching Young Children in Inclusive Settings

Grisham-Brown, J., Hemmeter, M.L., & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2005).

Bridging the gap between early intervention and early childhood/child development, this resource integrates knowledge about effective practices for teaching young children with and without disabilities into one comprehensive approach. This core text is easy to use - it's filled with visual aids such as tables, figures, and sample forms; vignettes and practical examples that illustrate key concepts and guiding principles; helpful summaries for each chapter; and dozens of learning activities. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes. Cost: \$29.95

Children with Special Needs: Lessons for Early Childhood Professionals

Kostelnik, M.J., Onaga, E., Rohde, B., & Whiren, A. (2002).

This is a wonderful resource for bridging the gap between early childhood/child development and inclusion. Each chapter introduces a child (ages birth to eight years) with one or more special needs, followed by additional information (description, hints for success, discussion questions, and resources) and insights (parent perspective, teacher perspective). New York: Teachers College Press. Cost: \$21.95

The Collaboration Guide for Early Career Educators

M.S.E. Fishbaugh. (2000).

Today's personnel are required to work collaboratively with a variety of partners-other teachers, early intervention specialists, parents, paraeducators, community agencies-yet few are adequately prepared to do so. Each issue-focused chapter in this book covers key skills needed by team member, such as communicating effectively, resolving conflicts, co-teaching and supervision. Goals, objectives, activities, photocopiable forms and vignettes are also included, making this a great resource for preservice, inservice or personal use. Examples are varied and effectively target both general and special education issues, as well as the intersections between the two. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes. Cost: \$29.95

A Roadmap for Facilitating Collaborative Teams

P. Hayden, L. Frederick, & B.J. Smith. (2003).

This manual provides reasons and resources for creating collaborative teams to promote meaningful change in local early childhood systems. It was developed based on research on effective practice related to systems change and teaming/collaboration. Strategies, activities, reproducible forms, guidance and encouragement are all offered as resources for the collaborative planning journey. Longmont, CO: Sopris West. Cost: \$35.00

When Teachers Reflect: Journeys Toward Effective, Inclusive Practice

E.A. Tertell, S.M. Klein & J.L. Jewett. (1998).

Eighteen teachers from a variety of settings tell the stories of their own movements -- gradual, sometimes bumpy-toward inclusive, developmentally appropriate practice. These stories engage readers in reflecting on their own early childhood and early intervention practices. Topics include individualizing, guidance, play, collaboration, inclusion and emergent curriculum. Washington, DC: NAEYC. Cost: \$11.00

Thanks to all who contributed to
this issue of the newsletter.



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Newsletter
Editor, Pennsylvania Early Intervention

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services to young children and their families.
practices in providing early intervention
regarding the important issues and best
with the early intervention community
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