

WHAT ROLE DOES THE COUNCIL PLAY?

The Council functions as a systems level planner and advocates for eligible children and their families. The Council assumes three major roles:

- 1) **ADVISOR:** Advising the lead agency and the state legislature on issues related to the implementation of a coordinated system of early intervention services for children with or at-risk for a developmental disability and their families.
- 2) **NEGOTIATOR:** Working as an advocate to encourage a particular course of action by the state. Major activities of the Council are to “review and comment on the annual state plan for services for children birth to three years; and to participate in the public hearing on it. This is part of its overall responsibility to assess the service system, as it exists in the state. This information as well as the cultivation of interagency coordination puts the Council in a position to be effective in making changes in the provision of services in the state. With agency and provider representatives on the Council, communication is enhanced.
- 3) **CAPACITY BUILDER:** Enhancing the ability of the overall service system to address service needs. In this role, the Council advocates for supports and services from the public and private sectors to ensure that all eligible children and families will be provided early intervention services.

HOW DOES THE MASSACHUSETTS ICC WORK?

A significant time commitment for members is attendance at a minimum of 5 ICC meetings, a 1 or 2-day annual retreat and participation on a Standing Committee or Task Group. There is also a constant stream of articles and documents to be read.

Primarily through task related activities in the Standing Committees or Task Groups.

According to requirements established at several levels:

- Federal – according to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as administered by the Federal Department of Education.
- State – according to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 111G, as administered by the lead agency, Massachusetts Department of Public Health.
- Council – according to the ICC by-laws and policies.

In a close collaborative working relationship with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Closely with parent groups, statewide providers of early intervention services for children birth to three years, and institutions of higher learning that educate professionals in the disciplines involved in the provision of services.