



The Update:

News and Information for MA Early Intervention Providers

December 2010

Welcome to the December Edition of "The Update." This is a periodic newsletter focusing specifically on issues and information in MA Early Intervention. This issue will highlight the upcoming Teleconference on the BDI-2; CORI Requirements for contractors and subcontractors; the Role of the Nutritionist in EI; Reflective Practice Mentoring opportunities; and best practices regarding data collection and entry.

Teleconference—Battelle Developmental Inventory—2 (BDI-2)

Save the Date! The Department of Public Health (DPH) will host a teleconference on the BDI-2 implementation plan **Monday, December 6, 2010 from 10am – 11am**. This conference call will address questions regarding the implementation of the BDI-2 as the universal tool for determining eligibility and measuring child outcomes in MA EI.

The Department will address the following on the call:

- Brief overview of the implementation plan and timeline
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Brief overview of scoring for Massachusetts eligibility
- Ongoing training and technical assistance



Dial In Number: 888-972-7809

Participant Passcode: 48431

Looking for something to be specifically addressed during the call? Please forward your questions to Patti Fougere at 617-624-5975 or patti.fougere@state.ma.us.

Out of Catchment Notification Forms



Effective immediately, the DPH no longer requires Early Intervention Programs to submit the Out of Catchment Notification forms to their Regional Specialists.

Programs may continue to enroll children from out of catchment, when they have the capacity to meet the individual needs of the child and family in the home or other community setting. In addition, programs must continue to inform families in writing of the program that serves the town in which they reside.


EIPs are responsible for providing individualized services to families as outlined in the IFSP. Occasionally this means that services may be provided outside of the service area of the program. Programs are encouraged to consider requests for out of catchment services on an individual basis.

In some cases the family may live in a town that is immediately contiguous with the out of catchment program's area. In addition some children may spend most of their day in a child care setting, out of catchment and parents are able to regularly arrange to spend time with early intervention staff in that setting.

Programs that choose to enroll children from out of catchment are not relieved of the responsibility of establishing a relationship with the receiving LEA. This could be achieved through a collaborative relationship with the EIP in the child's home community or through other more direct means.

The Department is not obligated to support out of catchment transportation. However, individual requests to the vendor and/or transportation unit will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Family Rights Notice

 As of **January 1, 2011**, programs should place orders for **Family Rights Notices** with Mary Dennehy-Colorusso, Director, Office of Family Rights and Due Process. Programs may order Family Rights Notices by e-mail (mary.dennehy-colorusso@state.ma.us) or by sending a fax to 978-640-1027. Programs are reminded that the notice must be given to families at key points during a family's participation and enrollment, including eligibility determination, IFSP development/subsequent reviews and whenever there is a change proposed by the IFSP team to the child's early intervention services.

Updated Guidance regarding CORI Requirements for Subcontractors

The DPH has received additional guidance from legal following an inquiry from a provider regarding the CORI requirements for contracted staff. The language below will be included in the revised Standards under Section C.

Staff Requirements:

There must be a CORI check on each of the contractor's employees with the potential for unsupervised contact with children, which is documented in the employee's file. Such check shall be in accordance with current requirements in regulations of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, 101 CMR 15.00: Criminal Offender Record Checks. The Department shall be permitted access to such documentation, and may obtain a copy of the documentation upon request, to ascertain the contractor's

compliance with the CORI requirements.

The Early Intervention Provider also is responsible for ensuring that subcontractors conduct a documented CORI check for each employee with the potential for unsupervised contact with children, in accordance with the EOHHS CORI regulations, 101 CMR 15.00. The contractor shall ensure compliance through a subcontract or MOU that requires the subcontractor to perform and document in the employee's file such a CORI check. The subcontractor must allow the contracting agency and the Department to inspect and obtain a copy on request of the documentation of the CORI checks. In addition, the EI provider shall conduct periodic audits to ensure compliance with CORI requirements, in accordance with any guidelines established by the Department.

The Role of the Nutritionist in Early Intervention



The Registered Dietician is an essential member of an Early Intervention Team and when appropriate should be involved in the IFSP process and its development to address nutrition concerns and to maximize growth and nutritional intake.

The nutritionist may perform the following functions:

- Provide nutrition assessments and consultations to families
- Serve as a service coordinator for families who have major nutrition concerns
- Provide technical assistance and training to team members
- Develop and monitor individual nutrition care plans
- Work with the team members to facilitate development of feeding skills and optimize nutrition intake

The nutritionist will work with parents/caregivers and other EI providers to address nutrition concerns and to

maximize the child's growth and nutritional intake. If you have any of the following concerns you should refer the child and family to a nutritionist:

- Cries and/or arches at most meals
- Growth and/or weight concerns
- Chewing and/or swallowing difficulties
- Food allergies and/or food intolerances
- Vomiting and/or spitting up
- Tube feedings
- Transition off bottle
- Guidance on supplementation of vitamins/minerals

Many EIPs employ nutrition consultants or are connected with a community nutritionist in their area. For information on identifying an appropriate nutritionist in your area, visit the Massachusetts Dietetic Association at www.eatrightma.org or contact Julie Schaeffer, LDN at 617-624-6140 or julie.schaeffer@state.ma.us.

NCSEAM Family Survey Update



Survey dissemination for 2010 was completed in October. Thank you to all Programs for their support of this initiative, and hard work in helping families understand the importance of completing and returning it. Although we will not know exactly how many Surveys were returned until after December 1, we do know that our total number of returns for 2010 is at least double that of 2009. As of mid-November, 1125 Surveys from the October and over 3500 Surveys from the March distribution had been received. Analysis of the Surveys will begin in December. Information gathered from these Surveys will be available for the Annual Performance Report due to OSEP in February. Each Program will receive a specific report once the data has been compiled. This year's numbers and percents will provide a more accurate reflection of Programs' performance because we have the actual number of Surveys distributed and can compare it to the number returned.

In 2011, NCSEAM Family Surveys should, once again, be disseminated in March and October. Each Program should have enough Surveys for the March distribution. A new shipment will go out to all programs in time for the October release. Please contact Suzanne Gottlieb, Director, Office of Family Initiatives, suzanne.gottlieb@state.ma.us or 617-624-5979 if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for making this effort meaningful for our EI system.

Reflective Practice Mentorship Opportunity

The Early Intervention Training Center (EITC) is currently supporting a **Reflective Practice Program Mentorship** through funding allocated to the Regional Consultation Programs to support the professional development needs of staff in each region. The Department would like to highlight and share some of the feedback on this opportunity with the field.



Approximately 15 clinicians participated in the first session and there was a wonderful “energy” in the room. The facilitator, Deborah Hirschland, laid the foundation for future sessions through a variety of avenues:

1—providing some background and context on reflective practice by creating a space for staff to talk about their work.

2—sharing a story about a “spirited” child in a child care program in which open ended questions were answered both individually and as a group and allowed for staff to reflect on their work with individual children and families.

Participants left the first session feeling energized and passionate about their work.

The Massachusetts Early Intervention Training Center Mentorship Program offers Early Intervention providers and programs the opportunity for a supportive professional relationship where knowledge, skills and experience are shared. Each mentorship is individualized according to the specific needs of the individual or staff.

Mentors and Mentees meet for up to ten hours over six months, working on goals that they create together. The goals can focus on any aspect of clinical practice or administrative initiatives linked to the Massachusetts Early Intervention Operational Standards and Core Values.

A new mentorship initiative designed to support program staff in utilizing the Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI-2) is also being implemented.

For additional information about the mentorship program or if you are interested in pursuing a mentorship in Reflective Practice or the BDI-2, please contact Jean Nigro, EITC Director at 978-851-7261 ext. 4041 or at jean.nigro@state.ma.us.

Focused Monitoring—FY 2011 Best Practices

The **Focused Monitoring** process has evolved in the Massachusetts EI system over the last several years. This year the Department has moved away from identifying Priority Areas that are tied to program compliance. It is using the process and components of Focused Monitoring to gather information about programs and commendable practices. This redirection will help guide the DPH in policy making decisions.

The Department would like to highlight some best practices and offer tips to ensure timely and accurate data collection and entry. The Focused Monitoring Team identified the following Strategies and Tips for programs to enhance their data management systems:

- Create a “program culture” that prioritizes the importance of reliable and accurate data collection and entry.
- Identify a key point person to oversee the data management system.



- Offer staff an opportunity to provide input into the data collection process/system to provide “buy in” and “ownership” of the importance of good data collection processes.
- Develop data checklists for staff to ensure timely and accurate completion
- Establish monthly tickler reports
- Identify a back-up individual when the data manager is unavailable
- Attend and participate in DPH trainings and teleconferences related to data entry requirements and timelines. Monitor patterns, errors and trends in timely data completion of forms by staff.

The Department would like to thank the Program Director and staff at the Thom Neponset EIP, for sharing information and resources, ensuring timely and accurate data collection and entry.

**Comments and questions to:
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