



The Parent Leadership Project's *Parent Perspective*

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Early Intervention Information and Resources

August 2007

Paths to Leadership: Becoming a Parent Leader

A Season of Change: Creating New Opportunities for Parent Leaders

The end of summer often brings many changes for families. Family calendars fill up with activities, and the falling leaves remind us that even the weather is about to change. The Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project has been busy planning some changes of its own to provide increased opportunities for families to develop leadership skills and become more involved in the Early Intervention system.

One of the changes we've made is to the format of our newsletter. In each issue, we will highlight a parent leader from Massachusetts. We hope that their stories will inspire you. Each issue will also have information about the NCSEAM Family Survey. The Working Together section, which highlights the activities that Early Intervention programs do with and for families, will spotlight a different region of the state in each issue. The most exciting change we've made to the Parent Perspective is that we now have two articles in each issue that will be translated into Spanish. We hope that these changes will assist families in learning more about parent leadership and the many opportunities to get involved.

Another exciting change is to the Hausslein Parent Leadership Awards. These awards created by the Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project through funding from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, give families the opportunity to take a leadership role by identifying an unmet need and partnering with their EI programs and the community to address it. Teams of parents can be awarded up to \$1000 to implement their ideas. In the past, all three parent team members needed to have children currently enrolled in EI programs. This year we are trying something new. The parent team must still have a minimum of three families, with one parent designated as the team leader. The team leader must have a child who has received EI services in MA who is six years old or younger. Other team members may have children who are enrolled in EI, or are EI graduates or may be families from the community experiencing the same needs.

Named in honor of one of the most influential parent leaders in Massachusetts, Evelyn Hausslein, the awards encourage families to develop initiatives that expand opportunities for children in Early Intervention and the community. Four of the main criteria for projects to be considered for Hausslein Awards are:

- It must be parent-driven
- It must meet the needs of families who are currently enrolled or have been enrolled in the Massachusetts Early Intervention system
- It must be a new program or a new component to an existing

Free Workshop Opportunity

Kitchen-Table Grant Writing

Would you like to learn the basics about how to write a grant? In preparation for the Hausslein Awards Application, the Parent Leadership Project is pleased to offer families the opportunity to attend "Kitchen-Table Grant Writing". This free workshop will be presented by Evelyn Hausslein, for whom the Hausslein Awards are named. Evelyn is the mother of three adult children, one of whom has special needs. She served as Dean of Wheelock College Graduate School and as Director of the Early Childhood Unit of the Federation for Children with Special Needs. Evelyn has written and reviewed grants for more than 20 years.

Participants in this workshop will learn about the essential elements of writing a grant. The workshop will be held on September 20th at the Criterion Valley Early Intervention Program in Milford from 10am to 2pm.

Registration is required.

To register, please contact the Parent Leadership Project toll-free at 1-877-353-4757.

parent-initiated program

- It must demonstrate collaborations between families and other members of the community

Other considerations to remember when applying:

- In order to be funded, the project must be beyond the activities and/or services that could be provided through the early intervention program
- Funds may not be used to purchase equipment or capital expenditures.

Do you have an idea that would help families in Early Intervention or the community? Are you interested in becoming more involved? Applying for a Hausslein Award is a great way to share your ideas. For more information or to receive a copy of the application, contact the Parent Leadership Project at 1-877-353-4757 or email us at eiplp@yahoo.com. The application for Hausslein Awards, as well as information about past award recipients and projects, is also available for download on our website at www.eiplp.org. Deadline for the 2007-2008 Hausslein Award application is October 26, 2007.

NCSEAM Family Survey Information

Families! The Department of Public Health Wants to Know...



Are you satisfied with your Early Intervention Services and are they helping you to:

- Know your rights
- Communicate your child's needs
- Help your child learn and develop

The Federal government requires Part C Early Intervention programs to ask families these questions and report on their answers. Service Coordinators will be giving out a **Family Survey** to every enrolled family at their six-month Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) review. Your input is very important to us and will help to improve Early Intervention services for you and for other children and families. Please fill out the Survey using a **pencil** and return it in the self-addressed,

stamped envelope provided.

If you have questions about completing the Survey ask your Service Coordinator or the Parent Leadership Project.

Family Survey Frequently Asked Questions

1. I like everything about my EI services. Do I still need to fill out the survey?

Yes, we need feedback from all families and want to hear if services are or are not meeting your needs.

2. What's a Service Coordinator?

A Service Coordinator is the EI home visitor who coordinates all your Early Intervention services, makes sure you understand your rights and that you know where to find resources and supports.

Información Sobre La Encuesta Familiar NCSEAM

¿Atención familias! El Departamento de Salud Pública está interesado en saber si...

Están satisfechos con sus servicios de intervención temprana?

¿Les están ayudando a...

...conocer sus derechos?

...comunicar las necesidades de su niño?

...apoyar su desarrollo y aprendizaje?

El gobierno federal requiere que los programas de Intervención Temprana Parte C hagan estas preguntas a las familias y preparen informes con las respuestas. Los coordinadores de servicios entregarán una **encuesta familiar** a cada familia inscrita al hacer la revisión a los seis meses del Plan individualizado de servicios familiares (*Individualized Family Service Plan* o IFSP en inglés). Sus comentarios son muy importantes para nosotros. Nos ayudarán a mejorar los servicios de Intervención Temprana para usted y para otros niños y familias. Por favor, complete la encuesta con **lápiz** y



envíela en el sobre provisto con franqueo y dirección de destino. Si necesita ayuda, dígaselo al coordinador de servicios o a los miembros del Proyecto Padres Líderes (*Parent Leadership Project*).

Preguntas comunes sobre la encuesta familiar

1. Si estoy conforme con todos mis servicios de Intervención Temprana, ¿necesito completar la encuesta de todos modos?

Sí, necesitamos conocer los comentarios de todas las familias. Es importante que sepamos si los servicios están satisfaciendo o no sus necesidades.

2. ¿Qué es un coordinador de servicios?

El coordinador de servicios es la persona del programa de Intervención Temprana que visita su casa, coordina todos los servicios de Intervención Temprana y se asegura de que usted entienda sus derechos y sepa dónde encontrar recursos y apoyo.

Supporting Early Literacy: Spanish Parent-Child Activity Materials Available

The Spanish version of *Supporting Early Literacy in Natural Environments: Activities for Caregivers and Young Children* has recently been updated. It includes forty-six home and community activities designed to address the three key skills of 1) language development, 2) phonological awareness, and 3) general print awareness. The activities are

appropriate for children with disabilities as well as children who are developing typically. To learn more, visit www.wlearning.com/Parent.html.



One Path to Leadership . . .**Finding Your Way:
One Parent's Journey to Leadership**

What does it mean to be a parent leader? What does parent leadership look like? The answer will be different for each person, depending on their own experiences and the goals they hope to achieve as a parent leader. Over the next year, we will be highlighting a parent leader in each issue. We hope that their stories will inspire you to take your own first steps on the path to leadership . . .

“What am I going to do now?” That was the question that Amy Young began asking herself after her daughter, Sara, was enrolled in Early Intervention. Amy had been working towards a career in leadership since high school when she was part of a Youth in Government group. She loved the opportunity to visit the statehouse and learn about how government worked at all levels. She had developed a professional career as a National Trainer for YMCA and was on track to become a national leader in her field. She left that career to help care for Sara but realized that she still had a void to fill.

The service coordinator working with the family introduced Amy to the idea of family involvement by bringing her a brochure for the MEIC (Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium) Conference and a Parent Leadership Project brochure. Within a few weeks, Amy attended the conference, went to observe an ICC (Interagency Coordinating Council) meeting and then joined the ICC as the Steering Committee Parent Representative. She also became a parent presenter for trainings, bringing baby Sara along with her. She joined the Transition Forum Task Force and sat in on many other meetings. Amy says her level of involvement and her desire to become a parent leader was a “natural transition to utilize my professional skills”. Amy admits that in the beginning, she didn’t have a full understanding of how the Early Intervention system worked. “I knew the providers who came to our house, but I didn’t understand the higher level system.” When an opportunity to become part of a National ICC Leadership Project became available, Amy took part. She says that talking with other states helped her learn more about how Early Intervention looks on the national level.

Amy was eager to get involved and admits that in her excitement, she lost sight of finding a balance. “Being in charge was my comfort level, and the leadership opportunities were a way for me to gain some control back in the situation,” Amy says. She also recognized the importance of having family voices heard and so joined numerous different activities. At one point, Amy was on 12 different task forces or boards, and she quickly realized “you can’t do everything. You have to choose what is important to you, and choose wisely”. By taking a step back, Amy was able to decide where she wanted to spend her time and energies to make an impact.

***“Families are qualified,
have great ideas and can
make a difference.
Families know how to
make things work.”***

Amy Young, Parent Leader

Amy Young is now a familiar face for many in Early Intervention. She is the current co-chair of the ICC and is involved in many aspects of the Early Intervention system at state and national levels. She says her commitment to Early Intervention was inspired by the providers who worked with her family. “Early Intervention is what allowed me to truly understand my child and her potential,” she says. “Early Intervention is my passion.” Amy is also a member of the Massachusetts Department of Education Special Education Advisory Board and is involved with Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change. Her biggest passion, though, remains the children and families in Early Intervention. She is currently working on the national level as the president-elect of Early Intervention Family Alliance, a group of family leaders dedicated to improving outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

Amy encourages parents to get involved. “Families are qualified, have great ideas and can make a difference. Families know how to make things work.” She also says that parents who get involved may find that they benefit personally, finding new information and resources to help their own child. Parent leaders also need to look beyond their child to the bigger picture and understand that they can make a difference for the many children and families who receive Early Intervention services.

For Amy, parent leadership means not only working to create systems of care that are family-centered, but also working to support other families who want to become involved. Her commitment to parent leadership is best described by her favorite quote: “The purpose of leadership is not to create followers but to create more leaders.”

ENCONTRANDO TU MANERA: "El camino de un padre hacia el Liderazgo"

¿Que significa ser un padre líder? ¿En qué consiste el liderazgo de los padres? La respuesta es diferente para cada persona. Depende de las experiencias individuales y los objetivos que cada uno se propone lograr. Durante el próximo año, presentaremos en cada número el perfil de un padre líder. Esperamos que estas historias los inspiren para dar los primeros pasos en el camino al liderazgo....

“Y ahora, ¿qué hago?” Ésa fue la pregunta que Amy Young empezó a plantearse después de inscribir a su hija Sara en el programa de Intervención temprana (*Early Intervention*). Amy había comenzado a encaminarse hacia una carrera de liderazgo desde que, en la escuela secundaria, participó en un grupo denominado *Jóvenes en el gobierno*. La oportunidad de visitar la legislatura estatal y aprender cómo funcionaban todos los niveles del gobierno le resultó fascinante. Hizo carrera como instructora nacional para el programa YMCA y estaba a punto de convertirse en una figura conocida en todo el país. Finalmente tuvo que dejar el cargo para cuidar a Sara. Pero se dio cuenta de que eso le dejaba un gran vacío en su vida.

El coordinador de servicios que trabajaba con la familia le sugirió a Amy la posibilidad de participar más activamente mostrándole folletos de una conferencia del Consorcio de Intervención Temprana de Massachusetts (*Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium*, MEIC) y del Proyecto Padres Líderes (*Parent Leadership Project*). En las semanas siguientes, Amy asistió a la conferencia, participó como observadora en una reunión del Consejo Coordinador Interagencias (*Interagency Coordinating Council*, ICC) y luego se unió al ICC como representante de los padres en el comité directivo. También pasó a ser presentadora en las sesiones de capacitación llevando consigo a su beba Sara. Además, se sumó al Grupo de Tareas del Foro de Transición (*Transition Forum Task Force*) y participó en muchas otras reuniones. Amy dice que su nivel de participación y su deseo de convertirse en padre líder fue una “transición natural para utilizar mis habilidades profesionales”. Reconoce que al principio no entendía del todo cómo funcionaba el sistema de Intervención Temprana. “Conocía a los proveedores que venían a mi casa, pero no comprendía el sistema a un nivel más amplio”. Cuando surgió la oportunidad de unirse al Proyecto Nacional de Liderazgo del ICC, Amy no dudó en participar. Afirma que el hablar con representantes de otros estados la ayudó a entender mejor la estructura de Intervención Temprana a nivel nacional.

Estaba ansiosa por participar y reconoce que su entusiasmo la llevó a perder un poco el equilibrio en su vida. “Me resultaba cómodo estar a cargo de todo y las oportunidades de liderazgo eran una manera de recuperar algo de control sobre la situación”, explica Amy. Al darse cuenta de la importancia de que las voces de las familias se hicieran oír, comenzó a participar en aun más actividades. Hubo un momento en que era miembro de 12 consejos o grupos de tareas diferentes. Hasta que se dio cuenta que “es

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Amy Young

imposible hacer todo. Hay que saber elegir lo que es importante para uno. Y hay que elegir inteligentemente”. Al detenerse a reflexionar, Amy logró decidir dónde le interesaba invertir su tiempo y energía para marcar una diferencia.

Amy Young es ahora un rostro familiar para muchas de las personas de Intervención Temprana. Actualmente codirige el ICC y participa en muchos aspectos del sistema de Intervención Temprana a nivel estatal y nacional. Afirma que los proveedores que trabajaron con su familia fueron los que la inspiraron a comprometerse con los servicios de Intervención Temprana. “La Intervención Temprana fue lo que realmente me permitió comprender a mi hija y su potencial. La Intervención Temprana es mi pasión”. Amy es además miembro del Consejo Asesor del Departamento de Educación Especial de Massachusetts y participa en Familias de Massachusetts Organizándose para el Cambio (*Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change*). Lo que más le entusiasma, sin embargo, siguen siendo los niños y familias que participan en el programa de Intervención Temprana. Actualmente trabaja a nivel nacional como presidente electa de la Alianza de Familias de Intervención Temprana (*Early Intervention Family Alliance*), un grupo de líderes familiares dedicados a mejorar las oportunidades para los bebés y niños pequeños con discapacidades y sus familias.

Amy alienta a los padres a participar. “Las familias están calificadas, tienen ideas buenísimas y pueden marcar una gran diferencia. Las familias son las que saben hacer que las cosas funcionen”. También opina que los padres que participan pueden descubrir el beneficio personal de encontrar información y recursos nuevos para ayudar a sus hijos. “Los padres líderes necesitan mirar más allá de las necesidades de sus propios niños para comprender el cuadro más amplio y darse cuenta de que pueden marcar una diferencia para la gran cantidad de niños y familias que reciben servicios de Intervención Temprana”.

Para Amy, el liderazgo de los padres significa no sólo trabajar para crear sistemas de cuidado centrados en la familia, sino también dedicarse a apoyar a otras familias que desean tener una participación activa. La siguiente cita es la que quizás mejor describe su compromiso con el liderazgo de los padres: “El propósito de liderazgo no es crear seguidores, sino crear más líderes.”

Family TIES of Massachusetts: *Together In Enhancing Support*

Family TIES of Massachusetts is a network for parents of children with special needs. As parents of children with special needs, we realize that the most powerful source of support is other parents. Sharing information provides family members with knowledge and skills that help to improve our children's opportunities.

For those of you who are new to our program (and those who may not realize all we have to offer), our Regional Coordinators provide information and referrals to community and public programs that can provide supports for your children with special needs. They also offer our free two-hour workshop "Let's Get Organized" to parent groups across the state, providing you with information, guidance, and a free notebook and supplies to get started. For more information, contact us through our toll-free line, 1-800-905-TIES (8437) or through our updated website, www.massfamilyties.org.

Our Parent-to-Parent Program brings together parents who are seeking information and emotional support as they raise a child with a disability, chronic illness, or special needs. One of the greatest gifts that parents gain in raising their children is experience. We believe that sharing your experiences provides strength and support for the parent seeking support *and* the parent who serves as the volunteer Support Parent. Parents can

contact us to request a match, or to become trained as a Support Parent. For details, please contact Linea Luck Pearson, our Parent-to-Parent Coordinator, at 508-792-7880 or visit the Parent-to-Parent section of our website.

SHARE YOUR VOICE! gives parents an opportunity to share their expertise around raising a child with special needs and become involved in activities of interest to them. This volunteer group is contacted when Family TIES is asked to identify parents for activities such as focus groups on Emergency Preparedness or oral health, volunteer members of advisory groups, or to review printed materials that will be directed to parents of children with special needs. To receive your copy of the SHARE YOUR VOICE! form and become an active member of the group, please contact Linea Luck Pearson, our Parent-to-Parent Coordinator, at 508-792-7880 or visit the Parent Activities section of the website.

We hope to have an opportunity to connect with each and every family!

FAMILY TIES of Massachusetts



Together In Enhancing Support

Workshops & Conferences

Basic Rights — Sept. 22 from 10am to noon at Children's Hospital of Boston at Waltham. This workshop provides families with information about their rights and responsibilities under federal and state special education law. For more information, contact the Federation for Children with Special Needs at 800-331-0688.

Turning Three — Sept. 25 from 5:30 to 7:30pm at Criterion-Heritage in South Hadley. Also Sept. 26 from 6:30 to 8:30pm at Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown. This training highlights the differences between Early Intervention and publicly funded preschool programs for students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Federation for Children with Special Needs at 800-331-0688.

Family Leadership Series — Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change is accepting applications for their Central Region Leadership Series which begins on Oct. 12 & 13. The series is free to families, and respite/child care funding,

transportation and translation will be arranged on an as-needed basis. For more information, please contact Laura Casey at 978-297-2240 or via email at Casey-Black922@aol.com.

Annual Regional Western MA Early Intervention

Conference — October 25 from 12 to 4:30 at the Log Cabin Restaurant in Holyoke. The topic for this year's conference is "The Challenging Young Child". Parents and providers are invited to attend, and lunch will be provided. Registration is required. The conference is free to families enrolled in the Thom Western Regional Consultation Program, and there is a fee for other participants. For more information, contact Karen Cassidy at 413-783-5500.



Save the Date! Annual Joining Voices Conference — Nov. 29 at the UCC Conference Center in Framingham. For more information, visit Mass Family Voices at www.massfamilyvoices.org or call 1-800-331-0688 ext.210.

Spotlight on DPH Programs**Community Support Line**

"We don't know, what we don't know, please give us information"

Parent of a child with special needs

Families whose children have special needs, disabilities and chronic illness are always looking for information about resources and opportunities. Sometimes knowing who to call can be just as important as the actual services children receive. To address this need, The Department of Public Health, Division for Perinatal, Early Childhood and Special Health Needs maintains a Community Support Line. This statewide, toll-free Line offers information, technical assistance and referral for families whose children have special health care needs. Experienced Community Resource Specialists are available to assist families and providers Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Staff is bilingual and bicultural. The Support Line has the capacity to respond to calls in multiple languages.

Resource Specialists provide information and assistance about and referral to, a broad range of programs including: Public

Benefits information and eligibility; the Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund; Care Coordination services, family-to-family supports; and other programs within DPH, other state agencies and community-based programs that may be able to provide additional assistance.

More information about the Community Support Line and other DPH programs is available on line at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/fch/dpech.htm> or by calling:

Toll-free Phone: (800) 882-1435 (In MA only)
Phone (If calling from outside MA): (617) 624-6060
TTY: (617) 624-5992

**Resources****Early Intervention On the Web**

The Department of Public Health is pleased to announce the creation of a new website for Early Intervention as part of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) portal. The new website www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention provides EI providers, families and

others interested in EI with information about the statewide Early Intervention system.

On this website you will find information about family involvement, family rights, IFSP development, specialty services, quality assurance and transition. It is our hope that anyone interested in EI will find all of the resources that they need for any questions about the EI system. The website, www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention is a user friendly URL that will increase public awareness and knowledge of Early Intervention, DPH, Health and Human Services and the services it provides.

Based on the increased accountability to the Federal government regarding public reporting on local program performance and to have this information available to a wide range of constituents (consumers, providers, legislature, and other state agencies) it is important for this website to be easily accessible to the public.

When choosing www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention, Early Intervention selected a name that could be used as a brand name. We chose a name that:

- people will associate with Early Intervention
- is relatively short, simple, meaningful and easy to spell, and
- people will easily remember, and
- does not have another strong meaning in the marketplace.

We hope that you find the new 'friendly' Mass.Gov URL for Early Intervention in Massachusetts useful. A special thanks to Jack Stewart for making this happen.

Working Together — Western Region

Thom Westfield Infant Toddler Services hosted their Annual Picnic and Reunion on August 7th at Stanley Park in Westfield. Staff were excited to see the currently enrolled children and families enjoying the afternoon, and they were pleased to welcome several graduate families as well. After feasting on pizza and goodies, families had an opportunity to network while the children played at the playground. Thom Westfield Infant Toddler is also pleased to announce that the groundbreaking for their new building will be taking place this month!

The **Thom Western Regional Consultation Program (WRCP)** had a busy and exciting summer. In July, they hosted a SibShop program at Mt. Tom State Reservation. The program was attended by 8 siblings of children with special needs who are or were enrolled in the RCP. The children, ranging in age from six to twelve, spent the day playing, hiking and having fun. On August 7th, the RCP hosted their annual Summer Get Together at the Castle of Knights in Chicopee. The WRCP also has a busy fall planned, with several workshops and events for families. On September 27th, the program will host a training on “Enhancing Communication All Day Long, Naturally” by Maureen Dacey Nevers from 1 to 4 pm at Criterion Heritage in South Hadley. On October 20, the Statewide Regional Consultation Programs will be hosting a Halloween Party for all RCP families, past and present, at Criterion Milford Early Intervention Program from 11am to 2pm. Western Regional Consultation Program families are also invited to attend the Annual Skating Party on November 4th at Interskate 91 in Wilbraham from 3:30 to 5:30pm.

Criterion-Heritage Early Intervention Program offered a summer drop-in playground time for parents and children of all ages and their families during July and August. Families were able to meet and enjoy the outdoor playground while children practiced their gross motor skills on the equipment and under the covered play space. Children also enjoyed a variety of sensory play areas (sand, water, easels). This time has proven to be a wonderful opportunity for socialization with peers, language stimulation and a chance for parents to network with other parents.

On June 6, the **Pediatric Development Center, Inc (PDC)** celebrated its 25th year of services to the communities in Central Berkshire County and surrounding hilltowns with a gala event at the historic Stoneover Farm in Lenox. Approximately 200 people gathered to celebrate the milestone event with the PDC Team! Many were former families and friends of the agency. Several awards were given for the outstanding contributions made to the growth of the agency over the years. The PDC Family Award, a crystal globe inscribed with “Changing the world, one child at a time”, went to Jan & Mick Mangano, for their work with foster children with special medical or developmental needs over the last 43 years. The PDC Community Award went to a longtime friend of PDC and now Early Childhood Coordinator for Pittsfield Public Schools, Linda Carnevale. Linda proudly mentions her involvement with PDC at its inception, due to her son, David's developmental needs. She was honored for her strong commitment to ensuring a smooth and seamless transition for children and families. Presentations by the PDC Board included numerous awards for founding PDC member, Maureen O'Connell Atwood, Executive Director, who celebrated her 25th year at the agency. Patricia Hall Pellegrino, was also recognized for her contribution of 19 years as PDC's Program Director. Photographs shared by parents ranging back as far as 25 years ago were displayed under the heading: “Then & Now” depicting the children when they were under 3 years of age to the present day, demonstrating their multiple talents now! PDC and its Team owe so much to the families we have been privileged to serve over the past quarter century. Our thanks to all who made this achievement possible.

On July 27, **MSPCC Holyoke Early Intervention Program** held a Community Picnic and Fun day at the Springdale Park in Holyoke from 10am to 2pm. All children enrolled in the program and their families were invited as well as those families who attend the MSPCC Parent Center and G.E.D. programs. The Holyoke Parks and Recreation staff was on hand to provide sports activities and crafts. All the families who attended were recognized and awarded with Early Intervention Participation Certificates for 2007.

EI Program Focused Monitoring Update

Sharon Walsh from the National Center for Special Education, Accountability and Monitoring joined the DPH staff to facilitate the Focused Monitoring Stakeholders Meeting on August 16, 2007.

Focused Monitoring is a process that the Department of Public Health in Massachusetts uses to select and monitor programs within the state for compliance and identification of best practices in the areas of transition and service coordination.

The Focused Monitoring Stakeholders meeting provided an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input on current indicators and data sources utilized for selection of programs for onsite monitor-

ing. The Focused Monitoring Stakeholders group is made up of EI providers, family members, and others interested in the EI system. This group meets at least one time a year to advise the Department of Public Health regarding the process of Focused Monitoring. This year the group looked at the current indicators, which focus on transition and service coordination during the onsite visit. Stakeholders also reviewed other possible data sources, which are universally collected from all EI programs by the DPH that could potentially be used in determining which programs should be chosen for an onsite visit. Parent feedback is always welcomed within all DPH activities; if you are interested in participating in the Focused Monitoring process please call Faith at the PLP at 1-877-353-4757.

THE PARENT LEADERSHIP PROJECT

The Parent Leadership Project was created to support parents whose children receive early intervention services. The Project's main goal is to promote lifetime advocacy, leadership skills and the development of an informed parent constituency, which will encourage early intervention services to be increasingly family centered. The Project is a parent driven endeavor, which continually seeks family involvement and input regarding the needs of families enrolled in Early Intervention and is implemented by parents whose own children have received EI services. The Project staff consists of a Statewide Director, a Communications Coordinator, an EI Program Focused Monitoring Parent Coordinator, Education/Training Coordinator and Collaboration and Outreach Coordinator. Please feel free to contact any of them with your thoughts, suggestions, and concerns.

Statewide Director:

Darla Gundler
Toll-Free 877-35-EI-PLP
800-445-1255 Ext. 1157
Darla.gundler@state.ma.us

Communications Coordinator

Brenda Allair
413-586-7525 Ext. 1162
Brenda.allair@state.ma.us

Education/Training Coordinator

Lynn Taylor
781-774-6622
Lynn.taylor@state.ma.us

Contact Us:

Toll-Free: 877-35-EI-PLP
Email: eiplp@yahoo.com
On the web: www.eiplp.org

EI Focused Monitoring Parent Coordinator

Faith Piaggi
413-663-3610
faithp1@verizon.net

Collaboration and Outreach Coordinator

Jada Carlson
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23 Service Center
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English and Español

To receive the *Parent Perspective Newsletter*, a free publication, published six times a year by the Parent Leadership Project, call us toll-free at (877) 353-4757 and ask to be added to the PLP mailing list or email eiplp@yahoo.com

NEXT DEADLINE: We welcome your input and suggestions for resources and articles. The next deadline is **September 17**. Please call our toll-free number (877) 353-4757 or the email the newsletter editor at Brenda.allair@state.ma.us.

The *Parent Perspective* newsletter is produced six times a year by the Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project, through funding from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

