



## The Parent Leadership Project's *Parent Perspective*

(877) 35-EI-PLP ♦ [www.eiplp.org](http://www.eiplp.org) ♦ [eiplp@yahoo.com](mailto:eiplp@yahoo.com)

**Early Intervention Information and Resources**

**Dec/Jan 2008**

*Paths to Leadership: Becoming a Parent Leader*

### **Parents Invited to Participate in Early Intervention Competency Indicator Review Process**

**A**s part of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), the Department of Public Health is announcing the launch of a competency indicator review process. The CSPD is mandated by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and requires each state to maintain a document outlining a plan for recruiting, preparing, qualifying, and retaining EI personnel. In Massachusetts, the CSPD is reviewed and implemented by the Personnel Preparation Committee of the ICC.

A certification process has been developed that assures all EI staff achieve a set of core competencies. The MA CSPD states that core competencies will be reviewed and updated every three to five years. The purpose of this review process is to clarify the wording of the competencies. The competency indicators provide the foundation for the Massachusetts Certification for Early Intervention Specialists system (CEIS).

Interested community members, including families, are invited to participate as part of a stakeholder group. Each member will be on a workgroup for a competency area or areas. The process will include review work by individuals, then review in small groups, followed by recommendations to ICC and DPH.

There will be other ways to participate in this process such as reviewing draft language, as well as providing input and feedback on the final product. The draft document to be presented to ICC will also be widely available for input in advance of the vote at ICC.

Those wishing to participate must complete an application, available electronically at [www.eitrainingcenter.org](http://www.eitrainingcenter.org), and [www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention](http://www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention). Family members who participate may be eligible for a stipend.

### *Opportunity Knocks*

### **Public Hearing for Early Intervention Funding Application**

**T**he Massachusetts Department of Public Health in cooperation with the Interagency Coordinating Council will hold a public hearing on the Commonwealth's 22nd Year Application for funding under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Part C of IDEA is the federal law that provides funds to assist states in providing Early Intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. In order to receive these funds, the state needs to submit an application to the federal Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

As the lead agency for Early Intervention Services, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health encourages anyone with an interest in the Early Intervention system to testify in person at the hearings, including members of families with young children, professionals who serve young children and families, and officials from any state agencies with responsibilities for services for children and families. Written testimony will also be accepted.



**Stay Tuned for  
More Information!**

**Updated information about the  
Public Hearing  
including date, time and location  
will be available on the  
EI Parent Leadership Project website  
[www.eiplp.org](http://www.eiplp.org)  
or by calling  
1-877-353-4757**

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



**F**amilies, thank you for your willingness to fill out and return the NCSEAM Family Survey you received from your Service Coordinator at the time of your six-month IFSP review. We are excited to let you know that **326** Surveys have been returned coming in from 50 of our 60 Early Intervention programs.

We also want to let you know that the Survey you are receiving this year has some important differences than any sent out in the past. First, it is going to every family enrolled in the EI system for over six months. Secondly, based on advice from EI staff and from families, a few of the questions that appear on the national survey have been changed to make them more meaningful to our Massachusetts EI system. In addition, there are some new questions. Two very important new questions are **# 48** which asks families *if EI services have helped them to feel more hopeful about their child's future* and **# 52** which asks *if anyone helped a family to fill out the Survey*. The Massachusetts Early Intervention system will learn a lot from the answers you give to these and the other questions. So, please,

remember to fill out and return your Survey in the envelope provided. We appreciate your help in improving EI services.

### Family Survey Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do I have to use a pencil to fill out the Survey?  
*The Survey is scanned by a machine that only recognizes pencil. Any Survey filled out in pen will not be counted.*
2. I had an IFSP review and didn't get a Family Survey. What should I do?  
*Surveys are given to families at their six-month IFSP review. You might have other meetings where changes are made to the IFSP, but will only get a Family Survey after six months of services. If you had a six-month review and didn't get a Survey, let your Service Coordinator know right away.*

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



**Q**ueridas familias:

Gracias por su buena disposición para completar y enviar la Encuesta para Familias del NCSEAM (Centro Nacional de Supervisión de la Educación Especial) entregada por su Coordinador de Servicios en ocasión de la revisión semestral de IFSP (Plan de Servicio Individualizado Familiar). Nos alegra contarles que hemos recibido **326** Encuestas provenientes de 50 de nuestros 60 programas de Intervención Temprana.

También deseamos contarles que la Encuesta que recibirán este año tiene algunas diferencias importantes respecto de cualquier otra enviada hasta ahora. En primer lugar, la encuesta le llegará a todas las familias que estén inscritas en el sistema de Intervención Temprana (EI) desde hace más de seis meses. En segundo lugar, de acuerdo con lo recomendado por el equipo de EI y las familias, se han modificado algunas preguntas de la encuesta nacional a fin de que éstas tengan más sentido para nuestro sistema de EI de Massachusetts. Asimismo, se han agregado algunas preguntas nuevas. Dos preguntas nuevas muy importantes son la **Nº 48**, que pregunta a la familia **si los servicios de EI los han ayudado a tener más esperanzas en el futuro de su hijo**, y la **Nº 52**, que pregunta **si alguien ayudó a**

**la familia a completar la Encuesta.** El sistema de Intervención Temprana de Massachusetts aprenderá muchísimo a partir de las respuestas a éstas y al resto de las preguntas. Por ello, por favor, recuerde completar y enviar la Encuesta en el sobre provisto. Agradecemos su ayuda para el mejoramiento de los servicios de EI.

### Preguntas comunes acerca de la Encuesta familiar

1. ¿Por qué debo usar lápiz para completar la Encuesta?  
*La Encuesta es escaneada por una máquina que sólo reconoce el lápiz. Toda Encuesta llenada en lapicera no se computará.*
2. Hice la revisión de IFSP, pero no recibí una Encuesta para Familias. ¿Qué debo hacer?  
*Las Encuestas se le entregan a la familia durante la revisión semestral del IFSP. Quizá tenga otras reuniones durante las que se modifique el IFSP, pero recién recibirá la Encuesta para Familias después de seis meses de servicio. Si ya pasó por la revisión semestral y no recibió la Encuesta, notifíquese a su Coordinador de Servicios de inmediato.*

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

*Parent Leadership means different things for different families. It can be chairing a large meeting, giving your opinion about a policy or program or deciding to learn everything you can about your child's particular diagnosis. What's the same for every family is that becoming a parent leader is a journey. Here's how one family took a step on the path.*

For Joanne Williams, becoming a parent leader has been about making connections with other families. Her youngest son was born prematurely, and health concerns during his first year of life kept both him and Joanne at home most of the time. Unable to participate in playgroups and other activities, Joanne reached out to other families by telephone. She learned about Family TIES of Massachusetts and the EI Parent Leadership Project, and she became interested in finding ways to give back the support she was receiving. She was impressed by the “team-building approach” she saw in EI as the service providers partnered with her to support her son’s growth and development, and she wanted to find ways to give back to the system.

When asked what inspired her to get involved as a parent leader, Joanne laughs and says, “Systems are all around us – Early Intervention, medical and school systems. Why would we *not* want to be involved?” She encourages families to find the subject that they are passionate about and to use that energy and enthusiasm to get involved and find leadership roles. Joanne’s passion is ensuring that families in Early Intervention feel supported and knowledgeable when their child transitions to school or other settings and that they are able to create a “bridge” between those services. She has been an active member of the Massachusetts Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) as the Boston Region Parent Representative, giving a presentation at this year’s ICC Retreat as part of her work with the ICC Program Planning Committee. “It made me step outside my shell,” she says, “and I was proud of the work we’ve done.”

Joanne feels strongly that Early Intervention fosters family/professional partnerships because the family is a key partner on the team working to develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). “Early Intervention helps us as parents to recognize our child’s needs, and advocate for the services to address those needs. Families can use this experience as a model for partnership with providers in other systems.” She brings that experience of partnership to her other leadership roles. Joanne is involved as a parent co-presenter at the Early Intervention Training Center, giving her the opportunity to share her story with providers who are new to the EI system.



*ICC Parent Representatives, Left to Right: Jennifer DerBogossian, Northeast Representative, Joanne Williams, Boston Representative, Jack Harris, At-Large Parent Representative, Amy Young, ICC Co-Chair*

She also serves on the Parent Advisory Board for the Department of Early Education and Care, a position that gives her a chance to voice her ideas as a stakeholder and to find out about new programs and opportunities for her own community. Through her work with the ICC, Joanne has traveled to the OSEP (Office for Special Education Programs) Conference in Washington DC, an experience that gave her a “national viewpoint” of Early Intervention and special education services. Her passion for education has also led her to her role as a Parent Consultant with the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

Joanne’s advice for families who are looking to get involved is to “start by talking with other parents. Learn about opportunities and build your knowledge and your confidence to take the next step.” She encourages families to connect with the Parent Leadership Project which can offer a variety of ways to get involved and provide support for becoming a parent leader. She also encourages parents to find ways to put all the pieces together, to learn about the different service systems and to recognize that family involvement can “pave the way for changes.”

In talking with other parents throughout Massachusetts and on a national level, Joanne believes that the Massachusetts Early Intervention system has a special commitment to family involvement and that, “Parents can make sure that the fire keeps burning, that family-centered care stays an important part of our systems of care.”

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

*Ser padre líder tiene un significado diferente para cada familia. Puede consistir en presidir una reunión grande, dar la opinión sobre una política o programa, o decidir que uno se informará lo más posible sobre el diagnóstico específico de su niño. Lo que tiene en común para todas las familias, sin embargo, es que para convertirse en padre líder hay que transitar un camino. Éste es el relato de cómo una familia dio un paso en esa dirección.*

Para Joanne Williams, ser madre líder ha consistido en establecer conexiones con otras familias. Su hijo menor nació prematuramente, y sus problemas de salud durante el primer año de vida los mantuvieron a ambos en casa la mayor parte del tiempo. Al no poder participar de grupos de juego y otras actividades, Joanne se acercó a otras familias por teléfono. Se enteró de *Family TIES of Massachusetts* y de *El Parent Leadership Project* y se interesó en encontrar maneras para retribuir todo el apoyo que estaba recibiendo. Le impresionó el "enfoque de equipo" que vio en Intervención Temprana mientras los proveedores de servicios trabajaban a su lado para apoyar el crecimiento y el desarrollo de su hijo, y deseaba encontrar formas para devolverle algo al sistema.

Cuando se le pregunta qué la motivó a participar como madre líder, Joanne sonríe y dice: "Estamos rodeados de sistemas, el de Intervención Temprana, los sistemas médicos y escolares. ¿Por qué *no* participar?" Ella alienta a las familias a hallar un tema que las apasione y a usar ese entusiasmo y energía para participar y encontrar los roles de liderazgo. La pasión de Joanne tiene que ver con asegurar que las familias en Intervención Temprana se sientan apoyadas e informadas cuando sus hijos pasan a la escuela o a otros entornos y que sean capaces de tender un "puente" entre esos servicios. Ella ha sido miembro activo del Massachusetts Intergovernmental Coordinating Council (ICC, Consejo de Coordinación entre Organismos de Massachusetts) como Representante de Padres de la Región Boston e hizo una presentación en el Retiro del ICC de este año como parte de su trabajo dentro de la Comisión de Planificación de Programas del ICC. "Me hizo salir del cascarón," dice, "y estoy orgullosa del trabajo que hemos hecho."

Joanne cree firmemente que la Intervención Temprana fomenta las asociaciones entre la familia y los profesionales porque la familia

es un socio clave del equipo que trabaja en el desarrollo de un Plan Individualizado de Servicios Familiares (IFSP, por sus siglas en inglés). "La Intervención Temprana nos ayuda como padres a reconocer las necesidades de nuestros hijos y a abogar por los servicios para satisfacer esas necesidades. Las familias pueden utilizar esta experiencia como modelo para relacionarse con proveedores de otros sistemas." Ella lleva esa experiencia de relación a sus otros roles de liderazgo. Joanne se desempeña como copresentadora de padres en el Centro de Capacitación de Intervención Temprana, lo que le permite compartir su historia con los nuevos proveedores del sistema de EI. También, se desempeña en el Consejo Asesor para Padres del Departamento de Educación y Atención Temprana, un puesto que le da la oportunidad de expresar sus ideas como parte interesada y conocer nuevos programas y oportunidades para su propia comunidad. A través de su trabajo con el ICC, Joanne ha viajado a la Conferencia de la OSEP (Oficina de Programas de Educación Especial) realizada en Washington DC, una experiencia que le dio una "visión nacional" de los servicios de educación especial e Intervención Temprana. Su pasión por la educación también la ha llevado a desempeñarse como Consultora de Padres en la Federación de Niños con Necesidades Especiales.

El consejo de Joanne para las familias que buscan participar es "comenzar hablando con otros padres. Conozcan las oportunidades, amplíen sus conocimientos y fortalezcan su confianza para dar el siguiente paso." Ella alienta a las familias a conectarse con el *Parent Leadership Project* que ofrece diversas formas de participación y brinda apoyo para convertirse en un padre líder. Asimismo, estimula a encontrar las vías para lograr que todo encaje, informarse sobre los diferentes sistemas de servicio y reconocer que la participación familiar puede "allanar el camino hacia los cambios."

Al hablar con otros padres de todo Massachusetts y del resto del país, Joanne cree que el sistema de Intervención Temprana de Massachusetts tiene un compromiso especial con la participación familiar y que "los padres pueden estar seguros de que la llama sigue encendida, que ese centro dedicado a la familia sigue siendo una parte importante de nuestros sistemas asistenciales."

### Workshops & Conferences

**Family Leadership Series** — Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change is accepting applications for their Northeast Region Leadership Series which begins on February 1&2. The series provides families with information and skills to effectively impact state and local organizations. 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 Susan Nadworny at 781-665-5179 or snadw@aol.com.

**Turning Three** — This training, offered by the Federation for Children with Special Needs, highlights the differences between

Early Intervention and publicly funded preschool programs for children with disabilities. The workshop is held at various locations throughout the state. For more information, contact the Federation at 800-331-0688.

**An IEP for My Child** — Jan. 15 from 6-8pm at Chicopee Main Public Library in Chicopee. This workshop assists parents in understanding the development of the IEP. For more information about this training contact Karen Cassidy at 413-783-5500 or the Federation for Children with Special Needs at 1-800-331-0688.

**Resources**

## Parent Training Groups for Young Children with or at Risk for Autism

Families with children between the ages of 15 months and 24 months who are at risk for or have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are invited to participate in a new study. Children who are “at risk” are those who: (1) have delays in social and communication development; (2) whose parents or service providers have expressed a concern about social and communication behaviors or ASD and/or (3) who have failed a routine autism screening.

The study will be conducted by University of Massachusetts Boston, Professor Alice S. Carter and Drs. Susan Wilczynski and Laura Fisher at the May Institute — National Autism Center in Randolph. The study will examine the potential benefits of a parent training intervention designed to improve social communication skills in young children at risk for an ASD.

To qualify for this intervention study, parents must bring their child to the May Institute - National Autism Center for an initial evaluation to determine eligibility. Half of the eligible families will be selected by chance to receive the Hanen More Than Words training, which will be provided by a speech-language pathologist. Families receiving Hanen More Than Words will participate in a group orientation session and a home visit from the speech-language pathologist, followed by 8 weekly small

group sessions at the May Institute - National Autism Center. All families are encouraged to continue their participation in any community-based intervention in which they are involved and will receive three assessments during the course of the 9-month study.

This study is funded by Autism Speaks and is also being conducted at the University of Miami and Vanderbilt University. Compensation will be provided to all participating families for their time.

For more information, please contact Angelina Rayno at [Angelina.Rayno@umb.edu](mailto:Angelina.Rayno@umb.edu) or 617-287-6313.

**Resources**

## Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Resources for Families



The Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program (UNHS) at the Department of Public Health is excited to announce that fact sheets for parents of children with unilateral (one-ear) hearing loss and those with mild hearing loss are available to help answer some of the questions they may have about their child's needs. The program's Parent

Information Kit, which contains a variety of information for families of children who have been diagnosed with hearing loss, is also now available in both English and Spanish.

Parent Information Kits are provided to DPH approved audiologists who distribute them to families when they learn their child has a hearing loss. Websites for family support, information on hearing aids, brochures for the Family Sign Language Program and information on Early Intervention is included in the kit to help parents understand and learn more about their child's diagnosis. The packet also contains fact sheets and other useful information for families of children

with hearing loss. Families can also visit the UNHS website at [www.mass.gov/dph/fch/unhsp/](http://www.mass.gov/dph/fch/unhsp/) for more information.

The UNHS program works with the hospitals and birth centers in Massachusetts to ensure that all newborns receive a hearing screening prior to discharge. The program also helps families access services if their child is identified as having a hearing loss after follow-up hearing tests have been done.

Families or programs who would like to receive a Parent Information Kit or who are interested in more information about the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program can contact Martha DeHahn, Parent Outreach Specialist and parent of two children with hearing loss, at 1-800-445-1255 or email [newborn.hearing@state.ma.us](mailto:newborn.hearing@state.ma.us).

## Working Together—Southeast Region

**Cape & Islands Early Intervention Program** staff have participated in the advanced training for the SCERTS (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support) model developed by Barry Prizant and colleagues. Two of those professionals have also gone on to participate in the special sessions of the training. The desire to find a model of service delivery for children on the Autism Spectrum or suspected of having ASD, and others with similar needs, that was consistent with a family-centered and functional program philosophy was the impetus for this effort. The group meets regularly to discuss strategies for home visits, on-going assessment, and classroom programming to support children on the Autism Spectrum or who have similar developmental needs. Families continue to have access to Specialty Services Programs that use an ABA approach once their children have been diagnosed, but this training and commitment by the staff has given them additional tools for meeting the unique needs of many of the children we serve and a choice for parents of strategies that best fit for their family. To support our efforts, The John W. Alden Trust has provided a grant for materials, equipment and other resources, such as speakers, that will enhance our service delivery and in particular support our twice weekly family support programs.

On October 26th Cape Cod Child Development Program, Inc., once again held its all-day Staff Day for staff of the agency including early intervention, early education and care, family child care, school age childcare, administration and support. Among the speakers for the day were Tom Miller from Perkins speaking on Children with Visual Impairment or Deaf-Blindness, and 3 EI staff presenting on Play is our Work (Joanne Powers), When a Hug isn't Enough (Meredith Ramos), and The Impact of Sensory Processing - Ideas and Strategies (Nancy Radosevic, OTR/L). Staff can pick workshops throughout the day to meet their individual professional development interests, personal health, wellness and safety, or family life. Other topics included sign language, computer skills, healthy eating, Portuguese culture, bullying, weight watchers, positive discipline and even a mini-facial! The entire agency is closed for the day to afford this opportunity for all of its more than 220 employees each year.

The **Taunton Area Early Intervention Program** held their Annual Halloween party recently at the St. Joseph's Church Hall in Dighton. It was attended by over 100 families and Early Intervention staff. Children came all dressed up in costumes and participated in circle time, singing, pumpkin shape sorting, bean bag toss, find the spider in the spaghetti, play-dough, and bowling.

In December, the program will host a holiday celebration for staff and families enrolled in the program. A visit from Santa is sure to make the event lots of fun!

**South Bay Fall River Early Intervention Program** hosted a Halloween Party for children and families enrolled in the program. The party was held at a local landmark, the Battleship Cove Carousel at Heritage State Park. Many families attended the event, and both children and adults enjoyed taking a ride on the carousel and taking in the views of the ships at Battleship Cove.

**Kennedy-Donovan Center Early Intervention in Plymouth (KDC Plymouth)** welcomes Nancy Walsh as our new Family Liaison. Nancy started in July and has already made her mark in engaging and empowering families in the early intervention process. Nancy is the parent of two teenage girls, one of whom was in the KDC EI program as an infant and toddler.

KDC Plymouth had its annual Rodman Ride, Swing Fore the Kids Golf Tournament in September. It was held at Souther's Marsh Golf Club in Plymouth and the day was perfect! We had many families and community members who participated by playing golf and helping to raise funds through a silent auction. It was great to see so many of our "alumni" parents back to support the program.



In October, child groups, families, and staff visited Sauchek Farm in Plympton. Everyone went for a walk through the corn maze and enjoyed a hayride to a pumpkin patch, where many of the children picked out pumpkins for Halloween.

A Transition Night was held recently with local school district representatives and families. The training was provided by Marion Lane, KDC's Transition Coordinator. Following the training, families had an opportunity to meet and talk with their respective school district representatives to learn more about their programs.

The Annual Family Holiday Party will be held on December 13<sup>th</sup> for the children and families currently enrolled in Early Intervention. The staff welcomes the families and provides crafts and games as well as a visit from Santa for pictures.

A "Yelling Doesn't Work" workshop is being planned for April. Presented by the Federation for Children with Special Needs, this workshop provides insight into why a child with special needs misbehaves and how changing your behavior will in turn change theirs. Space is limited. Please contact Nancy Walsh, Family Liaison, for more information at (508) 747-2012 ext 173.

Parents who are interested in any information about future workshops and events, please call Nancy Walsh, Family Liaison at (508) 747-2012 ext 173.

## Working Together, Cont'd

**South Bay Early Intervention Programs** in Brockton and Fall River provided several Infant Massage trainings for parents and members of the community. Certified Infant Massage instructors taught participants about the benefits of massage, which include the promotion of bonding and attachment, increased self-esteem, decreased stress response, promotion of healthy digestion and sleep, improved circulation, and the improvement of overall functioning of the digestive track.

The programs are also busy planning holiday parties for all children and families enrolled in their programs. We provide a festive atmosphere full of special activities, snacks, and a holiday gift for all of our EI children!

**The Schwartz Center for Children** has been very busy providing opportunities for children and their families. On October 26th, the programs of the Schwartz Center, (RCP, EI, and Day School) and the Family Involvement Committee hosted a harvest night for all families. The families participated in hay rides, pumpkin patch, pumpkin decorating, trick

or treating, monster mash dancing, cup cake decorating and fun activities for all. Over 260 people attended this very successful event.

The Regional Consultation Program participated in hosting the statewide RCP Halloween Party at Criterion Milford. This was a well attended event where families enjoyed music, entertainment, trick or treating, lunch and the opportunity to meet other families. Marco Fernandes, DPH Care Coordinator, also presented a "Public Benefits" workshop to RCP and Early Intervention staff & families. The RCP is also hosting a support group for parents of "children with specialness".

The RCP is hosting the Federation for Children with Special Needs as they present "Turning Three" on December 4, 2007. A workshop on the "IEP Process" will be held on January 8, 2008.

Additional and updated information can be found on schwartzcenter.org web site.

## Family TIES of Massachusetts: *Together in Enhancing Support* By Mary Castro Summers

**G**reetings from Family TIES of Massachusetts, a statewide network for families of children with special needs. Our staff offers information and referral services, parent-to-parent matching, and workshops to build parents' skills and knowledge. Family TIES is a project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division for Perinatal, Early Childhood & Special Health Needs.

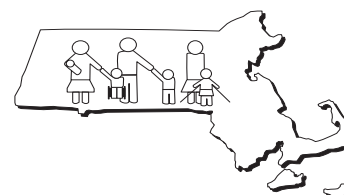
The Family TIES Parent Advisor Program offers parents an opportunity to share their experiences. Topics and opportunities vary greatly. Participants may be invited to share their expertise with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on many topics, such as access to medical care, program and policy development, family support programs, or transition issues, to name a few. Opportunities may come in the form of an invitation to attend a focus group, serve on an advisory board or committee, review educational materials or grant proposals, or share your experiences among a group of interested professionals. Time commitments vary, and availability is always based on family circumstances. Our Parent Advisors also receive periodic listings of upcoming leadership development opportunities.

Please consider joining us, in our efforts to bring the *Parent Perspective* to forums where we can make a difference.

The SHARE YOUR VOICE! Form is available (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese) on the Family TIES website: [www.massfamilyties.org](http://www.massfamilyties.org). Call our Regional Coordinators for more information: 800-905-TIES (8437).

**SHARE YOUR VOICE !**

## FAMILY TIES of Massachusetts



*Together In Enhancing Support*

## 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

### **Collaboration and Outreach Coordinator**

Jada Carlson  
978-851-7261 Ext. 4058  
Jada.carlson@state.ma.us

### **Contact Us:**

Toll-Free: 877-35-EI-PLP  
Email: [eiplp@yahoo.com](mailto:eiplp@yahoo.com)  
On the web: [www.eiplp.org](http://www.eiplp.org)

### **EI Focused Monitoring Parent Coordinator**

Faith Piaggi  
413-663-3610  
[faithp1@verizon.net](mailto:faithp1@verizon.net)

### **Education/Training Coordinator** VACANT



23 Service Center  
Northampton MA 01060

**Save the Date!**



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Visions of Community  
March 1, 2008  
World Trade Center — Boston

Please mark your calendars for this conference! Registration is scheduled to begin on December 21, and a limited number of scholarships will be available. More information about the Federation for Children with Special Needs, including presentations and handouts from last year's conference, is available on the web at [www.fcsn.org](http://www.fcsn.org).