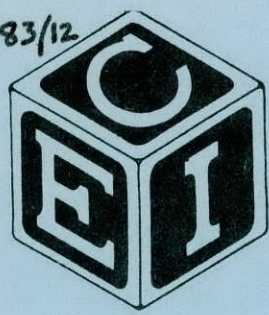


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NEWSLETTER

Early Childhood Intervention

NON-CIRCULATING

No. 7

December 1983

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ECI SUMMER WORKSHOP

The ECI Summer Workshop served as a meeting place for program personnel to learn better ways to handle areas of programmatic and fiscal concern, share ideas and information, and enable participants to meet their colleagues from around the state. It is not possible to transcribe the good feelings generated by the workshop nor the lively discussions that took place. The presentations themselves, however, were transcribed in a summary form to serve as a review for the participants. Because the information is appropriate not only for ECI-related personnel but for all who work with or are concerned about developmentally delayed children, it is reprinted here. What follows, therefore, is a summary of a summary--items drawn from the Proceedings of the ECI Summer Workshop that seem of widespread interest.

UNDERSTANDING PARENTS

It is not appropriate to compare the feelings of parents of handicapped children with those of parents whose children have died. Two aspects of the grief process apply: anger and guilt. An aspect that does not apply is acceptance.

Most literature stresses that parents should accept the fact that their child is handicapped. However, parents of a handicapped child find acceptance an almost impossible order. In the grief process that accompanies death there are rituals, there is finality; a parent can move on. Parents of a handicapped child face the death not of their child but of their dreams and hopes. Along with this is the fact that the child will be a part of their future. Handicapped children may never be in Little League or Brownies; they may not go to regular public school or get a driver's license, go to college or get married. But they continue to live. The child will never reach the milestones that society has set up for the normal child. It is depressing when the neighbor's youngster starts day care and their's starts early childhood intervention; when friends' children attend birthday parties, ride bikes, go to camp, have a date, and their child does none of these things.

Instead of accepting, the parents of handicapped children can cope. They live with the child and his problems day by day. They don't learn to accept, but they can learn to cope.

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(continued on page 2)

Parents' abilities to cope tend to fluctuate with every milestone their child should have reached but possibly never will. They experience highs and lows almost continuously. There is never a magic day when they accept; there is never a time when progress moves in a steady upward path.

Professionals cannot always help. You cannot win them all, but you must be willing to try.

INVOLVING PARENTS IN TRAINING

How many service providers get upset with parents for expecting too much of a child? We tend to make the same mistake in working with parents. If a counselor sets expectations too high, parents are not going to want to come in for training.

As professionals we must realize that we don't know all the answers and cannot be expected to. The role of the professional is not to solve problems but to give information and support to parents to help them solve problems themselves. You must get the parent to trust you. Change is frightening. Let the parent express fear and worry. There are not good or bad parents, but effective and ineffective ones. Teach parenting skills so that the parent may be effective. Be consistent; be a role model. Take time to talk to the parent as a person--talk about crops, have tea, whatever seems appropriate. Don't overwhelm parents with too much information at once. Tackle one behavioral problem at a time. Recognize that skills can be used with all children, and with people in general, not just with handicapped children. Build parents' self-esteem; help them feel success. Keep language at an elementary level, use simple handouts. These parents want help, not a college course.

For meetings, be consistent. Set a time and be there. Frequent short meetings are more effective than infrequent long-ones. Recognize and deal with what the group needs, not with a curriculum schedule.

BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

There are two behavior patterns in children: behavior parents like, and behavior they do not like. In working with parents, we are not dealing with the concept of whether a child is good or bad, we are dealing with behavior. Because a child is handicapped does not mean that he should be allowed to get away with bad behavior. Parenting a handicapped child is like parenting a normal child. The key difference is that the steps are slower.

Share with parents information about behavior itself. Behavior is learned, whether it is good or bad. Have parents make a list that specifies three types of behavior: things they like, things that are aggravating, and things that are intolerable. The whole idea of effective parenting is to decrease the uproar in families. It is not wise to follow the old concept that if children are being good, leave them alone. Rather, when children do things you like, praise them; when they do things that are aggravating, ignore them; and when they do things that are intolerable, punish them.

THE MONEY GAME

Looking for program funds? The Clearinghouse on the Handicapped has published a thorough, brief overview of the Federal funding process in the disability field. In addition to directing grant seekers to the proper sources for funding, the article lists a variety of organizations and publications that offer detailed information on this subject. Single copies of this 6-page article are available from G. F. England, Resource Memoranda Editor, Texas Department of MHMR, P.O. Box 12668, Austin 78711.

For direct and current information on available funds, two primary sources are the Federal Register and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. These publications are available at many large public libraries, Federal Information Center, and some state government agencies.

GRANTS ALERT

The U.S. Department of Education is accepting grant applications for new awards under its handicapped children's early education program. Applications for demonstration projects are due January 20; for outreach projects, February 9. Approximately \$3 million is available to support 30 new demonstration projects and \$5 million to support 15 new outreach projects in FY 84. For further information and application materials, contact Jane DeWeerd, Program Development Branch, Division of Innovation and Development, Special Education Programs. U.S. Department of Education, Donohoe Bldg., Room 4046, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202; 202/245-9405.

SAFETY ALERT

From the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) come words of warning to parents and caregivers of young children:

. Mesh-sided cribs and playpens, in which unattended babies may become caught and suffocate, should be checked carefully for possible safety problems. Eight manufacturers have been named in a complaint alleging that consumers were unaware of possible hazards because the products did not have warning labels.

If you are concerned about a product for children or would like further information, call the Commission's toll free hotline: 800-638-CPSC.

SCENE STEALERS - Youngsters from two Austin-based programs, the Capital Area Rehabilitation Center and the Austin-Travis County MHMR Infant-Parent Program, are the stars of a handsome new exhibit developed by the Texas Department of Health's Crippled Children's Services Bureau. CCS administers the purchase-of-service component of the ECI program, which provides assessments and direct services for children in areas of the state where no ECI programs are available.



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NEW YEAR

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMMING FOR INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN

Program: A workshop on the use and application of "Developmental Programming for Infants and Young Children," a test for use with children functioning in the birth to 36 month developmental age range.
Presenter: Sue Schafer, editor of the test
Sponsor: Education Service Center, Region XIII
Time and place: January 13, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Education Service Center, Region XIII, 7703 North Lamar, Austin 78752
For further information: Margie Sanford, ESC XIII- 512/458-9131

COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE BIRTH TO 3 POPULATION

Program: Symposium on prespeech and feeding development and cognitive language development
Presenters: Lyndel Jones, Illinois Institute for the Study of Developmental Disabilities, and Donna Bryant, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina.
Sponsor: Communication Disorder Department, The University of Texas at Austin
Time and Place: January 27-28; Thompson Conference Center, Austin
Registration fee: Approximately \$75.00
For further information: Professional Programs, Office of the Dean, College of Communication, The University of Texas at Austin, 78712

THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF LIFE

Program: Special presentation on early childhood
Presenter: Dr. Burton L. White, renowned author on early childhood
Sponsor: Education Service Center, Region XIII, and Seton Good Health School
Time and place: February 1, 7:30-9:00 p.m., Marriott Hotel, Austin
Registration: Send name, address, and \$7.00 to Dottie Havlik, Seton Good Health School, Seton Medical Center, 1211 West 38th Street, Austin 78705
For further information: Write or call Margie Sanford, ESC XIII, 7703 North Lamar Blvd, Austin 78752, or phone 512/458-9131

SOUTHMOST ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN

Program: Sixth annual workshop
Sponsor: SAEYC
Time and Place: February 11, Early Childhood Education Center, Harlingen
For further information: Monica Wilhite, Route 3, Box 414, Harlingen 78552

RESEARCH IN ACTION III

Program: For everyone who works with or is interested in young children, a program that will include a video festival on working with children, national keynoters, and a variety of papers on early childhood, management, the handicapped, etc.
Presenters: Hedda Sharapan, Associate Producer of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood; "Miss Jackie," the Music Lady; Dr. Sumner Yaffe and Dr. E. Pollitt, National Institute of Health
Sponsor: Institute for Child and Family Studies, Texas Tech University
Time and place: February 8-10, Lubbock
Registration: \$20.00
For further information: Institute for Child and Family Studies, Texas Tech University, Box 4170, Lubbock 79409; phone 806/742-1944

AROUND THE STATE . . .

Coordination in North East Texas

Communication is the byword of a new interagency effort, the North East Texas Early Childhood Consortium. Established through the Region VIII Education Service Center in Mt. Pleasant, the consortium is a working council of professionals serving handicapped children from birth to age 5. Membership includes ECI-funded projects, representatives from state agencies, the Education Service Center, and special education directors from local education agencies in the 11-county area served by the ESC. Consortium activities include coordinating community-wide developmental screening clinics, developing a resource directory, and easing the transition of developmentally delayed youngsters into preschool handicapped classes.

Position Available in West Texas

Needed: Infant Stimulation Coordinator to work with ECI program at Permian Basin MHMR, Odessa. Position requires a teaching certificate; special education certification and experience working with infants are preferred. Full-time position, \$18,900, with excellent retirement program and fringe benefits. For further information, contact Chad Spears, 915/337-5414.

Training Opportunities throughout Texas

Skill building is the goal of two special training programs designed to increase the competencies of persons working with young handicapped children.

The DEBT Outreach Training Staff (DOTS) trains personnel to develop home-based programs that will provide comprehensive services for parents of very young handicapped children. Among the topics covered in workshops are normal child development, high risk factors and unusual characteristics, handicapping conditions, physical management, assessment techniques, parent communication. DEBT is a nationally recognized model project that began in 1973 in the Lubbock Independent School District. Training is available to any school district or agency interested in implementing infant education programs in their communities. For further information contact D.E.B.T. Outreach, 1628 19th, Lubbock 79401; phone 806/747-2641.

Training in Project KIDS (Kindling Individual Development Systems), a curriculum for use with preschool developmentally delayed children, is now available free of charge to all ECI projects. Developed under the auspices of the Dallas ISD, the project is considered a model for curriculum development. KIDS trainer Donna Bricker-Derkacz will conduct workshops on what this and other curricula can do for your program, how to implement a curriculum, and how to develop teaching techniques and other skills. If you are interested in obtaining training for your staff, contact the early childhood consultant at your regional Education Service Center.

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ECI is a statewide program coordinated by the Texas Departments of Health, Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Human Resources, and the Texas Education Agency. News tips and information invited.

MERRY



CHRISTMAS

