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**STATE INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES**

**Thursday, February 20, 2014
1:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Arleen Downing, Gretchen Hester*, Marie Kanne Poulsen, Elaine Fogel-Schneider, JoEllen Fletcher, Madeline Journey-Lynn, Elise Parnes, Erin Paulsen, Ashley Ramirez, Patric Widmann

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:

Maurine Ballard-Rosa, Fran Chasen, Laurie Jordan*, Debbie Sarmiento*, Julie Kingsley Widman*

GUESTS:

Alicia Bernstein, Douglas Gerber, Jennifer Miller, Virginia Reynolds

RECORDER:

Ashley Ramirez (DDS)

*Parent

MEETING NOTES

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Elaine Fogel-Schneider opened the meeting at 1:30 P.M.

OPENING ROLL CALL

Madeline Journey-Lynn did roll call.

REVIEW AGENDA

The agenda was approved with the following change(s): Items 11 & 12 from the Executive Committee meeting were carried forward to this afternoon.

#11 Review of the ICC General Meeting Agenda with Proposed Special Presentations

Amend agency reports to include report from Chris Krawczyk, CA Department of Public Health; agency reports will be moved from #14 to after the ICC staff report; public input at 10:00 A.M.; special presentation at 11:00 A.M.; under Other Business add the State ICC webinar at 12 noon with a discussion to follow.

Proposed Special Presentations-

Patric asked for additional ideas for future special presentations.

- How many children are diagnosed with autism prior to leaving Early Start Program and how does this relate to system/program policy/practice issues/realities.
- The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (**M-CHAT**)

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- Dr. Larry Yin, San Gabriel RC; an ambassador for Act Early in Washington D.C., autism. (Marie Kanne Poulsen)
- The program manager for Valley Mountain Regional Center who has expertise on children with autism as this topic came up at the last Early Start supervisor meeting for Northern California. (Erin Paulsen)
- CA Department of Education Child Development Division is now called Early Education Support Division (EESD). They are broadening their services to serve populations birth to age eight years (previously birth to age 5 years). It was suggested that having someone from EESD present might be helpful to understand the recent changes and how that may relate to our collaborative work. (Virginia Reynolds)

#12 Other Business

The ICC Budget (Expenditure assessment)

Patric Widmann explained the history of the ICC travel budget covering fiscal years 2009/10 to current year. The change in budget has reduced travel in 2009/10 from full ICC participation at an off-site location, to meetings only by teleconference.

Patric shared that DDS Early Start has met with applicable Department contacts to inquire about how we can better support the community representatives participating in the ICC. The only answer provided was to provide travel advances. The Department does not plan to change this practice.

The ICC expressed concern that they do not have adequate parent/family voice represented. The ICC asked if travel costs could pay for one FRC regional representative to attend the ICC and share information from their region. Patric reminded the ICC that in the past travel for nonmembers to attend the ICC was funded out of the WestEd contract, but since sequestration those funds are no longer available.

Gretchen shared that she works with families and, when there is a group of parents/families, there often seems to be one salient point about an issue relating to regional centers that comes out of the interaction. She shared that perhaps we could tie in the issues that come up from the FRCs to the ICC. Gretchen cautioned the ICC about soliciting concerns and issues. This might be construed that the issues would be fixed especially since the ICC is actually attempting to understand the issues as a starting point for systemic change rather than to address individual issues. In addition, parents might be hesitant to share concerns fearing that their services might be impacted.

Marie clarified that these efforts to gather the parent voice is an attempt by the ICC to understand what is relevant to the parents and families involved in Early Start.

Patric stated that DDS is looking into video conferencing offering the opportunity for parent groups to connect with the ICC meetings and share their issues or concerns. Parent input could also be submitted anonymously in writing.

Elaine asked about next steps. Laurie explained that if the ICC wants the FRC regional representatives to do something on this topic, the ICC should submit their request in writing.

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During this morning's Executive Committee it was recommend that a letter be sent to the new DDS director with copies to Jim Knight and the heads of the budget hearing committees. Budget hearings are February 27 and March 11.

Fran reminded the group that anyone can send written comments for 30 days prior to the hearings. This is the time for anyone to comment on the Early Start budget, community representative funding and WestEd funding. Marie agreed to draft a letter.

DISCUSSION ON PROVIDING SERVICES TO FAMILIES EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Elaine explained that this discussion will carry forward the ideas and discussions from Alicia Bernstein's presentation at the Executive Committee this morning. Alicia was present for this discussion.

Patric said DDS sent out a document a week prior to the ICC that addresses all of the special populations regarding strategies available for use (**Attachment A**). The groups discussed that service and collaboration strategies exist. It seems like there is a need for strategies relating to intake/referrals strategies for these populations. Patric suggested looking at these and using them for discussion with Alicia.

Alicia commented that she has experienced similar challenges as described by the ICC regarding participation. She said that the challenge for travel funding is a significant challenge even at the shelter level.

Arleen commented that Alicia provided her with a different way of looking at responsibility to report. It is more than simply reporting, but seeking to understand the experience of the child and family with what is going on.

The group talked about possibly adding something to the *Assessment of Family Strengths and Needs* (Assessment document.) Alicia suggested that the assessment could include an understanding of the history of families, then thinking proactively about what the family might want/need for support, and how to move forward from past issues. Elaine talked about how working with families requires looking at the whole child and family and not just signs or symptoms and that this is a process. Patric asked for input to make changes to the Assessment document now. Patric also suggested that we could establish a small group to address these outside of the meeting.

The discussion continued on special populations culminating with the ICC members agreeing to be responsible for:

- Arleen and Julie – homeless
- Marie and Laurie - wards of the court
- Elaine – DV
- Gretchen - American Indian

Ideas for implementation/distribution of the end product:

- Through WestEd if their funding is brought back
- First 5 for distribution and use
- As a transfer of knowledge workshop

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APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 2013 MINUTES

The minutes were approved without changes.

Maurine raised an issue from the November meeting captured in the minutes. She explained that during the last ICC meeting, she had volunteered to write a letter of commendation to Alta California Regional Center for their efforts to incorporate natural environment practices into their service system. Discussion followed resulting in a decision not to single out Alta with a letter of commendations but to invite them to return for an update on their implementation at a later date.

Marie offered to send a personal thank you note to Alicia for her presentation today.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Patric went over the draft document sent out to the full ICC with the agendas. **(Attachment B)** She asked the group to identify which of the options the ICC would like to focus on that would be most helpful for the field.

In this context, the group discussed –

- Routines based interviewing and eco-mapping, which are approaches that lead to service coordinators truly individualizing practices and services/events based on the family and their supports.
- The term “Natural Learning Opportunities” (NLO) is a more fitting description of what we mean, rather than “Natural Environments” (NE). This term makes it clearer that this is an approach and not just about a place/location. The term natural learning opportunities may help emphasize that this is an approach and not just about a place/location.
Note: Natural learning opportunities are embedded within natural environments and the family’s everyday routines, relationships, activities and places. They are not artificial environments created for children served under Early Start.
- The shift from a hands-on personal responsibility to a facilitator role.
- The natural environment issue/requirement isn’t black and white.
- Enhancing the parent’s ability, competency and resources for supporting the child and doing it together in the existing structure of the family.

The Annual Performance Report (APR), does measure the amount of services provided in natural environments. The amount served in natural environments has gone down in the last year. The recent drop in natural environment compliance might likely be caused from the use of medical insurance which is not required to be in natural environment.

- The ICC needs to now come to an agreement on what option to move forward on.

The group agreed that this project could not be finished by May since further input was needed from the field about what would be most useful. The COTW decided to ask their local contacts the following four questions.

1. What do you see as barriers or challenges to the implementation of natural environments?
2. Do families/staff have an understanding of “natural environment” beyond it being a place issue? Do they think it is providing services in a home setting or childcare or do they understand that (NE) natural learning opportunities are where ever the family is (for example - grocery store, park, library, home)?

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3. Are there any needs around natural environment that the ICC can assist with? *Record any ideas and ask for explanations*
4. Would it be helpful to have a document from the ICC? Which of the four options would be of interest to you?

The following people will gather information using the above questions from their local communities.

- Julie Widman will be at the Part C Administrators meeting (next Monday) with representatives from First 5, American Academy of Pediatrics, FRC, Local Educational Agency and regional center for San Diego County
- Maurine will contact California Early Start (CES) group.
- Marie will contact ES managers at regional centers in the South.
- Elaine will contact Harbor Regional Center.

Elaine confirmed that each person will talk with their community and bring back the information as an agenda item at the next ICC meeting. Madeline will type up the questions to ask and send those out to the full ICC with a request that they consult their communities (families, service providers, service coordinators, etc.) and provide the information prior to the May ICC meeting or bring to the next ICC meeting for discussion.

FINALIZE REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT OF FAMILY STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

Patric reported that introductory information was added to each section and some of the content was rearranged without changing meaning. The document now flows better and is more readable. The document will go to Caroline Walker at WestEd for final edits and then will be emailed out to the ICC for a final look. If anyone has a burning issue or passionate response to, they can email Patric with their concern.

ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

None

TASKS AND WORKPLANS

May COTW meeting agenda will include field input on natural environments and discussion on special populations: Compile and discuss responses from the NE/NLO topic and continue with the special population strategies update/planning.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:30

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ATTACHMENT A

ICC Priority: Serving Young Children from Special Populations
(American Indian, Homeless, Domestic Violence, Wards of the Court)
Feb 12, 2014

Challenges and Opportunities

- Transportation
- Lack of documentation to enroll in programs
- Contact information changes frequently
- Families may be highly mobile
- Health and development are at risk
- Unsafe living conditions
- Difficulty trusting service providers
- Emotional stress
- Inconsistent program attendance
- Public services may focus on the parent rather than the entire family including young children.

Identification and Referral Strategies

- Partner with family shelters, campgrounds, food banks, low cost motels, transitional housing, etc.
- Younger siblings of school aged children receiving public services are identified and tracked
- Identify family as member of a special population on referral documents long with contact information or places that they may frequent.
- Designate young children that are a member of special population as highest priority expediting evaluation and assessment.
- Conduct evaluation and assessments in locations that are comfortable for the family or as a last resort provide accessible transportation.
- Add young children from special populations to the at risk criteria for PRRS services
- Refer to PRRS as being at risk due to homelessness, victim of domestic violence, American Indian or ward of the court.
- Streamline the referral process by obtaining consent for release of medical records, screening information, and to conduct Early Start evaluation and assessment at time of referral.
- Offer families incentives such food, transportation, health services.

Service Delivery Strategies

- Designate an FRC person as the liaison to families who are members of special populations.
- Support families in valuing early intervention as an important support to their family.

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- Refer to FRCs for peer to peer support from another parent who has experienced similar situations.
- Coordinate services that will meet the family's basic needs and provide support to ensure that they get the services they need.
- Promote persistent efforts by service providers to locate family and deliver services.
- Provide services based on the family's unique concerns and priorities.
- Be flexible and creative in providing community based intervention.
- Help service providers to understand that parents in special situations may be overwhelmed by feelings of stress or guilt and their ongoing efforts to meet their family's basic needs. Working with them requires greater patience and flexibility along with a strengths-based approach.

Collaboration Strategies

- Identify partners (family shelters, shelters for pregnant and parenting teenagers, domestic violence shelters, American Indian medical clinics, tribal organizations, county welfare offices), and their contact information.
- Designate one person to liaison with the community services.
- Establish relationships with partners.
- Focus on tangible goals with partners.
- Share Early Start eligibility criteria, referral procedures, service options, and Reason for Concern brochure.
- Share information about developmental and maternal depression screening options with partners.
- Post Early Start information at immunization clinics, pediatricians' offices, low-cost health clinics, libraries and application offices for Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and others.
- ICC and local coordinating councils share information, develop and promote strategies, and comment publicly on needs of young children experiencing homelessness.
- Demonstrate the value of collaboration (understanding referral options, meet requirements, meets program goals)
- Conduct a community needs assessment and develop a local plan for identifying and serving young children who are from special populations experiencing homelessness.
- Conduct joint trainings.

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ATTACHMENT B

ICC PRIORITY: PROMOTING NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

February 12, 2014

- **Option #1: Taking it a step further: Explaining to families evidence based service delivery in natural environments**
 1. Audience: Service coordinators and providers
 2. Placemat
 3. Service delivery model - Relationship based, delivered through coaching and consultation, promoting competence and confidence in caregivers, maximizes learning opportunities
 4. Identifying everyday routines, relationships, activities, places and partnerships as part of assessment
 5. Id location for each service
 6. Identify which service outcomes have not been met in NE, id alternate location, dev justification including time frames to transition back to NE
 7. Options for parent-parent support and group interactions

- **Option #2: Making the shift to community based services**
 1. Audience: Direct Service Providers
 2. Large facility vs small office reduces rental, furniture and utility costs.
 3. Bag of toys vs adapting items in the home reduces costs for toys and equipment
 4. Multiple weekly visits vs coaching and consultation once per week reduces personnel and travel costs
 5. Avoid Confusion by families when dually served receive services in different settings by close coordination
 6. Explore new funding models that support evidence based service model travel time and mileage (rural) and IFSP meetings, illness and no shows, increased liability costs, parent only sessions, telecommunication – costs built into 805 fee
 7. Online training is available on delivering relationship services through coaching in natural learning environments
 8. Options for parent-parent support and group interactions through FRCs using respite to participate in EIS (parent support)

- **Option #3- Position paper supporting service delivery model (theory)**
 1. Audience: Directors and management
 2. Relationship based services
 3. Coaching
 4. Consultation
 5. Caregiver competence and confidence
 6. Benefits: maximize learning opportunities within family routines, relationships, activities, places

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- **Option #4 – White paper promoting services in NE (practical implementation)**
 1. Audience: Managers and supervisors
 2. Introduction
 3. Assessment
 4. IFSP process – functional outcome – service - location - provider
 5. Within context of relationship based services and coaching
 6. Delivering services
 7. Recommend funding model that includes payment for travel time, travel, IFSP meetings, coordination activities