



The Parent Leadership Project's *Parent Perspective*

(877) 35-EI-PLP ♦ www.eiplp.org ♦ eiplp@yahoo.com

Early Intervention Information and Resources

January/February 2006

Growing Parent Leaders

DPH Launches “Focused Monitoring” System: Families can view EI Program Ratings

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the lead agency for Early Intervention services is responsible for the “general supervision” of Early Intervention (EI) programs throughout the state, in order to assure the quality of EI services and compliance with state and federal laws. DPH has recently developed a new system known as “focused monitoring”, in collaboration with the National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (NCSEAM), the Massachusetts ICC, and a statewide stakeholder group composed of providers, parents, higher education professionals and others.

The Goals of the new Focused Monitoring system

The goals of the focused monitoring system are to address accountability by EI programs and enhance the quality of early intervention services. According to the NCSEAM Advisory Board, “focused monitoring is a process that purposefully selects priority areas to examine for compliance/results while not specifically examining other areas for compliance to maximize resources, emphasize important variables and increase the

probability of improved results.”

How Focused Monitoring Works

Under the former program re-certification system, each of the 61 current Early Intervention programs received an on-site visit by DPH staff every other year.



In contrast, in the new focused monitoring system, programs are grouped according to size based on the number of children who are enrolled. Data is collected from EI programs by DPH staff in selected areas, called “priority indicators” which are considered to be important for high quality EI services. Using this data, EI programs are ranked on each measure and the lowest performing programs are selected for an on-site visit.

At the on-site visit, a team comprised of DPH Regional Specialists and Parent Team Members gather information and compile a report to the program identifying areas of non-

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Public Hearing on February 15, 2006

Parents Invited to Give Testimony on Early Intervention Funding Application

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division for Perinatal, Early Childhood and Special Health Needs (DPECSHN) in cooperation with the Interagency Coordinating Council will hold a public hearing on the Commonwealth’s proposed 20th 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.

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. Public comment on proposed changes in eligibility for Early Intervention Services and proposed changes to the fee structure for families and other issues is invited for inclusion in the state’s funding application to the federal government.

The hearing will be held on **February 15, 2005 from 10 AM to 12 PM** at One Ashburton Place, Boston, 21st floor.

Drafts may be reviewed at the DPECSHN, 250 Washington Street 4th floor, Boston. Requests for mailed copies may be addressed to Ron Benham, Director, DPECSHN 250 Washington Street, 4th floor, Boston, MA 02108.

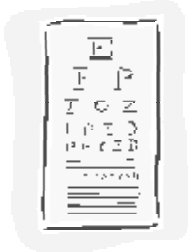
If you cannot testify in person, written testimony may be sent until March 20, 2006 to Ron Benham, Director, DPECSHN, 250 Washington Street, 4th floor, Boston, MA 02108.

The hearing site is accessible and sign language interpreters will be present. For more information or to request other accommodations, please contact Early Intervention Services at (617) 624-5901 (voice) and (617) 624-5992 (TTY).

Resources

Vision and Hearing Information and Training Opportunity for Parents

Parents, Early Intervention specialists, and other early childhood professionals are invited to learn about "Vision and Hearing Screening: Regulations, Standards and Best Practices" on February 9 at the UMass Collaborative Services Facility, 333 South Street in Shrewsbury. This workshop is provided free of charge. Pre-registration is required by February 1. For more information, please contact Steve Shuman at (617) 565-1118 or email sshuman@acf.hhs.gov.



Did you know that 3-4 babies out of every 1000 will have some sort of hearing loss at birth? Detecting hearing loss in newborns is the goal of the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Babies are screened while they are still in the hospital and those who do not pass the screening are referred for a follow-up hearing test. To learn more about this program and other available resources for children who are deaf or hard of hearing, please visit www.mass.gov/dph/fch/unhsp.



Free Conference Opportunity for Parents

The Child with Chronic Illness: Facing the Issues - March 17

Baystate Health will present "The Child with Chronic Illness: Facing the Issues", a conference that will explore the issues related to the impact of chronic illness on the child and family at home and in school. The conference will be held on March 17 from 8 am to 4:30 pm at the Baystate Health Learning Center at Ingleside, 361 Whitney Avenue, Holyoke.

Speaker Dr. Robert Brooks, will deliver the keynote presentation "The Power of Mindsets" Nurturing Motivation & Resilience in children with Chronic Illness."

Topics will include explaining the rights of children with chronic illness in school, strategies teachers and parents can use at home and in school to help the child with chronic illness be successful, identifying the effect chronic illness can have on mental health, among others.

Parents of chronically ill children may attend the conference free of charge. For more information, please contact Baystate Health Office of Continuing Education at (413) 794-3466 or email Joanna.Barnett@bhs.org. Register online at Partnerships in Caring for Children in Schools at www.baystatehealth.com/learn.

Save the date...

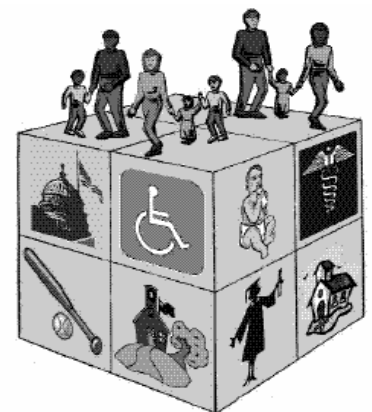
Federation for Children with Special Needs to hold Annual Conference-- March 4

The Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN) will host its annual statewide conference for parents and professionals who work to enhance educational, mental health, health, family and support services for children with disabilities Saturday, March 4th, 2006 at the World Trade Center in Boston.

The conference, entitled "Visions of Community 2006: A Conference for Families of Children with Special Needs and the Professionals Who Serve Them" will include a special guest speaker, Susan Senator, local author of *Making Peace with Autism*. Dr. Troy Justesen, Deputy Assistant Secretary Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) and Acting Director, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the U.S. Department of Education has also been invited to speak at the conference.

This popular conference includes access to a wealth of information on important topics such as special education, parental involvement, autism, literacy, health, sexuality and many more issues affecting families and professionals involved in the lives of children with special needs. Participants will enjoy a selection of more than 30 break-out sessions, including three presentations in Spanish and Portuguese respectively.

The cost for this all-day conference is \$55 per person if registering by the early bird deadline of February 12th. After February 12th the cost per person will be \$65, and space is limited. Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon coffee break are included in the registration fee. Child care is available on a limited basis for those who pre-register. Registration can be done on the web over a secure site, via phone, or by mail.



The Federation for Children with Special Needs provides information, support, and assistance to parents of children with disabilities, their professional partners, and their communities. For further information, or to register, please call the Federation for Children with Special Needs at (800) 331-0688, or visit www.fcsn.org

Parent Leaders in Action**Meet Elba Vargas... A Dynamic and Persistent Parent Leader**

Elba Vargas had never heard of Early Intervention before March 2002. She had just moved from Rhode Island to Taunton, Massachusetts, and was expecting her second child. She didn't know the community or many people and was feeling "very lonely and isolated." When her baby was 18 months old, Elba's instinct told her that something was wrong with her son—he had yet to speak more than a few words and then stopped using them altogether. Although other people told her that it was a stage that he would outgrow and he would "catch up", Elba took action. She leafed through the Yellow Pages, calling anyone and everyone who knew anything about childhood learning delays.

Elba learned about the Taunton Area Early Intervention Program. Her son was evaluated and was found to have cognitive, expressive and receptive language delays, as well as feeding, dressing, and social/emotional delays. "I was devastated," she said. However, someone was finally listening to her concerns and her son could now receive the treatment he needed.

At 21 months old, her son was diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) on the autism spectrum, and later came the diagnosis of High Functioning Autism and Hyperlexia. Elba "was grieving the loss of her perfect baby." Her developmental pediatrician gave her a packet of materials that had a list of resources and groups and said "don't do this alone, seek the support of others". Elba remembered those words and took action.

Elba had always been active in her community as an ESL instructor, Spanish tutor and liaison when she lived in Rhode Island. Now, Elba recalls "I had to integrate myself and my son into the community."

Thus began a single-handed, full-tilt mission to fill her son's days and nights with activities that were both therapeutic and fun. A "very patient" staff at the local YMCA toddler program worked for six months along side Elba to get her son fully integrated into gymnastics and swimming. Later on, Elba became a "Y" volunteer who worked with staff to include children with disabilities into their programs. Elba now advocates for full

inclusion of children with disabilities in programs and social groups. It can change a "child's life forever" and leads to greater humanity, compassion, empathy for the most vulnerable people.

Elba's energy and enthusiasm led to her involvement with the Preschool Council, the Community Partnerships for Children in her area, the ARC, Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change, the SPED PAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council), Family TIES of Massachusetts and the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

"When I looked at the Federation web site, (www.fcsn.org) I saw that they provided free workshops on disabilities. The first one I attended was in New Bedford titled 'Transition: Turning Three.' Later I attended 'Basic Rights' in Worcester. I was going anywhere the workshops were given. I went to the whole series all over Massachusetts with my son in tow."

While visiting the Federation web site, Elba also noticed a posting seeking a bilingual (Spanish) Trainer and Outreach Specialist to Spanish speaking families. Elba applied and the rest, as they say, is history,

In August, Elba joined the staff of the Parents' PLACE Project, the statewide parent information and resource center at the Federation for Children with Special Needs. Parents' PLACE offers free workshops that give families the tools they need to support their children in school and to play a strong role in their education. (For a list of current workshops please visit www.pplace.org).

Now Elba reaches out to teach other families how to work in partnership with schools to make sure their children, with and without disabilities, have the best education possible because, she says, "After all, all children are equal in God's eyes!"

Elba Vargas is the Statewide Trainer and Outreach Specialist for Spanish speaking families at Parents' PLACE (Parents Learning about Children's Education) at the Federation for Children with Special Needs. For more information, visit www.pplace.org, call (877) 471-0980, ext. 332 or email evargas@fcsn.org

Visiones de la Comunidad 2006 –Sabado 4 de marzo de 2006, 7:30 am-4:45 pm**World Trade Center, Boston— The Federacion para Niños con Necesidades Especiales**

Conferencia estatal anual para padres, y profesionales que trabajan para aumentar la educación, la salud física y mental, y los servicios de apoyo de familia para niños con discapacidades.

- **Talleres en: La Participación de los Padres, Salud, Transiciones, Discapacidades, Oportunidades de Recreación, La Ley Que Ningún Niño Quede Atrás, IDEA, y mucho más.**
- **Habrará talleres en Español y Portugués e intérpretes disponibles.**
- **Varias organizaciones tendrán materiales e información gratuita y a la venta.**
- **Venga y participe en la Celebración de Reconocimiento a los ganadores del "Community Partnership Award" (Premio Asociación con la Comunidad).**

Hay un número limitado de becas. Regístrese temprano en o antes del 12 de febrero del 2006, si necesita intérprete o cuidado de niños [Visite nuestra página web www.fcsn.org para más información!](http://www.fcsn.org)

DPH launches "Focused Monitoring" System

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compliance with state standards and federal regulations. The reports will eventually be posted for public viewing on the Parent Leadership Project website, www.eiplp.org.

What are the "Priority Indicators?"

This year, the priority indicators are "service coordination" and "transition". The "service coordination" indicator looks at how EI service coordinators assist families in organizing and implementing the supports and services on their Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Five EI programs will receive an on-site visit based on the results of the "service coordination" indicator.

The "transition" indicator looks at the preparations to assist families who are leaving the Early Intervention system because they are no longer eligible for services. Five EI programs will receive an on-site visit based on the "transition" indicator.

How can families who receive EI services be involved?

Families are an integral part of this process. Family input is extremely important to get a full picture of how a program operates. During each on-site visit, families whose children are enrolled in or have recently graduated from the EI program will be asked to volunteer to participate in a focus group or interview. Parents may also complete a survey about their experiences before the on-site visit. All of this information along with interviews with EI staff, administration, community providers and file review will be used to complete a final report.

Focused Monitoring Schedule for 2006

The following schedule identifies which programs will receive an on-site visit during 2006:

Valley Infant Development Services (Service Coordination)	March 2006
Harbor Area EI (Transition)	April 2006
Riverside EI at Needham (Service Coordination)	May 2006
Criterion Mattapan EI (Transition)	June 2006
KDC-Plymouth EI (Service Coordination)	July 2006
Thom Anne Sullivan Center (Service Coordination)	August 2006
UMASS EI (Transition)	September 2006
Riverside EI at Dedham (Service Coordination)	October 2006
Dimock EI (Transition)	November 2006
Minuteman EI (Transition)	December 2006

If your family received EI services at any of these programs and would like to participate in their onsite visit please call Faith Piaggi at the Parent Leadership Project at (877) 353-4757.

Opportunity Knocks

Parents Invited to Learn about EI at Early Intervention Training Center Workshops By Philip Printz Director, EITC

It's late January... Is it time to review your child's IFSP? Is your child making good progress toward the goals in the IFSP? How do you know? Have you had recent opportunities to discuss and review your child's progress in meeting developmental goals? Parents can learn more about the IFSP process at workshops offered by the Early Intervention Training Center (EITC).

Parents are always invited and welcome to attend free training events at the EITC. Offerings are posted on the web site at www.eitrainingcenter.org and parents may register on-line to attend workshops. The spring training calendar is posted and on-line registration has been revised and updated. Parents are included as trainers in all presentations. EITC staff value the relationships they have developed with parents who have been involved in training activities. Over the course of the next few months, the EITC will be working with a team of parents and DPH staff to revise the core courses to reflect a more active role for parents as co-trainers. The EITC will also be developing an on-line survey specifically for parents that will appear on the EITC web site.

The Early Intervention Training Center is making good progress moving into the third quarter of the year. The feedback received from parents and the field enables the EITC to respond to your needs. The analysis of the recent survey of Early Intervention Specialists and Directors is in the final stage. The results of the analysis will be shared at the next meeting of the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), posted on the EITC web site and shared in the next newsletter. Please continue to send your comments by going to the web site (eitrainingcenter.org). Visit the web site frequently for weekly resource updates. The staff of the EITC--Donna, Janet, Satu, and I look forward to hearing from you and working with you.



CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

February 1—**Music Therapy Group for Kids, 4-5 pm**, 338 Main Street, Suite 301, Wakefield. Riverside Family Support presents an eight week program. For more information, please call (781) 246-2003.

February 7- "**What's New in Treating ADHD**", 7:00 pm, Westin Waltham Hotel, 70 Third Avenue Leonard Rappaport, MD, MS, Director of the Developmental Medicine Center at Children's Hospital in Boston will discuss new ways to diagnose, treat and reduce the impact of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder on children and their families. For more information, please call (617) 355-3532.

February 7, "**Food Allergy Overview & Options for Treating Food Allergy Emergencies**", 7-9 pm, Newton-Wellesley Hospital,, Newton. The Metro-Boston Asthma & Allergy Educational Support Group presents this lecture. For more information, please visit www.asthmaandallergies.org or call (617) 965-7771.

February 7, **Project RIDE Open House**, 2-4 pm, Jewish Community Center, 1160 Dickinson Street, Springfield. Project RIDE (Recreation, Independence, Development and Equipment) is a new program sponsored by Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts and is designed to enhance recreational opportunities for children with special needs, Project RIDE will provide children with special needs ages (5-12) specially modified bikes. The Open House will feature information about the program, face painting, a magician, arts and crafts and snacks. For more information, please call (413) 737-2601 or email d.cordeiro@jfswm.org. Spanish interpretation will be available.

February 8—**Building a Community: An Orientation to Massachusetts Early Intervention**— Part 1, Massachusetts Hospital School, Canton. The Early Intervention Training Center presents this workshop. Learn about core values and the evolution of the EI system, operational standards, state and federal laws. For more information, additional dates and locations or to register visit www.eitrainingcenter.org.

February 8—**Basic Rights Workshop**, 7-9:00 pm, Milford High School, Milford. The Federation for Children with Special Needs presents this course that covers basic information about state and federal laws to assist parents in planning, decision-making and monitoring their child's special education services. For more information on other dates and locations or to register, please call the Federation at (800) 331-0688 or visit www.fcsn.org.

March 7—"Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders", 6:30-9:00 pm, 2315 Grand Army Highway, Swansea. Community Autism Resources presents this course free of charge for residents of southeastern Massachusetts and at a small fee for people outside the region. For more information please call (508) 379-0371 ext. 13.

March 18— **23rd Annual Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress Conference**, DCU Center, Worcester. For more information, please visit www.mdsc.org.

April 1— "**A Day of Hope -Helping Other People with Epilepsy**" Conference, 9:30-5:00 pm, Holiday Inn, Newton. The Epilepsy Foundation of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The conference will address questions and issues facing families who have members with epilepsy and seizure disorders. For more information, please contact Lynn Dann at (617) 508-6041 or visit www.epilepsymassri.org.

Save the date...

**TAKING CARE OF
OUR CHILDREN...**

**TAKING CARE OF
OURSELVES**



**23rd Annual
New England Regional
Seminar**

Parents*Professionals*Children

**Saturday, April 29
8:15 am - 3:00 pm**

At the Perkins School for the Blind
175 North Beacon Street
Watertown, MA 02472

*Presented by:
The New England Regional Seminar
for Families of Children with Visual
Impairments, Ages 0-7*

For more information contact Tom
Miller at (617) 972-7331 or
by email at
preschoolservices@perkins.org

WORKING TOGETHER

METROWEST NEWS

In November Judith Sleeper, LICSW, of **Thom/Charles River Early Intervention Program (Thom Charles River EIP)** and Janice Russell, of Greater Waltham ARC (GWARC) co-sponsored a two session training for parents. The workshop about techniques for behavior management was offered to both parents of children receiving early intervention services and children receiving special education services in preschool. Steven Lepler, a psychologist, presented the workshops on behavior management techniques by rewarding appropriate behavior. This perspective was very well received by parents. In the week between his presentations, several parents reported that by focusing on their child's positive behaviors, some of the negative behaviors just "disappeared" just as he had predicted. This was second time that **Thom Charles River EIP** and GWARC partnered in order to reach more families in the communities that both serve.

In January, State Senator Scott Brown visited the **Riverside Early Intervention Program at Needham (Riverside at Needham)** to tour the facility and learn more about Early Intervention. MaryAnn Mulligan, a lobbyist for the Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium discussed the EI Quality Workforce Initiative to address the issue of staff development and retention.

NORTHEAST NEWS

South Bay Early Intervention in Lowell (SBEI-Lowell) welcomes new staff members Jack Hudzik, LICSW, clinical supervisor, developmental specialists Allison Bergskaug, Kelli Bowdridge, Marion Pakingan-Wong, and Jennifer Robtoy.

In October at the **Criterion-Stoneham Early Intervention Program (Criterion-Stoneham EIP)** Deborah Capuano of Deborah Capuano's Holistic Massage and Therapies, conducted a discussion on the "Importance of Touch." There was a great turnout and participants thoroughly enjoyed a chair massage!

In November, Amy Kreydin of The Barefoot Dragonfly, demonstrated the benefits of "Reflexogy" at the monthly discussion group at **Criterion Stoneham EIP**, putting a little one right to sleep by relaxing him with a foot massage. His mom is eager to learn more because she has never seen him respond to anything like this before! In December, Barb Shea of the **Criterion-Stoneham EIP**, led a discussion about Stress Management - just in time for the holidays! Thanks, Barb! The feedback was great.

Upcoming events include a "Potty Training" discussion on January 18, the **Criterion-Stoneham's** Annual Valentine's Open House with entertainment, refreshments and a craft, and on February 15, the monthly discussion topic is "Discipline."

On January 9, the **Professional Center for Child Development**

(**PCCD**) began a time-limited specialty group for children with feeding issues and their parents. The children worked and played in a group with Early Intervention staff who specialize in feeding issues in young children. At the same time, the parents were in a group with a nutritionist from the program, learning techniques and strategies for successful meal times at home.

Families enjoyed a holiday party at **PCCD** on December 9, complete with a singer and a visit from Santa. On December 14, a groundbreaking ceremony was held at **PCCD** on an expansion project to more than double the size of the Center, including new space for classrooms, a conference room and recreational space.

On March 16, **PCCD** will host an IEP Workshop to be presented by the Federation for Children with Special Needs, from 7 to 9 pm. Please call Ellen to RSVP at (978) 475-3806 ext. 217.

SOUTHEAST NEWS

Associates for Human Services Taunton Early Intervention Program (Taunton EIP) held their annual family party with over 200 people attending. Santa brought a gift for all children and there were balloon animals, coloring, snacks and drinks.

Associates for Human Services will also host a legislative breakfast on February 17 from 9 to 11 am. Families are invited to a Scholastic Book Fair at **Taunton EIP** from March 29 to April 10, with proceeds going to children's services and activities.

Kennedy Donovan Center-Plymouth Early Intervention Program (KDC-Plymouth EIP) hosted a "Transition Evening for Parents" with representatives from local school districts on November 30. Parents had the opportunity to learn more about the transition process and meet with their own school districts. On December 15, families enjoyed a holiday party at the Center, complete with tattoos, coloring, cookie decorating and other fun projects. Santa was on hand for photos.

WESTERN NEWS

The **Criterion Heritage Early Intervention Program (Criterion-Heritage)** welcomes new parent contact Maria Burke

The **Northern Berkshire Early Intervention Program (No. Berkshire EIP)** held a Holiday Party for families at the program. Frosty the Snowman even made an appearance. **Thom/Westfield Infant Toddler Services (WITS)** held its annual holiday party on December 6. Mrs. Claus and her elf were in attendance and had gifts for all the kids. Everyone enjoyed good food, too.

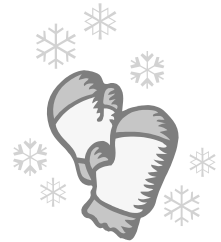
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FAMILY & EI PROGRAM COLLABORATION

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The Thom Western Regional Consultation Program (WRCP) will hold parent groups at Holyoke Community College. On January 24th, the topic is “Making Treatment Decisions, the Joys and Difficulties!” On February 28th, the **WRCP** will be hosting the annual “Couples Group” with leader Ron Baer. Most groups are open to families with children under and over 3 years old (413)783-5500. Please call Karen Cassidy, if you are interested in attending.

In January, sign language classes will resume throughout the western region, including a new training for “Songs In Sign” for parents, EI staff and childcare providers. The drop-in skating group for families at Interskate 91 in Wilbraham continues every Tuesday morning from 10 to 11:30 am. RCP families with children under 6 from anywhere in the state can come share some fun with us for FREE! Other families may participate for a small fee.



What's New with Family TIES by Mary Castro Summers

Family TIES of Massachusetts is a statewide information and support network for families of children with special needs. It is a project at the Federation for Children with Special Needs, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division for Perinatal, Early Childhood and Special Health Needs. Families of children with special needs can receive information, referrals, direct parent-to-parent support, and training from Family TIES. All of our services are **free** of charge. Family TIES serves as the Central Directory for the Early Intervention system in Massachusetts, providing contact information for families across the state.

Information and Referrals: Family TIES staff are located in the Department of Public Health offices across the state. Regional Coordinators work half-time and offer assistance through phone calls and e-mails, providing information about programs and services that can be helpful to families of children with special needs. Family TIES publishes its annual Directory of Resources for Parents of Children with Special Needs. The next edition will be offered at the Federation annual conference on March 4th. Copies will also be available from the Regional Coordinators beginning at the end of March and on the Family TIES website, www.massfamilyties.org.

Parent-To-Parent Program: The mission of the Parent-to-Parent Program is to bring together parents facing similar challenges in raising their children with

special needs. We believe that sharing experiences provides strength and support for each other. This volunteer-based program provides opportunities for all parents to share, on both sides of the conversation. Parents contact us in search of a listening ear -- another parent who has faced some of the same issues and concerns as they now face. This may be in response to a new diagnosis or a new challenge, a transition in the child's life, or just to recharge their batteries.

Parents seeking parent-to-parent support can contact Family TIES through the Regional Coordinators or our toll-free number, 1-800-905-TIES (8437), or call Linea directly at 508-792-7880, Ext. 2175. Forms to begin the match process are available on our website. Visit the Parent-to-Parent section at www.massfamilyties.org. For those parents who would like to attend a training and become a volunteer Support Parent, please contact your Regional Coordinator to learn about upcoming trainings in your area.

Parent Trainings: The Regional Coordinators offer “Let's Get Organized” workshops to groups of parents, at Early Intervention Programs or Special Education PACs in their local communities. This workshop offers effective ways for parents to organize information and manage paperwork, plus offers general ideas on “keeping it together” and tips to develop community connections for your child that can help during the transition process and beyond. Contact your Family TIES Regional

Coordinator to arrange for a **free** workshop in your local area.

Federation Conference: The Federation conference is always a great opportunity for the Family TIES staff to meet many of the parents who have called us, and having connected in person, inspires new calls as well. Please be sure to stop by our exhibit table in the main lobby and to also visit our resource tables in the exhibit hall. Additionally, our staff will present in two conference sessions: *Practical Parenting Tips for Young Children with Autism* and *Preparing Your Family's Emergency Plan*. We hope to see you in Boston!

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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, a Focused Monitoring Parent Coordinator, a Training Coordinator and a Collaboration and Outreach Coordinator. Please feel free to contact any of them with your thoughts, suggestions, and concerns.

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TRAINING COORDINATOR

Vacant

Contact Us:

Toll-free:

(877) 35-EI-PLP

Email: eiplp@yahoo.com

Visit us on the web:

www.eiplp.org

The Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project NEWS

Come Join the PLP Team !

We Are Hiring

The EI Parent Leadership Project is seeking a Training Coordinator to work as part of the PLP team to:

- Develop a calendar of learning opportunities for families
- Collaborate with other family organizations and EI Programs
- Participate in newsletter development
- Assist in updating and increasing the Parent Leadership Project database
- Meet with families in Early Intervention

This position is 25 hours per week with office space located in a DPH Regional Health Office.

If this sounds interesting, we would like to hear from you. For more information, please contact the Parent Leadership Project toll-free at (877) 353-4757 or by email at eiplp@yahoo.com. Watch for the posting on our website, www.eiplp.org.

NEXT DEADLINE: The next deadline is **March 15, 2006.**

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. **To receive a copy of this free publication, call us toll-free at (877) 353-4757 and ask to be added to the PLP mailing list, or email eiplp@yahoo.com.**

