



The Update:

News and Information for MA Early Intervention Providers

October 2007

Welcome to "The Update." This is a periodic newsletter focusing specifically on issues and information in MA Early Intervention. This edition highlights the NCSEAM Family Survey and the FY 07 Annual Report. Some versions will be paper; some electronic. Please let us know how you like this format!

NCSEAM Family Survey

Thank you for your participation in the DPH's efforts to systemize the collection of data to ensure input and feedback from all families whose children receive Early Intervention Services by distributing the NCSEAM Family Survey. The Family Survey is being utilized to collect data for the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report, Indicator #4 on Family Outcomes.

All programs should have received a mailing from Piedra Data Services that contained English and Spanish scannable surveys, explanatory flyers, and stamped self addressed envelopes. Service Coordinators are now distributing the prepared packets to families at the time of the **six month IFSP Review**. This ensures that every family enrolled in Early Intervention for at least six months will be surveyed, thus reaching children six months to three years of age. Completing and returning the Survey gives all families an opportunity to share thoughts about their EI experience. To date, Piedra Data has received 76 completed Family Surveys.

DPH perceives the implementation of the NCSEAM Family Survey as a very useful way to obtain information from families about their Early Intervention experience with the following benefits to the overall system and individual programs:

- Opportunity to improve services for children and families receiving Early Intervention.
- Information gathered will be analyzed in the aggregate to meet federal reporting requirements.
- Information will also be disaggregated by program and given to programs annually to support ongoing program planning.
- Information obtained from the Family Survey can be incorporated into ongoing quality assurance plan.
- Completing the Survey will educate families about options and opportunities to better meet their needs while still enrolled in EI.

Training was held with Parent Liaisons to support families in completing the Survey. The DPH has received

some thoughtful ideas and suggestions on engaging families to participate in the process such as hosting parent meetings to discuss the importance of completing the survey and how the data will be used. In addition, announcements about the survey are being posted on the EIPLP and Family TIES websites, and an article with updates is included in each edition of *Parent Perspective*, the PLP Newsletter. DPH will share information and reminders with Parent Liaisons and Parent Contacts.

Please note the following additions to the **Family Survey Frequently Asked Questions:**

1. What if a parent needs some help in understanding or filling out the Survey?

One resource is the EI Program's Parent Liaison. DPH and the EI Parent Leadership Project (EIPLP) provided training to Parent Liaisons to answer questions from families about completing the survey.

2. What's a Parent Liaison and how would I know if my program has one?

Parent Liaisons are family members whose children went through EI who are hired by their EI program to help families get the information they need and get involved in program activities. Right now, 15 programs have Parent Liaisons. You can ask your Service Coordinator or Program Director if your program has a Parent Liaison.

3. Who can help families if their program does not have a Parent Liaison?

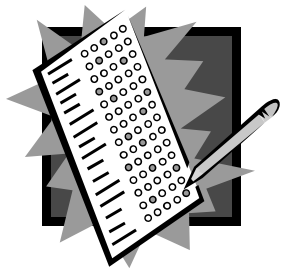
A Service Coordinator, other staff within the EI program or agency, family members, other community agencies where you receive services or the Parent Leadership Project.

4. If a family has twins or multiples do we distribute one or two survey?

EIPs should distribute only one survey per family if the family has multiple children enrolled in Early Intervention.

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FY 07 Annual Report



Early Intervention Programs will be receiving their program's individual Annual Report/Self Assessment for FY07 by late October 2007. The Annual Report/Self Assessment is a key piece of data collection for federal and state reporting requirements.

The DPH will be utilizing the information for the Annual Report to collect data for the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report on Indicator #1 *Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who receive services on their IFSP in a timely manner*; Indicator 8 on *Part C Transition Requirements*; and Indicator # 14 *State reported data are timely and accurate*. The report will be sent out electronically to providers with specific instructions for accessing and completing the report and providers will be given six weeks in which to complete the Annual Report and return to the DPH.

The format and much of the data collection is consistent with last year's Annual Report/Self Assessment. Programs will be required to submit information regarding Process Verification, Data Collection Verification, Transition practices and activities, File Review/Data Verification, and the MDPH Health and Safety Checklist and Affirmation. The Transition Survey will collect data on those children who received EI services for six or more months and were discharged between 1/1/07 and 6/30/07 and referred to an LEA.

This year the Transition Survey is requesting the Date of the Transition Planning Conference, and the DPH has added a field that will automatically calculate the 90 day timeframe. Programs will be able to provide an explanation for the reasons why the transition planning conference did not occur at all or within the 90 day timeframe. As part of the data verification process, the DPH will select 10 files from the Annual Report Transition Survey in which programs will be asked to submit the IFSP Transition Page to support appropriate transition activities occurred and are documented in the IFSP. DPH staff will also complete the data verification of accurate data entry and transmittal by cross-referencing the eligibility information with the EIIS database.

Next year's **FY08 Annual Report** will add two additional questions to the Transition Survey to reflect the recent changes to the IFSP Transition Pages: the Date of Referral to the LEA and Parental Opt Out for those families who choose not to have their child's contact information shared with the LEA.

If you have any questions regarding the upcoming Annual Report/Self Assessment please feel free to contact your Regional Specialist or myself.

Comments and questions to:

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