

The UPDATE

News and Information for Massachusetts EI Providers

September 2017



Important Dates...Mark your Calendar!

September 14, 2017: ICC Retreat, Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, Marlborough, MA
"Innovation, Passion and Leadership; Re-energize the work; sustain and grow our leadership"

September 15, 2017: Deadline for submitting the FY17 Annual Report to your EI Regional Specialist

September 26, 2017: DPH Monthly Webinar: "IFSP Implementation—Materials & Resources"

November 1, 2017: Program Director Session—"Aligning the SSIP with General Supervision"



DPH Updates

BDI—2 Scoring Booklets

The Department has placed the order for BDI-2 Scoring Booklets. Programs should expect to receive a shipment for the entire year during the month of September.

IFSP Implementation

DPH continues to finalize the IFSP document (paper and electronic versions), and policies related to the IFSP process. As noted in the DPH July 2017 webinar, DPH has drafted revisions to the Prior Written Notice and Consent for an Eligibility Evaluation/Assessment forms to align with Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); reduce duplication and support the effective implementation of the IFSP. The goal is to have the revised forms available on the September 26, 2017 webinar to allow EI programs time to share information with staff, prior to the formal implementation date of January 1, 2018. Given that the PWN and Consent for Evaluation/Assessment forms will be revised, the DPH cautions programs from making any large printing or NCR orders of the current forms.

Just as a reminder – the following is the IFSP implementation timeline which will be discussed along with the final materials on the September 26, 2017 webinar. In addition, the current "**Process of developing an IFSP**" module on the EITC training center will be taken down as of September 12, 2017 as it does not reflect the pages of the new form.



State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) - Outcome Data Collection

Massachusetts Early Intervention received very positive feedback from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on Phase III of the SSIP which focuses on implementation and evaluation.

OSEP commented that initial activities and outputs of the implementation plan align with the theory of action. The Department clearly communicated the milestones that were met, timelines put in place as well as adjustments to activities and timelines after reviewing the Phase II plan. The Department considered internal and external resources in implementing the plan, and obtained a lot of input from stakeholders. OSEP was pleased with the choice of the Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI) as the evidence based practice that focuses on parent child interactions to strengthen the child and family unit.

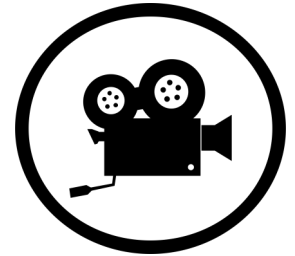
As part of the SSIP evaluation, DPH Regional staff will once again collect progress data on high quality IFSP outcomes using the placemat tool criteria. No more than 10 active records will be used in the data collection process. The Regional team will be contacting programs shortly to schedule a time to visit your program to review outcomes.

Thank you all, for your ongoing efforts and activities at the local level to support the SSIP activities improving social-emotional skills of children enrolled in the MA Early Intervention System.

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Update on Consent Forms for Video Recording

The DPH/EITC *Consent to Video* form is no longer required for Early Intervention staff that are videotaped. After consulting with our legal department, videotaping is part of EI providers employment expectation and consent forms are not needed, as long as the staff person knows that he/she is being videotaped.

This form is still required for any children and/or parents/caregivers captured in a video that is being submitted to DPH for general supervision requirements (BDI-2, PIWI, etc.).



NCSEAM Family Survey Update

Just a reminder that October is the next distribution month for the NCSEAM Family Survey. Lists of your program's eligible children was sent out via secure mail from DPH today, September 12. We hope this will give you plenty of time to cross check, make sure these families are still enrolled, remove any who are not and add any child/family that does not appear on the list.

Surveys should be given to families whose children have been enrolled for at least **six months** who did not receive a survey in March 2017.

The Department will provide a brief review of the purpose of the survey and resources to help you implement it during the September webinar (Tuesday, September 26).

If you have questions or need assistance with anything related to the Family Survey, contact Suzanne Gottlieb at: suzanne.gottlieb@state.ma.us.

Cannabis Oil and Medical Marijuana

It was recently brought to the attention of DPH that a parent was giving her child cannabis oil as a treatment for Autism Spectrum Disorder. Other incidents of parents smoking marijuana in the home have raised concerns with some providers. The following statement, that was shared during the August EI Autism Status call, represents the DPH position:

DPH, as lead agency for Early Intervention services in Massachusetts, does not provide guidance or advisory opinions on a parent's decisions to pursue alternative interventions or other approaches to address concerns related to ASD.

DPH would support a program/program staff to have a parent consult their primary health care provider on alternative interventions which could correlate to a child's overall well being including growth, health and development as good clinical practice.

As with any instance of providing services to families in their home, if staff have observed concerns consistent with the DCF definition of abuse or neglect as it relates to the welfare of a child, staff, as mandated reporters, are responsible to file a report with the Department of Children and Families.

ARICA Webinar Scheduled

Amy Weinstock and Teri Farrell from the Autism Insurance Resource Center will present a webinar on *Tuesday, October 3, from 10 am to 11am*, on the Massachusetts Autism Insurance Law, *ARICA*. This webinar is in addition to the regular monthly EI Program Director webinar and is a great opportunity to learn about insurance coverage for families with a child diagnosed with ASD. Amy and Teri will share their expertise regarding resources and technical assistance and their website www.amicovered.disabilityinfo.org that assists families with determining their insurance coverage for services. This becomes critically important for children turning three and transitioning out of EI.

All EI Program Directors will receive an invitation to register, as well as, the Autism Contacts that programs have identified. Currently, only half of the EI Programs have responded to the request for Specialty Service contacts for Autism, Hearing and Vision that was sent to program directors on August 3. If you wish to have your Autism Contact participate in this webinar, please return the *EI Program Contact/Liaison for Specialty Services* form to Joan Rafferty as soon as possible.

Specialty Providers for Autism Contracts

During July and August, DPH staff, that included Ron Benham, Patti Fougere, Steve McCourt, Noah Feldman and Joan Rafferty, met separately with both the Specialty Service Providers for Autism and representatives of the MEIC board/ Early Intervention Program Directors.



The topic discussed was the possibility of SSPs for Autism contracting directly with DPH as opposed to the current practice of contracting with EIPs for service provision to children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This very preliminary conversation was to consider the pros and cons regarding the following: Clinical Implications, Fiscal Implications, Logistical Implications/Capacity Issues, Monitoring/Procedural Safeguards, System Implications. Both groups shared thoughts that will be considered as the system moves forward with the implementation of the new web-based system coming in the next few years.

Again, this is very preliminary and meant to be the start of an ongoing discussion before any decisions are made. Anyone wishing to share thoughts or comments about this issue, may send written responses to Joan Rafferty at joan.rafferty@state.ma.us to be shared with the DPH team.

Transition Study

The Department of Public Health is collaborating with researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital for Children and Harvard Medical School on a research project examining the transition from early intervention (EI) to preschool for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).



The project seeks to interview early intervention coordinators, providers, educators, specialty service providers and physicians who serve children with ASD in the EI and preschool special education systems as well as in the health care system. We are specifically interested in how the current service systems support or create challenges in providers' capacity to serve children with ASD, and what are the barriers and facilitators of effective service coordination and relationship building during this transition period. We hope that the information we collect will improve knowledge of how to best provide support for families of children with ASD who must make the transition from EI services to preschool-based services.

We will be recruiting providers of children with ASD between the ages of 2.5-5 years old. If you're interested in participating in a brief 30-45 minute interview, please contact the Project Director, Morgan Crossman by email at mcrossman@mgh.harvard.edu.



Policy & Clarifications

Policies and clarifications will be posted here if there are any.



Data Manager Update

Information and updates will be posted here when there are any.



Forms & Materials

Home Visiting Philosophy Flyer

The DPH is pleased to share a new resource for providers to share with families and referral sources: the Home Visiting Philosophy flyer. It is available in English, Spanish and Portuguese and can be found on the EIPLP website under Basic Information for EI, EI Materials at www.eiplp.org/home-visiting-flyer/.



EITC Update



“Grab and Go” Training

The EI Training Center has developed a BDI-2 fidelity checklist “Grab and Go” training which can be found on our website at www.eitrainingcenter.org/professional-development/training-materials.

This “Grab and Go” is a resource developed to support EI specialists in learning about the BDI-2 fidelity checklist as a tool. Through the use of a PowerPoint presentation and video examples, participants will learn what the fidelity checklist is and how it can be used as a tool to identify observable errors in the administration of the BDI-2.

BDI—2 Online Module

The EI Training Center is releasing a new BDI-2 online module focused on the standardized structured procedure. Participants will learn through video examples, and information excerpted from the BDI-2 Examiner’s Manual. Tips and techniques will also be shared! This module will also include a video glossary of items being demonstrated to fidelity. Please see our website at www.eitrainingcenter.org to register.



Specialty Services Updates

IFSP Webinar

Program Directors from the Specialty Service Providers for Autism, Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Vision Loss will be invited to the EI webinar scheduled for Tuesday, September 26 from 10 – 11 am.

The topic will be the new IFSP form that has been in development over the past two years.

For those who have not participated in an EI webinar previously, the format is GoToWebinar. This will require a prior registration that can be accessed from a link sent in the invitation. Instructions will be included in the invitation. Please contact Joan Rafferty at joan.rafferty@state.ma.us, with any questions.



Resources

MA Home Visiting Initiative Overview

The Department of Public Health runs the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV), known in-state as the MA Home Visiting Initiative (MHVI). MHVI program goals are primarily focused on expanding evidence-based home visiting (EBHV) services to pregnant and parenting families, but also include strengthening statewide maternal, child, and family services and supports to strengthen the early childhood system of care.

MHVI provides funding to community-based agencies in 17 cities/towns* across MA to expand evidence-based home visiting services. The EBHV programs supported by MHVI funds include:

1) Healthy Families, 2) Parents as Teachers, and 3) Early Head Start.

Families receiving Early Intervention may enroll in EBHV programs for services that complement support received through EI. Families aging out of EI may also be eligible for certain EBHV programs to fill a gap in services prior to kindergarten. While EBHV programs differ in focus and curriculum the primary goals are to improve child and family outcomes such as (but not limited to) increasing school readiness, building family self-sufficiency, enhancing the parent-child relationship, promoting physical and mental health, and reducing child abuse and neglect. Home visitors build a strength-based trusting relationship with families and provide support based upon the family's needs through supportive family-determined goals, education, and connecting families to community resources.

MHVI has also made substantial gains in supporting the broader early childhood system of care. Specifically, MHVI developed and implemented Welcome Family, a universal one-time nurse home visit to all families with newborns up to eight weeks postpartum in Boston, Fall River, Lowell, Holyoke, and Springfield. The program serves to promote optimal maternal and infant physical and mental well-being and provide an entry point into a system of care for families with newborns.

Please find attached a [contact list](#) of the MHVI-supported evidence-based home visiting and the Welcome Family programs. All programs are accepting and enrolling families.

(* Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, North Adams, Pittsfield, Revere, Southbridge, Springfield, and Worcester)

Institute for Health & Recovery (IHR)—Early Literacy

Reading to babies, early on, is known to have many benefits! The IHR is please to share this resource with you...please feel free to pass it on to the families you serve, www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Developmental-Milestones-of-Early-Literacy.aspx.

As always, please contact karenwelling@healthrecovery.org or karengould@healthrecovery.org for any training and technical assistance needs, and to get your hand-delivered (training included) Trauma-Informed Tip sheets.

Planning for a Family Emergency—Advice for Immigrant Families

New resource for immigrant families that are trying to make caretaking plans in case of an emergency. This [link](#) will take you to a PDF version, it is also available at www.masslegalhelp.org/immigration/family-emergency.

Resources for Immigrant Families

The resources attached may be helpful for you and your staff in addressing the needs of some of your immigrant families.

[Food Stamps/SNAP—How Does Immigration Status Affect Benefit Amounts?](#)

[Cash and Food Stamp/Snap Eligibility Chart by Immigration Status for MA Residents](#)

[Immigration Services Referral List](#)

[Know Your Rights: Everyone has certain basic rights, no matter who is president](#)

[Trump's Executive Orders and Immigrants' Access to Health, Food, and Other Public Programs](#)

The National Immigration Law Center has "Know Your Rights" wallet cards in multiple languages at www.nilc.org.

The Massachusetts Law Reform Institute is another excellent resource: www.mlri.org/.



Events

Improving the Care of Mothers, Infants and Families Impacted by Perinatal Opioid Use in Massachusetts: A Statewide Initiative

This Fall Summit will be held on September 27th from 9am to 4pm at the Sheraton Framingham Hotel & Conference Center. Please see [attached flyer](#) to register.

Save the Date—MA Act Early State Team Fall Summit

This is a half-day training conference of the MA Act Early State Team for early childhood providers from all delivery systems. Learn about the extensive inventory of CDC Act Early materials and resources and how to access them, hear about current research, preview Watch Me Grow! modules, and network with colleagues. Break-out sessions will examine sharing difficult information with families, implementing developmental surveillance and Act Early material, accessing available resources in the community, and communicating with other stakeholders and agencies. Additional information available [here](#), This conference is FREE and includes lunch!!!

Thursday October 12, 2017 - 7:45 am- 2:00 pm
UMass Medical School - Worcester, MA

Practitioner-Researcher Conversations Series: Working with Families and Young Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Hosted by the Massachusetts Association for Infant Mental Health (MassAIMH) on Thursday, October 12th at the Jewish Family & Children's Services from 5:30pm—7:30pm. Please see [attached flyer](#) to register.

Save the Date—GPS: Guide to Providing Services

A Workshop for Early Intervention Providers working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants and Toddlers

This workshop offers a unique opportunity for Early Intervention Service Providers to come together to learn information and to network. There is no fee for this workshop and lunch will be provided. Certificates of attendance will be issued at the end of the workshop. Please contact Mary_Jane_Huru@tlcdeaf.org with questions and for registration information!

Monday, November 6, 2017; 8:30am to 3:30pm
The Learning Center for the Deaf, 848 Central Street, Framingham, MA 01701



Comments, contributions or feedback, please contact:

Patti Fougere

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