



# The Parent Leadership Project's Parent Perspective

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**"Change happens—Make it Count!"**

**Issue 117 – Spring 2018**

## **Is My Child Crazy?**

By Tracy Graham

## **¿Mi hijo está loco?**

Por Tracy Graham

In May, I attended the MEIC\* conference. The keynote speaker was Dr. Robert Brooks. He was so funny, insightful and easy to understand. "Be careful of the words you say and what you do," said Brooks. "Kids are always listening and watching us."

I know this to be true. My five-year old boys, Ryan and Hunter, are always mimicking their daddy and me. We are constantly saying, "Where did you learn that?" Then we realize one of us has said or done it before.

We use the virtual assistant to our computer, Alexa by Amazon. Mostly the kids use it to play music on the computer. The Alexa program displays the most common demands and words we said to it. Top on our list were, "Play My Little Pony and Frozen theme songs" and "Alexa...you're stupid!"

Dr. Brooks said there are three temperament types; impossible, difficult and "mother killer." So is my child "crazy?" Is he a "mother killer?" No, he is "spirited" and "very busy." The words we use are very important. I would never want Ryan to go to school telling his teachers that his mommy called him "crazy." Therefore, I am learning a new way to talk and express myself.

When the temperament of a "mother killer" comes out, I realize that I need to find better ways to take care of myself. Brooks gave a helpful list of suggestions to help us be in the moment and not stressed out all the time. He recommended that we meditate, eat dinner as a family, exercise, and stay calm.

Throughout their lives, my boys will always need my help and guidance; one of them is legally blind and on the spectrum, the other has ADHD. Having the opportunity to go to informative conferences like this really gets me thinking and putting everything in perspective. It helps me improve the lives of my boys, my family and myself. Now, I just need to find time to slow down and implement the strategies.

I do not want to be the parent that says, "I love your ideas, but I am too stressed out to use them!"

\*MEIC—Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium



En mayo, asistí a la conferencia MEIC\*. El orador destacado era el Dr. Robert Brooks. Fue divertido, inteligente y fácil de entender. "Tengan cuidado con las palabras que dicen y con lo que hacen," comentó Brooks. "Los niños y las niñas siempre nos están escuchando y observando."

Sé que es cierto. Mis hijos de cinco años, Ryan y Hunter, siempre nos están imitando a su papá y a mí. Constantemente les decimos: "¿Dónde aprendiste eso?" Después nos damos cuenta de

que uno de nosotros lo ha dicho o hecho antes.

Usamos el asistente virtual de nuestra computadora, Alexa de Amazon. En general, los niños lo usan para reproducir música en la computadora. El programa Alexa muestra las instrucciones más comunes que le dimos y las palabras que usamos. Las primeras de la lista han sido: "Quiero escuchar los temas de Mi Pequeño Pony y *Frozen*", y "Alexa... ¡eres estúpida!"

El Dr. Brooks dijo que hay tres tipos de temperamentos: imposible, difícil y "mata-madres". Entonces, ¿está "loco" mi hijo? ¿Es un "mata-madres"? No, es que está muy "animado" y "activo". Las palabras que usamos son muy importantes. Nunca querría que Ryan fuera a la escuela a decir a sus maestros que su mamá lo llamó "loco". Por lo tanto, estoy aprendiendo una nueva forma de hablar y de expresarme.

Cuando el temperamento de un "mata-madre" se expresa, me doy cuenta de que tengo que encontrar mejores formas de cuidarme. Brooks nos dio una lista útil de sugerencias para ayudarnos a estar en el momento y no estresarnos todo el tiempo. Recomendó que meditemos, cenemos en familia, hagamos ejercicio y mantengamos la calma.

A lo largo de sus vidas, mis hijos siempre necesitarán mi ayuda y mi guía. Uno de ellos es legalmente ciego y en el espectro, y el otro tiene ADDH. Tener la oportunidad de ir a conferencias informativas como esta realmente me hace pensar y poner todo en perspectiva. Me ayuda a mejorar las vidas de mis niños, mi familia y la mía propia. Ahora, solo necesito encontrar el tiempo para tomarlo con calma e implementar las estrategias.

No quiero ser la madre que dice: "Me encantan tus ideas, ¡pero estoy demasiado estresada para usarlas!"

## NCSEAM Family Survey Update

Every March and October, the NCSEAM Family Survey is distributed. If your family has been enrolled in Early Intervention (EI) for at least **six months**, you will receive a Family Survey. Service coordinators hand deliver the Survey, a letter explaining what the Survey is and why it is important for you to fill it out. They also include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for you to mail your completed Survey back.

Families fill out **one** Survey in each calendar year. Your response on the Survey measures **three family outcomes**. We want to know about your experience in EI in these three areas.

The Department of Public Health (DPH), Early Intervention Program, collects the outcomes that you share anonymously. Then the outcomes are reported to the Federal Office of Special Education (OSEP). They are:

- **Early Intervention services help families know their rights**
- **Early Intervention services help families effectively communicate their children's needs**
- **Early Intervention services help families help their children develop and learn**

The DPH and your EI program also use this outcome information to learn how helpful you think your family's EI services are.

If you filled out a Family Survey in March, **thank you very much!** If not, you may be getting a Survey in October. Please complete it and return in the envelope provided.

***Sharing your opinions helps make EI services better for all children and families!***



Receive our Newsletters, Events & Opportunities more quickly!

Email us at [eiplp@live.com](mailto:eiplp@live.com) and ask to be added to our email list!

HELP the EIPLP meet our goal of "750 likes!" on Facebook AND NEW... "follow us" on Instagram



## Información de la encuesta para las familias de NCSEAM



La Encuesta Familiar NCSEAM se distribuye en marzo y octubre de cada año. Si su hijo/a y familia están registrados en el programa de Intervención Temprana (*Early Intervention*, EI) desde hace por lo menos **seis meses**, usted recibirá una Encuesta Familiar. Los coordinadores del servicio entregan en mano la Encuesta y una carta con una explicación de qué es y por qué es importante que la complete.

También recibirá un sobre con respuesta postal paga y designación del destinatario para que pueda enviar por correo la Encuesta cuando la haya completado.

Las familias completan **una** Encuesta por año calendario. Sus respuestas a la Encuesta se usan para medir tres resultados familiares y ayudan al Departamento de Salud Pública (DPH) a entender su experiencia en Intervención Temprana.

El Programa de Intervención Temprana del Departamento de Salud Pública (DPH) recolecta la información que usted comparte. Las respuestas que usted proporciona en forma anónima, que se informan a la Oficina Federal de Educación Especial (OSEP), son:

- **Los servicios de Intervención Temprana ayudan a las familias a conocer sus derechos**
- **Los servicios de Intervención Temprana ayudan a las familias a comunicar eficazmente las necesidades de sus hijos/as**
- **Los servicios de Intervención Temprana ayudan a las familias a ayudar a sus hijos/as a desarrollar-se y aprender**

El Departamento de Salud Pública y el Programa de Intervención Temprana también usan estos resultados de encuesta para saber cuán útiles le resultan los servicios de Intervención Temprana que utiliza su familia.

Si usted completó una Encuesta Familiar en marzo, **muchas gracias**. Si no, puede ser que reciba una Encuesta en octubre. Por favor, complétela y devuélvala en el sobre provisto con la Encuesta.

***¡Compartir sus opiniones ayuda a que los servicios de Intervención Temprana sean mejores para todos los niños y sus familias!***

The EIPLP is now on Instagram! Find us at EIPLP



The photos the EIPLP takes at events statewide can be found on our Facebook page...be sure to check out the photos from this year's MEIC conference by following this link, [www.facebook.com/pg/EIPLP-108236104290/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=10156304248104291](https://www.facebook.com/pg/EIPLP-108236104290/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10156304248104291)

## A Chance Meeting

By Katie Lavoie

My family's incredible journey began when my son Richie was diagnosed with Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI) at two weeks old. He was born with a broken femur, with no explanation. We had no clue that he would be born with brittle bones disease.

Months and many fractures later, his pediatrician introduced my husband and me to the idea of Early Intervention. We had no idea that we could do such a thing and eagerly, we got involved.

Before that, I joined Facebook groups full of parents who had children with OI or had it themselves. One parent I connected with however, was through a mutual friend and not a Facebook group.

My friend's husband worked with someone who had a daughter with OI. It was not long before we started messaging each other. His name was Bill and he told me his wife Marie and his daughter Mary both have OI and they both are type three. There are several types ranging in severity and symptoms. The world became smaller when I found out that they both have type three which is the same type that my son has. We messaged quite a bit about our struggles and how we handle them. It was such an amazing feeling to have that type of love and support from someone who can relate with you.

I'd say that we went almost a year without messaging prior to our recent encounter. It turns out that Marie, Bill and their daughter Mary also participate in Early Intervention. In fact, we finally were able to meet for the first time when we both attended the 2018 MEIC\* Conference in May. This was my first year attending the conference so I was nervous and didn't know what to expect.

When I walked into the first lecture on the first day of the two day conference, there they were! We both smiled as we recognized each other and listened to the lecture.

Later on that morning, we met up in a hospitality room for parents. From that point on, we shared stories about our lives and related on so many things. The best part of all of this was that our OI babies got to meet and play with each other. It was so heartwarming and I will always remember how happy I felt.

In summary, the MEIC\* Conference was such a unique and inspiring experience. We learned quite a lot, we laughed countless times, and connected as family. I highly recommend Early Intervention and the resources, like the conference, that are provided. We are already getting excited for next year.

## Una reunión casual

Por Katie Lavoie



La increíble travesía de mi familia comenzó cuando a mi hijo Richie le diagnosticaron Osteogénesis Imperfecta (OI) a las dos semanas de edad. Nació con un fémur quebrado, sin explicación. No teníamos idea de que nacería con la enfermedad de los huesos de cristal.

Muchos meses y muchas fracturas más tarde, su pediatra nos presentó a mi esposo y a mí la idea de Intervención Temprana. No teníamos idea de que eso era posible y con mucho entusiasmo nos dedicamos a la tarea.

Antes de eso, me uní a grupos de Facebook llenos de padres que tenían hijos con OI o que padecían ellos mismos OI. También me conecté con un padre a través de un amigo en común, y no un grupo de Facebook.

El esposo de mi amiga trabajaba con alguien que tenía una hija con OI. Poco después empezamos a intercambiar mensajes. Su nombre era Brian y me contó que su esposa Meghan y su hija Margaret tenían OI y ambas eran del tipo tres. Hay varios tipos con distintos niveles de gravedad y síntomas. El mundo se volvió más pequeño cuando descubrí que ambas tenían el tipo tres, que es el mismo que tiene mi hijo. Intercambiamos varios mensajes sobre nuestras luchas diarias y cómo enfrentarlas. Fue un sentimiento maravilloso tener ese tipo de amor y apoyo de alguien que puede identificarse con uno.

Diría que había pasado casi un año sin intercambiar mensajes antes de nuestro encuentro reciente. Resulta que Meghan, Brian y su hija Margaret también participan en Intervención Temprana. De hecho, finalmente pudimos reunirnos por primera vez en la Conferencia MEIC\*2018 en mayo. Este fue el primer año que asistí a la conferencia, así que estaba nerviosa y no sabía qué esperar.

Cuando entré a la primera conferencia del primer día en esta conferencia de dos días, ¡allí estaban! Sonreímos al reconocernos y escuchamos la presentación.

Luego, esa misma mañana, nos encontramos en una sala de recepción para padres. Desde ese momento, compartimos historias sobre nuestras vidas y nos sentimos cerca en muchas cosas. Lo mejor de todo esto fue que nuestros bebés con OI se conocieron y pudieron jugar juntos. Fue tan reconfortante que siempre recordaré la felicidad que sentí.

En resumen, la Conferencia MEIC\* fue una experiencia única e inspiradora. Aprendimos mucho, nos reímos bastante y nos conectamos como familia. Recomiendo mucho el programa de Intervención Temprana y los recursos, como la conferencia, que se brindan. Ya estamos muy entusiasmados por participar el año próximo.

\*MEIC—Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium



## Home Visits in Massachusetts Early Intervention

Massachusetts (MA) Early Intervention (EI) uses research to guide home visits. EI focuses on three concepts in their work with families:

1. Infants and toddlers learn best through lots of practice during their daily activities.
2. You (their parent or caregiver) have the greatest impact on your child's progress. You are with your child every day. Early Intervention is only with your family for a short time.
3. The EI Specialist supports your relationship with your child.



EI uses principles from the Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI)\* to guide home visits. PIWI helps parents and caregivers, as well as infants and toddlers, feel good about what they do together and individually. MA EI wants children and families to be active and successful in all they do throughout their lives.

During your home visit, you, your child and your EI Specialist will:

- ♥ Learn about things your family does every day, such as eating meals, baths or a trip to the grocery store. Are these things easy? Are they hard? How does your child do these things with you?
- ♥ Come up with strategies to support your Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) outcomes.
- ♥ Help you discover ways to practice skills in your daily activities.
- ♥ Help make sure you and your child are feeling confident learning new skills while enjoying the activities you do as a family.

**You are an important part of the EI visit!** You play the most important role in accomplishing the IFSP outcomes for your family!

*\*T. Yates, J. McCollum. Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI). Center of the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, 2015. Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Massachusetts Early Intervention (EI) Home Visits flyer. Early Intervention, 2017.*

## Early Intervention Support in Our Every Day

By Nicole Mills

My oldest son, Liam started Early Intervention (EI) when he was just two months old. Liam had a lack of oxygen at birth and was referred for services straight from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). It was the best thing I could have done for him, myself and our family.

Initially, I had some assumptions about early intervention; that someone was going to come to my house, judge me, and tell me what to do with my son to help him. That was not the case at all and I was extremely grateful for that. I was also afraid of what my son's future was going to be because of his birth history.

To be honest, the process was scary and intimidating. However, soon after Liam's early interventionist started coming to my house, I knew that this was going to change our lives for the better. Early intervention was nothing like what I thought it would be. A woman named Laura came to my house and she did not judge me. She did not care what my house looked like. She cared about my son, my family and how best to help us all succeed. Laura asked me about what I would like to see changed during my day. She truly wanted to support Liam and our family. She made it clear that I did not have to know all the answers. She guided me and helped me communicate what my family's needs were. She helped mold me into the confident parent that I am today.

Laura did not come in wanting to change the parent that I was. She did not want to fill my day with requirements and things that felt like tasks for us to help Liam. What Laura did was empower me to be the parent she knew I could be. We changed very small things that I was already doing; we just used a different approach. For instance, when I put lotion on Liam, I moved his legs differently to stretch them due to his tone issues. When I would play with Liam, and talk with him, I learned to engage him just a little differently so that it would help him learn. As Liam changed and grew, my days changed, and early intervention was there to guide and help me through all of these changes; big and the small.

Liam had such a hard time with transitions. After talking about it with Laura, we implemented little things like warnings, and setting the stage for what was next for him. With consistency, Liam did much better. These small changes made my time with him better so that we could really enjoy each other, reducing my stress and anxiety.

This process took time and having early intervention guide us, it was easier. Liam is now three years old and has transitioned to Pre-K. He has a younger brother named, Aiden. Aiden also receives EI services. He experienced many ear infections and could not hear for the first 6 months, this resulted in a speech delay.

## Early Intervention Support in Our Every Day (continued)

One of the things I learned through our experience with Liam was that I am a good parent, I am able to do what is right for my family and this resulted in me more confidently requesting services for Aiden on my own. I think it's important to share this because with Liam I was told to get services and with Aiden, I was already aware and knowledgeable so I didn't wait for the pediatrician to refer him. The pediatrician only sees Aiden routinely but I know him best. I also knew that he could be doing more if we had the guidance.

Early Intervention helped me significantly with both my sons. Both are unique and have different personalities. Our early interventionist helped us to identify strategies that work best for each of my boys based in on their needs. She genuinely cared about my relationship with each of my sons. She communicated with me clearly, and helped make me the confident parent I am today. I am so glad that I was wrong about what I initially thought EI would be.

## Apoyo de intervención temprana en todos los días

Por Nicole Mills

Mi hijo mayor, Liam, comenzó con Intervención Temprana cuando tenía tan solo dos meses. Liam tuvo falta de oxígeno al nacer y fue derivado a los servicios directamente desde la Unidad de Terapia Intensiva Neonatal. Fue lo mejor que podría haber hecho para él, para mí y para nuestra familia.

Inicialmente, tenía algunos preconceptos sobre la intervención temprana; que alguien vendría a mi casa, me juzgaría y me diría qué hacer con mi hijo para ayudarlo. No fue así, para nada, y me siento sumamente agradecida por ello. También temía por cómo sería el futuro de mi hijo, debido a su historia al nacer.

Sinceramente, el proceso me generaba dudas, era apabullante. Sin embargo, poco después de que la especialista en Intervención Temprana de Liam comenzó a venir a casa, supe que esto nos cambiaría la vida para mejor. La intervención temprana no tenía nada que ver con lo que yo había supuesto. Una mujer llamada Laura vino a casa y no me juzgó. No le importaba cómo estaba la casa. Le importaba mi hijo, mi familia y cómo podía ayudarnos a todos a superar la situación. Laura me preguntó qué me gustaría que fuera distinto durante mi día. Realmente quería apoyar a Liam y a nuestra familia. Me aclaró que yo no tenía por qué saber todas las respuestas. Me orientó y animó a comunicar cuáles eran las necesidades de mi familia. Me ayudó a moldearme como la madre segura que soy hoy.

Laura no vino con la intención de cambiar a la madre que yo era. No quería llenar mi día de requisitos y cosas que parecieran tareas para poder ayudar a Liam. Lo que hizo Laura fue empoderarme para que pudiera ser la madre que ella sabía que yo podía ser. Cambiamos pequeñas cosas que yo ya estaba haciendo; solo usamos un enfoque diferente. Por ejemplo, cuando le ponía loción a Liam, comencé a mover sus piernas de manera diferente para estirarlas debido a sus problemas de tono muscular. Cuando jugaba con Liam y le hablaba, aprendí a captar su atención de modo un poco diferente, para ayudarlo a aprender. Liam cambiaba y crecía, mis días también cambiaron, y la interven-

ción temprana estaba allí para guiarme y ayudarme en todos estos cambios, grandes y pequeños.

A Liam las transiciones le costaban mucho. Después de hablarlo con Laura, implementamos pequeñas medidas como avisos, como forma de preparar el terreno para el próximo paso que debía dar Liam. Con constancia, a Liam le empezó a ir mucho mejor. Estos pequeños cambios hicieron que mi tiempo con él fuera mejor y que realmente disfrutáramos el estar juntos, y así se redujo mi estrés y ansiedad.

Este proceso llevó tiempo y con la guía de la intervención temprana fue más fácil. Ahora Liam tiene tres años y ha pasado a Pre-K. Tiene un hermano menor, Aiden. Aiden también recibe servicios de intervención temprana. Tuvo muchas infecciones de oído y no pudo oír durante sus primeros seis meses, lo cual le causó un retraso en el habla.

Una de las cosas que aprendí a través de nuestra experiencia con Liam fue que soy una buena madre, soy capaz de hacer lo que es correcto para mi familia, y esto me hizo sentir más segura al solicitar servicios para Aiden por mi cuenta. Creo que es importante compartir esto porque con Liam me dijeron que solicitara el servicio, mientras que con Aiden yo ya era consciente y estaba al tanto, así que no esperé a que el pediatra lo derivara. El pediatra solo ve a Aiden en forma rutinaria pero yo lo conozco mejor. También supe que a él le podría ir mejor con esta guía.

Intervención Temprana me ayudó significativamente con mis dos hijos. Ambos son únicos y tienen personalidades diferentes. Nuestra especialista en Intervención Temprana nos ayudó a identificar las estrategias que funcionan mejor para cada uno de mis hijos sobre la base de sus necesidades. Realmente se interesa por mi relación con cada uno de ellos. Se comunicó conmigo claramente y me ayudó a ser la madre confiada que soy hoy. Estoy tan contenta de ver que mi percepción inicial sobre lo que sería la Intervención Temprana no era la correcta.

## Family Opportunities to Become More Engaged!

**Would you like to have a voice in the future planning and policy decisions for the Early Intervention system?**



### **What is the ICC?**

The Massachusetts Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) is a federally mandated statewide inter-agency group that advises and assists the Department of Public Health on Early Intervention. The ICC is comprised of parents, professionals and providers. Members of this dynamic group include representatives of state agencies, higher education, one State legislator, one medical professional, EI providers, early childhood service providers, as well as parents. The ICC meets on a regular basis. It is important that voices from all of these perspectives are shared and valued.

As a parent of a child who has received Early Intervention services, you have a unique perspective on how the Early Intervention system operates. Parents are encouraged to share their views and their opinions.

There are several ways for parents to get involved in the ICC, including as an ICC Parent Representative or as a member of one of six committees.

### **ICC Parent Representatives**

Parent representatives are voting members of the ICC, and as such are required to attend meetings five to six times a year. They receive a stipend and mentorship when they regularly attend meetings.

There is one parent representative from each of the six regions of the state and one at-large parent representative. Regional representatives must live in the region and have a child who is receiving or has received Early Intervention services.

Parents are encouraged to join a committee of the ICC. There are six standing committees that meet monthly at various locations throughout the state.

**Join an ICC Committee** (*Program Planning, Fiscal, Personnel Preparation, Standards, Specialty Services and Membership /Steering*).

Please contact Roxanne Hoke-Chandler at [roxanne.hoke-chandler@state.ma.us](mailto:roxanne.hoke-chandler@state.ma.us) or 781-774-7205 for more information about getting involved!



### **EI Training Center Presenters needed!**

If you're a parent or caregiver of a child who has received Early Intervention (EI) services and would like to become part of a team that trains EI staff, then read on!

Part of the commitment that the Department of Public Health makes to ensure that EI staff are well-trained, and have the tools to successfully support children and families in Massachusetts, is professional development. The EI Training Center (EITC) is looking for parents to present the required orientation trainings as part of the facilitation team.

- Attend Train-the-trainer curriculum.
- Trainings are held regionally throughout MA.
- This is a paid opportunity.

If you'd like to apply to become a facilitator or learn more, please contact Emily Webb at [emily.webb@state.ma.us](mailto:emily.webb@state.ma.us).

### **Onsite Monitoring Parents needed!**

The Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project is currently looking for family members of children who have graduated from EI or will be graduating from EI before September 1, 2018 to participate in the EI Onsite Monitoring process. Onsite Monitoring is one of the many efforts the Department of Public Health uses to ensure Early Intervention Program compliance with federal and state requirements. Reimbursement is available.



- Family members must attend an orientation training which will be held in the fall.
- A commitment of participating in up to 2 onsite monitoring visits during the fiscal year (July 2018 – June 2019) is required.
- An onsite visit consists of 2 to 3 full days onsite at an EI program to gather information, and pre and post meetings.

Most program assignments are within your family's region, but will not be the program from which your child graduated or any program with which you were involved. For more information, please contact Faith Bombardier at [faith.bombardier@state.ma.us](mailto:faith.bombardier@state.ma.us).

Watch the Early Intervention Training Center calendar for up-to-date opportunities...providers, families and caregivers are all welcome to participate in the online courses available!  
[www.eitrainingcenter.org](http://www.eitrainingcenter.org)

**DPH Spotlight**

**Office of Oral Health**

The Office of Oral Health at the Department of Public Health (DPH) works to improve and maintain oral health and ensure access to oral health care for all residents of Massachusetts. The Office shares information about prevention programs. These include community water fluoridation, school fluoride and sealant programs, and working to ensure that all residents, especially underserved populations, have access to dental services. The Office stresses that good oral health practices are important for everyone, at every age!



**Did you know that?**

- Baby teeth are important! Yes, they will fall out, but "first teeth" are needed for chewing and speaking. They also save space in your child's mouth for future permanent teeth.
- Most babies get their first tooth around 6 months, but like everything else that is unique about your baby, so is the arrival of the first tooth. Teeth may begin to appear as early as 3 months or as late as 14 months.
- Tooth decay or dental cavities are the most common childhood disease. Taking care of teeth properly will help your child to be healthy and comfortable.

**Here are some simple ways to keep babies and young children's teeth healthy**

- Use a soft, damp washcloth to wipe baby's gums after each feeding.
- Once teeth erupt, brush gently with a soft, child size toothbrush and a rice-sized smear of fluoridated toothpaste twice a day, morning and night.
- Begin flossing when any two teeth touch.
- Feed your child healthy foods and snacks such as fresh fruits and vegetables, cheese and yogurt.
- Give your child white milk. The calcium and vitamin D in milk helps grow strong teeth and bones.
- Avoid sugary, sticky foods.
- Never put your baby to bed with a bottle or sippy cup filled with anything besides water. This can contribute to tooth decay.
- Offer only water at bedtime after brushing.
- Schedule your child's first dental visit within six months of the eruption of the first tooth or by age one whichever comes first.
- Discontinue the use of pacifiers by age 3.

You can learn more about oral health and resources at [www.mass.gov/dph/oralhealth](http://www.mass.gov/dph/oralhealth) or at <http://mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/eccfactsheet.pdf>



*Family TIES is a statewide parent-to-parent information and support network for families of children special health needs, chronic illnesses or disability, and their professional partners. We are a proud Alliance Member of Parent to Parent USA, a national organization that provides technical assistance to parent-to-parent programs across the country. Family TIES of Massachusetts is a project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, with funding from and in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division for Children & Youth with Special Health Needs. For more information or resources, call 1-800-905-TIES (8437) or [www.massfamilyties.org](http://www.massfamilyties.org).*

**Massachusetts Early Intervention (EI) System**

**Mission Statement:**

*Massachusetts Early Intervention is a viable system that builds upon supports and resources for family members and caregivers to enhance the development and learning of infants and toddlers through individualized, developmentally appropriate intervention embedded in everyday activities.*

**Core Values:**

*Respect - Individualization - Family Centeredness -  
Community - Team Collaboration - Life Long Learning*

**Federation for Children with Special Needs**

[www.fcsn.org](http://www.fcsn.org)

**Turning Three**—Provides information about the required process for transitioning a child from Early Intervention (EI) to special education. Discussion includes EI transition planning, special education eligibility, the Team process and the parent's role in planning, making decisions and monitoring their child's progress.

**Basic Rights**—Provides families with the foundation knowledge needed to understand other special education workshop topics. This workshop introduces participants to the federal and state special education laws, special education process, parent and student rights and how to resolve differences with the school.

**An IEP for My Child**— Explains the Individual Education Program (IEP) document, its development, how to articulate a vision, write measurable annual goals, monitor a child's progress and understand how the document will support a student.

# THE PARENT LEADERSHIP PROJECT

The EI Parent Leadership Project (EIPLP) strives to develop an informed parent constituency, promote leadership and lifelong advocacy skills for parents and family members, facilitate family participation to ensure that Early Intervention Services are family-centered and support EI programs to identify, train and mentor families to take on roles across the EI and Early Childhood system. 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 Coordinator of the EIPLP, a Statewide Family Engagement and Collaboration Coordinator, a Media Coordinator, a Statewide Monitoring Coordinator and a Statewide Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator. Feel free to contact any of them with your thoughts, suggestions, and concerns.

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We'll add you to our email list!



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**NEXT DEADLINE:** We welcome your input, suggestions for resources and articles. The next deadline is **August 30, 2018**. Please call our toll-free number (877) 353-4757 or email the newsletter editor at [kris.levine@state.ma.us](mailto:kris.levine@state.ma.us).

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