



## **Washington State Part C System Improvement Project July and August 2011 Update Wrapping Up -- Last Update**

July and August were extremely busy months for ESIT and the System Improvement Project (SIP). September will be focused on finalizing materials, summarizing feedback and work, and the roll out of the new Data Management System (DMS).

Several meetings were held during July to allow for initial presentation of findings from the cost study to key leadership and stakeholders. On July 13 Berk Consulting presented to the State Interagency Coordinating Committee (SICC) Finance, Public Policy, and Family Leadership and Involvement Committees (FLIC). On July 27 they presented to the SICC as a whole. Feedback from these meetings was combined with reviews by ESIT staff and SIP consultants to improve the final draft of the cost study report. The draft report was provided to key stakeholders and leadership at the end of August and is currently under review.

July also saw the kickoff of the user acceptance testing for the new DMS. A dedicated group of volunteers continues to work hard extensively testing the new system so that bugs can be worked out prior to the launch to the field in September.

The new procedural safeguards forms and technical assistance guide were fully implemented in July and August. PDF versions in English are available on the ESIT website, Spanish and English versions were also provided to LLAs in Word and are available in hard copy from the state Department of Printing. Forms are also available on request in Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Laotian, Russian, and Vietnamese. Forms will also be available to print with the child's information already completed from within the new DMS.

Washington again had strong representation at the annual Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Leadership Mega Conference at the beginning of August. Karen Walker, ESIT Program Administrator, was part of a panel discussion of considerations and action steps that need to be addressed in adopting changes to Part C service delivery approaches. (See materials at: <http://mega-2011.tadnet.org/agenda1> )

Work continues to move forward on a complete overhaul of ESIT's policies and procedures with national experts Sharon Walsh and Ross Taylor. Members of the SICC Public Policy and Finance Committees convened all day on August 18 to review an initial draft of changes. The new policies and procedures will be released later this year for public comment, with a goal of completion for submission to OSEP February 2012.

The Washington Training and Technical Assistance Cadre (WATTAC) continued their monthly phone calls. They have taken on the work of reviewing and further developing potential competencies for early intervention practice in Washington. At this time, WATTAC is reviewing draft competencies to assess how current trainings address these skills and identify gaps.

Work continued on efforts to improve the field's capacity to meet social-emotional/mental health needs in the families we serve. A list, developed by Dr. Sheri L. Hill, was posted to her early childhood training webpage and provided to local lead agencies (LLAs) of suggested materials to purchase. Several of these materials have been purchased by ESIT and will be shared with the field. Additionally, interdisciplinary study groups are being explored around a book designed to be addressed in a small study group format over a 12 month period: [www.the-nrf.com](http://www.the-nrf.com)

Lillas, C, & Turnbull J (2009) *Infant/Child Mental Health, Early Intervention, and Relationship-Based Therapies: A Neurorelational Framework for Interdisciplinary Practice*. NY, NY: WW Norton & Co

The NRF for interdisciplinary practice provides a “unifying, interdisciplinary framework based on current neuroscience research into how infants and children developing the context of relationships and their surroundings.” (Book Reviews, 2011, *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 32 (4)).

Conversations continued with experts from Colorado's Center for Family and Infant Interaction around improving our capacity to meet these needs specifically in families with infants coming to early intervention from the NICU or with intense medical needs. Early Intervention Colorado also has several downloadable resources (in English and Spanish) that Washington providers may find helpful such as their *Family Guidebook: Supporting Development of Infants and Newborns*. Links for these resources can be found at the end of this summary.

Finally, testing by ESIT staff, consultants, technical assistance providers, and the two pilot sites was completed in August on the three online training modules. Again, ESIT wishes to express its deep appreciation for all the community volunteers who have provided stakeholder feedback on this and the many other components of the SIP efforts despite limited time and resources.

To close out the ARRA work with the community, over 100 stakeholders representing LLA's, providers, parents, SICC members, community leaders, state partners, training and technical assistance providers, and ESIT staff gathered together with SIP contractors for an exciting two days

August 16 and 17. So much had been accomplished with the ARRA funds in the past 18 months that almost the entire first day was spent providing short updates on each project.

In addition to reports on all of the above noted projects, attendees also were updated on: the new and revised public awareness materials becoming available; the new Curricula for Families (Our Next Steps and Families Are Important); the Universal Developmental Screening Project; Autism Outreach; the statewide Autism training; the Washington Sensory Disabilities Project; Mediation, Communication & Teaming training; the revised Family Resources Coordinators (FRC) trainings; and soon to be released new practice briefs on topics such as screening, informed clinical opinion, and developing functional outcomes.

The second day of the meeting concentrated on discussions with stakeholders on how to effectively implement statewide all of the new forms, information and supports developed by the SIP. The two pilot sites (Yakima and Island Counties) both brought large portions of their teams to the end of the ARRA meeting to share their experiences and were critical for this discussion.

As a panel, they shared their successes and challenges in early implementation and testing of the new procedural safeguards forms and guide, the new Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) form, the new *IFSP Process and Resource Guide*, and the new online training modules. Overall, they were enthusiastic about ESIT's direction and progress in moving this effort forward, and felt the materials and supports developed during the SIP were going to be essential to improving their daily work. The meeting concluded with ESIT spending time listening to, and brainstorming with, stakeholders about how to effectively implement the SIP products as well as overall change and progress in the field.

This has been an exciting 18 months of system improvement efforts. A great deal has been accomplished in a relatively short period of time. However, as Karen Walker (ESIT Program Administrator) has noted repeatedly, this represents the beginning of a time of growth and change, not the end. Full implementation in the field of new materials and processes is expected to take quite some time to realize. ESIT looks forward to partnering with the community and stakeholders as the seeds planted now grow to fruition.

Additional Links:

Resource List on Dr. Hill's website: [www.earlychildhoodpolicy.com/ECTrain.html](http://www.earlychildhoodpolicy.com/ECTrain.html)

Center for Family & Infant Interaction Resources: [www.cfiicolorado.org/products\\_resources.php](http://www.cfiicolorado.org/products_resources.php)

Early Intervention Colorado (see their public awareness materials): [www.eicolorado.org](http://www.eicolorado.org)