

Early Intervention Training News

Administered by the United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Chicago and
Funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services Bureau

How To Reach US

Phone

708.444.8460
ext. 23

Toll Free:

866.509.3867

Fax

708.444.8470

EI Website

www.illinoiseittraining.org

Address

7550 W.
183rd Street
Tinley Park, IL
60477

How to Reach

Provider Connections

Phone: 800.701.0995

Bureau of Early Intervention

217.782.1981

What is the value of developing a professional portfolio?

By Ted Burke, EI Training
Program Director

Developing a professional portfolio is a complex, thought-provoking process of self evaluation, reflection, decision-making, and goal setting that takes place over time. If I began early in your career, it has potential to be a vehicle for career-long professional development and a source of unrivalled personal satisfaction. For me, it was a forced exercise that I was required to do by my employer almost a decade ago. Thinking at the time, that I would be in the same job forever, I felt it was a complete waste of my time. I could not have been more wrong.

Responsibility for continued growth rests with each of us individually. Although others including teachers, colleagues, supervisors, and those who implement DHS rules may offer valuable coercion and assistance, each of us must engage in self-assessment and evaluation if meaningful professional

growth is to take place. For all of us, self-evaluation begins with reflection. Reflection helps us to learn who we are as professionals and to be aware of our own unique style and the direction we take towards our jobs. Over time, reflection significantly affects and directs professional choices and directions. The portfolio process can prompt each of us to reflect on ourselves and our practice on a regular and continuing basis.

Portfolios also facilitate personal goal setting. Through a process of goal setting, striving to meet those goals, recognizing achievement, and subsequently revising those goals or setting new ones, portfolio development can ultimately lead to improvement in the way we do our jobs. This process also advances our professional development.

Portfolios are unique and a valuable means of documentation of your skills. Two of the most im-

portant times to use this means of documentation are during the early intervention credentialing process and in professional employment interviews. During the early intervention credentialing process, the organization of everything you need for documentation has been compiled over time and is available in one place. This relieves a lot of stress and frustration that many professionals feel when trying to find all of the documentation needed to maintain their credentials. While most of us don't need a portfolio presentation during employment interviews, portfolios are increasingly welcomed and have been personally invaluable the last two job interviews I participated in.

Finally, a portfolio has value as a source of self-satisfaction. Like all symbols of growth and success, portfolios help bring out feelings of accomplishment and success.

(cont. p. 2)

Professional Portfolios cont.

General Guidelines for Organizing Professional Portfolios

A Well Prepared Portfolio

- Shows your achievements
- Documents the scope and quality of your experience and training
- Shows your skills and abilities

Organizing Your Portfolio

- Determine the skills necessary for your profession
- Choose items that will document how you have used those skills
- Use a loose-leaf portfolio notebook
- Include a Table of Contents that identifies the overall organization of the portfolio. Indicate and label the sections clearly. Color-coding and/or oversize dividers may be helpful
- Use plastic page covers to protect your materials and to make rearranging your portfolio easy.
- Label the different sections for ease of finding information in the portfolio

What to Include

- A copy of your résumé
- An official copy of your transcript
- A copy of your degree
- A copy of any professional licenses held

- A copy of your Early Intervention Credentials
- A list of experiences that do not fit into your résumé
- Certificates of awards and honors; special certifications for special trainings
- A list of conferences and workshops you have attended, copies of certificates received and a description of each
- Letters of commendation or thanks
- Letters of nomination to professional and academic organizations
- Newspaper articles that address some achievement
- A list of professional organizations in which you hold membership

Other things you may want to add with written consent from the families that you serve might include

- treatment plans
- assessment reports
- integrated home program plans
- A videotape of a session



Attention EI Providers Are You Looking for Toys?

Would you like to have access to more toys than you can use with the children and families you work with through EI?

If your answer is YES, then ToyLend a Lekotek Program is your answer.

ToyLend through Lekotek loans toys to agencies and professionals for \$100 a year.

The \$100 fee entitles providers to borrow 10 toys per month from the program. A trained Lekotek play specialist will help providers select their toys. ToyLend has over 1,500 educational and adaptive toys from which a provider can choose.

Providers who are interested in the ToyLend program can call 312.433.3216, or check out the ToyLend website at www.toylend.org.

The Lekotek ToyLend program is located at 1950 W. Roosevelt Road in Chicago.

Provider Connections Corner

By Rob Derry
Manager Provider Connections

Developmental Therapy Credential Changes

Beginning January 1, 2004 the early intervention credential requirements for **NEW** Developmental Therapy applicants will change. As a part of Rule 500 – Early Intervention, individuals must document the following requirements:

A bachelors degree or higher in Early Childhood Education (Type 04), Early Childhood Special Education (Type 04), Special Education (LBS-1 or LBS-2), Special Education: Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Blind/Partially Sighted (3-21), Child Development, Elementary Education, Developmental Psychology, or Social Work and when applicable a teaching certificate; OR with a bachelors degree or higher and a full specialist credential in the Early Intervention program; OR a current license in art, music, recreation, or other type of therapy, rehabilitative or habilitative in nature, in the state where they provide services to Illinois children.

Documentation of proof of training on the use of a formal assessment tool that would allow the provider to perform global evaluations/assessments (e.g. Battelle Developmental Inventory, Hawaii Early Learning Profile)

Completion of educational experiences, as approved by the Department, that includes at least

a two semester hour college course or the equivalent (30 clock hours or CEU credit hours, such as current and/or past workshops taken for renewal purposes) in each of the following early intervention core knowledge content areas:

1. **The Development of Young Children: Typical & Atypical**
One semester hour or 15 clock hours in Typical and One semester hour or 15 clock hours in Atypical Development
2. **Working with Families of Young Children with Disabilities**
3. **Intervention Strategies for Young Children with Special Needs**
4. **Assessment of Young Children with Special Needs**

NOTE: "Young Children" is defined as children ages birth to five. The documentation must specify this age range.

The credential application contains a form labeled "Claim for Credit for Coursework/Contact Hours to Exhibit Competency in the Early Intervention Core Content Areas." It is the applicant/provider's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation that delineates that the core knowledge content areas have been met. Any documentation that does not clearly delineate these content areas will be returned for more information.

Expansion of the Core Knowledge Content Area Requirement

Beginning July 1, 2007 all credentialing new and renewing applicants (excluding Parent Liaisons) must document completion of the educational experiences in each of the early intervention core knowledge content areas, as described above. They must also meet the educational standards for their credential discipline.

Currently, as a part of the credential renewal process, Provider Connections is providing feedback by compiling the amount of applicable continuing professional education each renewing provider has in his or her credential file. On the "Portfolio Checklist" sent to applicants who have successfully renewed their credential the amount of continuing professional education on record at Provider Connections for each of the four core areas will be listed. Also indicated is whether any or all of the areas have been fulfilled.

Individuals should submit this documentation upon initial application or at the time of renewal **ONLY**. Materials submitted for this purpose prior to credential renewal will be returned to the provider without review.

Continuing Education Hours for EI are offered by many agencies and groups

By Lucy Gimble,
EI Training Program Resource Specialist

Many continuing education opportunities appropriate for early intervention credentialing are not necessarily sponsored or presented by the EI Training Program. In these cases, the Illinois Early Intervention Training Program must have approved those particular training events *before* a provider submits them to Provider Connections for credentialing.

EI Service Providers seeking approval for a training event you've attended should first log on to our website, www.illinoiseittraining.org, and select the menu option titled: Training events requested and approved for EI credit. There you will find an alphabetical listing of workshops and conferences already approved by the EI Training Program. If what you've attended is listed, do nothing more than send your proof of attendance to Provider Connections along with the rest of your credentialing paperwork.

If your particular event is not listed, click back to the website's homepage and download the EI Training Activity Credit Request form found in the first paragraph of the page. Complete the instructions on the form and submit it to the Illinois Early

Intervention Training Program as directed. We'll get back to you with a letter. If your request is approved, the event will be added to our website list of approved trainings.

Please read and follow the form instructions thoroughly. Incomplete request forms will be immediately returned to the sender without review.

Groups, organizations and other entities seeking a blanket approval for a training event *you will be hosting/sponsoring* must submit to the EI Training Program a brief cover letter stating your request for EI credit along with the following information:

- ◆ Title of event
- ◆ Date, Time & Place to be held
- ◆ Brief description of the training
- ◆ Timed agenda or syllabus of the training
- ◆ Short biography of the presenter

Once reviewed, a letter of approval/rejection will be sent to the contact person submitting the request. If approved, the event will



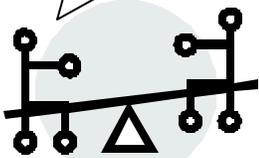
be listed with the approved training events on our website. Because Provider Connections uses the data posted on the EI Training Program's website to corroborate information received from providers, separate certificates from the EI Training Program are not necessary but can be issued on special request.

The volume of credit requests received fluctuates at any given time; therefore, processing time may take up to 30 business days.

Reminder: Please check the website before submitting your request. We receive multiple requests for approval of events already approved. This slows the review process and creates a backlog of your time-sensitive requests.

Register now for an EI Regional Conference

So what is all this hype About the EI Regional Confer-



The response to the EI Training Program's regional conferences has been wonderful. Over 100 people attended the conference in South Cook County in November. That was the first time two full days of workshops were offered.

What the people in Chicago Heights said
"Everything. The workshops were loaded with tons of great and much needed info and the presenters were very experienced and knowledgeable and seem to be tops in their field." ... "I liked being able to give feedback on what goes on in the real world..." "I earned all those contact hours in just 2 days."

What the people in Mt. Vernon said
"Good speakers" ... "The location, having it in the summer, the speakers and the food, it was all great." ... "This was very informative. I learned a lot." ... "Everything was very well organized, the speakers were good and informative." ... "Dr. Morgan's trainings were very well thought out, clear to understand and useful." ... "I wish we had two full days."

Don't miss this chance. Here is the information. Each of the conferences will include two full days of workshops and a question/answer session on the first day. Participants will receive EI contact hours for the sessions they attend, including the question/answer sessions. An attendance fee of \$25.00 will be charged participants attending one OR both days of each conference. Parents who have children receiving EI services can apply to the EIPALS program for a stipend to pay the participation cost. For information on the stipend contact Joan Debelak at 708.444.8460, or 866.509.3867, ext. 12.

Watch the EI Training website for updated information on the regional conferences. You can mail or fax your registration form. If you fax the form please mail your \$25 check as soon as possible. The registration form is on the back side.

Quincy, Jan. 13-14, 2004

Peoria, March 2-3, 2004

Crystal Lake, May 25-26, 2004

Mt. Vernon, June 16-17, 2004

Conference Topics The conferences will offer sessions that relate to the following areas:

- ◆ Working With Families Who Have Children With Autism
- ◆ Genetic Disorders in Young Children
- ◆ Neurological Challenges in Young Children
- ◆ Assistive Technology in Early Intervention
- ◆ Evaluation/Assessment (the full-day required session for EI providers)
- ◆ Sensory Techniques With Young Children
- ◆ Down Syndrome
- ◆ Writing Family-Centered Functional Outcomes
- ◆ Visual Strategies
- ◆ Service Coordination: From Intake to Outcomes
- ◆ Effective Practice and Problem Solving for the IFSP Team Meeting
- ◆ Families in Early Intervention
- ◆ Q/A Session on Billing and Insurance
- ◆ Q/A Session on Credentialing



EI Regional Conference Registration Form

Please **CIRCLE** which Regional Conference you plan to attend

Quincy, Jan. 13-14, 2004

Peoria, March 2-3, 2004

Crystal Lake, May 25-26, 2004

Mt. Vernon , June 16-17, 2004

Please complete the registration form below and send

Via Mail to: Illinois Early Intervention Training Program
c/o United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Chicago
7550 West 183rd Street, Tinley Park, IL 60477

Fax to: 708.444.8470

If you are faxing your registration form you will need to send a check for \$25.00 payable to UCP of Chicago as soon as possible to secure your registration.

Name _____

Daytime Phone _____

Agency/School _____

Fax Number _____

Work Address _____

City/State Zip _____

Home Address _____

City/State Zip _____

E-Mail address _____

Current EI Credentialed Position _____

I am a parent of a child receiving EI services (check here if applies) _____

I would like to apply for a parent stipend (check here if applies) _____

If you have questions call us at

708.444.8460, ext. 23

toll free 866.509.3867

The EI system's focus on social-emotional Development enhances family relationships

By Sonia Hall
Social-Emotional Project Consultant

(this is the first in a series of articles about the Social-Emotional Initiative funded through DHS Bureau of Early Intervention)

The EI System in Illinois has launched a Social-Emotional Initiative designed to support and enhance relationships, specifically the relationships between children and their parents/caregivers. Those of us who work with young children and their families know this is an important initiative, and find that families are expressing concerns about their developing relationships with their children.

The following is quoted from a parent information sheet, developed by Zero to Three and the American Academy of Pediatrics, highlighting the needs of newborn to 2 month old infants.

(Future articles that will be published in this newsletter will highlight needs as children grow into different stages of social-emotional awareness.)

“Key findings from (a National Academy of Sciences) report include:

- A parent/caregiver's relationship with a child is the foundation of his or her healthy development.
- A child's development depends on both the traits he or she is born with (nature), and what he or she experiences (nurture).
- All areas of development (social, emotional, intellectual, language and motor) are linked. Each depends on, and influences, the others.
- What children experience, including how their parents respond to them, shapes their development as they adapt to the world.”

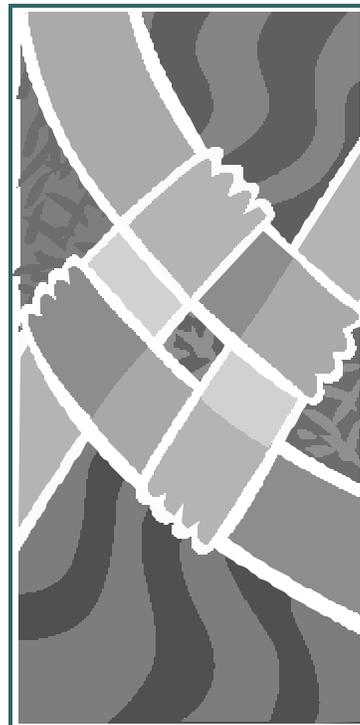
How does this look in everyday life?

When 2-month-old Benjamin cries and cries each evening and kicks his arms and legs wildly, his parents try everything they can think of to comfort him. They rock, walk and swaddle him, massage his

tummy in case he has gas and sing lullabies, all to calm him down. Sometimes it takes 20 minutes; sometimes it takes 2 hours.

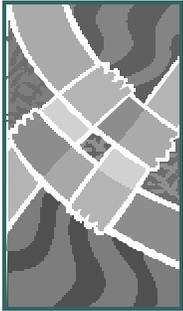
Benjamin's crying, and his parents' response, demonstrates how all areas of Benjamin's development are linked, and how his parents help to encourage his development. Benjamin cries because he has come to expect that his parents will respond. When mom and dad don't give up trying to comfort Benjamin no matter how frustrating it can be, they are nurturing his social and emotional development because it makes him feel important and he learns to trust that his parents will care for him. This gives him the confidence to trust others, which will help him form healthy relationships as he grows.

In addition, being soothed by his parents in these early months will help him learn to soothe himself as he gets older, a very important skill throughout life. Using his voice and body to communicate is part of Benjamin's early **language and motor development**. When his parents answer his cries, Benjamin learns that his efforts at communicating are successful, encouraging him to communicate more, first through gestures and sounds, and later through words.



Relationships are the foundation of a child's healthy development.

**Social Emotional Project
Cont.**



**How listening to
parents can help
providers**

When a parent reports or describes their child as having regulatory problems such as difficulty calming for sleep, explore with them the history of this behavior to help them understand how their child's temperament may have contributed to what is happening. Parents may need additional information, strategies, or practice in helping their child develop a capacity for self-regulation. In so-doing, you will be addressing ALL areas of development.

More information about the Social-Emotional project is available at



Under Construction

Completed

EI training program staff are working hard to get approval from the PT, SLP and SW organizations so our trainings will count towards training required for EI providers to maintain their licenses. We're also applying to ISBE so we can offer CPDUs.

We are putting the final touches to trainings that will focus on the IFSP, documentation for service providers and documentation for service coordinators.

Guess what? Once you provide your email address when registering for an EI event, you will then receive updates on EI trainings via email.

**Illinois Early Intervention Training Program
c/o UCP of Greater Chicago
7550 W. 183rd Street
Tinley Park, IL 60477**

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