



Making Connections

Message from the President

Greetings amidst these summer days! I have a number of updates to share that will keep you informed of current happenings and how your Association is supporting you. Between much needed vacation time and busy end-of-the-year activities, August finds all of us implementing our plans for strategic use and transparent reporting of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. The much needed OMB guidance on these reporting requirements was provided in July, and ITCA will soon offer a conference call for members. Sixteen states have been informed they will have closer scrutiny of their ARRA activities and reporting, conducted by the Government Account-

ability Office (GAO). The sixteen states include Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas. ITCA is providing a forum for them to support each other's ability to respond to GAO requests and requirements. The first conference call was July 30th. For all member states and territories, ITCA has an easy to find web tab that is dedicated to ARRA resources. Be sure to check them out on our newly redesigned website: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/>. A big thanks to the Leadership Committee for the noteworthy redesign.

Your Board of Directors met face to face this summer to do its annual strategic planning. In the context of our 10th anniversary, we had frank conversations about where ITCA needed to go as an organization and its role in supporting members. Your Board seriously considered its responsibility to fulfill its mission in the coming years and identified what was needed to move forward. It was a time of frank dialogues about the implications for member dues and alternative funding sources. We will be coming to you in the coming months to discuss the options before us. This will definitely be a topic for member discussion at our

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Reflections on Ten Years of ITCA

Duncan Munn (NC), President of ITCA in 2003, was asked to reflect on the question "What did the Association mean to you?" Duncan's response follows:

Of my current activities, perhaps the one which gives me the most pleasure is teaching a course at one of the University of North Carolina campuses. Last semester, on the first day of class, I noted that one of the students had a familiar last name. It turns out that she was the recipient of early intervention services, and her mother was actively involved in many leadership roles for our Infant Toddler Program. In subsequent conversations with her, her mother and brother, I learned that she had achieved some amazing things in terms of her independence, social and community living skills. For these, they all attributed a major role to her early intervention experiences. After a sobering reflection on the passage of time, I was able to shift my thinking to what might be the characteristics of a

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The IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association is organized as a not-for-profit corporation to promote mutual assistance, cooperation and exchange of information and ideas in the administration of Part C and to provide support to state and territory Part C coordinators.

Making Connections

The Results Are In! A Look at Technology Use Across the Country

EI professionals from across the country recently participated in Tots-n-Tech's (TnT) Assistive Technology (AT) Program Self-Assessment. Part C Coordinators designated agency and program directors, regional coordinators, or other relevant people in their states to respond to the on-line self assessment. The assessment's purpose is to provide a picture of how well recommended AT practices are implemented within state communities. Information from all respondents is combined to provide state-wide and regional views of

how programs are doing in making AT and adaptations available for infants and toddlers with disabilities or delayed development.

What Does the Self-Assessment Measure?

Items in four major practice areas are included on the self-assessment reflecting:

- child evaluation and assessment,
- individualized planning,
- AT implementation and use, and
- systems

Items included on the tool were identified through a review of articles published about AT and young children and recommendations made by various organizations or groups about quality AT practices. Participants who were working in EI programs across the country then judged the items by responding to a survey posted on the TnT website. Their responses were analyzed statistically to identify the most important items and to drop those that were unclear or unimportant. This process resulted in a semi-final version of the scale which was completed by another national sample of providers and further refined into the existing instrument.

The self-assessment is scored against an expert or ideal score. A number of people across the country

who are leaders in AT with infants/toddlers were asked to score the self-assessment to identify: items required by public policy (law, etc.); items not recommended; and items recommended. The recommended items were further grouped into high/low priority for recommended practice. This process resulted in an expert – or optimal -- score against which responses to self-assessment items are scored.

How Well Are AT Practices Implemented Nationally?

A total of 282 people from forty-six states completed the self assessment during Fall 2008 through Winter 2009. Each individual response was compared to the expert score for each of the 4 practice categories, a score was calculated

of the percent of practices reported (e.g., 63% of the recommended practices in child evaluation and assessment are implemented by the states).

The graph below shows the national self-assessment results. As can be seen, nationally, states are using only about half of the practices related to AT system supports and fewer than half of the IFSP practices but have some evaluation and AT implementation practices in place. TnT will be monitoring state's adoption of AT practices over the next 5 years using annual web-based administrations of the Self-Assessment instrument. A variety of types of resources targeted to each of the 4 self-assessment areas will be available through the TnT website for state or regional use.

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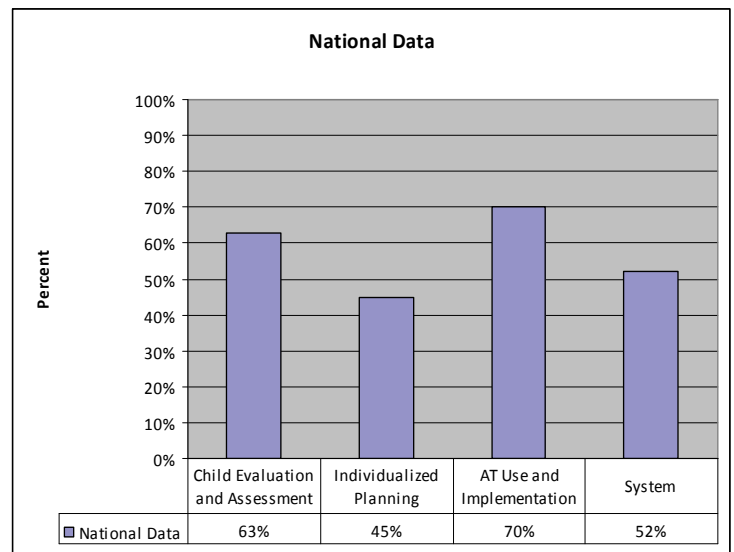


DID YOU KNOW?

THE ITCA ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION WERE FILED ON MARCH 4, 1997.

INCORPORATORS:

- MARY JONES, ID
- BETH GOULD, CA
- AUDREY WITZMAN, IL
- RON BENHAM, MA
- CYNTHIA OSER, OH
- MARILYN PRICE



Project Forum: Determinations of LEA Compliance

This brief policy analysis presents IDEA 2004 language requiring states to make annual determinations of each local education agency. Findings from a survey to which 45 state directors of special education responded are described. Findings include processes states use in making determinations,

resources used, enforcement actions taken and benefits and challenges encountered in making determinations.

Additional copies are available from NASDSE; however, there are no restrictions on copying because this document was produced with federal funds.

This document is available for downloading at www.projectforum.org.

Project Forum's site has more than 100 documents available for download. Please take a moment to visit and bookmark this site and send to others on your staff.

Technology *continued*

Recently, Part C coordinators received the results of the initial (2008-09) self-assessment responses from their state in each practice area. Each coordinator was also given one or two resource guides based on their specific needs. Examples of these guides include how to start a lending library, including AT on the Individualized Family Service Plan, and resources

for funding AT. All of this information, including state specific results and resource guides, will be available in June on TnT's website (<http://tnt.asu.edu>).

In addition, T-n-T will begin a program in Fall 2009 with selected states and teams of practitioners within each state to improve the use of adaptations and AT with infants and toddlers. The program

will provide on-site orientation and training for state coordinators and practitioner team leaders, on-line training modules, and support and mentoring in order to determine optimal ways for enabling early intervention staff to use adaptations and AT with Part C program children. If you would like more information about this program and how your state may participate, please contact pipcamp@aol.com (215-503-1602) or Jill McLeod (215-503-4421).

Reflections *continued*

service system that can lead to such achievements. Some of those that came immediately to mind included use of data in all facets of program management, an organizational structure focused on accountability and tangible outcomes for children and family, concrete inter-agency collaborations, policies that reflect best practices, and a sound system of professional develop-

ment and certification. In all these areas, North Carolina benefited from the knowledge and skills I gained through my participation in ITCA. Thus, there was a very real connection between her accomplishments and the Association. I can't think of a better indicator of the real value of an organization than such a connection.



DID YOU KNOW?

ITCA'S 501(C)(3) WAS ESTABLISHED ON JULY 13, 2000.

ITCA OFFICERS:

- MAUREEN GREER, IN
- ANNE LUCAS, VA
- LINDA GOODMAN, CT
- DUNCAN MUNN, NC
- SANDY LOERCH, WA
- MARK SHARP, OK
- RON BENHAM, MA

2009 Parent Leadership Award

The IDEA Infant and Toddler Association (ITCA) **National and Regional Parent Leadership Awards** are given annually to acknowledge outstanding state / regional, and/or national parent leadership on behalf of the Part C program for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. Parents may be nominated on the basis of significant contributions, in either a volunteer or paid capacity, during a specific period of time, or for exceptional efforts over a period of several years. These efforts may range from family support efforts, recruiting and/or training families, serving on committees, working on legislative initiatives etc.

The ITCA will make *Parent Leadership Awards* in each of the Regional Resource Center (RRC) regions. Additionally, the National Parent leadership award will be chosen from individuals nominated for leadership efforts at the national level.

ITCA Parent Leadership National Award Winners

2003 Margaret Sampson, NY
 2004 Denise Arland, IN
 Cassie Johnston, WA
 2005 Carren Knehr, NV
 Rachel Porcher, NM
 2007 Darla Gundler, MA
 2008 Maureen Casey, AZ

Nominees can be biological/adoptive parents, foster parents or grandparents of children with special needs who have participated in a Part C program. Nominees can represent a variety of different leadership roles that contribute to the Part C program, including:

- Parent volunteers or parents not affiliated with any formal organization.
- Parents serving in appointed positions on state or local ICC's.
- Parents in salaried positions, or who are compensated for their time.
- Parents of young children with disabilities currently in the Part C Program, or parents whose children have transitioned, or whose children are older, but have remained actively involved in the Part C program.
- Parents associated with a PTI, advocacy or other formal organization.

In selecting the recipients, consideration will be given to parents whose contributions include any of the following activities:

- Actively engaging the involvement of other parents in local, state or national Part C policy/program activities, and sustaining that involvement through ongoing mentorship.
- Promoting best practices in early interven-

tion through participation in personnel preparation or collaborative training activities at the local, state or national level that enable families and providers to: understand and implement Part C family rights; understand and encourage children's development; build family-centered support; or actively and successfully participate in their communities.

- Advocacy at the local, state or national level that includes, but is not limited to activities that result in: changes to public policy that strengthened the Part C program; increased or preserved levels of funding; enhanced service delivery, including creating opportunities for services in natural environments; better public awareness; or implementation of family-centered supports and services.

The ITCA will appoint an Awards Committee of at least three (3) individuals, one of whom is the ITCA Past President and another shall be an individual who previously received an ITCA Parent Leadership Award to determine the award recipients.

To nominate an individual for the *Parent Leadership Award*, prepare a nomination packet that contains:

- The nomination form

- A short biography and/or a copy of the parent nominee's vita
- A brief description of the parent's major achievements, which address at a minimum:

- ◇ What was outstanding about the nominee's contribution(s)? Include information that highlights the scope of the nominee's achievements.
- ◇ What was accomplished? How are these accomplishments relevant to the Part C program? What was the impact of the activities on the Part C system at the local, state or national level? Are the activities consistent with the mission and goals of the Part C program and the philosophy of family-centered early intervention?
- ◇ Who benefited? Did the nominee's contributions make a difference for Infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families? Parents serving in leadership roles? Professionals involved in the Part C program?

- Letter(s) of support.
- ◇ One letter, preferably from a parent (e.g., ICC Parent, parent mentee or parent advocate)
- ◇ One from the state Part C Coordinator, **if** the person is being nominated for the Regional Parent Leadership Award

Parent Leadership Nomination Form

Nominee: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

I am nominating this person for:

_____ Regional Award

_____ National Award

Nominator Contact Information:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Submit Nomination Packet Electronically by October 1, 2009 to: ideaitca@aol.com



Making Connections

Data Committee



The Data Committee has updated the strategic plan for 2009 to redefine and add activities including:

- ◇ Identify concerns/issues and advise on changes to data collection and reporting of race/ethnicity.
- ◇ Work with the Finance Committee to review the results of the 2008 Finance Survey questions and modify the survey questions as needed.
- ◇ Determine if all states have an electronic data system and, if not, what technical assistance/support can be provided.
- ◇ Determine how states are measuring 618 and 616 data tables
- ◇ Identify data needs for collecting, measuring and reporting on the utilization of ARRA (stimulus) funds.

The Committee would like to thank the states that have responded to the Finance

(38 states) and Natural Environments/Service Delivery (33 states) surveys. The ITCA would like to present data from all member states so it is also not too late to respond to surveys. The third survey on Lead Agency Staffing/SICC/Family Involvement should be released in August.

The Committee was invited by OSEP to provide input on the 618 Exiting Table, SPP/APR Part C Measurement Table and APR Rubric. In addition, the Committee met at the Part C Data Meeting to prepare the ITCA public comment on the Proposed Collection of Information, OMB #1820-0578-v.11, IDEA, Part C Annual Performance Report (APR).

The committee currently has membership from twelve states with a significant representation of data managers. If you are interested in participating on this committee, please contact the ITCA office or Terry Harrison as one of the co-chairs. The committee meets by conference call on bi-monthly and face to face at the annual data meeting.

President's Letter *continued*

Annual Business Meeting in December.

We are getting lots of interest in our Parent Awards application process that went out this summer. Please send the application to key stakeholder groups that can nominate parent leaders. It is gratifying that family leadership continues to shape the Part C field and recognition of these vital leaders is thriving.

Nominations for Vice President and an At-Large member of our Board of Directors are currently open. Please consider nominating yourself or colleagues. Discerning this type of commitment is daunting at best, yet I know from personal experience that it has been very rewarding. Applying what

I have learned about the Part C system, its role at the federal level, and research's wisdom has improved my professional knowledge and skills - from which my state has benefited. The best part has been to learn from and have camaraderie and fun with fellow members through the Board and committee work.

This newsletter is packed with information to keep you updated on things that are important to your state's Part C system. ITCA Committees recap the vital work they are doing to accomplish our Strategic Plan goals. I am especially pleased that we are featuring highlights of our 10th Anniversary. Look for the special logo that highlights a review of our formation

and reflections from former leadership. We are also recruiting a few people for a 10th Anniversary committee that will make plans for celebrating at the December EC National Conference in Washington, DC. Our first recruit is Larry Edelman of CO who will bring his technology and professional development expertise and creativity. Please contact me, Julie.Curry@iowa.gov and join in on the fun!

Julie Curry, President

Finance Committee

The ITCA Finance Committee has been focusing on the ARRA funds: expenditure options, agency oversight processes, tracking and data reporting requirements. Concerning data reporting, OSEP's Ruth Ryder shared with the ITCA Board on 6/26 that OSEP was not planning additional reporting beyond that required by OMB. ITCA will continue to facilitate conference call for states to share experiences and lessons learned as Part C Co-

ordinators as well as state and federal agencies all are in this "learn as we go" mode.

In the immediate, Part C Coordinators would be well advised to:

- ◇ Go to the OMB website and review their July report to view what the GAO reported about your state.
- ◇ View the OMB webinar material that was posted on their website the week of July 20. Of

the multiple webinars, the two of most practical use may be the first webinar as the general overview (useful in orienting your administration) and also the "sub recipient reporting".

- ◇ Clarify within your administration, the responsible party for direct reporting of ARRA fiscal data to the federally designated websites. This is critical as reporting parties need

to formally register.

- ◇ Participate in the ITCA conference calls. These are being planned at two levels:
 - ◇ For the GAO study states; and
 - ◇ General Part C ARRA fund reporting.
- ◇ Stay alert to emails and memos issued by OSEP as future decisions at higher levels in the federal administration may alter previous guidance.
- ◇ Ask for operational definitions during your contacts with state and federal agencies as different entities are using terms in different ways (e.g. "subrecipient", "awarded funds" etc).

ITCA is continuing to facilitate contact with OSEP on an "as needed" basis and will structure TA activities for Part C Coordinators.

Leadership Services Committee

The Leadership Services Committee held a conference call in May. The committee reviewed the demographic portion of the finance survey and made recommendations to the Board. The revisions were adopted by the board and were reflected in the survey recently disseminated to the membership. The committee would like to

sponsor a series of topical conference calls in 2010 to provide coordinators the opportunity to network on issues and to provide support to each other. Ongoing discussions have occurred with TACSEI and the committee is planning a call for the membership with TACSEI for discussion of issues related to social emotional develop-

ment.

The Board has placed a hold on category 2 membership pending further review by the committee for consistency with mission.

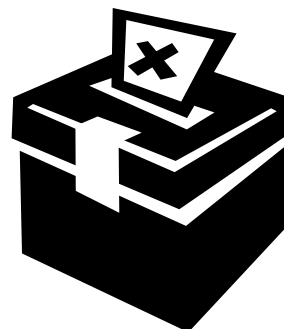
The Leadership Services Committee is planning a meeting in December at the annual meeting and welcomes new members to join the committee.

2009 ITCA Board Elections

The ITCA Board of Directors is seeking nominations for the annual Board elections. This year the Nominations Committee is seeking candidates for two positions: Vice President/President Elect and Director at Large. The ITCA bylaws require that the Board of Directors be appropriately representative

of geographical, state size, and Lead Agency mix.

Nominees must be current members of the Association. Self nominations are encouraged. Julie Curry is the chair of the Nominating Committee. If you are interested, please contact Julie at Julie.curry@iowa.gov





Year in Review

The Early Intervention Family Alliance (EIFA) has incorporated and is in the final stages of completing their application to be recognized as a 501(c)(3) non profit organization. A formal plan for financially separating from ITCA will be developed and implemented by this fall. EIFA would like to acknowledge and thank ITCA for the continued encouragement and support to bring our organization from a dream to a reality.

Other accomplishments in

the past year include:

- ◇ Increased outreach, education and membership, including outreach to every State ICC;
- ◇ Hosting our first annual membership meeting just preceding the OSEP conference, with approximately 50 in attendance;
- ◇ Establishing and awarding the first annual EIFA Family Involvement Advocacy Award to Maureen Greer;
- ◇ Preparing input to the Obama Transition Team;
- ◇ Submitting a letter to Secretary Arne Duncan expressing our concerns about the lack of Part C regulations and regarding the upcoming reauthorization of IDEA;
- ◇ Convening our Board to establish plans and priorities for the next year;
- ◇ Electing and preparing to seat a new EIFA Board of Directors for a term of July 2009 through December 2011, after which the Board members will serve two-year terms.

For the upcoming year, our priorities include:

- ◇ Exploring and using technology as a means to increase membership, communication, and active involvement;

- ◇ Continuing to build partnerships that will help advance our mission of achieving effective family representation and partnership in Part C at all levels;
- ◇ Partnering with ITCA and other organizations to address the important issue of Part C funding, as well as beginning to prepare for Part C Reauthorization.

We look forward to continuing our strong relationship with ITCA in the next year and beyond. We value your partnership, and appreciate the continued opportunity to learn from you and share our perspective and ideas with you.

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