



# Official Newsletter of the Illinois Subdivision of the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3

## Upcoming Events

### "Many Hands, One Vision"

**The 10 Illinois Statewide  
Collaborative Early Child-  
hood Conference**

**October 17-19, 2007**

*Crown Plaza Hotel*

*Springfield, IL*

**DEC annual Conference 2007**

*Niagara Falls, Ontario,  
Canada*

**October 25-28, 2007**

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## A Message from the IDEC President Deborah A. Bruns, Ph.D.

This is an exciting time in Early Intervention (EI) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE). Regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are moving forward. In addition, the Recognition and Response early intervening system is gaining momentum in Illinois and around the country (<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~randr/>). New initiatives are being developed and implemented to address universal screening and progress monitoring, a multi-tier approach to intervening, collaborative problem-solving.

There is also increased funding for Pre-Kindergarten programs. Illinois' Preschool for All initiative has grown through an infusion of funding and an increasing appreciation of providing quality services for three to five year olds (with a set aside for infants and toddlers and their parents) (<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/>

[default.htm](#)). An additional outcome is a variety of program options and a greater willingness to include young children with disabilities in these settings.

There are also changes for obtaining and maintaining the Early Intervention credential. Provider Connections has updates on their website (<http://www.wiu.edu/providerconnections/>). Be sure to refer to the website for notices about initial credentialing, renewals, etc. Work also continues at both the EI and ECSE levels with the Early Childhood Outcome System (see [http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/html/ec\\_speced\\_outcomes.htm](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/html/ec_speced_outcomes.htm) for forms, training information, etc.).

I hope that the information in this message (and the preceding ones) provide helpful information to provide infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities

and their families with the necessary supports and services to reach their desired goals.

I have enjoyed my term as IDEC President. Please join me in welcoming Mary-alayne Hughes as the incoming IDEC President. I leave the organization in very capable hands.

You may contact Debbie Bruns at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, College of Education and Human Services: [dabrunsi@siu.edu](mailto:dabrunsi@siu.edu), (618) 453-2311 (phone) or (618) 453-7110 (fax).



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<http://illinois-dec.org/>**

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## ABA: Bringing Together Families, Educators, and Professionals by: Johnathan Chiao

On Monday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 40 parents, teachers, and professionals all gathered at the University of Illinois for an introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). This training, sponsored by The Autism Program of Champaign County, uniquely allows a wide range of individual backgrounds to come to-

gether and learn this data-centric approach to treating autism. Over the next six months, continuing participants will be taking part in this bimonthly training led by Ilene Schwartz, Ph.D., an expert in early childhood special education of children with Autism from the University of Washington. Dr. Schwartz is Chair and Professor of Special Education

and Interim Director of Experimental Education Unit in the University of Washington's College of Education, and will be returning to conduct future classes as well as collaborating via teleconference for the duration of the program.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is one of the only interventions in the treatment

*Continued on page 3*

## Membership Matters! Come and join us!!!

The [Division for Early Childhood\(DEC\)](#) of the [Council for Exceptional Children \(CEC\)](#) is a nonprofit organization advocating for individuals who work or on behalf of children with special needs, birth through age eight, and their families.

Founded in 1973, DEC, promotes publications and advances evidence-based practices that support families and enhance the optimal development of young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities.

Here's a sampling of membership benefits:

- Access to CEC publications such as, Exceptional Children, Teaching Exceptional Children, and CEC Today Plus, DEC Publications such as the Journal of Early Intervention and Young Exceptional Children.
- Discounts on resources and materials specifically for special educators.
- Professional development opportunities, such as the CEC Annual Convention and Expo and the DEC Conference.
- Networking opportunities for professional support.
- Online Member-Only discussion forums
- Discounts on services such as Car Insurance, car rentals and professional insurance

More information about membership can be found at:

<http://www.dec-sped.org/membershipbenefits.html>

## It's Finally Here: PRESCHOOL FOR ALL!

**LaShorage Shaffer**

I can remember three summers ago, sitting in a class discussing the need for Preschool for All. In my opinion, this initiative represents an educational opportunity that helps children be more successful when they enter the school system. It was my experience that many children were on waiting lists for preschool programs and these children were not included, because they were not considered at-risk. So in my perspective many children were being *LEFT BEHIND*.

When I heard about the Preschool for All initiative, I thought finally, our voices are heard and a better future awaiting our children. To my joy it is actually happening in Illinois! Governor Rod Blagojevich has long supported the idea of providing all children with a positive early start to their education career. The collaborative effort of the Governor, Early Learning Council members, and the Illinois General Assembly has made this idea a reality. With the signing and passing of Preschool for All in July 2006, at least 10,000 new children will be able to attend a high quality preschool program.

The list of eligible applicants that can be funded under Preschool for All are

wide and diverse, including school, community, and faith-based sites and programs. Programs that are funded under the Early Childhood Block Grant are required to meet quality and accountability by serving primarily children at-risk and families whose incomes are less than four times the federal poverty level. There are several different ways that programs can meet the successful community collaboration required under Preschool for All (examples can be viewed on the ISBE website).

The programs that come under Preschool for All have specifications similar to other Pre-Kindergarten programs in the state. There are five required components that come under Preschool for All which include: 1) Screening; 2) Educational Program; 3) Parent Education and Involvement; 4) Community Collaboration; 5) Staff Requirements and Professional Development.

The state of Illinois is headed in the right direction for meeting the needs of the young children of the state. As resources, thought, and effort continue to be put forth in the area of early childhood education and early childhood

special education, children, families, and communities in Illinois will continue to flourish from these commitments. We as educators should continue to put our best efforts forth to provide the best services for children and families, knowing that we are striving to leave no child behind. More information about Preschool for All can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/preschool\\_for\\_all.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/preschool_for_all.pdf).

### **"Cross New Borders"**

The 23rd Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special needs and Their Families **October 25-28, 2007**

Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada  
October 25-28, 2007  
Sheraton on the Falls & Brock Plaza

## FAMILY RELATIONS:

by Lisa A. Ellis

Eric's\* family considers themselves lucky that they were able to get an early diagnosis of autism for their son. An early diagnosis allowed them to learn more about their son and his needs, as well as the interventions that might work for him. In addition, upon meeting Eric, who is currently finishing his first year in a public elementary school, one can see his desire to bring a new person into his world. He will hold your face in his hands so he can study it and lean in for tight hug. Most likely this is a result of the many caring professionals who have worked with Eric and his family through his early years.

Throughout their experience with intervention programs Eric's parents have found that the services provided are typical, such as speech and occupational therapy. While there is no doubt that these are effective, they feel that there are other innovative interventions which tap into Eric's interests, such as music and water therapy. However, there are barriers in the special education service system which makes access to these interventions difficult. For instance, her insurance will cover limited amounts of additional therapy for Eric such as speech OR water therapy. Since mom sees speech as more important they utilize this service but her child might also

benefit from the water therapy he goes without. Also, a lack of resources in the schools does not allow her child's teachers to gain training in these more innovative techniques.

Upon transitioning between zero to three (Part C) and preschool (Part B) services, Eric's family was faced with even fewer options and parental choice surrounding services. First, they sought private preschool programs in their area, but were concerned that their child's needs would not be met in these settings. Private preschools lacked staff trained to work with children with autism and did not have many family supports built into their program. Yet his parents feared that the local program serving children with special needs and at-risk lacked social models their child needed in order to prepare him for the demands of Kindergarten in a public school. In addition the programs seemed to short. For example, the public school program was only 2.5 hours a day. According to his IEP, Eric also needed many hours of speech and occupational therapy each week. This left him with only a few hours in the classroom where he would be taking part in classroom activities, routines, and socialization.

In order to maximize his services mom brought him to school prior to the other children's arrival to attend speech therapy.

Finally, Eric's mom expressed a great deal of relief over some of the more recent changes for IDEA. Her experience with school is that they have been more focused on academic goals than functional goals, though it is clear that functional goals are a clear need for Eric. However, the new law outlines that functional goals can also be addressed by schools. While it is still not clear how professionals in her child's school will interpret this new part of the federal law she feels strongly that changes like this will help her as a parent advocate.

\*Names have been changed to provide confidentiality for the child and family.

### ABA (continued from page 1)

of children with autism that research has proven to improve social, motor, verbal, and reasoning skills that can be employed in a variety of environments. One of the advantages of ABA is that home-, school-, and clinic-based models have all been shown to be effective environments in which implementation helps children with developmental delay achieve their goals. Throughout the course, participants in the training will receive an intensive training in ABA techniques such as chaining, prompting, fading, generalization, shaping, differential reinforcement, video modeling, and discrete trials.

For more information on The Autism Program, and to find out about future events

in Champaign County, please visit <http://www.theautismprogram.org/uiuc> or contact The Autism Program of Champaign County directly at (217)



### Your Community Your Opportunity Your Conference NAEYC Annual Conference & Expo

2007

*November 7-10  
Chicago, Illinois*

For more information

Visit

<http://www.annualconference.naeyc.org/>

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The Illinois Association for the  
Education of Young Children

Presents its Annual



September 24-26, 2007

The Chateau Hotel, Bloomington IL  
Featuring:

Debby Cryer, PhD,

Frank Porter Graham Child Development  
Institute, Chapel Hill North  
Carolina

Cost: \$275 per person \* AEYC Member

\$325 per person\* Non Member

*Includes registration, book, and  
meals*

**Limited Number of Registrations Accepted  
Registration Information Going Out Soon**

**To reserve a spot early call: 217-529-  
7732**

**A Resource Available on IDEA Part C Regulations**

Division on Early Childhood (DEC) have developed a resource to help readers understand the IDEA Part C proposed regulations, released by the U.S. Department of Education on May 9. DEC website make it possible for you to see the official draft part C regulations, the side-by-side comparison of the current IDEA Part C regulations to the 2007 proposed Part C regulations, and DEC's preliminary comments on proposed IDEA part C regulations. For more information and updates, please visit <http://www.dec-sped.org/>

**Many Hands, One Vision**

10th Biennial Sharing A Vision Conference:  
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield, IL  
October 17-19, 2007

For more information visit

<http://sharingavision.org/conf/2007/sav07.html>

**Online Workshops for Early Childhood  
Educators and Families**

**EC-TIIS: Early Childhood Technology Integrated Instructional System** at Western Illinois University has developed nine online workshops for educators and families of young children. Topics include Adaptations, Curriculum Integration, Computer Environment, Expressive Arts, Emergent Literacy, Math, Science, and Social Studies, Technology Assessment, Software Evaluation, and Family Participation. Each workshop contains written information, graphics, links to outside resources and downloadable curriculum activities and articles.

**Participation in the workshops is free.** You will need to register and complete a technology survey, a pre-school educator or family survey and a short pre-assessment before reviewing the workshops. Professional development credit options, including CPDUs, CEUs, graduate credit, and a Certificate of Completion, are available.

University faculty can incorporate the workshops into coursework to provide students with needed information on integrating assistive technology into curriculum activities.

For more information, visit the EC-TIIS website, [www.wiu.edu/ectiis/](http://www.wiu.edu/ectiis/). You can view sample workshops before registering. If you have questions or want information on credit or a certificate, please contact EC-TIIS Co-Director, Linda Robinson, [L-Robinson1@wiu.edu](mailto:L-Robinson1@wiu.edu), or call 309-298-1634 ext.250.