



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

Volume 17, Issue 1

## Message from the IDEC President...

**Nasiah Cirincione-Ulezi**

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The *IDEC Newsletter* is a quarterly publication of the Illinois Division for Early Childhood. Please send inquiries, comments, and article submissions to:

**Linda Robinson**

Newsletter Editor

32 Horrabin Hall

Macomb, IL 61455

309-298-1634 ext.250

309-298-2305 fax

L-Robinson1@wiu.edu

Greetings! My name is Nasiah Cirincione-Ulezi. I am currently serving as IDEC's 2010-2011 President. I have been involved with IDEC for the past four years, and I have served on the executive board for the past three. I have worked with and on behalf of young children with disabilities and their families for the past 15 years as a classroom special education teacher, developmental therapist, and special education coordinator. Currently, I am a full-time faculty member at Chicago State University, in the Special Education program. I am greatly honored to now serve in a leadership capacity for IDEC.

IDEC also welcomes three new board members. Connie Shugart, Coordinator of STARNET Regions I and III, is IDEC's current Vice-President. Elizabeth Cambray, a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Illinois at Chicago, is the new Treasurer; and Turan Crocett, a graduate student at Chicago State University, is a new student representative for IDEC. Our new board members come with experience, energy and enthusiasm.

The executive board has already held one meeting this fiscal year and decided to move forward with a new early intervention committee, chaired by members Amy Cocorikis and Susan Conner.

Some of the initial activities of this committee will be to:

- Increase awareness of the field of early intervention and identify practice issues in the field.
- Participate in state activities to represent and advocate for the role of educators in the Illinois Early Intervention System.
- Create practice standards and core competencies for the role of the educator in the Illinois Early Intervention System.
- Support and further define the developmental model of service delivery in early intervention.

Additionally, Ms. Janet Gully, Bureau Chief of Part C, Early Intervention in Illinois, has requested that the IDEC's Early Intervention Committee develop a list of recommendations addressing Best Practices, specifically for Developmental Therapists who serve as Part C early intervention service providers in Illinois.

I look forward to an exciting and productive year during my term as President of IDEC!

# 'Families Telling Their Stories'

Sandy Ginther and Roseann Slaght



STARNET Region I & III have created a workshop/module that assists families of children with disabilities and developmental delays to generate their family's story for use in communicating with the media, influencing policy, sharing experiences and informing the community at large.

The importance of recognizing their children's competence and intelligence is critical. Creating their story allows the opportunity to show that children are much more than their diagnosis. Stories dispel stereotypes with facts.... behavior is communication... non-verbal doesn't mean nothing to say... everyone has something to contribute to society... and many more. Stories are our medium for sharing information; finding solutions through problem-solving; increasing understanding of perspectives; and identifying barriers. Families' stories are powerful, and families should be encouraged to share them.

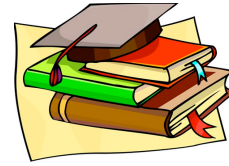
The workshop/module provides families structures to put their stories together. By sharing examples of others' stories, outlining steps, and illustrating tools for various presentations of their stories, families leave empowered to inform those in their worlds.

The workshop/module can be modified for time and audience. Resources found very valuable in addition to presenters own experiences, were:

- Articles
  - *Presuming Intellect: Ten Ways to Enrich Our Relationships Through a Belief in Competence* by William Stillman, 2007  
[http://www.williamstillman.com/archive/presuming\\_intellect.html](http://www.williamstillman.com/archive/presuming_intellect.html)
  - *Sharing a Family's Story: A Tool for Family Advocacy* by Iowa State University, University Extension, 2003 - [www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/SP215.pdf](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/SP215.pdf)
  - *Least Dangerous Assumption*, Anne Donnellan (Movement Differences and Diversity in Autism-Mental Retardation, 1994)
  - *Once Upon a Family* by National Institute on Media and the Family, 2008
- Websites
  - People First - <http://www.disabilityisnatural.com>
  - Life My Way video and text - <http://www.lifemyway.org>
  - National Down Syndrome Society - *My Great Story*  
- [http://ndss.org/index.php?view=article&com=com\\_content&id=252](http://ndss.org/index.php?view=article&com=com_content&id=252)
- Other Resources
  - [www.bemyvoice.org](http://www.bemyvoice.org)
  - YouTube - Randy Pausch's 'Last Lecture' 2008
  - Welcome to Holland in the New Millennium* by Sandy Ginther, 2005

*Sandy Ginther and Roseann Slaght are Family Resource Specialists for STARNET Regions I and III. They were recently interviewed by the Family Center for Technology and Disabilities for the August 2010 issue of their online newsletter. The 18 page issue, **Developing Family Stories: Moving the Backstory to the Forefront**, can be viewed or downloaded at [www.fctd.info](http://www.fctd.info).*

## Interested in getting paid while you earn your Master's degree?



The Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program in the Department of Special Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has been awarded federal funding (**PREP 2 Project**) to support students interested in earning a master's degree, with an emphasis on working with young children, ages birth to six, with disabilities and their families. This is a 2 year full-time program on the Champaign-Urbana campus. There are no online courses at the present time. If accepted into the program, funding consists of a traineeship stipend, a tuition waiver, and waiver of some fees. Funding is limited and awarded on a competitive basis. Attached to this funding is a service obligation to be fulfilled after completion of the degree.

Interested individuals should apply to the graduate program in the Department of Special Education.

Deadline for receipt of admission applications: **November 15, 2010 for Spring 2011** admission; and **April 1, 2011 for Summer 2011 or Fall 2011**. For more information about the application process and admission deadlines, visit: <http://education.illinois.edu/sped/AdmissionsMasters.html>. Applicants should indicate their interest in the PREP 2 project in the goal statement component of the application materials.

For more information, contact **Mary-alayne Hughes**, Project Director, [mahughes@illinois.edu](mailto:mahughes@illinois.edu)

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### Save the Date

**Professional Development Advisory Council**

**2010 Annual Stakeholders Meeting**

**November 19, 2010**

**10:00 am - 3:00 pm**

**Doubletree Hotel - Bloomington, Illinois**

Dr. Mildred Warner, nationally recognized researcher from Cornell University will link the need for increased investments in our work to improved local and regional economic development.



# Family Preferences for Technology Supports: Preliminary Survey Suggests Directions for Education Professionals

Howard P. Parette, Jr., Hedda Meadan, and Sharon Doubet

*Illinois State University*

Jackie Hess

*Family Center on Technology and Disability*

In the last decade, a study conducted by the Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD, 2004) provided a window into understanding how education professionals have perceived family needs for information and responded to such needs through the delivery of technology-based supports. However, less is known about the types of technology supports that families of children with disabilities *prefer* and *use*. To gain a better understanding of family preferences and needs, the Special Education Assistive Technology (SEAT) Center at Illinois State University collaborated with the FCTD in late Fall 2009 and early Spring 2010 to conduct a preliminary web-based survey of 144 families of young children with disabilities birth to 8 years (Parette, Meadan, Doubet, & Hess, in press).

The survey instrument, advertised through a range of current technology-based and information forums, was accessible at the FCTD website for several months. Questions on the survey instrument were designed to address three broad questions: (a) *What are the experiences of parents of young children with disabilities when they use technology to receive or find information?* (b) *What technology-based supports do parents use?* and (c) *What are parents' preferences when using technology to gain information or support of their young children with disabilities and their family?*

Patterns of computer use and Internet access by family participants were similar to those reported for adults more broadly in the U.S., though this may have been attributable to the fact that most participants (74%) were in the 31 to 50-year-old age range; tended to be White (93%); and had higher educational backgrounds, i.e., either bachelor's or higher degrees (70%).

In this preliminary study, family participants reported clear preferences for using the Internet to *seek information* about their children, i.e., treatment, intervention, and disability-specific information, followed by email with both professionals and other parents. Only slightly more than half of the respondents relied on the Internet for social support. Searchable websites and search engines were reportedly the most frequently used supports, followed by email for communications with professionals and organizations. Other current and emerging technologies (i.e., social networking sites, discussion groups, lending libraries, listservs, and podcasts) were less frequently used.

In interpreting the findings, the researchers noted that families typically have many demands placed on their time, resulting in a tendency for education professionals (who design web-based and other technology supports) to "assume that families can (a) use the technology support features effectively; (b) gain information efficiently from the provided support; (c) understand the content provided; and (d) be able to problem-solve effectively" (Parette et al., in press). These assumptions may indeed be flawed from a family perspective given the differing preferences and use patterns (Angelo, 1997; Hourcade & Parette, 2001) compared to those of professionals who design web-based and related technology supports.

- Angelo, D. H. (1997). AAC in the family and home. In S. L. Glennen & D. C. DeCoste (Eds.), *Handbook of augmentative and alternative communication* (pp. 523-541). San Diego: Singular Publishing Group.
- Hess, J. (2004). *Assistive technology information needs: Results of a national needs assessment*. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development.
- Hourcade, J., & Parette, P. (2001). Providing assistive technology information to professionals and families of children with MRDD: Interactive CD-ROM technology. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*, 36, 272-279.
- Parette, H. P., Meadan, H., Doubet, S., & Hess, J. (in press). Supporting families of young children with disabilities using technology. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*.

*Howard P. Parette, Jr., is Director of the SEAT Center and a Special Education faculty member at Illinois State University; Hedda Meadan and Sharon Doubet are Special Education faculty members at ISU; Jackie Hess is the Director for the Family Center for Technology and Disabilities in Washington, DC.*

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## **Ten Current Resources on RtI Applied to the Early Childhood/Preschool Level**

Compiled by  
Robin Miller Young, IDEC Past President

Much has been happening with the system's change initiative known as Response to Intervention (RtI), as applied to early childhood and pre-k settings, since I wrote the first article that appeared in the Illinois Division for Early Childhood (IDEC) newsletter, in Spring 2008 (Vol. 14, no. 3). Here is a list of ten current resources that includes upcoming conferences, recently held professional events/publications with links to documents you can access, as well as information on an award-winning RtI in EC program, and development of an RtI in Early Childhood/Pre-K Settings Position Statement. As you learn of other resources, you are welcome to forward them to me at [Robin\\_MillerYoung@ipsd.org](mailto:Robin_MillerYoung@ipsd.org) for potential inclusion in the next list of resources.

### **1. RtI in Early Childhood Summit; Second Annual ([www.crtiec.org](http://www.crtiec.org)):**

The Second Annual *RTI Early Childhood Summit* will be held on October 12 - 13, 2010 at the Westin Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri preceding the CEC Division of Early Childhood conference. As those who attended last year know, this is a remarkable opportunity for us all to share ideas, promising practices, and newly developed interventions. Summit registration is now open. Meanwhile, clear the time on your schedule, and plan to join other Network members at the Summit.

Hope to see you in October!

Center for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood (CRTIEC)

Juniper Gardens Children's Project

University of Kansas, 650 Minnesota Avenue

Kansas City, KS 66101

### **2. Illinois Association of Early Childhood (IAEYC); state conference (<http://illinoisaeYC.org>).**

RtI is the topic of a pre-conference of the IAEYC state-wide, 3-day event (September 30 to October 2, 2010) to be held on Thursday, 9-30-10 at the Springfield Crowne Plaza. Registration for the preconference session is limited to 75 participants.

#### **SESSION 3: RTI (Response To Intervention) in PreK: What Could it Look Like?**

**Sign in:** 8:30 am      **Workshop:** 9:00 am – 3:30 pm

**Sponsor:** Illinois Resource Center Early, Childhood Professional Development, Illinois STARNET and Illinois Head Start

**Continental Breakfast & Lunch provided:** Preregistration required

**Facilitator:** Lynette Chandler, Northern Illinois University (NIU)

**Panel:** Representatives from various Illinois programs. Invited districts include Barrington #220, Glenview #34, Indian Prairie # 204, Naperville # 203, Peoria # 150, Rockford #205, Valley View # 365U, and Winfield # 34.

Participants will learn about a variety of models for RTI in Preschool which have been implemented in some Illinois school districts. Tier 1 leading into Tier 2 intervention practices will be shared as well as challenges and successes in implementation.

**What is RTI?** from the Center for RTI in Early Childhood

<http://www.crtiec.org/RTI/whatisrti.shtml>.

### **3. LRP Publication article on RtI in Early Childhood**

Several articles address information on RtI applied in early childhood –pre-k settings in the February 2010, Volume 21, Issue # 2. *Early Childhood Report: Children With Special Needs & Their Families*.

Cover story: Consider how behavioral RtI can work for your preschoolers (page 1 and 4); RtI use in early childhood gains national boost (p. 3); RtI in early childhood is ripe for rollout, experts say. (p. 5).

Special attention is given to work being conducted at the Early Childhood Center, Valley View School District; contact Donna Nylander ([Nylanderd@365u.will.k12.il.us](mailto:Nylanderd@365u.will.k12.il.us)) for information on Valley View's program; for article information, contact LRP Publications, Horsham, PA.

### **4. NASP (National Association of School Psychologists) March 2010 Annual Conference**

**Presentation ([www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)):**

*Applying RtI in the Early Childhood Settings*; NASP Paper Presentation #187 from NASP 2010 Annual Conference (March 2010). Click on <http://nasponline.org/conventions/handouts2010/papers/NASP%20RTI-ECP-1.ppt> or contact [mebrown@glenview34.org](mailto:mebrown@glenview34.org) or [Melissabrown@thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Melissabrown@thechicagoschool.edu); presenters included Verity Rodrigues and Melissa Brown who have been implementing an RtI model in the Glenview School District #34.

### **5. NASP March 2010 Annual Conference Symposium ([www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)):**

*Data-Based Decision-Making in Preschool: Promoting Early Academic Success*; NASP symposium # 034 from NASP 2010 Annual Conference (March 2010). Click [www.nasponline.org/conventions/handouts2010/symposia/NASPPreschool.pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/conventions/handouts2010/symposia/NASPPreschool.pdf) (takes time to download) or e-mail [roh206@lehigh.edu](mailto:roh206@lehigh.edu); presenters included Robin Hojnosi (Lehigh University), Kristen Missall (University of Iowa), Chelsea McColley (Monroe School District, Wisconsin) Holly Windram (St. Croix River Education District, Minnesota), Lisa Snow (Prairie Children Preschool, Indian Prairie School District # 204), and Cindy Navin O'Meara (Early Childhood Program, Naperville School District # 203).

### **6. NASP March 2010 Annual Conference Invited Full-day workshop ([www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)):**

Implementing Response To Intervention (RtI) into Early Childhood Settings was an invited pre-conference workshop ( #33) conducted by Lynette Chandler and Robin Miller Young on Thursday, March 4, 2010. The powerpoint and small group activities to learn the four-step problem-solving process can be accessed at <http://www.cedu.niu.edu/tlrn/aboutus/documents/NASP.Workshop.33.LKCRMY.pdf> or contact Robin at [Robin\\_MillerYoung@ipsd.org](mailto:Robin_MillerYoung@ipsd.org).

### **7. American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) (<http://www.aota.org>):**

*Response to Intervention & Early Intervening Services*; AOTA Continuing Education Article: Occupational Therapy Roles in General Education. January 2010, OT Practice 15 (1); <http://www.aota.org/cea> or 1-877-404-2682.

**8. RtI in Early Childhood:First Annual Summit:** Two Illinois participants of the First Summit on RtI in EC (October 2009), describe their sessions in the April 2010 issue of the Illinois Division for Early Childhood (IDEC) newsletter; it may be accessed at <http://illinois-dec.org/nl/v16i3.pdf>.

**9. Award Received for RtI in EC Efforts; Prairie Children Preschool, IPSD # 204:**

Prairie Children Preschool, Indian Prairie School District # 204 was awarded designation as a "Spotlight School" by the Dupage County Regional of Education (ROE) for leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a Response to Intervention (RtI) model for Early Childhood Settings. The award was presented on April 13, 2010 by Darlene Ruscitti, ROE Superintendent, to Sharon Tate, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and LuAnn Shields, Principal, Prairie Children Preschool, at the First Annual Dupage County RtI "Showcase" event. For more information on the preschool's inclusive and RtI practices, please contact [Luann\\_Shields@ipsd.org](mailto:Luann_Shields@ipsd.org) or 630-375-3030.

**10. RtI Position Statement to be developed by DEC, NAEYC and Head Start:**

From the DEC Newsletter:

In a matter of a few short years, Response to Intervention (RTI) has become a familiar phrase in the early childhood field. Because RTI is an emerging practice, it is critical that the early childhood field has a reliable source of information as programs begin to define and implement these practices.

DEC will work with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Head Start Association to address these and other important questions in a jointly developed position statement on RTI in early childhood. Financial support for the process is being provided through a generous grant from the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation. The National Professional Development Center on Inclusion (NPDCI) will contribute staff time and resources to facilitate the development of the joint position statement.

Initial steps for this project will involve convening a panel of national experts to discuss the parameters for the development of a position statement on RTI (e.g., defining features, content specificity). This will be followed by input from a joint DEC-NAEYC-NHSA work group and the governing boards of all three organizations. A final step will be the national validation of the joint position statement.

For additional information about this work, contact:

Camille Catlett, National Professional Development Center on Inclusion  
(919) 966-6635 [catlett@mail.fpg.unc.edu](mailto:catlett@mail.fpg.unc.edu)

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## **OSEP Policy Letter Related to Head Start and RTI**

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) has posted Office of Special Education Policy Letters related is Part C and Section 619 on its website, <http://www.nectac.org/idea/clarfctnltrs.asp> The letter from Dr. Alexa Posny, Office of Special Education Programs Director, to Dr. Linda Brekken, SpecialQuest Birth-Five Director is the most recent post. This letter answers questions on how LEAs may implement RTI when a child suspected of having a disability is referred from Head Start. You can view or download the letter at

<http://nectac.org/~pdfs/idea/letters/Brekken-RTIHeadStart-6-2-10.pdf>

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## CONNECT Module on Transition Now Available



CONNECT: The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge at Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina recently released Module 2: Transition. This module provides information and strategies to support children's preparation for and adjustment to new environments. Today, most families of young children move between different types of early childhood services -- like Head Start, private child care, public preschool, or kindergarten. The Module includes an 8-minute video, *Foundations of Transition for Young Children*, which provides the conceptual framework for transition, related research, and legal requirements. Other videos, activities, and handouts can be used as part of professional development events on transition. CONNECT Modules can be found at:

<http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules/connect-modules>

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### Social Media Resources

NAEYC has devoted a section of their website to information, examples, and resources related to using social media. NAEYC has their own Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube channel pages. If you are thinking of how to apply some of these new media options to your own work, you may want to explore how NAEYC is currently using them to inform the early childhood community.

<http://www.naeyc.org/about/socialmedia>

There will also be a session, NAEYC Social Media 101, at their annual conference in Anaheim, California, November 3-6, 2010.



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### Time is Running Out - Plan to Attend Illinois AEYC Statewide Early Childhood Conference



September 30 - October 2, 2010

Crowne Plaza Hotel - Springfield

<http://illinoisaeyc.org/conferences>

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## New Literacy Training Tools Including Podcasts Available!!

CELL, a research-to-practice technical assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs, has **Technical Assistance Tools for Trainers** on their website. The Center has compiled a variety of methods, materials, and practices that can be used to conduct trainings on literacy. Tools are divided into the following categories:

- **Presentations** - PowerPoint slides and notes for use during training along with training modules are available for downloading. There are also 11 presentations from 2006-2009 which can be found under Presentations on the main page of the website.
- **Videos** - nine videos can be viewed from the website. Videos range from four and a half to 17 minutes long. Topics include an overview of literacy, designing a literacy rich environment, and literacy in everyday activities.
- **Tools for Practitioners** - pdf files of checklists, schedules, and tip sheets for practitioners to use as resources to support families can be downloaded.
- **Practice Guides** - pdf files of a variety of guides to promote infant, toddler, and preschool literacy can be downloaded.
- **Podcasts** - a recent addition to the website are *CELLcasts*, which are short video and audio or audio only podcasts focusing on literacy strategies for working with infants, toddlers, and preschool children.

[http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/ta\\_pract\\_main.php](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/ta_pract_main.php)

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## Sharing a Vision - Call for Proposals



Sharing a Vision planning committee is accepting presentation proposals for the conference to be held September 27-28, 2011 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. Online proposal form can be found at <https://illinois.edu/fb/sec/3739092>

**Deadline for submission is October 15, 2010**

Conference Co-Chairs are Carol Weisheit ([carol.weisheit@heartland.edu](mailto:carol.weisheit@heartland.edu)) and Sharon Doubet ([sdoubet@ilstu.edu](mailto:sdoubet@ilstu.edu))

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## Resources from IRIS

compiled by Nasiah Cirincione-Ulezi, IDEC President

The IRIS Center for Training Enhancements (<http://iriscenter.com/>) has free online resources that include a variety of evidence-based topics focusing on the education of students with disabilities. The following websites are a sample of the resources that can be found through IRIS.

<http://www.tadnet.org/placemat> - This website disseminates information about projects supported by the US Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

<http://www.ideadata.org> - The IDEA Data Accountability Center allows public access to statistical data about children with disabilities who receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

<http://www.rti4success.org> - The goal of the National Center on Response to Intervention is to assist states and districts in implementing best practices for RTI and Early Intervening Services.

<http://www.projectforum.org> - Part of the National Association of the State Directors of Special Education (NASDE) forum project aims to improve services to children with disabilities by collecting and disseminating information that supports positive changes to policy and practice at all levels.

<http://www.cast.org/index.html> - The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) is a non-profit organization and is funded by OSEP to do foundational work on Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

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**DEC • 2010**



### THE 26TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON YOUNG CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS & THEIR FAMILIES

October 14-17, 2010

Kansas City, Missouri

<http://www.dec-sped.org/Conference>



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