



THE CONNECTION

Linking children and families to services!

March 2009

RECD Updates!

Check out What's New on our Website:

www.monroe.edu/recdc

Click the Information Tab on the Left for recent articles on Social Skills, Inclusion, and Autism.



Inclusion—Partnerships!

By L. Sullivan

One of the greatest barriers to inclusion has been the challenge of communication between community programs and special education providers and families are often caught in the middle. There are many reasons, including time constraints, and misunderstandings regarding roles and responsibilities. Here are some tips to help break down these barriers.

Preschool or Child Care Programs that serve children identified with a disability can develop positive relationships with SE Providers in the following ways.

1. Provide a Welcome Packet. Assign a staff person to meet with each provider when services begin to give a brief orientation to their program. A packet with information about the program, i.e. philosophy, policy, regulation information, floor plan, calendar of events, and contact numbers can be very helpful. Find out what the provider's needs are i.e. child's schedule, place to work, place for belongings, call when child is absent, etc. Remember, providers have very tight schedules, and when they have 30-60 minutes to work with a child, they shouldn't have to spend half of it trying to figure things out!

2. Use a separate Sign-in Sheet for all providers including, name of the agency they are with, contact numbers, child they are serving, services provided, days/times, and method of ongoing communication.

Special Education Providers (S.E.I.T., S.T., O.T., P.T. Consultants, etc.)

1. Assist programs by sharing all relevant information, allowed through consents, i.e. the child's plan, Committee meeting dates, name of the coordinator, and specific information on the child's disability or special needs.

Provide suggestions and strategies, to help program staff reinforce and carry over skills.

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Who we are:

Regional Early Childhood Direction Center

Mike Reif, Director
Jill DelVecchio, Asst. Director
Linda Sullivan, Inclusion Assoc.
Lorraine McMullen, Secretary

(RECD) is a "clearing-house" that provides free information, referral, technical assistance and support to families, professionals, and community agencies concerned with children birth to five with suspected or diagnosed delays or disabilities. We provide ongoing community workshops for both parents and professionals. We can be found at:

41 O'Connor Rd.

Fairport, NY 14450

585.249.7817

FAX: 585.249.7816

Toll Free: 1.800.462.4344

www.monroe.edu/recdc

Is Monroe #1 BOCES Closing it's Preschool Programs?

A committee comprised of representatives from BOCES 1, component school districts, Monroe County, RECD, NYSED and parents was formed, to study this issue. It is the intention of BOCES 1 to keep the Preschool Program open, if at all possible. However, if the funding issues cannot be resolved, there will be a planned two to three year phase out of the program. In May 2009, the Preschool Program Committee will report back to the BOCES 1 Board of Education on the committee's findings and the Board will make a final decision. Progress thus far includes:

- Monroe 1 BOCES Superintendent Dan White and other BOCES administrators have met with local legislators to ask for assistance in having the cumbersome Preschool Rate methodology modified as recommended in a November 2007 Preschool Task Force Report.
- Parents of Children affiliated with the Preschool Program have individually written letters to legislators urging their support. Superintendent Dan White personally delivered the letters to legislators and leadership chairs while in Albany on February 24th for BOCES Lobby Day.
- RECD conducted a survey in early February and compiled data from 26 Western NY Preschool Evaluation Sites, Preschool Program Providers and Related Service providers. Over 76% of the approved preschool evaluation teams in the region are also realizing an average 26% deficit as well as slightly smaller deficits with program and related service reimbursements.

Spring is coming! Parent Corner...! Food for Thought!



The best gift you can give your children is the gift of your time! Take time daily to play with or read a story to your child. Have them help with chores, such as sorting laundry, or setting the table. Take walks with your children, and get that exercise you've been wanting! Don't forget all that the local library has to offer, or the Strong Museum of Play! For more information on what you can do with your children check out

rochester.kidsoutandabout.com/

You've seen the signs, do you know what it means? **5•2•1•0**

5 fruits and veggies a day ...

2 hours or less of computer or TV time

1 hour of active play

0 sugary drinks

Make this your family's Motto!

**5•2•1•0 BE A
HEALTHY
HERO!**

Free Training Opportunities!

New Statewide Training for Committee on Preschool Special Education information coming soon. Check RECDC Website for details. Just a sample of what else RECDC can offer!

- NY State Preschool Laws and Regulations
- CPSE Chair and Member Training
- The Birth to Five Referral Process
- Accessing Resources for children with Special Needs
- Advocating For Children with Special Needs
- Parent Workshops
- Parent Education Workshops on the Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten



- Making Inclusion Work—Collaboration and Strategies
- Strategies for Successful Inclusion!
- The Importance of Play!
- Parent Education Workshops on the Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten
- Communicating Effectively with Children
- Teaching Social Skills to Reduce Challenging Behaviors!

Mark your calendars for Upcoming Events! Check our website for more info or call 585-249-7817

RECDC Inclusion Series— Partnering for Successful Inclusion	March 23, 1:30-3:30	Linden Ave. Rochester, NY
Collaborative Problem Solving for Kids w/Asperger's Syndrome Ross W. Greene, Ph.D.	April 9, 2009	Center for Disabilities, Albany, NY
RAEYC Spring Seminar	April 15, 2009 5:00	Clarion, Rochester, NY
Discipline with Dignity: Parents and Professionals Learning Together Annual Conference	April 30, 2009	Buffalo, NY
Children's Mental Health Awareness Conference	May 1-2, 2009	Rochester, NY

Inclusion... Cont.

3. Find out from classroom staff the best ways to share information. Notebooks can be helpful as a way of sharing suggestions, strategies, and progress notes, but should not be the only form of communication. Phone calls, and times to meet should be scheduled periodically to share information, and address any concerns or questions.

These steps can go far in terms of understanding roles and responsibilities. Leave ego's at the door! No one is an expert in all areas. As much as the Special Education Providers have expertise in their specific area, they should acknowledge the skills the Preschool and Child Care Staff have in regard to child development. Each team member brings something different to the table. Mutual respect, an open mind, and the willingness to learn from each other will go along way in terms of achieving best outcomes for the child, and that's the bottom line.

Families depend on us to work together and to include them in the process. For more information on how to make Inclusion work. Here are some ways you can get the ball rolling!

1. Check out Inclusion Articles on our website
2. Attend our Inclusion Workshops
3. Get a copy of ECICMC's Inclusion Guide
4. Contact RECDC's Inclusion Associate, Linda Sullivan at 249-7814.

10 GREAT WAYS TO TEACH SOCIAL SKILLS!

1. **Model** - Children copy what they see! Have adults **plan** to model the use of manners, coping skills i.e. deep breathing, taking a break when angry or frustrated, solving problems, and communicating feelings during activities.
2. **Make books with children**, i.e. All About Me, My Feelings Book. Adults write child's words as a story and child decorates with drawings, photos or magazine pictures. Send books home with children.
3. **Teach emotions** by naming what you see. i.e. "I see you are **angry** that Joe took your truck".
4. **Use children's videos, DVD's TV** programs to supplement and reinforce social skills.
5. **Use games**, to teach and practice social skills, i.e. sharing, turn taking, cooperation, manners, waiting.
6. **Use role-play and puppets** -Adult or puppets play the part of children having conflicts; have children help to come up with solutions.
7. **Use picture charts** to teach rules and problem solving. Display at child's eye level to be used as needed.
- 9 **Use positive communication** - tell children what **you want to see** versus what you don't want to see. i.e., "Use quiet voices", vs. "stop yelling".
10. **Use lots of positive reinforcement** to build self-esteem and reinforce good choices. Focus on the positive, catch them being good. Embed social skills lessons into every part of the child's day, every day for best results!

Call RECDC at 249-7817 for more information on Social Skills.

The Regional Early Childhood Direction Center (RECDC) is sponsored locally by Monroe #1 BOCES, University of Rochester's Golisano Children's Hospital at Strong, Division of Neurodevelopmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, and the Division of Neonatology

