

ICC Topic Call: December 17, 2003
Notes

Participants: Dawn Wardyga (RI) John Hoffman, (MN), Michael Jameson (SC), Amy Young (MA), Barbara Popper (MA), and Marilyn Gutierrez (MA).

The topic of the call focused on the networking of ICC parents across the country, through the National Parent Leadership Development Project for ICCs and then beyond the life of the project through the formation of a separate organization. The discussion covered the following points:

- ? The project can offer needed TA to ICC parents, but it does not want to assume ownership of specific issues.
- ? Parent networking can be facilitated by the project's website and listserv, as well as through calls sponsored by the project every other month.
- ? Other ways for parents to connect is through Family Voices or through Family-to-Family Health Information Centers (about 14 across the country).
- ? Some parents don't know about the purpose of the ICC, or the Federal level ICC, and need to know what its function is. (The new version of IDEA being considered does not include the FICC.)
- ? A discussion was held on the purpose of the ICC Parent Leadership Institute (sponsored by the project) to train new parents serving as leaders on their state ICC. The training is needed by all.
- ? The alphabet soup of agencies and programs is hard for new members, but new parents need to learn fast so they can be useful before their terms end. New members are needed all the time and the learning curve is steep.
- ? The state ICC is to advise and assist the state in running its program (as John Hoffman learned in his background working for his Minnesota).
- ? RI does include all new members in their orientation.
- ? Rhode Island plans a resource directory on the website of its parent center, www.ripin.org. It is the home of Family Voices and a family-to-family center funded by the state.
- ? Amy Young spoke about ways to increase communication among state ICC members, including calls and meetings before ICC meetings. They share issues. A general problem is lack of funding for state programs to serve all eligible. We need to find ways to motivate parents to protect their early intervention programs through action.
- ? Alerts and information in advance will be needed across the country relative to the new federal applications for state programs. We have heard that there is no voice for early intervention on the federal level and no funds for achieving it. In November at a parent gathering at the OSEP meeting, a parent asked about organizing ICC parents as a separate non-profit so they could independently raise issues and funds for their awareness campaign. We will continue to ask the questions about whether the FICC is still needed and how parents will be able to express their views at the national level if that forum is dropped. (See the website for the FICC for its goals and purpose: www.fed-icc.org)