

## Meeting Highlights Central Region Inclusion Connections

Guilford Child Development  
Greensboro, NC

Wednesday, November 12, 2008, 10:00 am – 1:00 PM

### Number of participants:

- 25

### Facilitator:

- Rhodus Riggins, Jr., Regional Consultant, Partnerships for Inclusion

### Meeting Overview:

- Rhodus provided the minutes and highlights of September 12, 2008, meeting. Our "State of Inclusion" conversation allowed participants to identify what was occurring for children with special needs and their families in their communities.
- The following themes emerged on September 12, 2008: the need for resources to support inclusion, including resources to support diverse families, need for professional development, education and training for everyone, need to provide a range of options and settings based on families' preferences (from self-contained to inclusive options), need for culturally relevant, responsive, and family centered approach, need to share information with families in a relevant, practical way, need for administrative support, including program leaders, the importance of outdoor learning opportunities for children, including children with special needs, and the need to support individuals who feel they are not prepared to work with children with special needs.

### Meeting Focus:

- November's meeting built on "State of Inclusion" conversations from first regional meeting held on Friday, September 12, 2008. We identified the needs/challenges; however, we did not have time to explore supports for children with special needs and their families within our communities (*what's in place to support children with special needs and their families?*).
- Explored resources to support inclusion, including resources to support diverse families.

## Meeting Discussions:

- Participants introduced themselves and shared their roles/agency's roles and how they supported children and families.
- Rhodus provided additional information to support some of the themes identified during our September 12, 2008, meeting. Handouts included: *Family Members' Perceptions of Inclusion from An Administrator's Guide to Preschool Inclusion* (Go to <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~publicationsoffice/pdfs/AdmGuide.pdf> for a free copy)  
*Division for Early Childhood's Position Statement on Responsiveness to Family Cultures, Values, and Languages* (Go to [www.dec-sped.org](http://www.dec-sped.org), click on "Position/Concept Papers", and then "Family, Cultures, Values and Languages" for a copy) ; *Division for Early Childhood's Position Statement on Inclusion* (currently in revisions with NAEYC); *Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices' Parent Checklist* by Mary Louise Hemmeter (Go to [www.dec-sped.org](http://www.dec-sped.org), click on "Tools You Can use" for a copy); and *Inclusion: The Role of the Program Administrator* by B.J. Smith, P. Strain, and M.M. Ostrosky, go to the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning's website, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>, and click on "Resources" and then "What Works Briefs", Number 13.
- Rhodus circulated a draft of "*Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)*". At the time of this meeting, public feedback and input were being solicited. Feedback from the field is currently being incorporated and revisions are being made. Please visit [www.dec-sped.org](http://www.dec-sped.org) for additional information, click on "Position/Concept Papers" and then "Inclusion".
- **What's in place to support children with special needs and their families (group brainstorming)?**
  - Child Care Health Consultants: for a listing of consultants, please go to the North Carolina Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center, <http://www.healthychildcarenc.org/> and click on "Child Care Health Consultants". You may also call the Resource Center at 1-800-367-2229.
  - Outdoor Learning Environments Initiative: please go to the North Carolina Office of School Readiness' website, <http://www.osr.nc.gov/>, and click on "Professional Development and Resources" and then "Outdoor Learning Environments". There is also a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet available at: <http://www.osr.nc.gov/ProfDevandResources/oleFAQ.asp>

- Lizz Forbis, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, announced that she conducted an outdoor learning environments workshop on taking the inside outside.
- **Who's blending funds to provide inclusive opportunities?**
  - Davidson County: Please speak with Donna Danzy, Smart Start of Davidson County, 336-249-6688, [donnad@partnershipforchildren.org](mailto:donnad@partnershipforchildren.org), for more information.
  - Iredell County: Please speak with Jennifer Griffith, 704-878-9980, [jgriffith@icpyc.org](mailto:jgriffith@icpyc.org) or Christine Wilson, 704-878-9980, [cwilson@icpyc.org](mailto:cwilson@icpyc.org)
  - Charlotte-Mecklenburg: Blending at the 4-year old level, working on blending at the 3-year old level. Please speak with Trish Tanger, 980-343-2716, [trish.tanger@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:trish.tanger@cms.k12.nc.us) or Lizz Forbis, 980-343-2769, [lizz.forbis@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:lizz.forbis@cms.k12.nc.us)
  - Winston-Salem/Forsyth County: Working on blending: Please speak with Amy Banks, Smart Start of Forsyth County, 336-714-4370, [amyb@smartstart-fc.org](mailto:amyb@smartstart-fc.org) or Jennifer Byers, Winston-Salem-Forsyth Preschool Intake, 336-771-4730, [jbyers@wsfcs.k12.nc.us](mailto:jbyers@wsfcs.k12.nc.us)
- **Where to go to observe inclusive child care?  
From 9-12-2008 Meeting & 11-12-08 Meeting**
  - Partners in Learning, Salisbury, NC <http://www.epartnersinlearning.org/>, Norma W. Honeycutt, Executive Director, and Cindy Webb, Inclusion Specialist.
  - The Special Children's School, Winston-Salem, NC, <http://www.specialchildrenschool.org/>, Karen Young, Child Care Director.
  - Thompson Child and Family Focus (Matthews, NC)/Thompson Child Development Center (Charlotte/North Charlotte, NC), <http://www.thompsoncff.org/>, is opening a new 5 Star Child Development Center.
  - LifeSpan Circle School (formerly Alamance Developmental Day), Burlington, NC, [www.lifespanservices.org](http://www.lifespanservices.org) , click on "Locations" for contact information.
  - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools: Please contact Trish Tanger or Lizz Forbis, Exceptional Children's Preschool Program. Contact information is provided above.

- **Resource Sharing:**

- Barbie More, Infant-Toddler Specialists, provided an overview of the new *Infant-Toddler Foundations: Guidelines for Development and Learning for NC's Infants and Toddlers (Birth to 36 Months)*, and how it supports the inclusion of infants and toddlers in early care and education settings. *Infant-Toddler Foundations* may be ordered through NC Division of Child Development, <http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/home.asp> , Click on "What's New" tab and scroll down to "What's New – January 2009" , Infant Toddler Foundations.
- Barbie announced that Train-the-Trainer sessions for Infant-Toddler Foundations will be conducted also.
- Barbie also shared a variety of resources, including children's books, dolls, , books on simple signs , resources to support families, and additional props (examples, diverse music CDs, puzzles,) to support diversity.
- Debra Worsley, Child Development Specialist, Child Care Resources, Inc., provided an overview of resources to support children and diverse families, including children with special needs. Sample resources included: - Developmental Screening Fact Sheets and Fact Sheets (and warning signs) on a variety of developmental disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Intellectual Disability, Vision Loss, Hearing, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, available for free at the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. Please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/downloads.html> to download fact sheets and other resources. These materials are a part of the Center on Disease Control and Prevention's *Learn the Signs. Act Early* campaign and are available in English and Spanish. You may also call 1-800-CDC - INFO (232-4636) to receive a packet of information.

Additional resources shared by Debra includes:

- Children's Home Society of California, has a Family Education Program and resources to support parents and caregivers. Please visit: <http://www.chs-ca.org/fep.html> for additional information.
- Child Care Aware, <http://www.childcareaware.org/en/> : Brochures available in English and Spanish can be down loaded for **free**. Please click on "Resources" and then "Publications". Brochures on choosing quality child care, including *Choosing Quality Child Care for a Child with Special Needs* are available. You may also call toll free at: 1-800-424-2246.

- National Association for the Education of Young Children, [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org) , resources available in English and Spanish, including, *Teaching Young Children to Resist Bias: What Parents Can Do*. Resources may be available at a small cost.
- Parents Action for Children, <http://store.parentsactionstore.org/prostores/servlet/-strse-template/aboutus/Page>, DVDS and resources, including DVDS on *A Child with Special Needs- English or Spanish* (\$10.00). This is Rob and Michele Reiner's efforts to raise awareness of the importance of a child's first years of life. They are the producers of *I am Your Child Video Series*.
- Trish Tanger and Lizz Forbis, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, shared that they maintain a list of parent resources to support families and teachers.
- *Ready, Set, Go! Your Guide to Kindergarten Transition* may be previewed on Child Care Resources, Inc.'s website, <http://www.childcareresourcesinc.org/news/default.aspx?ID=9> or <http://www.readysetk.org/>
- Rhodus shared the *Introduction to Early Childhood Inclusion: Train-the-Trainer* materials with the group.
- Upcoming training opportunities were announced. Please visit Partnerships for Inclusion's website for professional development opportunities, and resources to support inclusion, <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~PFI/>.
- Meeting evaluated, certificates issued, meeting adjourned.

**Meeting highlights submitted by:** Rhodus Riggins, Jr., March 5, 2009