

## **Western Regional Inclusion Connections**

**Location:** Buncombe County Child Care Services

**In attendance:** 13

### **Highlights of August 22, 2008 Meeting**

At the beginning of the meeting each participant wrote on a large “post it” note one thing they came to the meeting hoping to get. Resources were number one, general resources to support inclusion, resources for classrooms and resources for providers to use with children who have challenging behaviors. To improve knowledge and learn more was next, with specifics including more knowledge about the inclusive classroom, more about inclusion strengths and needs in the region, more about availability of funding to support inclusion, and more knowledge about where to send parents and the process for identifying children and getting services for them. Networking was also identified as a reason for coming.

The group indicated that in their various roles they see children with disabilities being served in inclusive settings. Concerns about the need for training were expressed by the group because the practices they see could be improved.

Some observations reported : an increase in #s of children with disabilities as well as an increase in children “falling through the cracks” because of the change in eligibility for services for children birth to three, physicians only doing developmental screening on children with Medicaid in some communities, some negative side effects associated with the new rated license requirements, such as one higher paid teacher in the room, but without an assistant, higher paid teachers with the educational requirements who do not feel they can work with a certain child threaten to leave and the director asks the child to leave rather than lose the teacher, directors telling some children to stay home during visit by assessor, children with disabilities being in one program for part day and then having to make a transition to another program which requires travel time, adjustment to different caregivers, peers, expectations, environments, etc.

### **Training Needs Identified:**

- Normal sexual development for children including how to respond to behaviors exhibited
- Training for parents on the benefits of early identification, why teachers report observations and concerns about a child’s development and how to navigate the system
- Training for child care home providers about inclusion, how they can include children with disabilities, what kinds of support (financial and from specialists, etc.) they can access and how to do that.
- Training on how to respond effectively to challenging behaviors
- Training about subsidy, what when and how?

**Other Needs:** (increased services, info. on PFI website or a hand out that could be distributed)

- Increased availability of quality infant care (increase prevention and earlier identification)
- What to do when parents won't give permission for referral
- Help for providers to know what they can tell assessors/raters about practices in the classroom related to a child's IEP or IFSP. ( ex. increased time on computer written into IEP)
- Information for persons who write IFSP or IEP goals and persons who are working in a classroom, but not employees of the center ( ex. one on one assistants) about practices that are not allowed in center or homes due to licensing regulations. ( ex. restraint, rewards of candy)
- Information for persons assisting students with disabilities (such as one on one assistants) about best practices for inclusion which support and promote participation in classroom activities other children are doing, social interactions and use of natural supports.
- List of commonly asked questions and answers related to inclusion
- List of persons communities can call upon to do training on inclusion
- Inclusion Tool Box/Kit or a link to one that already exists.
- Information for assessors/raters on things in a classroom that may have been modified/adapted to accommodate a child with a disability and as a result could affect the rating ( ex. furnishings, space, substantial time, time allowed on some activities)
- Lists of resources to support inclusion that classrooms can use (\$, ideas for adapting and modifying activities, materials etc., books for children, pictures, furnishings, specialists available to them, etc.)
- Lists of websites
- Info. for parents on how to navigate the system
- Info. for providers on best practices for communicating with parents
- Lists of persons who can be called upon to do training for providers on chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes and allergies.
- Info. on the roles, priorities and restrictions of specialists funded by CCR&Rs and Smart Starts (Behavior Specialists, Infant Toddler Specialists)
- A list of things assessors/raters can do to reduce anxiety and stress for teachers and ensure that the rating more accurately reflects the classroom environment and practices, prior to or during a visit
- Information for providers on classroom practices for children who have a mental health diagnosis such as bipolar disorder, etc.
- Information about resources and programs in communities that are effective and perhaps could be duplicated in other communities such as child health care consultants who are nurses, increased screening by physicians of all children not just children with Medicaid, programs such as KARE in Haywood County

**Biggest Highlights:** Participants with a desire to improve inclusive opportunities in their regions and to become more knowledgeable about needs and resources. Great conversations related to a variety of needs identified from the perspectives of persons in varied roles and with varied responsibilities. When you look at the information/lists generated, much was done to lay the groundwork for future meetings and for addressing the needs of children, families and providers.

**Next Meeting;** Participants decided on the same location for the next meeting and on the date of November 14 2008 at the same time, 10AM to 1:00 PM.

**Focus of next meeting:** The CCR&R/Smart Start Specialists in the room agreed to clarify the roles, priorities, and restrictions in their job descriptions; so that we could all learn what they can and cannot be called upon to do. Luanne agreed to bring some information from the licensing regulations that could be a reference to help those who write IFSPs and IEPS and persons other than center employees who work in a classroom, know the kinds of interventions or practices that are not allowable under licensing regulations. Libby will bring the Inclusive Child Care course books ( participant and instructor manuals) developed by PFI, to reacquaint or introduce participants to those materials as a resource for local training on inclusion, as well as some other resources that could be used to address some of the training needs identified. Participants are invited to bring resources and or share information they feel would address any of the needs identified.

Libby Wilson, Partnerships for Inclusion  
August 26, 2008