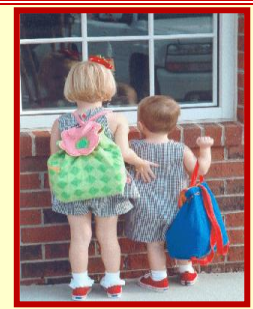




KIT

"Keeping In Touch"

September 2008



A Publication of the Army Educational & Developmental Intervention Services CSPD

Resource Article



This month's KIT article, published in the September 2008 edition of the *Journal of Early Intervention*, is a study by Malone and

Gallagher examining the timely transition of young children with disabilities to preschool special education services. Applying an ex post facto design, the researchers analyzed the official special education records of 211 preschoolers who qualified for and received preschool special education as a three-year-old child. The population studied was a very large school district in a Southern state. The study design focused on how the transition process was influenced by three factors, the child's level of functioning, the referral source, and the educational level of the mother.

The results of this study revealed that children with more significant delays were more likely to receive early intervention services. Accordingly, they were more apt to be referred to preschool from the Part C program. In addition, children participating in early intervention services tended to be referred to preschool special education earlier than children referred from other referral sources are. Parent referral was the second highest, followed by other and private referral sources. An interesting point was made that some parents might delay the referral to preschool services if they are satisfied with services received from other sources, such as private

insurance therapies. Also highlighted was the importance of educating medical and other community agencies, which interface with families and children, about the resources available for preschool age children with possible delays in development. In the end, the timeliness of referrals is critical for ensuring that children and families do not experience a gap in supports and services. The study also included examination of the influence of mother's educational level. With regard to this factor, no significant differences were discovered.

Within this study, an impressive 72% of referrals to preschool special education were received by the child's third birthday.



Yet, based upon national data reported in this study, more children with special needs are served at age 4 than at age 3. Overall, based on the population included in this study, the source of referral, and the child's level of functioning play a role in the transition process. Participation in early intervention had the greatest positive influence on the timeliness of referrals to preschool special education services. As concluded by Malone and Gallagher, "referral through Part C is more likely to assure Part B services by the time the child's 3rd birthday than referrals through other sources in the community."

Malone, D. G. & Gallagher, P. A. (2008).

Transition to preschool programs for young children with disabilities. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 30(4), 341-356.

On the WWW

The website this month comes from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Community of Pediatrics Teleconference.

Specifically, the “Act Early on Developmental Concerns: Partnering with Early Intervention” web conference, held on July 14, 2008, is highlighted.

Act Early on Developmental Concerns: Partnering with Early Intervention

Monday, July 14, 2008

-Georgina Peacock, MD, MPH, FAAP
AUCD Fellow, CDC/National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities
-Diane Zedan
Director, Special Education, First Steps Washtenaw/Early On
-Layla Mohammed, MD, FAAP
Primary Care Pediatrician, Ypsilanti Pediatrics

This web conference was geared for the pediatric community to describe importance of referring children to Early Intervention. Also highlighted was the need for follow up services as soon as a developmental issue is suspected; the value in promoting understanding of the role of the Early Intervention; and the critical need for effective community partnerships.

The direct link to this web conference, including the audio link, PowerPoint slides, and associated resources is:

http://www.aap.org/compeds/resources/teleconf_EI.html

The link to other teleconferences sponsored by the Community of Pediatrics follows:

<http://www.aap.org/compeds/resources/teleconferences.htm>



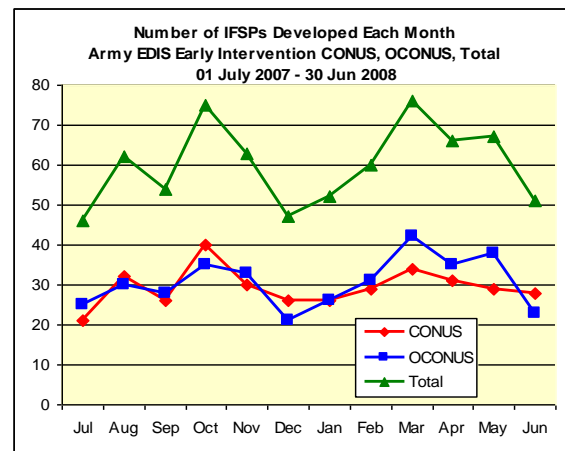
What Do the Data Say?



Across the Army EDIS early intervention programs, how many Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) are developed each month?

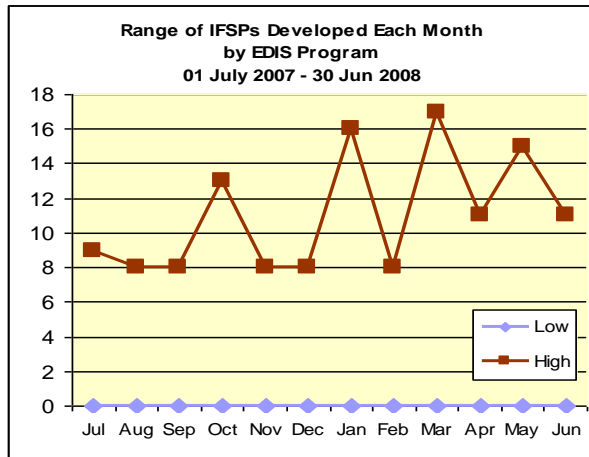
Data from the Special Needs Program Management Information System (SNPMIS) for the past DoD reporting year (01 July 2007 to 30 June 2008) were examined to answer this question. Table one below illustrates the number of IFSPs developed (i.e., the number of new and annual IFSPs started) each month by Army EDIS during this reporting period. The data are shown by CONUS (Continental United States), OCONUS (outside the Continental United States), and the total CONUS and OCONUS programs for Army EDIS early intervention. Interestingly, the high and low months for developing IFSPs are similar for CONUS and OCONUS programs. The peak times also coincide with major Permanent Change of Station (PCS) times (i.e., fall and spring).

Table 1



Looking closer, table two illustrates the range of IFSPs developed each month from a local EDIS program level. During the past reporting year, at least one EDIS program each month developed zero IFSPs. The high number of IFSPs developed by an EDIS program each month ranged from eight to 17.

Table 2



Consultation Corner

This section of the KIT features consultation, in the form of questions and answers, from national experts and leaders in the field of early intervention.



From June through this month, September 2008, the Consultation Corner features Dr. Beth Rous and Caroline Gooden responding to questions related to our focus topic:

Transition from EI to Preschool

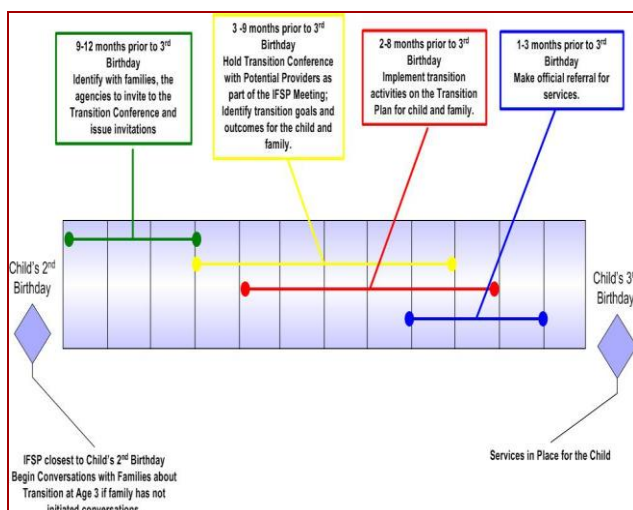
Q: What is the recommended time prior to the child's third birthday to begin the transition process (i.e., discussing and planning for the transition)?

A: All of us need time to plan for a change in our life. For families who have children in early intervention programs, conversations should start as soon as they express an interest in talking about their child's preschool experiences. Child outcomes related to transition should be embedded in the IFSP process throughout the child's early intervention experience. If families have not expressed an interest, voiced concerns, or posed questions by the time

their child is two years of age, providers should initiate those conversations. At this time, talk with families about their thoughts, concerns, and priorities. Find out what programs they are interested in for their child once he/she turns three. This information will help inform what agencies should be invited to participate in the Transition Conference, held at least six months prior to the transition. It is important to provide an official (e-mail, written or personal) invitation to agencies families want to invite to the transition conference at least one month prior to the conference. The invitation should include information on what the expectations are for the agency attending, including providing information about their program, the process for enrollment or eligibility, and the timeline needed to initiate services.

The Transition Conference, which is part of the IFSP meeting, should focus on giving the family information they need to help them develop a Transition Plan, as a component of the IFSP, that includes goals and outcomes for the child and family. For families, goals and outcomes are focused on those that will support the family in making a decision about where they would like to refer their child for services at age three (e.g., visits to programs, talks with other families). Therefore, these goals need to take into consideration the timeframe needed for the potential receiving agency to complete their process for evaluating, determining eligibility and initiating services by the child's third birthday. Typically, no later than 6 months prior to the child's third birthday, an official referral for services with the receiving agency must be made. For the child, goals and outcomes should include the skills and competencies they need to be prepared for and successfully adjust to the next setting. Goals need to be specific and measureable, and monitored throughout the next six months. Following the conference, transition activities need to be initiated with the child and family, and completed before the child's third birthday.

The following figure provides an example of the recommended timelines for this process.



<http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/nectc>, including written materials and reports published through the center. In addition, an on-line searchable database of research, policy and practice resources is available at <http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/nectc/DATABASES/search.aspx>

Continuing Education for KIT Readers



The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) is offering a continuing education opportunity for EDIS KIT readers. In line with the focus on transition, readers are invited to receive continuing education contact hours for reading the monthly KIT publications (June through September 2008) and completing a multiple choice exam about the content covered in these KITs.

If you are interested, take the exam online at www.edis.army.mil and upon successful completion, you will receive a certificate of non-discipline specific continuing education contact hours.

Please send your Consultation Corner questions and KIT ideas via email to edispspd@amedd.army.mil

Q: Beyond regulations and policies, what resources would you recommend to a local school and early intervention program wanting to improve their transition process?

A: The following resources offer practical and helpful information to support the at-three transition process.

www.transitiononestop.org

Developed for providers in Kentucky to support transition across the lifespan, this site provides information for family involvement, individualized and community interagency planning, forms and resources that can be used by programs anywhere.

Tools for transition in early childhood: A step-by-step guide for agencies, teachers, and families

B. Rous & R. Hallam, Brookes Publishing
This book is filled with helpful information, charts, and tables that can be used to develop transition practices for programs.

<http://www.landlockedfilms.com/Order%20a%20Video.htm>

"Turning Three, from C to B: Age 3 Transitions for Kids with Special Needs" (Bilingual DVD containing English and Spanish versions).

Several other helpful resources are available on the NECTC website, at

