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# Resources and Connections:

Enhancing the Quality of Early Learning and  
Early Intervention for Infants, Toddlers, & Their Families

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April, 2002 • Volume 1, Number 3

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A monthly compilation of useful resources to help keep you up-to-date on the latest information and opportunities supporting quality practices in early learning and early intervention. Read the details at the end of this issue to request a **FREE** monthly subscription. An online version of can be viewed at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/earlychildhoodconnections/local/tech.htm>

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## ***New Program: Provider Incentive Grants for Services in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places***

Early Childhood Connections is delighted to announce the availability of *Provider Incentive Grants for 2002-03*. Check the ECC web site for announcements this summer at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/earlychildhoodconnections> Some of the coming attractions:

**Purpose and Focus of Proposals:** The purpose of these grants is to enhance the capacity of practitioners, programs, and systems to provide early intervention services and supports within a child and family's everyday activities, routines, and places. Proposals for these grants must be focused on addressing needs that have been previously identified through processes such as the Part C Grant Application, Community Needs Assessments, Interagency Work Groups, Part C systems monitoring, etc. The proposal should be aimed at implementing one or more strategies that promote the practice of early intervention services and supports in the child and family's everyday activities, routines, and places. Strategies might include: Training and

education for providers and/or families; Building mentoring relationships; Paying for functions that lack current reimbursement (e.g. consultative services, attendance at IFSP meetings; team planning time); Reimbursing practitioner's travel time and/or expenses; and Equipment (e.g. video, computer). At the conclusion of the project, awardees will be expected to provide a detailed evaluative report on the project. There will be a required training and technical assistance component for all grant recipients throughout the funding year.

**Who Can Apply?** Applicants need the participation of a collaborative group. At a minimum, this group must include: 1) individuals or agencies that provide approved early intervention services; 2) family members or family/consumer advocacy groups; 3) the local ECC office, and 4) the Community Centered Board. Applicants are encouraged to invite others to participate, including: health departments, school districts or BOCES, higher education, child care providers, and other community groups. Applicants will designate a project coordinator to oversee the activities and serve as the liaison with ECC/CDE.

## **IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE:**

Summer, 2002: Information on ECC web site  
June 12, 2002: Mandatory bidders telephone call, 11 am to noon, call: (877) 427.0627- code 221335#  
Aug. 13, 2002: Proposals are due  
Oct. 1, 2002: Awards are notified  
Nov. 1, 2002 – Oct. 31, 2003: Project Period

**For more information:** Contact Susan Smith at: [smith\\_s@cde.state.co.us](mailto:smith_s@cde.state.co.us)

## Research Brief



Dunst, C., Trivette, C., Humphries, T., Raab, M., and Roper, N. (2001). Contrasting Approaches to Natural Learning Environment Interventions. *Infants and Young Children*; 14 (2): 48-63

This article compares and contrasts various approaches to natural environment interventions. A three-dimensional model is used to illustrate similarities and differences in practices. The first part of the model contrasts the *setting dimension* in which learning opportunities vary from contextually meaningful and functional to non-contextual and non-functional. For example, a contextual behavior occurs when a child walks up stairs to go out to play; non-contextual behavior occurs when a child walks up and down steps in a therapy room to “practice weight shifting.”

The second part of the model is the *activity dimension*. This dimension contrasts child initiated activities and adult directed activities. Child initiated activities engage the child by inherent interest and drive to accomplish an end result. In adult directed activities the goal or outcome is identified by an adult for a child, and include the learning desired by the adult and the place where the learning will occur.

The *practitioner dimension* of the model focuses on whether learning takes place in the presence or absence of an early childhood practitioner. Practitioner implemented learning activities are characterized by instruction, or inclusion of early intervention strategies in the context of natural learning opportunities. Practitioner absent learning opportunities exist in thousands of activities and events that are part of children’s everyday lives, many of which produce competence by their inherent development-instigating features.

This study found that one particular approach (practitioner-implemented, adult-directed) has increasingly been emphasized to the exclusion of other kinds of naturally occurring learning opportunities. The authors contend that interpreting the natural environments provision of IDEA solely as practitioners providing services in natural settings is unnecessarily limiting. The article observes that “the literature includes many examples of how contextually based, child-initiated, and adult-directed learning opportunities provided by parents and mediated by practitioners have been used as natural learning opportunities for positively influencing child behavior and development” (p. 57).” The article suggests that a variety of contextually based learning opportunities may be better than a preponderance of only one type of practice. The article concludes that much more research is needed to learn what constitutes a logical mix of natural learning environment practices.

*Editorial Commentary:* The analysis found in this article helps us to expand our perspectives on how we provide supports and services to young children and their families. Practitioners can use the framework provided to help choose, blend, and implement their strategies. This article is a significant contribution to the literature and offers useful guidance for conceptualizing and implementing our practices.

### **Save the Date!!!**

**Colorado's 11th Annual Early Childhood Institute:  
Celebrating Quality Practices in Assessment and Service Delivery**

October 17 & 18, 2002

Vail, Colorado

New this year!: Pre-Institute Workshops on October 16, 2002

**Stay tuned for more details!**

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## Spotlight on Resources

### On the Web

#### Project INTEGRATE

<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~integrate/index.htm>

*Project Integrate* promotes integrated therapy through training and technical assistance to early childhood programs serving children with disabilities and their families across the country. Located at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, this project is funded by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U. S. Department of Education. Directed by Dr. Robin McWilliam, Project INTEGRATE provides consultation, training, and technical assistance related to early intervention in natural environments. This site contains a wealth of resources, including training materials, reference lists, links, frequently asked questions, and more. Be sure to check out the checklists that Project INTEGRATE has developed for every stage of the service delivery process. The work of Dr. McWilliam and his colleagues related to integrated therapy and instruction is described in the related Individualizing Inclusion in Child Care web site at <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~inclusion/>

### Zero to Three Bulletin

Every other month, the *Zero to Three* Bulletin keeps subscribers informed on advances in research, programs, practices, policies, and publications on children during their first three years of life and their families. Be sure to catch the Feb/Mar 2002 (Vol. 22:4) Issue. The focus is on "Routines and Rituals In the Lives of Infants, Toddlers, and Families." To download two sample articles from this issue, visit: <http://www.zerotothree.org/professional.html?Load=e-news.html> and then click on "Zero to Three Journal" then click on "Read Sample Articles" and then select the article title, *Child Care Is Rich in Routines* or *Bridges to Literacy: Early Routines That Promote Later School Success*.

### What's Going On in There? – How the Brain and Mind Develop in the First Five Years of Life

By Lise Eliot, Ph.D.  
Bantam Books, 1999



Blending cutting-edge science with a mother's own insight and wisdom, *What's Going On in There?* is an invaluable contribution to the nature vs. nurture debate and shows parents and caregivers the innumerable ways in which they can help their children grow better brains. Charting the brain's development from conception through the first five years, this book is a thought-provoking exploration of the questions critical to every prospective parent: How much of a baby's development is genetically ordained and how much is determined by environment? Is there anything that parents can do to make their babies' brains work better to help them become smarter, better-adjusted people? This book also discusses:

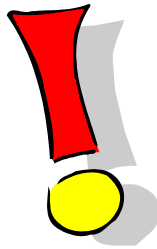
- the evolution of the senses, motor skills, emotions, memory, self-control, language, attention, and intelligence;
- which prenatal factors are most important in shaping brain development;
- why there are critical periods in brain development for sensory, language, and emotional skills;
- how nutritional factors can improve children's mental functioning;
- the differences between boys' and girls' developing brains.

"This is a wonderful book, informed, instructive, empathetic, sensible, and optimistic...a must for all parents." – Eric R. Kandel, Professor, Columbia University

"This is an excellent book for parents – easily understandable and readable." – T. Berry Brazelton, M.D.

"A fascinating and masterful account of what science knows about how a baby's brain grows -- and how what we do makes a difference." – Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*

## Upcoming Events



### Summits and Valleys

May 6-10, 2002 - A conference on families and communities, sharing the triumphs and challenges of families and children with special needs in Southwestern Colorado. The focus of this year's "traveling" conference is "Building Positive Futures: Creating A Dream, Keeping the Vision, and Reaching Your Goals." An evening presentation and a half day conference the next morning will be held in four southwestern Colorado communities: May 6 & 7 in Durango, May 7 & 8 in Cortez, May 8 & 9 in Montrose, and May 9 & 10 in Alamosa. For more information contact the Part C Coordinator in those communities or Rick Noll at 1 (970) 240-8200 or [rhino@gjct.net](mailto:rhino@gjct.net)

### Assistive Technology and Early Childhood workshop

June 14th, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in Denver. This workshop is designed to give participants ideas about simple assistive technology solutions to help young children be successful in walking, talking, playing and daily activities. Registration is \$42. Sponsored by the Colorado Assistive Technology Project. For more information, contact (303) 315-1283.

### KIDs' BRAINS: Healthy Connections for Our Future 2002 Conference

May 16 and 17, 2002 at the Auraria Campus, Denver, Colorado  
Featuring Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D., Medical Director, Provincial Programs in Children's Mental Health, Alberta Mental Health Board, this 3<sup>rd</sup> annual conference is a two-day exploration into the importance of environment in brain development for infants and young children. Presented by *Metropolitan State College of Denver, Human Services Dept.* For more info: [www.kidsbrains.org](http://www.kidsbrains.org)

### Service Coordination Core Training

Four-day program: June 11-12 and July 9- 10 in Denver. Call Melissa Garner at (303) 866-6710 Or email at [garner\\_m@cde.state.co.us](mailto:garner_m@cde.state.co.us)

### The Culture of Childhood Early Childhood Care and Education Summer Symposium

July 17 and 18, 2002 at the Beaver Run Resort in Breckenridge. This year's general theme will be "Language and Literacy." For more information, contact Juanita Kirkpatrick at (303) 866-6629 or [kirkpatrick\\_j@cde.state.co.us](mailto:kirkpatrick_j@cde.state.co.us)

### Lastly, the Early Childhood Activities

**Calendar** is a useful source of information on training opportunities and other events: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/earlychildhoodconnections/calendar/Cal.htm>

### Subscription Information

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### To Receive Connections by U.S. Mail:

Contact Melissa Garner at [garner\\_m@cde.state.co.us](mailto:garner_m@cde.state.co.us) with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line and your U.S. Mail address in the body of the message or mail your address to: Melissa Garner, CDE, 201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203

**Contact Us...** *Resources and Connections* is published by Early Childhood Connections at the Colorado Department of Education and JFK Partners, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. We invite you to contact the editors with your questions and suggestions.

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**We encourage you to pass along copies of *Resources and Connections* to your colleagues and friends.**