

*Working
together
to improve
services
for children
and youth
with
disabilities
and their
families*

The Individual Interagency Intervention Plan (IIIP)

Imagine what the world would be like if we only had to develop one document in order to get all of the services needed by each child with a disability. What if this plan helped services to be truly coordinated, without overlapping? What if one individualized plan could follow a child throughout his or her entire elementary, middle, and high school years and that very same plan would provide the intake information to meet the requirements of a variety of service providers and agencies? To quote Louie Armstrong, "What a wonderful world it would be!"

The new Individual Interagency Intervention Plan (IIIP) has the potential to make what would once have seemed wishful thinking into a reality. To date, the IIIP has been developed to address the needs of children with disabilities ages 3-5 who need services from two or more agencies. Over the next two years, the plan will be expanded to address the needs of children and youth with disabilities from age 3 to age 21. The purpose of the IIIP is to identify and organize both formal and informal supports to develop a plan that addresses the child's and family's concerns. It also serves as a framework for interagency teams to document, describe, and coordinate services as well as payment arrangements for each individual child and their family.

A number of important assumptions and principles have been used in the development of the IIIP which provide a foundation for its use and implementation. These include —

- **The IIIP uses a child and family-centered planning process**

While the actual written document contains the mandated plan requirements of many services and programs, the plan itself is the product of interaction, collaboration, and partnerships between families and professionals. The family is considered to be the core of the IIIP team.

- **The IIIP is fluid and flexible**

The IIIP document as well as the development process is meant to be flexible and fluid to allow it to meet the diverse and changing priorities and needs of families with young children with disabilities.

- **The IIIP provides services to children with disabilities needing services from two or more agencies**

The IIIP is designed to be used for children with disabilities ages 3-5 who meet Special Education eligibility criteria and who also receive services from two or more agencies of which one is the public school.

- **Substitution for other plans**

The IIIP contains the minimum statutory documentation requirements and can be used in place of the Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals Plan (CADL), Community Alternative Care Plan (CAC), Individual Service Plan (ISP), Individual Education Plan (IEP), Traumatic Brain Injury Plan (TBI), Individual Family Community Support Plan (IFCSP), Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), and Home Care Plans. Other program plans should be coordinated through the IIIP planning pro-

MnSIC Updates

The Minnesota System of Interagency Coordination (MnSIC) includes the State Interagency Committee along with a number of subcommittees and work-groups that work on behalf of the initiative to meet the legislative requirements (M.S.125A.023). Below is an update summarizing their current efforts.

State Interagency Committee (SIC)

State Interagency representatives from Children, Families, and Learning; Children's Mental Health; Developmental Disabilities; Health; and Corrections are meeting to develop a common understanding about what should happen with mental health priorities and how this relates to the MnSIC system.

Single Plan Subcommittee

The Single Plan Subcommittee is determining what laws and rules regulate the age 6-21 services to be included on the Individual Interagency Intervention Plan (IIIP). A grid outlining the common required elements for all mandatory individualized plans was created to use in developing the IIIP for ages 3-5. The committee plans to develop a supplement to this grid to assist in expanding the IIIP development for ages 6-21. The subcommittee is recruiting additional representatives from agencies that require provision of services to youth with disabilities ages 6-21.

The IIIP Guidebook has been published and provides samples and instructions for developing the IIIP for ages 3-5. The Guidebook is available on the Web at www.mnsic.org/products.

Dispute Resolution Subcommittee

The Dispute Resolution Subcommittee is developing information and procedures for coordinating dispute resolution processes, which are required as part of local interagency agreements or joint powers of agreement.

A reference document has been created that outlines the different dispute resolution processes used by agencies involved with the MnSIC. The document identifies the agency, defines the dispute process, identifies the procedures used, and outlines the legal source for each process.

Local governing boards will receive a copy of the reference document and a user friendly brochure that describes how disputes or disagreements are resolved at the local level.

Governance Subcommittee

The Governance Subcommittee has finalized the State Interagency Committee (SIC) Interagency Agreement under Minnesota Statute 125A.023. All state agencies included in this mandate have signed the agreement signifying their support and adherence to the agreement as it relates to providing coordinated, interagency, intervention services for children and youth with disabilities age 3-21. The agreement can be viewed on-line at the MnSIC Web site at www.mnsic.org.

Technical assistance activities are being developed to support local areas in complying with the January 1, 2001 deadline for local agreement submission.

Service Coordination Subcommittee

The Service Coordination Subcommittee has been gathering information about the definitions of service coordination and case management across agencies, as well as identifying current state and federal funding available for such activities. A fiscal study of service coordination/case management will be done. For purposes of the 3-21 system, service coordination is considered the same as case management.

The Service Coordination Subcommittee submitted the following recommendation to SIC for consideration: "The term *service coordination* be used to describe those individual coordination activities that encompass case management and interagency facilitation duties. Models and methods are to be locally designed and implemented." A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal as stated above. The motion carried.

K-14 Work Group

The K-14 Work Group is developing system components of the 3-21 MnSIC for children with disabilities. The work group also identified the relevant issues within MnSIC as they pertain to the K-14 age range. No action was taken at this time.

14-21 Work Group

State agency members of the 14-21 Work Group reviewed the draft of a newly developed document outlining proposed components of the 3-21 MnSIC for ages 14-21. State agency members are gathering information from agencies to clarify their responsibilities in regard to these components.

Anoka Area IEIC Birth-5 Demonstration Project

This segment of the MnSIC Newsletter will regularly share working models and strategies for building a coordinated interagency service system for children and youth with disabilities age 3-21. There are a number of ongoing efforts in Minnesota to address this area which includes the funding of five local demonstration sites. This issue of the MnSIC newsletter will highlight the efforts of one of these sites. Our hope is that their model and ideas will serve as a catalyst for others who are currently in the beginning stages of building their local 3-21 coordinated service system.

The goal of the Anoka Area Interagency Early Intervention Committee's (IEIC) project was to develop a coordinated service system for eligible children with disabilities ages birth-5. We started by identifying the strengths already in place through our birth-3 Early Childhood Special Education program. The following were identified as critical for implementing a strengths-based, coordinated, interagency service system for children with disabilities age birth-5 —

- Services must be provided in a family-focused and culturally sensitive manner.
- Individual plans must be developed for all eligible children with disabilities age birth-5 and their families.
- Coordinated services and a designated Service Coordinator must be available for all eligible children and their families.

We believed that it was a natural progression to expand the existing theories and practices of early intervention to age 5 rather than creating something new and

different, which might increase the likelihood of redundancy and duplication of services.

Activities Implemented

Free Training

We provided a variety of free seminars and materials to professionals involved with service provision. This included early childhood and family education educators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech/language clinicians, public health nurses, social workers, and others. Seminars built sequentially upon one another and included a Kickoff Event and *Introduction to the Philosophy of Family-Centered Services, Due Process for Parents, Overview of Early Childhood Programs for Interpreters, How to Use Interpreters for Professionals, Service Coordination, Introduction and Use of the Road Map of County and Community Resources, Team Building, Cultural Diversity, and Making Positive Life Changes.*

Outcomes Achieved

Increase in IFSPs, Competence and Confidence

At each seminar questions and surveys were used to collect information about participants' perceived skill levels regarding development of an IFSP, addressing cultural issues, and working out service coordination and team building issues. A random control group was also selected to participate in an ongoing mail survey throughout the grant year that measured individual progress in these same topical areas. The control group indicated that the percentage of case managers with individual caseloads currently using an IFSP and corresponding service coordination methods has

risen from a baseline of zero to 95%. Anecdotal comments provided by control group members indicate that confidence within the various topical areas has risen with each seminar presentation. Finally, individuals that attended seminars indicate that their overall competence has increased.

Lessons Learned

Ongoing Training and Technical Assistance are Critical to Success

Despite the significant number of inservice opportunities throughout the grant cycle, there have been requests to repeat trainings and offer opportunities for advanced study regarding the concepts, philosophy and technology. Ongoing exposure to techniques and methods in this area is essential, as change will occur over a long period of time.

Moving to an interagency, coordinated service delivery system that is truly family-focused can involve significant changes in the attitudes, beliefs, and philosophies of those working within the system you are attempting to change. Critical to success are opportunities for repeated exposure to new and shifting philosophies, identification of barriers, and collective brainstorming of creative solutions. Ongoing exposure to the rationale for change is essential to bring about full implementation and buy-in from all of key personnel and team members.

Contributed by Jennifer Babiracki, Sarah Hickman, and Heidi Johnson, Anoka Area Interagency Early Intervention Birth-5 Demonstration Project

The Individual Interagency Intervention Plan (IIIP), continued from cover

cess. Some provider plans may have additional program specific requirements that can be appended to the IIIP document.

• **Responsibility for implementation and quality assurance**

Local Individual Interagency Early Intervention (IEIC) Governing Boards have been designated through legislation to design a local, interagency governance system. Governance includes the development of a Joint Powers Agreement, which should include an outline of responsibilities for providing and paying for needed services in each IIIP. The agreement should also include methods for guaranteeing quality assurance of IIIPs. Local teams are then responsible for development and implementation of each IIIP.

The IIIP provides an opportunity for us to truly work together on behalf of children and youth with disabilities and their families. Won't you join us in making a difference? For further information contact Sue Benolken at (651)582-1806.

Resources

MnSIC Web Site

<http://www.mnsic.org>

The MnSIC Web site is a general informational site on the age 3-21 coordinated service delivery system being developed and implemented in Minnesota. The Web site has been designed as a resource to meet the needs of educators, administrators, parents, service providers, and state staff that are working to develop a coordinated interagency service system for children and youth with disabilities age 3-21 and their families.

The *MnSIC Newsletter* is produced through a collaborative project sponsored by the State Interagency Committee (SIC). Appointed memberships include —

- Minnesota Departments of — Children, Families, and Learning; Economic Security; Commerce; Corrections; Health; Human Rights; Human Services
- Association of Minnesota Counties
- Minnesota School Boards Association
- Minnesota School Nurse Organization
- Ex-officio Membership: Minnesota Administrators of Special Education

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