

EARLY INTERVENTION EDITION

The Newsletter of the School-Based Early Intervention Unit Winter 2010



The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families www.kids.delaware.gov

Secretary Lowery on Early Intervention *by Belvie Herbert-Perry*

Dr. Lillian M. Lowery Delaware's Secretary of Education and former Christina School District Superintendent, shared with us her very unique perspective on the idea of early intervention.

Dr. Lowery prefers to use the term early childhood care when speaking about early intervention as she believes the latter term implies the correction of a problem midstream. "I'd rather characterize early childhood



Dr. Lillian M. Lowery
Secretary of Education

care as a proactive measure which ensures that interventions are minimal at best" Dr. Lowery stated. She believes that if we begin

giving children what they need from day one then they will grow in a positive direction from day one.

Dr. Lowery feels that the K-5 Early Intervention Program is a program that was long overdue in terms of closing the achievement gap among students. She also feels that the renewed focus on early childhood care at the federal and state levels will compel a national call to action. "Research demonstrates that the 0-5 formative years are the most critical in preparing children for academic and social success," she stated.

As the terms "college and career ready" have appeared consistently in recent education reform language, Dr Lowery envisions Delawareans graduating in high percentages prepared to compete internationally, stimulating economic growth throughout the state.



News Flash From Our Schools

by Dorangely Johnson

This summer students from West Seaford and Blades Elementary Schools were involved in a program entitled "Pay It Forward," which focused on community enrichment. The program introduced students to a variety of educational experiences within their communities and reinforced the value of community enrichment and citizenship. It also helped students to understand the many needs of their communities and how they could collectively take action to give back. Pay It Forward

emphasized sensitivity towards and tolerance of others; building on similarities between each other, promotion of community involvement and volunteerism. The largest community outreach effort was the Special Olympics fundraiser which took place during the junior varsity baseball playoffs. The students had set a goal of \$200 dollars but were able to raise \$140 in just two and half days! This was a unique and memorable opportunity for the students involved. They also took pride in knowing that they were contributing to an organization which exemplifies the spirit of giving!

Message from the Manager

Joyce D. Hawkins

The Family Crisis Therapists have been busy during this fall term. In September they engaged new children and families as well as helped students gear up for the challenges and opportunities of the new school year. Services provided to schools by the FCTS included children and parenting groups, crisis intervention, parent advocacy, helping parents navigate through systems and facilitating school-wide programs to address problem behaviors.

In this current economic climate, related stressors can have a devastating effect on our families. In addition to the counseling and groups facilitated to address issues which negatively affect the learning process, FCTs are also working with organizations such as "The Basket Brigade" and "Thanksgiving for Thousands" to help needy families.

I would like to thank our collaborative partners at Adopt-A-Family who supplied our children with backpacks. I would also like to recognize the work done by Operation Warm. Through our collaboration with them we have been able to supply coats to a multitude of needy children.



**The Delaware Conference on
Young Child Mental Health and
Child Traumatic Stress**
by Irma Hernandez-Ortiz

The Delaware Conference on Young



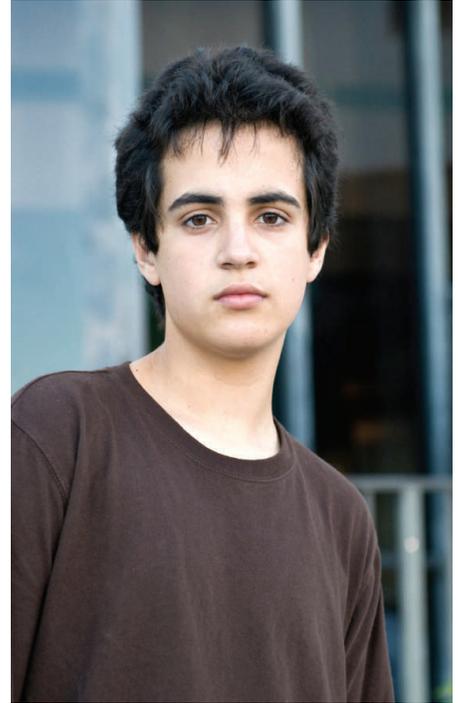
Child Mental Health and Child Traumatic Stress was held on Friday September 11, 2009 at Clayton Hall on the University of Delaware Campus. The conference facilitators included Dr. Timothy Fowles from Delaware Parent-Child Interaction Therapy or PCIT, Nancy Widdoes from DCMHS, Dr. Cheryl McNeil, a Professor of Psychology in the Clinical Child Program at West Virginia University and Dr. Esther Deblinger a licensed psychologist and professor at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of the New Jersey School of Osteopathic Medicine. The session began with an overview of a Delaware initiative entitled "B.E.S.T." which stands for Bringing Evidence-Based System of Care and Treatment. Conference participants were given information on how to access specialist who are trained to work with children who manifest specific behavioral disorders due to traumatic experiences. She was followed by Dr. McNeil, who gave a very thorough presentation on modifying disruptive behavior by reinforcing positive behavior and ignoring the negative. In addition she discussed the therapist's role in teaching parents how to establish a positive parent-child

relationship and how parents need to work with their children in order to achieve the desired results from the therapy.

Conference participants then had the opportunity to attend the mini-sessions of their choice. I chose A clinical workshop that included two sessions on Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy which was facilitated by Dr. Deblinger. Dr. Deblinger discussed some of the symptoms that manifest as a result of trauma such as bedwetting and separation anxiety in very young children to social isolation and substance abuse in adolescents. In addition she gave an overview of trauma specific treatments, such as cognitive behavior therapy, for children who have been victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse; and for children who witnessed violence or some other traumatic event.



I found the training to be very informative and I received a plethora of practical information that I will be using in my own work with the students and families here at Lewis. And finally I would recommend this training to anyone who is charged with addressing the emotional needs of children.



A THOUGHT TO PONDER:



" We have a powerful potential in our youth and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power towards good ends."

- Mary McLeod Bethune

Michelle Thomas, Administrative Specialist III, received an Associates degree in Human Resource Management



from the Community College of the Air Force and is currently enrolled at Wilmington University where she expects to graduate in January 2010 with a Bachelor's degree in Business

Management. Mrs. Thomas's military career included 8 years of active duty with the Air Force where she was deployed to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Florida. Some of her military duties included human resource issues and database management. Mrs. Thomas was recognized as Employee of the Quarter in 2002 and the Air Force Base Human Resource Manager of the Year in 2002 and 2003.

In May 2007 Mrs. Thomas joined the Early Intervention Unit as an Administrative Specialist. Some of her responsibilities include supervising a staff of two, assisting our Program Support Manager, and maintaining the fiscal operations process. Mrs. Thomas resides in Dover with her husband Joe and their daughter Carlysia.

Tomeka N. Jones, Administrative Specialist I has been with the Early Intervention Unit for the past two years. Prior to joining the Early Intervention team



Miss Jones was a Receptionist with the Division of Management Support Services. Her current responsibilities include:

compiling schedules for Early Intervention staff, developing meeting agendas, recording meeting minutes, and compiling monthly contact records and stats. She is also responsible for maintaining office equipment and Early Intervention database documentation.

Miss Jones recently completed her training and received a diploma in Medical Billing. She will take the test for certification in January and

aspires to move into this field. Miss Jones currently resides in Newark with her nine year old daughter Dymond.



Distinguished Principal *by Joy D'Souza*

With her passion for needy and "at risk" children, **Brenda Wynder**, Principal at Lake Forest North Elementary School in the Lake Forest School District, is the ideal Principal for the Early Intervention Program.

Graduating with a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and a Masters of Education degree from Salisbury State University, Ms. Wynder began her career as a math teacher. She was Principal at Wicomico Alternative Learning Center before becoming Principal at LFN in 2005.

Ms. Wynder and her staff have continued to receive "Superior School" ratings due to their commitment to the students at LFN. She encourages community and local agencies as well as parents to take on the responsibility of the students in her school and impresses upon them the significance of education. Since her arrival at LFN there has been increased involvement and support from the local town of Felton, its police force and the local churches.

Ms. Wynder's passion comes from personal experiences. She grew up in the inner city, lost her father at the age of 15 and ended up in the foster care system. Ms. Wynder recently received the Delmarvelous Award which is given annually by a local radio station to a citizen who has beaten the odds to achieve their goals. She was honored at a ceremony in Dover on November 20th.

Ms. Wynder is currently studying to earn her doctorate degree at Delaware State University. She plans to develop residential schools for "at risk" students with minor law infractions and continued discipline problems.

Ms. Wynder considers the Early Intervention program a flickering beacon to show her the way to work with families. She stated that the only downside to the program is the lack of Family Crisis Therapists in middle and high schools.



Resource Roundup

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

New Castle County

Jewish Family Services of Delaware

199 Passmor Rd.
Wilmington, De 19803
(302)478-9411

Program Description: Outpatient counseling

Kent County

Phoenix Mental Health of Dover

537 South Governor's Ave.
Dover, DE 19904
(302) 736-6135

Program Description: Psychiatric and behavioral health services

Community Mental Health Center

Williams State Service Center
805 River Road
Dover, De 19963
(302) 857-5060

Program Description: Diagnosis, therapy, medication, and case management

Sussex County

Safe Harbor Psychological Assessments and Service

6 Bay Oak Dr.
Lewes, DE 19958
(302) 925-9425

Program Description: Clinical and forensic mental health services

Mental Health Access Group

306 East Stein Highway
Seaford, De 19973
(302) 652-7350

Program Description: Psychopharmacological evaluation, treatment of anxiety and depression, intensive outpatient

Out of the Mouths of Babes

by Maria Griffin



Maria Griffin, Family Crisis Therapist at Benjamin Banneker Elementary School in Milford School District recently interviewed two of her Early Intervention students to get

feedback regarding their involvement in the Program.

Jennie, a fifth grade student stated the following: "I am going to miss the K-5 program because Mrs. Griffin has helped me learn many things. Since coming to the United States and being at this school with Mrs. Griffin, I have learned how to make friends, to choose appropriate friends, to make good choices and to think highly of myself."

Allison, also a fifth grade student stated the following: "The K-5 program means a lot to me because I can have fun, play games with other people, change my ways, talk to someone about my feelings and talk in general about everything on my mind."

Welcome Back Steve!

Steve Yeatman, a lieutenant with the Delaware National Guard has been deployed since March 2007. He returned home from active duty in November and has resumed his position as Family Crisis Therapist Supervisor with the Early Intervention Unit.

Steven, we are glad to have you back with us!

Newsletter Staff:

Ed Burks, Belvie Herbert-Perry & Jacquelyn Saunders

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