



Illinois State Board of Education
Division of Early Childhood

Community Collaboration:

Recruitment, Outreach, Referrals & MOUs

By

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Introductions

- Michelle Wood – Illinois State Board of Education Early Childhood Principal Consultant
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Overview

- **Community Collaborations**
 - Requirements
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Community Collaboration- In Action
- Outreach in Your Community
- Coordinated Intake
 - Definition & Benefits
- Referral Process
- Questions



Community Collaboration- In Action

- In Your Community
 - Develop a community advisory group with representatives from relevant local stakeholder groups to inform your program messages.
 - Conduct focus groups with families in the community to understand the needs of the target population.
 - Conduct meetings with staff of local agencies to brainstorm about the needs and interests of the target population



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Outreach in Your Community

- In Your Program
 - Hold social hours, parents' night at schools, and other community events on a regular basis.
 - Participate in community block parties or potlucks.
 - Post fliers and posters in busy places, such as bus stops and grocery stores.
 - Develop radio or television advertisements for local population-specific networks.
 - Use social media (e.g., program-based website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
 - Regularly update and distribute program materials.



Coordinated Intake

- Coordinated Intake (CI) is a collaborative process that provides families with a single point of entry for early childhood programs within a community. Trained Coordinated Intake workers serve as a hub for early childhood programs (PFA, Head Start, etc.), assessing families' needs, referring them to an appropriate program that best meets their needs, and tracking what happens to the referrals.



Benefits of Coordinated Intake

Benefits to child- and family-serving systems include:

- Building broader early childhood systems of care to meet comprehensive needs of children and their families; and
- Improved data collection through easier ability to track families and obtain data in order to identify gaps in services and areas of improvement



Benefits (cont.):

Benefits to local communities include:

- Systematically improving coordination among programs may reduce costs and reduce duplication of effort (e.g. parents enrolled in multiple programs) within a community.



Benefits (cont.):

Benefits to young children and their families include:

- Provides a central point of entry for families seeking early childhood services, particularly given that the initial engagement of families is critical;
- Helps families navigate an array of services and agencies;
- Helps educate families on what is available within their community; and
- Individual needs are better identified and families are more efficiently matched—in a more direct and expeditious way—to home visiting programs in the community.



Benefits (cont.):

Benefits to programs include:

- Reducing burden on programs to find participants to fill their enrollment;
- Reducing competition among providers;
- Programs receive families who meet their criteria and may be more likely a good fit for program, so enrollment and retention rates improve, which may help programs meet funding requirements; and
- Better identification of health risks (e.g. interpersonal violence, substance abuse, and maternal depression) which can be addressed either as part of a program intervention or through a simultaneous referral to other services.



Referrals

- Does your program?
 - Use centralized intake to connect families to services that match their needs
 - Use common forms (applications, screening tools, referral forms) and data systems across programs and services
 - Expand developmental screening across all settings serving young children
 - Establish a centralized telephone access point to connect children and their families to needed services
 - Develop community hubs to deliver multiple services to families in a single location



Questions?


