



Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant & Toddler Early Learning Training, Distribution & Evaluation Proposal

Background

In October 2004, the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) completed its participation in the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, under the auspices of the Zero to Three, Inc. Infant Toddler Initiative, an 18-month technical assistance federal grant to help states strengthen their infant & toddler system. As a result of this initiative, Connecticut chose to focus on the development of infant and toddler early learning guidelines (ELG).

DSS convened a workgroup led by Anna Figueroa, an early childhood consultant, and other early childhood experts to provide assistance and guidance to develop the ELG. The first ELG draft was issued in January 2005. Statewide forums were held in March and April 2005 to gather comments and approximately 100 individuals participated. The workgroup then developed a process from June thru December 2006 to pilot test the draft ELG at selected center-based, family child care and kith and kin child care settings.

The information in *Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning* is based on current research and best practices with the goal to reach, inform, and support infant and toddler primary caregivers. The ELG has been formally adopted as a key strategic component within the Early Childhood Education Cabinet's strategic plan to serve infant-toddlers entitled: *First Words, First Steps – The Importance of the Early Years*.

Training, Dissemination and Evaluation Design

DSS and the ELG workgroup are now ready to train caregivers, disseminate the ELG and evaluate the application of the ELG by early caregivers in their day-to-day interactions with infants and toddlers. Information gathered from the forums and pilot phase were used to design this training, dissemination and evaluation plan beginning in state fiscal year 2009. DSS has designated the Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP), a program of Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC), to coordinate this work given its current statewide and regional service delivery system for caregivers seeking accreditation and early care and education consultation activities.

The proposed training, dissemination and evaluation plan is as follows:

- Summer 2008 – AFP and the ELG workgroup will identify an evaluation consultant.
- Summer 2008 – AFP and the ELG workgroup will identify two (2) trainers to deliver the 6-hour Train-the-Trainer (TTT) curriculum to 30 professionals (20 trainers identified by the Training Program in Child Development, a program of CT Charts a Course; 6 trainers identified by the CT Parents-As-Teachers program; 2 individuals identified by the All Our Kin family day care home program and 2 individuals identified by the Windham kith and kin program.
- Fall 2008 – AFP and the ELG workgroup will coordinate the delivery of 1.5 hour ELG workshops plus up to 2 hours of contact/coaching to 250 infant & toddler caregivers by the 30 individuals which received the summer 2008 TTT training.
- Winter 2008-2009 - AFP and the ELG workgroup will offer two additional 6-hour TTT sessions for 60 new potential trainers.

- Winter 2009 & Spring 2009 – AFP and the ELG workgroup will coordinate the delivery of 1.5 hour ELG workshops plus up to 2 hours of contact/coaching to an additional 500 infant & toddler caregivers.
- Thus, by the end of SFY 2009, there will be 90 new individuals trained to provide the ELG training, 750 early caregivers trained (see attached visual) to implement the ELG as part of their daily work with infants, toddlers and their parents, a revised TTT curriculum and a summary evaluation.

Cost Estimate

The proposed cost for the Year 1 training, dissemination and evaluation design is estimated at \$155,000. This represents \$85,000 for the training components, \$55,000 to support program coordination and evaluation and \$15,000 for monitoring and reporting activities.

DSS has provided all prior year funds to support the ELG workgroup, the ELG design and development, an initial printing of 3,000 ELG documents and the ELG Train the Trainer curricula design.