



## Spotlight On Success: The Knight Family

*Everyone has a success story. Whether a major triumph or a small victory, we at the Illinois Early Intervention Training Program believe all are worth celebrating and that sharing them helps to empower others on their journeys to success. The following story exemplifies the family centered approach to early intervention and the benefits of family involvement. Although this particular family has recently transitioned out of early intervention, their story is relevant and a tribute to the services and family support provided by Illinois Early Intervention and the Child & Family Connections' Staff across the State. Thank you La-Rabida Children's Hospital for allowing us to introduce you to the Knight Family...*

Fonta and Russ Knight appreciate EI being available for their son, Russell, and would like other parents to know about early intervention services. Russell, diagnosed with cerebral palsy had particular difficulty with the muscles in his legs. "EI will not work without parent involvement in therapy and at home," said Fonta. Since each of Russell's therapy sessions lasted only one hour each week, Fonta, Russ and Russell's therapists developed a way to make therapy a part of everyday activities. Russ carried Russell on his shoulders and had him reach for the tops of the door frames in order to stretch his arms. They also played toddler basketball together. When Fonta exercised, Russell joined her by doing leg curls and yoga poses such as 'downward facing dog,' which provided a good stretch for his legs. "These activities are not only helpful and fun for Russell, they're inexpensive," said Russ.

At first Fonta and Russ felt a need to buy

all of the educational toys their therapists had made available during sessions. However, with the help of their therapy team and some creativity, the Knights learned to use everyday items as well as toys Russell already had to encourage his development.

For example, household items, such as toothpicks and rice are used for grasping and scooping activities. The Knights do have a good investment that they live by—a binder. Fonta keeps the many suggestions, exercise sheets and progress notes received from Russell's therapists in the binder. This helps to remember what Russell is working on during each session. Russ is also grateful for this binder. He uses the binder as a way to keep informed on Russell's progress, goals and activities. As for Russell, he looked forward to his therapy sessions. Even though they can be physically demanding for him, Russell would tell his mom that he is 'ready to work' and 'ready to do a good job!'

With the help of his team of therapists, Russell made tremendous progress. A big accomplishment for Russell and for his family was the day Russell walked down the aisle of the family's church, by himself, to participate with other children in their Christmas play.

Fonta and Russ Knight are grateful for the early intervention services provided to their family and encourage families to seek out services available to them; to speak up when they are not satisfied; and to truly make the most of EI.

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## New Feature on Provider Connections' Credential Search

Provider Connections has added another feature to the credential search on its website, <http://www.wiu.edu/providerconnections/search/index.php>. When clicking on the credential search and pulling up a person/people, you will find a "Details" link in the first column, before name. This feature has been in place and when clicked it pulls up specific credential information including credit accumulated in the four core content areas. A new feature on this page is "Central Billing Office Enrollment Data". When clicked, this link shows all Payee/Organizations that particular provider has enrolled with, the addresses of

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Monday - Friday

## ***Provider Connections continued...***

the Payees/Organizations, phone number(s), status, whether active or inactive with a particular organization and the Category of Service the provider is enrolled to bill.

It is hoped that this information is useful to providers and CFC's. The ability to check which agencies providers might remain enrolled with, but are no longer employed by allows providers and agencies alike to make appropriate inactivations and maintain professional portfolios.

## Other updates and reminders...

Provider Connections' offices will be closed December 20th through January 4th, resuming normal business hours on Monday, January 5, 2009. Any (re)credential applications and paperwork received during this time will be date stamped December 31, 2008.

If you are aware of anyone considering applying for EI Credentials, please encourage them to view the Provider Connections' video podcast instructing on the completion of the EI Credential Application. This podcast is available through the Provider Connections' website by clicking on the "Podcast" tab on the home page.

Those bi-lingual interpreters/translators currently enrolled and billing the Illinois EI Central Billing Office must have completed the 'Interpreter Training', specific to the role and responsibilities of an Interpreter in the Illinois Early Intervention System AND have met the language proficiency requirements established by the IL DHS Bureau of Early Intervention and Provider Connections by January 1, 2009. Interpreters/translators who are seeking new enrollment, must complete the Illinois Early Intervention System Overview training in addition to the Interpreter Training and language proficiency requirements prior to enrollment. Further information as well as current training and language testing opportunities are posted on the EI Training Program's website.

## **Additional Early Intervention Resources:**



IL Dept of Human Services Bureau of Early Intervention  
<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/>



Provider Connections  
[www.wiu.edu/ProviderConnections/](http://www.wiu.edu/ProviderConnections/)



IL Early Childhood Intervention Clearinghouse  
<http://www.eicclearinghouse.org>



Hearing and Vision Connections  
[www.morgan.k12.il.us/isd/hvc](http://www.morgan.k12.il.us/isd/hvc)

## **TRAINING PROGRAM'S INCLEMENT WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY**

It is the policy of the Illinois EI Training Program to hold all scheduled workshops and training events regardless of weather condition, whenever possible. Safety is of the utmost concern and participants are urged to use their own judgment in determining if weather conditions make the commute too hazardous even though the event is still being held.

In the event a training is cancelled, we will make every effort to announce the cancellation of daytime events by 5:00 am and evening events by 2:00 pm on the day of the event.

Cancellation announcements will be posted on the home page of our website, [www.illinoiseittraining.org](http://www.illinoiseittraining.org) and a message will be recorded at our toll free number, 866/509-3867, ext 250.

## **\*Seven Key Principles: Looks Like / Doesn't Look Like**

*This document, developed by the Workgroup on Principles and Practices in Natural Environments (February, 2008) elaborates on seven key principles identified by work group members listing the concepts underlying the brief statements. Each principle also has descriptive statements illustrating what the principle should "look like" in practice. There are also descriptions of what is "doesn't look like" because often those practices are still being used. While the work group offered much input, no attempt was made to reach consensus. The statements are simple examples and many others could be added. This document may be particularly useful as training material.*

1. Infants and toddlers learn best through every day experiences and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts.

### **Key Concepts:**

- ⇒ Learning activities and opportunities must be functional, based on child and family interest and enjoyment
- ⇒ Learning is relationship-based
- ⇒ Learning should provide opportunities to practice and build upon previously mastered skills
- ⇒ Learning occurs through participation in a variety of enjoyable activities

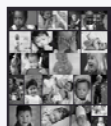
<b>This principle DOES look like this</b>	<b>This principle DOES NOT look like this</b>
Using toys and materials found in the home or community setting	Using toys, materials and other equipment the professional brings to the visit
Helping the family understand how their toys and materials can be used or adapted	Implying that the professional's toys, materials or equipment are the 'magic' necessary for child progress
Identifying activities the child and family like to do which build on their strengths and interests	Designing activities for a child that focus on skill deficits or are not functional or enjoyable
Observing the child in multiple natural settings, using family input on child's behavior in various routines, using formal and informal developmental measures to understand the child's strengths and developmental functioning	Using only standardized measurements to understand the child's strengths, need and developmental levels
Helping caregivers engage the child in enjoyable learning opportunities that allow for frequent practice and mastery of emerging skills in natural settings	Teaching specific skills in a specific order in a specific way through 'massed trials and repetition' in a contrived setting
Focusing intervention on caregivers' ability to promote the child's participation in naturally occurring, developmentally appropriate activities with peers and family members	Conducting sessions or activities that isolate the child from his/her peers, family members or naturally occurring activities
Assuming principles of child learning, development, and family functioning apply to all children regardless of disability label	Assuming that certain children, such as those with autism, cannot learn from their families through naturally occurring learning opportunities

2. All families, with the necessary supports and resources, can enhance their children's learning and development.
3. The primary role of the service provider in early intervention is to work with and support the family members and caregivers in a child's life.
4. The early intervention process, from initial contacts through transition, must be dynamic and individualized to reflect the child's and family members' preferences, learning styles and cultural beliefs.
5. IFSP Outcomes must be functional and based on children's and families' needs and priorities.
6. The family's priorities needs and interests are addressed most appropriately by a primary provider who represents and receives team and community support.
7. Interventions with young children and family members must be based on explicit principles, validated practices, best available research and relevant laws and regulations.

*\* Seven key principles: Looks like/doesn't look like. OSEP TA Community of Practice-Part C Settings, can be found in its entirety at <http://www.nectac.org/topics/families/families.asp>.*

## ***SAVE THE DATES ...***

### **3rd Annual Empowering Professionals Conference** *Celebrating Successes...Recognizing & Supporting Professionals in Their Work with Infants, Young Children & Families*



**Friday, March 6, 2009**

**8:30 am - 4:30 pm**

Pre-registration is required for this one day conference featuring Keynote, Larry Edelman, M.S., Senior Instructor in the Dept of Pediatrics at the University of Colorado and Health Sciences Center. Recognizing that there is no one 'cook-book' approach to providing services for young children and their families, there are a number of interrelated approaches that, taken together, can shape our work. Larry will highlight individual successes in the field. Afternoon breakout sessions, continental breakfast, lunch, and vendor expo are also on the agenda.



6.5 EI Contact Hours

CEUs, CPDUs, & DCFS  
 Inservice Hours also  
 Available.

Business & Community Education Center  
 202 South Halsted Street  
 Chicago Heights, IL 60411

For Additional Information, Please Call Julie DeLong at (708) 709-7919

## **Early Childhood Today: Nurturing Futures-Building Foundations**

**Wednesday, March 4, 2009**

**8:30 am - 3:00 pm**

A conference for parents, caregivers and professionals who shape the lives of children ages birth to 8 years old. Workshops will address five different themes including speech/language, social/emotional; early literacy; accommodations/developmental supports and health/wellness.

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**Registration Opens January 17, 2009**

**[www.sxu.edu/starnet](http://www.sxu.edu/starnet)**