



## *In this issue. . .*

- Results-Driven Accountability (RDA)—Part C Update
- PRT Training Offered
- iCanConnect National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program
- Family Survey Update
- Restructuring of Planning Region Teams
- PRT Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) Within the Results Driven Accountability Process
- Policy and Family Services Update
- Part C Procedural Safeguards
- Save the Date

## Results Driven Accountability (RDA)—Part C Update (Sue Bainter & Cindy Hankey)

In 2014, the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) added a new indicator to the IDEA Part C State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) that requires states to develop a State Systematic Improvement Plan (**SSIP**) by April 1, 2015. The plan, which is to span the next 5 years, must identify one state-identified measurable result (**SIMR**). Based on stakeholder input and recommendation, Nebraska's IDEA Part C SIMR is:

To increase the number and percentage of infants and toddlers who demonstrate progress in the acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication) –



SPP/APR Indicator 3B, Summary Statement 1.

In Nebraska, RDA efforts for IDEA Part C are organized at the Planning Region Team (PRT) level. This means that the PRT will be the focus for training and implementation of improvement strategies, and child outcome and family survey data, by PRT, will be used to measure progress toward the SIMR.

In order to reach the SIMR and demonstrate improved child outcomes, the Early Development Network (EDN) Co-Leads are recommending EDN programs implement three improvement strategies:

1. The Routines Based Interview (RBI) as the child and family assessment process,
2. Development of meaningful and measurable child and family IFSP outcomes using information obtained from the RBI, and
3. Quality routines-based home visits.

Training on the improvement strategies began in the summer of 2014 with three pilot PRTs—PRT 1 (Wakefield), PRT 22 (Westside), and PRT 27 (North Platte). Training with Year 2 pilots will begin during the summer of 2015. The Year 2 pilots are PRT 4 (Auburn), PRT 19 (Omaha Public), and PRT 21 (Millard).

In addition to working with the pilots, the EDN Co-Lead Agencies will continue to support PRTs that are willing to implement the RBI and are invested in improving the qualities of IFSPs and early intervention service delivery. The PRT system support grant funds can be used for these purposes, when specified in the PRT Targeted Improvement Plan. For more information, please click on: <http://edn.ne.gov/cms/planning-region-teams/results-driven-accountability>

## PRT Training Offered (Connie Shockley)

PTI Nebraska is offering a new workshop for Planning Region Teams (PRTs) called ‘Recruiting and Retaining Parent Representatives on local PRTs.’ In this workshop, ways to increase parent participation on committees, specifically PRTs, will be shared. Topics covered include the importance of having Parent Representatives, various strategies around recruitment and retaining members, as well as a reflection on embedding research-based strategies into current policies. Assessments are offered to help in mapping out current practices and in considering strategies that could be implemented to improve participation.

All trainings from PTI Nebraska are available to PRTs free of charge. If you are interested in having someone from PTI Nebraska come to your region to conduct this workshop, please contact Connie Shockley at 402-403-3911 or at [cshockley@pti-nebraska.org](mailto:cshockley@pti-nebraska.org) to schedule a time.

Can't make it to a training or workshop? You can also log into our recorded one hour webinar here at: <http://www.answers4families.org/family/special-needs/pti-webinar-series/pti-webinar-series-recruiting-and-retaining-parent-representatives-planning-region-teams>

## iCanConnect National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program



Nebraska is committed to ensuring that all of its population has the capability to communicate in the home, the workplace, the community, and the school system. Therefore, through the iCanConnect National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program, the Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership helps qualifying consumers—those who cannot afford a telephone, email, internet access, or other communication technologies—to obtain the equipment they need to keep in touch with others. This equipment can include Braille devices; cell phones; tablets; computers;

audible, visual, and vibrating signalers; and screen readers. If you have a combined vision and hearing loss and cannot afford these types of equipment, please contact:

Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership  
1313 Farnam on the Mall  
Omaha, NE 68512  
(402) 595-1613  
(877) 201-4141 (toll free)  
[www.atp.ne.gov](http://www.atp.ne.gov)  
[lauren.rock@nebraska.gov](mailto:lauren.rock@nebraska.gov)

## Family Survey Update

It is April, so it is Family Survey time! Over 1,558 surveys were sent to families to gather their input about how early intervention services have helped them (1) know their rights, (2) effectively communicate their child's needs, and (3) help their children develop and learn. As of March 27, 2015, we had received completed surveys from 47% of the families. Nebraska's return rate on the family survey has consistently been among the very top

return rates in the country. All surveys need to be returned by April 24, 2015. All surveys should now be distributed to families, and we hope to get our highest return rate ever.

## Coming in August—Restructuring of Planning Region Teams

In August 2015, EDN will add a new PRT—Elkhorn Public Schools. Elkhorn is currently part of PRT 3, however effective August 1, Elkhorn P.S. will become PRT 25. This will require a change in numbering for the Fremont area Planning Region which is currently PRT 225. Effective August 1, Fremont area Planning Region will be renumbered to PRT 2. In anticipation of the restructuring, EDN is revising all directories, maps, and other materials to reflect the changes.

## PRT Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) Within the Results-Driven Accountability Process

By August 1, 2015, PRTs must submit Phase I of their multi-year, comprehensive TIP via the Grants Management System (GMS) on the Nebraska Department of Education website. Phase I of the TIP should include the following:

- PRT Data Analysis, including what sources of data were used in the analysis and how the data were disaggregated to determine the focus for improvement;
- PRT Infrastructure analysis, including strengths and challenges within the system to support the focus for improvement;
- PRT Focus for improvement, including the specific child and/or family level outcome(s) that will provide the focus for improved results for infants/toddlers with disabilities and their families, including baseline and measurable targets;
- Evidence-based strategies/activities, including how the strategies/activities relate to other collaborative regional or state-level B-3 initiatives. The PRT TIP must include strategies and outcomes to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities, and their families, and must be evaluated annually. The PRT TIP may be revised in response to the evaluation of outcomes, plan effectiveness and consultation with the Co-Lead agencies.

Further guidance on the PRT Targeted Improvement Plan, can be found at:

<http://edn.ne.gov/cms/sites/default/files/pdf/EDN%20Guidance%20PRT%207-31-14%20FINAL.pdf>

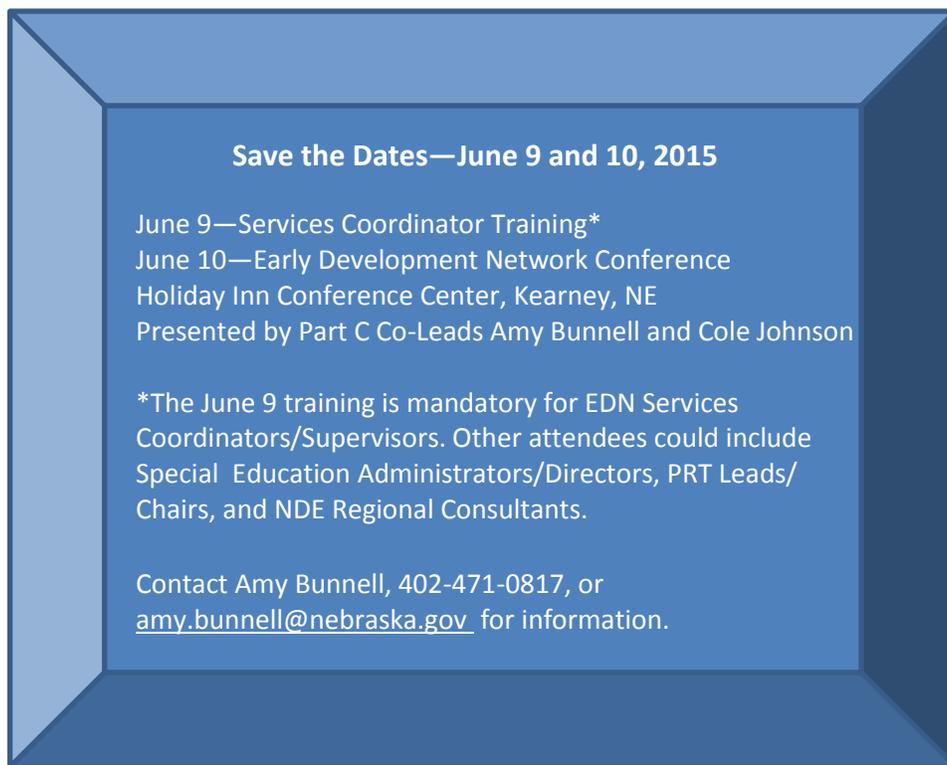
In response to the Federal requirements of Results-Driven Accountability, the PRT Lead Agency Assurances have been revised to reflect major changes in the role and responsibilities of the Planning Region Team Lead Agency. The Lead Agency Assurances will continue to be found on the GMS system and will need to be submitted with the TIP by August 1, 2015. A few examples of the new items added to the PRT Lead Agency Assurances, include:

- Serve as the agency that leads the Monitoring process for the PRT and facilitates the development and implementation of the PRT Corrective Action Plan;
- Serve as the agency that facilitates the development and implementation of the Targeted Improvement Plan as described and collect data needed to demonstrate progress toward achieving goals documented in the plan;
- Submit state required reports, including: PRT Systems Support grant application, evaluation/revision of TIP using available data, financial reports and annual meeting report by the due dates.

## Policy and Family Rights Update

Annually, each state must submit an application to the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, in order to receive a grant award under IDEA Part C. The Nebraska Part C Co-Lead agencies' IDEA Part C Application and required Policies are out for public review and comment until April 20, 2015, at the following link: <http://www.education.ne.gov/sped/index.html>. The Part C Application must be submitted to OSEP by April 21, 2015, in order for Nebraska to receive IDEA Part C grant funds on July 1, 2015.

**NEW!!!** The Part C Procedural Safeguards are now available to all PRT's and families. Please view or download a copy at: [http://www.education.ne.gov/sped/parentinfo/Part\\_C\\_Procedural\\_Safeguards.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/sped/parentinfo/Part_C_Procedural_Safeguards.pdf). Per NDE Rule 52 and DHHS 480 NAC 3, school districts and services coordination agencies must ensure each EDN family receives the Part C Procedural Safeguards.



**Save the Dates—June 9 and 10, 2015**

June 9—Services Coordinator Training\*  
June 10—Early Development Network Conference  
Holiday Inn Conference Center, Kearney, NE  
Presented by Part C Co-Leads Amy Bunnell and Cole Johnson

\*The June 9 training is mandatory for EDN Services Coordinators/Supervisors. Other attendees could include Special Education Administrators/Directors, PRT Leads/Chairs, and NDE Regional Consultants.

Contact Amy Bunnell, 402-471-0817, or [amy.bunnell@nebraska.gov](mailto:amy.bunnell@nebraska.gov) for information.