



May 11, 2009
Number 13

The Stakeholders say ...

a newsletter to help with strategic planning

SUMMARY OF CONVERSATIONS WITH PROFESSIONALS WHO OFFER "EARLY INTERVENTION" SUPPORTS

"Early Intervention" staff members gathered on two occasions to share ideas about the future of supports for people with developmental disabilities in Butler County. They responded to three questions, and we've summarized those responses below.

1. *What is most important to you about Butler County MR/DD services and why?*

- First, early attention to difficulty in the growth or learning of young children is vital. It's clear that there are major long-term benefits from early intervention, both in terms of enhancing the learning of individual children and the strength of their families, and in terms of reduction of lifetime service needs for individuals. Families also benefit from the direct contact with trained and experienced supporters (i.e., EI specialists and therapists) that takes place IN the families' homes. Professionals are able to tailor the learning opportunities to fit each family's particular situation.
- The way we do things in the Butler County EI Program is important. We make supports available to all families who need and want them; we treat each family with respect and understanding and approach children in hopeful ways; we use a collaborative style that targets each specialist/therapist's strength precisely where it is needed by families and children.

2. *What would you want to be available to families that receive Early Intervention services through Butler County MR/DD?*

- Lower case-loads for Early Intervention personnel, so that they could focus more on the situations of each child and family.
- More bi-lingual EI personnel; we're seeing more and more families with whom we can't communicate.
- More "specialty groups"—especially in other community locations that families can get to easily.
- Greater attention to "sensory" issues in EI program.
- Ways for families to get to know one another.

EARLY INTERVENTION STAFF HAS ITS SAY

- PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—families are hampered by the lack of transportation—often can't get to places where they need to go.

3. *What would you want to be available to families that receive services (other than Early Intervention) through Butler County MR/DD?*

- PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—families and children need ways to get around in the community.
- Families need much more information about resources they can use to assist someone with a dev. disability, e.g.,
 - Brochures
 - Access to consultation or guidance on-line or via the telephone
 - Classes for families (like an expansion of current "transition series")
- More ways for high school graduates and other adults to get EMPLOYMENT!
- Families should have continued contact with the Developmental Disabilities Program during their child's school years, to take advantage of outside-of-school supports like respite, etc.

UPCOMING EVENTS

*Community
Café
Conversation,
May 12, 2009
5:00-7:00 p.m.,

Hamilton High School,
Hamilton

*Strategic
Planning
Search
Conference,
May 18-19, 2009

Wilks Conference
Ctr.
Hamilton