

Communication and Early Childhood Research and Practice Center



2014

Mission of the Center

An expanding body of research supports the importance of early intervention/education for young children with special needs and their families. The Communication and Early Childhood Research and Practice Center (CEC-RAP) is designed to promote interdisciplinary contributions to the field of early intervention/education for young children with disabilities, communication disorders, and/or multiple risks for learning. CEC-RAP focuses on the continued expansion of research, personnel preparation, and service delivery through collaboration with interrelated projects in the College of Communication of Information, College of Education, and the Autism Institute in the College of Medicine.

Goals of the Center

To be recognized as a major national source of research and personnel development in early intervention/education for children with developmental delays and disabilities, communication disorders or multiple risks, CEC-RAP will:

1. Have continuity, diversity and growth of funding sources from governmental and private sources for research and demonstration,
2. Offer funded personnel preparation programs for graduate students (master's and doctoral) that will foster recruitment of the best scholars,
3. Invest in undergraduate research, leadership and service learning opportunities that promote the future of the Center,
4. Foster interdisciplinary and interagency collaboration in early childhood policy and program development within an engaged community, and
5. Develop and maintain model programs for research and professional development.

Spotlight - Language and Literacy

Improving Language & Literacy (L&L) Outcomes for Children with Communication Disorders in High-Need Populations is a personnel preparation grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The grant supports the pre-service training of speech-language pathologists with specialized knowledge and skills in working with children with speech, language and literacy disorders who may be at risk for academic failure due to living in poverty, achieving far below grade level, homelessness, or being English learners ("high-need children with disabilities"). In collaboration with the School of Communication Science and Disorders and co-directed by Drs. Emily Lakey and Toby Macrae, the L&L grant will train 25 scholars over the next 5 years. This fall, four first-year graduate students joined the L&L grant: Erin Barr, Khalyne Jones, Brooke Ossi, and Emily Panek. In addition to their regular graduate program, these four scholars are participating in a specialized seminar on prevention and assessment of speech, language and literacy disorders in high-need populations and classroom-based service learning through the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend and Kids Incorporated- Early Head Start.



Personnel and Professional Development

2014 has brought many new exciting accomplishments and activities for the new and ongoing projects in CEC-RAP.

Autism Spectrum Specialized Education and Training (ASSET) is a federally funded personnel preparation project designed to build the capacity of speech-language pathology graduate students in order to address the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and their families. Five scholars graduated in August 2014 and five new scholars have joined the project. (<http://asset.fsu.edu>)



If you are a former (or current) ASSET scholar, please join us on FACEBOOK or link to our PINTEREST site. (Facebook: FSU ASSET • Pinterest: <http://pinterest.com/fsuasset>)

Distance Mentoring Model (DMM) promotes the implementation of family guided routines based intervention (FGRBI) for families of children eligible for Part C services and supports. Incorporating evidence-based practices for professional development with technology strategies and supports, DMM engages early intervention providers, service coordinators and program administrators in a systematic change process to increase the use of recommended practices with children and families. Collaborations with Minnesota and Pennsylvania resulted in over 400 early intervention providers practicing in training activities. (<http://dmm.cci.fsu.edu>)

Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC) was funded to serve as a national resource to State Education Agencies (SEA), State Lead Agencies for Part C Programs, Institutes of Higher Education (IHE), and other entities responsible for professional development of personnel providing early childhood intervention to infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities and their families. Iowa became an intensive state for technical assistance while Florida chose targeted TA. (<http://www.ecpcta.org>)

Personnel Preparation in Early Intervention and Education Project (PPEIEP) PPEIEP students continued to expand their community experiences in infant and toddler early intervention programs by joining Early Head Start classrooms and Early Steps home visiting programs for summer practica. Summer experiences, both in the classroom and community, focus on the unique needs of children and their families with multiple risk factors in addition to the child's developmental delays and disorders. (<http://ppeiep.coe.fsu.edu>)

Doctoral Training in Research, Autism and Interdisciplinary Leadership (TRAIL) is a collaboration between CEC-RAP and the Autism Institute began recruiting Doctoral Scholars interested in a PhD in Communication Science and Disorders with a specialization in Autism Research. Juliann Woods and Amy Wetherby are Principal Investigators for the five year project. Two doctoral scholars, Abby Delehanty and Ciera Lorio began full-time study in the Fall. Jessica Hooker and Edie Kiratzis are completing a combined masters-doctoral program. (<http://trail.med.fsu.edu/>)



EPIC

Embedded Practices and Intervention with Caregivers

Embedded Practices and Intervention with Caregivers (EPIC)

It has been an epic year! EPIC is a Goal 2-Development project funded by the Institute of Education Sciences to develop and investigate an evidence-based approach that focuses on infants and toddlers with significant disabilities and their caregivers. To address the need for evidence-based practices for infants and toddlers with significant disabilities, EPIC's research team is using an iterative approach to design, develop, and validate a caregiver implemented intervention approach called Embedded Practices and Intervention with Caregivers (EPIC).



During this year, we have:

- Communicated with our stakeholder advisory panel to develop and refine the EPIC model
- Built the EPIC website including instructional modules, videotaped examples, and printable resources for EPIC Part C Early Intervention Providers
- Conducted a Try Out Study to determine the feasibility of the EPIC model for providers and parents
- Begun a single case design study at each of our three sites to evaluate the effectiveness of the EPIC approach for teaching parents to embed instruction with their children in everyday activities, and the effectiveness of the approach for improving child outcomes
- Worked with some adorable children, amazing families, and fantastic service providers

We are currently in the early stages of the single case design study. We have completed the assessment phases with each family in the single subject study and are beginning interventions. After the single case study is complete, we will use the information we learn to better refine the intervention. In 2015, we will conduct a group design study across our sites in Florida and Illinois to examine the effects of EPIC intervention on parent use of intervention strategies and on child outcomes in comparison to the effects of other home based early intervention services. We are excited to learn more from our providers and families about how we can help them facilitate infant and toddler learning!

CEC-RAP welcomes Dr. Mollie Friedman and Kelly Windsor to the EPIC team. Mollie returns to CEC-RAP as an EI provider. Kelly, a doctoral student from Vanderbilt University, is managing the data analysis and supervising the student coders

EPIC is a collaborative project between Florida State University, University of Florida, and University of Illinois-Chicago

Distance Mentoring Model for Iowa's Early ACCESS Program

The first year of the Distance Mentoring Model for Iowa's Early ACCESS Program (IA-DMM) was a success! This summer, early intervention providers from across the state traveled to Des Moines to celebrate a year of learning, practice and growth in using family-centered practices in natural environments. As 'early adopters,' this first cohort of 30 providers participated in a yearlong professional development cycle that included 3 face-to-face training workshops, individualized performance-based feedback via monthly videoconference sessions with expert coaches at CEC-RAP, monthly webinars, specialized website content and peer coaching. At the end of the training cycle, Cohort 1 providers had made changes in their home visiting practices including:



- Joining children and caregivers in diverse family routines for embed intervention during home visits,
- Greater diversity of specific caregiver coaching strategies to support caregiver engagement, active practice and decision-making, and
- Increased use of recommended practices (Key Indicators of Family-Guided Routines-Based Intervention).

In November, CEC-RAP staff and students presented DMM research findings at the American Speech Language Hearing Association Annual Convention in Orlando. Undergraduate research assistant, Jessica Perrin, presented a poster on Cohort 1 providers' use of specific coaching strategies to build caregiver capacity. Drs. Woods and Lakey presented a seminar on the home visiting framework and considerations for adult learning included in the IA-DMM initiative.

In January 2015, the second cohort of 28 Early ACCESS providers will conclude a 9-month training cycle with the DMM staff at FSU and support from Cohort 1 peer partners in their regions. The third cohort of 32 providers began in October with a 2-day training workshop and will participate in a follow-up workshop in April 2015.

Both state leadership and local regional implementation teams utilize an implementation science framework to engage in ongoing efforts to support the DMM initiative statewide in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Education, Early ACCESS early intervention system, and CEC-RAP DMM.

Student Research

Story Book Reading Project at Early Head Start



The Interactive Story Book Reading Project at Kids Incorporated Early Head Start is an annual favorite each year for undergraduate volunteers to the Center. This year **Amanda Romagnolo, Alexis Hickox and Cindy Sheffield.** The students begin the project by

completing the Early Head Start volunteer training and joining a classroom for observation and opportunities to participate with the children getting to know them. After a few weeks of practice, each student is videotaped reading to the children. Next, the volunteer completes an online training module on strategies for dialogic and interactive storybook reading that facilitates child engagement and vocabulary learning. After more practice with the children, a second video is completed and each student watches their videos to see what new strategies they are using to support child learning.

CEC-RAP goes to ASHA!

Use of Capacity-Building Coaching Strategies in Parent-Implemented Early Intervention

Jessica Perrin, Juliann Woods, Ph.D., CCC-SLP & Emily Lakey, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Jessica Perrin completed an independent undergraduate honors research project examining the frequency and use of problem-solving and reflective comments and questions during conversations between parents and their children's early intervention providers.

Self-Determination and Social Competence Intervention for Tweens with ASD

Jessica Hooker, B.A., Anyea Livers, B.S., Molly Ramassini, B.H.S., Emily Rippon, B.S.Ed., Anne-Marie Rogers, B.S., Juliann Woods, PhD, CCC-SLP, Abby Delehanty, MS, CCC- SLP, Jeanna Cripe, M.S.

The ASSET team presented the results of their summer research and practice activities at the ASHA conference. Mollie, Jess, Anyea, Anne Marie, and Emily led ten students in a "Self-Together Tween Group" that met for three weeks during the summer of 2014. In their half day sessions, the graduate SLP students had the opportunity to guide the tweens' use of technology including interactive computer and iPad applications to address literacy, social and vocabulary goals. Trips to the city library were included to extend learning within the community.

Service Learning

In addition to Service Learning activities at Kids Incorporated Early Head



Start, CEC RAP student volunteers participated in Whole Child Leon Community Screening activities in both Leon and Jefferson Counties.

The CEC-RAP Service Learning Volunteers for 2014 were: **Amanda Romagnolo, Alexis Hickox, Cindy Sheffield, and Sarah Harley.**

Garnet and Gold

The Garnet and Gold Scholar Society facilitates involvement and recognizes the engaged, well-rounded undergraduate student who excels within and beyond the classroom in the areas of Leadership, Internship, Service, International, and Research. An undergraduate student who meets the criteria in three of the five areas and completes a Synthesis Reflection will qualify to graduate as a member of the Garnet and Gold Scholars Society.

CEC-RAP is proud of the Garnet and Gold Scholars who graduated in 2014.

Desirae Ott, Heather Baum, Kelsey Hendershott, Lauren Reingold, Brooke Ossi, Carolyn Alexander, and Layne Beauregard

Jessica Perrin is currently completing her engagement areas.

Developmental Disabilities Certificate

CEC-RAP accepts practicum students for the Developmental Disabilities Certificate and encourages undergraduate volunteers to learn more about community services available for individuals with disabilities. Cindy Sheffield and Jessica Perrin participated in the Developmental Disabilities Certificate this year.

Cindy Sheffield, Jessica Perrin, and Britany Devine

Undergraduate Opportunities

Undergraduate students are welcome at CEC-RAP. Currently, students earning a certificate in Developmental Disabilities can complete their practicum by participating in a variety of CEC-RAP research and community activities. Other students elect to complete an independent study, an internship, or honors research project within the Center. Priorities are given to students interested in early intervention and research with young children with developmental disabilities and their families. If interested, please contact Dr. Woods at jwoods@fsu.edu for an appointment.