



*Birth
to
3*

*An early intervention program for infants and toddlers with developmental delays from
birth to age 3, and their families*

**BIRTH TO 3 CONTRACTED AGENCY
AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT
ACT (ARRA) PROJECT
FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

Name of Contracted Agency: WESP-DHH Outreach
Report Submission Date: September 16, 2011

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**Contracted Agency
Birth to 3 ARRA Project Final Narrative Report**

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1. Wisconsin Birth to 3 ARRA Project Background

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides additional funding for the Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). This federal grant program, known as the Birth to 3 Program in Wisconsin, assists states in operating a comprehensive statewide program of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, from birth to age 3 years, and their families. The Goals of Part C of IDEA are: 1) enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities; 2) reduce educational costs by minimizing the need for special education through early intervention; 3) minimize the likelihood of institutionalization and maximize independent living; and, 4) enhance the capacity of families to meet their child's needs.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) currently contracts with county agencies to provide Birth to 3 Services at the local level. There were 5,980 infants, toddlers and their families enrolled in the Birth to 3 Program on October 1, 2008, an increase of seven percent from the prior year. The additional ARRA funding has helped to improve services to infants, toddlers and their families and will build ongoing improvements into the Birth to 3 Program.

In addition to the ARRA funding the Department issued to local Birth to 3 county agencies, approximately \$2 million was issued to various contracted agencies – many that have been long-term partners with the Birth to 3 Program, including the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), including their sub-agencies the Wisconsin Centers for Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI), the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WESP-DHH), and several Community Education Service Agencies (CESAs), the Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health (WIAIMH), Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA), Wisconsin Personnel and Development Program (WPDP) with the Wisconsin Board of Regents, Parent to Parent of Wisconsin, and Shelden and Rush, LLC, national technical assistance experts on evidence-based intervention to infants and toddlers in a natural environment.

These partners have helped to strengthen the Birth to 3 delivery system through:

- Promoting collaboration across state agencies
- Promoting best practices in early intervention
- Scheduling training sessions focused to early intervention personnel and service providers
- Expanding public outreach efforts to parents on early intervention services
- Increasing access to assistive technology devices and provide support to Birth to 3 teams for assistive technology assessments

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- Increasing provider capacity in infant mental health and social emotional development supports
- Training and technical assistance from national experts offered to implement Birth to 3 evidence-based practices at the local level

2. Agency Birth to 3 ARRA Budget Description

Provide a detailed description of your agency's Birth to 3 ARRA approved budget. Include a statement to confirm that all funds were expended by July 31, 2011. If all funds have not been expended, include a brief statement as to why the final expenditure amount is less than the Birth to 3 ARRA allocation.

All funds were spent. In addition, funds from IDEA discretionary dollars (\$8000) and federally funded (PL 105-17 IDEA Special Education – Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Service and Results for Children with Disabilities) Wisconsin Deafblind Technical Assistance Project monies (\$7800) were used to support this initiative. (See the Final Budget Report in the “Supporting Documents” file attached to this report)

2.1. ARRA Project Description

Provide a detailed description of your agency's plans for the ARRA-funded project:

ARRA funds will be used to develop a pilot model of services for children, aged birth to 6, who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind, in one region of the state. This project will pilot the recommended re-design strategies identified by stakeholders who attended the Birth to 6 Redesign Summit conducted June 29-30, 2009. The pilot goals are as follows:

- To develop and implement a pilot system of supports to address the specific needs of infants and children who are deaf, hard of hearing, and have a combined vision and hearing loss.
- Utilize information/data gained from the pilot to inform the creation of a Regional Birth to 6 System Service Delivery Model for children with sensory disabilities that could be implemented statewide.

Components of the pilot include the following:

- Purpose: Gather information, build infrastructures, determine efficacy
- Collaborators: Wisconsin Sound Beginnings (WSB), Birth to 3 programs, school districts, CESAs, Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Children and Youth with Special Health Care Need, RESource, Audiologists, Cochlear Implant centers, families, etc.
- Pilot will interface with other WESP-DHH initiatives, specifically assistive technology supports (WISHES), as well as GBYS, DMP, HELP, educational program consultation
- A Regional Services Coordinator (RSC) will be hired to oversee, coordinate and work in tandem with Birth to 3 Services Coordinators at a regional level. The RSC will work in collaboration with/under the supervision of the Outreach Birth to 6 Services Coordinator

- Year 1: Identify “team” members to determine levels of knowledge, skills, expertise for regional team; to identify creative collaborations; to identify gaps in the region; to provide trainings to ensure equal foundation of knowledge and necessary specialization; to build a strong and quality “team”
- Year 2: To provide services and collect data regarding the impact of services

2.2. Anticipated Outcomes

Provide a detailed description of the outcomes that were anticipated by your agency through your ARRA-funded project:

Outcome: To develop and implement a pilot system of support to address the specific needs of infants and children who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind. This project will pilot the recommended re-design strategies identified by stakeholders who attended the Birth to 6 Redesign Summit conducted June 29 - 30, 2009. Results will be used to inform the creation of a Regional Birth to 6 System Service Delivery Model for children with sensory disabilities that could be implemented statewide.

Goals:

- Increase the number of families with children who are deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind that have access to comprehensive services in one region of the State of WI and determine impact on children and families.
- Increase systematic data collection and program evaluation at the state level.

2.3. ARRA Project Implementation Barriers and Challenges

Provide a detailed description of any barriers and/or challenges that your agency encountered during the implementation of your ARRA-funded project:

- Statewide Delay in implementation of the ARRA Project Grant-Reduced two year timeline to a 21 month timeline. .
- Resignation of Regional Services Coordinator after Year One: Delayed the start of year two activities by four months.
- Changeover in Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program staff resulting in undefined collaborative roles.

2.4. ARRA Accomplishments and Lessons Learned

Provide a detailed description of the accomplishments that were achieved and any lessons learned during your ARRA-funded project:

The ARRA pilot had a number of accomplishments that have positively impacted regional and statewide systems, professional development (Regional Team), and service provision (family & provider support). Below is a summary of these accomplishments. Detailed information about these accomplishments can be found in the "Supporting Documents" file.

Systemic Accomplishments:

Regional Needs Assessment Completed:

Information gained was used to identify training needs, guidance for service provision, and discussions for sustainability. (see "Needs Assessment Themes")

Overall increased awareness of the specialized needs of this population

Regional Team Collaborations & Development:

Increased collaboration with a variety of agencies (LEA, CESA, County, Resource, ODHH, Outreach, and CYSHCN). Collaborations developed have resulted in resource sharing and professional relationship development. (see Regional Services Coordinator (RSC) Presentation Log)

Establishment of a W. Region Birth to 6 List serve that is housed on the DPI server

Provides a venue to post questions, comments, and resources for families and providers within the region.

Professional Development: Development of a Coordinated Western Regional Team of B-6 Service Providers:

Comprehensive Team of Providers with Specialized Training in Meeting the Needs of D/HH and DB children and families within the Western Region.

Created the position of a Regional Services Coordinator (RSC) who assisted in the identification and training of Regional Team members that could provide direct service to B-3 programs and school districts. The RSC maintained a link between B-3 Programs and the Western Regional Team.

Regional Team Development and Collaboration: Team members included a variety of disciplines from a variety of programs. Each team member was encouraged by their program administrator to attend the training and act as a Regional Team member. (See Team Member Demographics and Directory)

Completion of *SKI-HI Curriculum: Family-Centered Programming for Infants and Young Children with Hearing Loss* for all Regional Team members. A summary of the Pre/Post training results showed an increase in amount of knowledge for providing effective services for d/hh and db children B-6 from 2.99 (Pre) to 4.08 (Post) based on a ranging scale of 1(little knowledge) to 5 (great amount of knowledge). Additional "homework" assignments were provided to support understanding of the Wisconsin Sound Beginnings (WSB) Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program, the Wisconsin B-3 Program, and Transition Services from IDEA Part C to IDEA Part B (See SKI-HI Training

Overview, Pre/Post Survey Results, and Systems Overview).

Service Provision: Family and Provider Support

Child/family Demographics and Services Provided.

A total of six B-3 Programs/Families received services from the RSC. Of these families, three of them also received services from a Regional Team member. One family received services from two Regional Team members. These services included: Speech/language; Teacher for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing; and Early childhood special education/service coordination. At the time of the pilot's completion, there were three outstanding requests for support from the RSC. Additionally, from the period of 8/1-9/20/11, four additional children were identified with a hearing loss in the Western Region. (see Service Provision Summary for more information)

Satisfaction Surveys.

Of the four Satisfaction Surveys completed, 75% reported the quality of services and information provided by the Regional Team was extremely valuable. 25% said the quality and information were adequate. (See Pilot Satisfaction Survey)

Implementation Guide.

The "Implementation Guide" is a comprehensive protocol documenting the steps and materials used for the development of the Western Region Model. The purpose of this guide is to provide guidance to other regions within the state in developing their own Regional Team and a Regional Services Delivery Model. (See the "Implementation Guide" file at the end of this final ARRA report).

Requests from other regions to implement this design.

Through networking meetings with B-3 Programs, School Districts and through RSC presentations, other regions of the state have requested that a similar model for B-6 services be developed in their own regions. These requests have come from B-3 providers, ODHH, CYSHCN, Families, School Districts and CESAs. These additional requests speak to the need for specialized services for children B-6 who are d/hh and db. They also highlight the willingness of local and regional systems and agencies to engage in collaborative solutions with a focus on improving services for this population of young children.

LESSONS LEARNED

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations:

Success of the pilot depended on collaboration and sharing of resources for service provision and sustainability of the pilot. There were a variety of agencies that were engaged in the discussions of the development of the pilot plan (County B-3 Programs, WESPDHH (DPI), State B-3 Leadership, School Districts, and CESAs), and demonstrated a belief that a regional approach to service delivery would ultimately improve B-6 services. Yet, each of these entities was guided by their own systems'

rules and regulations, which caused challenges with the implementation of the pilot's service delivery model. Two main barriers highlighted are: Confusion of roles and responsibilities within the model of service implementation; and, financial concerns and decisions regarding access to Regional Team members and the provision of direct services beyond ones' designated service boundaries

Lessons Learned:

- It's important to communicate with the leadership of all local agencies who are stakeholders within the region.
- Local agencies need to be involved in the outreach and development of the Regional Service Model (identifying team members, engaging in collaborative discussions, building upon current initiatives, etc.).
- State Agencies involved in B-6 Services need to clearly define roles and responsibilities for each stage of the pilot's implementation and expected outcomes. The roles of WESPDHH and the State B-3 Program were not clearly defined and agreed upon in relation to the expected outcomes of the pilot.
- Valuing the role of collaborative relationships and the ability to engage in creative discussions regarding financial decisions and the sharing of resources across "boundary" lines (county lines, district lines, and CESA boundaries) is key to the success of Regional Service Delivery Model.

2.5. ARRA Activity Sustainability

Provide a detailed description of the sustainability of your ARRA funded project. Include a description of any activities that will continue after the ARRA-funded project terminates:

As of July 30, 2011 a collaborative sustainability plan had not been developed with Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program. WESPDHH attempted to discuss sustainability in March of 2011; however, Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program was not prepared for such a discussion. In May of 2011, a sustainability plan was discussed and drafted with the stakeholder workgroup, including Wisconsin Statewide B-3 Leadership, using additional funds from DPI. The Wisconsin State B-3 Program, however, determined that they would not be named in this plan. Wisconsin Birth to 3 has recently discussed several ideas for sustainability; however, no definitive plan has been developed.

Plans for sustainability, at this time, are focused on children ages 3 to 6 (see the PST Plan in the Supporting Documents file). WESPDHH Outreach is a program of the WI DPI, thus is not able to sustain a system re-design for B-3 programs without collaboration from Wisconsin Statewide B-3 Leadership.

A document establishing the evidence-based need for this regionalization of services was developed by WESP-DHH and Wisconsin Sound Beginnings in 2008 (see The

Time is Now at http://www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/wesp/out_b6summit.cfm). Also, an “Implementation Guide”, has been developed that reflects the work of the ARRA funded initiative and is intended to be used for supporting sustainability for a re-design process in other regions of the state. (see the “Implementation Guide” file attached to this report)

3. ARRA Project Close-Out Activities

Provide a detailed description of the close-out activities (if any) of your Birth to 3 ARRA-funded projects.

The “Implementation Guide” was developed to provide guidance to other regions who may want to implement the regional team concept. WESPDHH will post this guide on their website under the Birth to Six Summit Page. Guidance from the state of Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program has not yet been provided for dissemination and/or use of this Guide with B-3 County Programs around the state, thus definitive Close-Out Activities have not been identified.

3.1. ARRA Project Conclusion

Provide a detailed conclusion, describing your agency’s ARRA-funded project(s). Indicate any follow-up actions or next steps your agency plans to take.

The data collected from this pilot reinforces the need for a Regionalized Services Model for children who are d/hh and db and their families, that ensures access to quality providers who can provide family-centered services and supports. Input and commitment from stakeholders, representing a variety of agencies, provided an excellent concept and framework for this project. This engagement speaks to their motivation and desire to re-design the system to better meet the needs of the children and families that they serve. The need for this type of model is also evidenced by the following quotes taken from the Family/Provider Satisfaction Surveys:

“They researched transition options (ie. Schools), talked about various resources (including “Guide By Your Side”, a new resource we wouldn’t have know about for this family without team input), and much more. Their resources so outnumbered what we could provide and were extremely helpful to the family.”

“You guys are awesome! Keep up the fantastic work! This is a great service!”

Core to the development of this model was the role of the Regional Services Coordinator (RSC). This position allowed for: Numerous outreach activities to educate others about evidence-based practices for young d/hh and db children; completion of a comprehensive regional needs assessment survey; a coordinated Regional Team

training which increased provider skills in Birth to 6 services; timely and appropriate resource sharing and support to families, Birth to 3 Providers and collaborating agencies; and the development of an "Implementation Guide" that can serve as blueprint for replication of this model around the state. Each of these aspects is a core component for building and implementing a successful Regional Model of Services. Modified aspects of each of these components are already being implemented within the PST plan for d/hh and db children 3-6 years of age.

It is clear that this project met the need as stated. Based upon the positive data and anecdotal feedback, the concept of sustaining and growing a Regional Service Model throughout the state is recommended. Key to the success of this model is the role of a Regional Services Coordinator; this could either be a new position or could be merged with an existing position. For this model to be replicated and effective, however, commitment and leadership from the Wisconsin State B-3 Program will be needed. As noted in the "Lessons Learned" section of this report, role clarification between collaborating agencies; sharing resources across boundaries; and financial decisions, all posed challenges to the implementation of service provision. To lessen these challenges, the Wisconsin State B-3 Program should promote the success of a Regional Service Model and support regions in exploring their needs, identifying quality providers, and, provide ongoing direction to county programs about developing creative agreements with collaborating agencies regarding the sharing of resources and accessing quality providers. Without these actions, sustaining and/or growing an effective Regional Service Model for B-3 or B-6 services through the state will be difficult to attain.

APPENDICES

List any documents or products (e.g., brochures, flyers, forms, work flows, etc.) that were developed through your ARRA-funded project, and include as attachments to the Final Narrative Report.

Please note that these documents and products should include an acknowledgement of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Birth to 3 ARRA funding.

Additional Files Submitted with this Report:

Supporting Documents Section

Budget: (Question #2)

Final Budget Report

Accomplishments: (Question #2.4)

Systems

Needs Assessment Themes

RSC Presentation Log

Professional Development (Western Regional Team)

Western Region B-6 Team Demographics

Western Regional Team Directory

SKI-HI Training Overview Summary

SKI-HI Pre/Post Test Results

Systems Overview

Service Provision (Family and Provider Support)

Service Provision Summary

Pilot Satisfaction Surveys

Activity Sustainability (Question #2.5)

Program Support Teachers (PST) Plan

Implementation Guide

Close-Out Activities (Question #3)