



OSEP National Early Childhood 2009 Conference

Recruiting and Supporting Parents as Leaders

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Margaret Sampson
Family Initiative Project

Talina Jones
NYS EICC

Family Initiative Project

- Funded by the NYS Department of Health Bureau of Early Intervention
- Implement a variety of activities for families involved in the EIP:
 - Early Intervention Partners Training Project
 - Provide technical assistance to the EICC, particularly to EICC Parent Members
 - Develop information resources for families
 - Other activities identified by the NYS DOH BEI

Early Intervention Partners Training Project



EI Partners Training Project

- Leadership training for families of children in the EIP or serving on local ICCs
- 2 x per year: Downstate in the Fall; spring session rotates through the state
- 3 sessions over 3 months totaling 5 days of training
- Graduates are invited back as resource parents, trainers and interpreters
- No cost to families and funding available for transportation and child care



Talk Points

Recruitment & Outreach

- Mailings
 - ICC Members
 - EI Officials
 - Parent and Disability Organizations
 - Random sample of families
- Listservs
- Phone contacts

Considerations

- Cost, staff resources
- Relies on others to reach families
- Beliefs about who should receive the information
- Time intensive

Selecting Participants

- Must submit application
- Accept 50 parents
- Application Review Steering Committee
- Must have child in EIP or interest in EICC/LEICC

Considerations

- Establish selection criteria
- Look for leadership indicators
- Assumptions about who is “appropriate” parent
- Personal contact

Philosophy of Support

- Invite discussion of family support needs (non-judgmental)
- Creative use of resources to support families
- “Whatever it takes philosophy”

Considerations

- Essential to interview family to determine needs
- Lack of child care top issue/barrier
- Parents without resources to wait for reimbursement
- Very time and resource intensive

Before, During, and After the Training

- Build relationships
- Create a vision of the future
- Keep list of parents interested in becoming involved
- Look for opportunities for involvement

Considerations

- Understand that there are many ways in which parents can contribute or be involved
- Work with Lead Agency and other stakeholders to involve graduates of the EI Partners training

Retention



Parent Involvement The Jones Family



EI Partners Training Spring 2007

Why did I apply?

What expectations did I have?

What changed for me as a result
of the training?



Seeking appointment to EICC

No political connections or background in disability organizations

Wrote letter to Governor

Recommendation from Family Initiative Project to the Lead Agency

Appointment to EICC

Climbing the Ladder of Family

Involvement: The higher you get, the scarier it is!

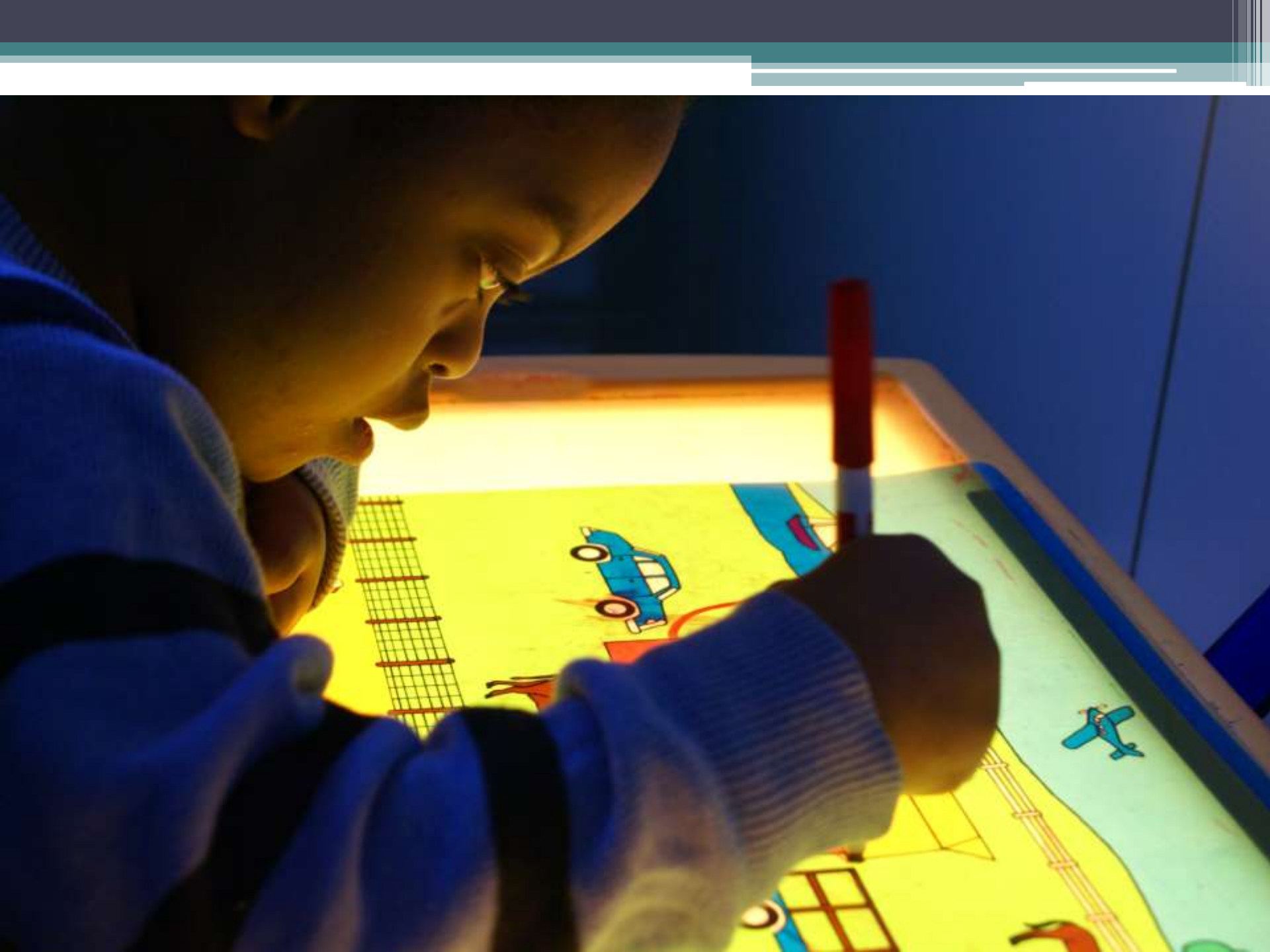


Positives

Challenges

Recommendations

- Provide:
 - Opportunities with key policy makers to discuss issues—allows parent leaders to become more meaningfully involved at the policy level.
 - Supports (financial & mentoring)—invaluable to a parent, in particular those who volunteer. Opens door to more diverse group of families.
- Create ongoing opportunities for parents to enhance their knowledge and skills—key to building confidence.



Contact Information

Margaret Sampson
Family Initiative Project
Just Kids Foundation
PO Box 12
Middle Island, NY
11953
Phone: (631) 205-0502
E-mail:
margsampson@optonline.net
<http://www.eifamilies.org>

Talina Jones
357 Pleasantview Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13208
Phone: (315) 453-7975
E-mail: tajeemom@aol.com