



## WEEKLY UPDATE – JUNE 19, 2009

### *INFORMATION AND RESOURCES*

#### FAMILY CAFÉ UPDATE

The Family Café, a statewide conference on disabilities for families, held its 11<sup>th</sup> annual event on June 5-7, 2009 at the Coronado Springs Resort at Disney World. I was excited to represent the ESSO for the fourth straight year.

The Exhibit Hall was filled with resources for families – which included state agencies, private non-profits, micro-enterprises (which are small companies owned by individuals with disabilities) as well as many companies which provide services and supplies to individuals with disabilities of all ages.

The Florida Department of Health State Surgeon General Dr. Ana Viamonte Ros participated in a panel Friday evening for the Summit on Disabilities which also included agency heads from Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Education, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Emergency Management, Department of Children and Families and the Agency for Health Care Administration. The scheduled speaker, Representative Galvano was ill at the last moment, but the agency heads provided answers to families' questions presented on "pink cards." I assisted Dr Viamonte Ros, following the presentations, by informally answering questions directly from families.

My workshop on "The New Star: Traveling the Seas of Families, Feelings and Emotions" had about 20 participants (including infants and toddlers), and lots of active sharing. It was particularly rewarding to see the family of a 7 year old, who was in Early Steps years prior, and whose mother felt the need to reconnect with us. As she continues to struggle with her son's undiagnosed disability, she recalls the wonderful supports she received when he was in Early Steps.

Kelli Lizzaraga and Sue Loftis, FRSs from Big Bend Early Steps, facilitated an informative New Star workshop, "Sailing Through Transition." As expected, this was well attended and provided the opportunity to review the transition page of the IFSP. Families had lots of questions and received information on planning for and following up with transition goals. I was pleased with the participation and response at both workshops.

Twelve FRSs (as well as a few service coordinators, some kids, and spouses) attended the breakfast at the Pepper Market on Saturday morning. It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up informally with the FRSs. We agreed to start a new tradition and meet each Family Café at 8am (or maybe 9) for breakfast.

I had the opportunity to meet the new FRS from the Ft Myers area, Eliana Tardio and her delightful and busy son.

I appreciate this opportunity to represent the ESSO at the Family Café and to share our wonderful program with other families. If you have any questions about the Family Café, feel free to email or call me.

Sue Cannon, State Parent Consultant ESSO

# FAMILY RESOURCE SPECIALISTS CONFERENCE CALL NOTES

## JUNE 10, 2009

For information and updates regarding the Family Resource Specialists please see the attached conference call notes from June 10, 2009.

## NECTAC NEWS

For the most current issues of NECTAC eNotes go to <http://www.nectac.org/enotes/enotes.asp>

Articles of interest:

1. Grant Notice - ARRA Funds for State Early Childhood Advisory Councils
2. Podcast on Early Childhood Development and Public Policy
3. New Brief Outlines Basic Concepts of Program Evaluation Research
4. Research Findings - Father Involvement Related to Reductions in Infant Cognitive Delay