

**Birth to Three in Day Care:
Perspectives of Specialists and Day Care
Providers**



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Educational Studies 400

December 2006

Background

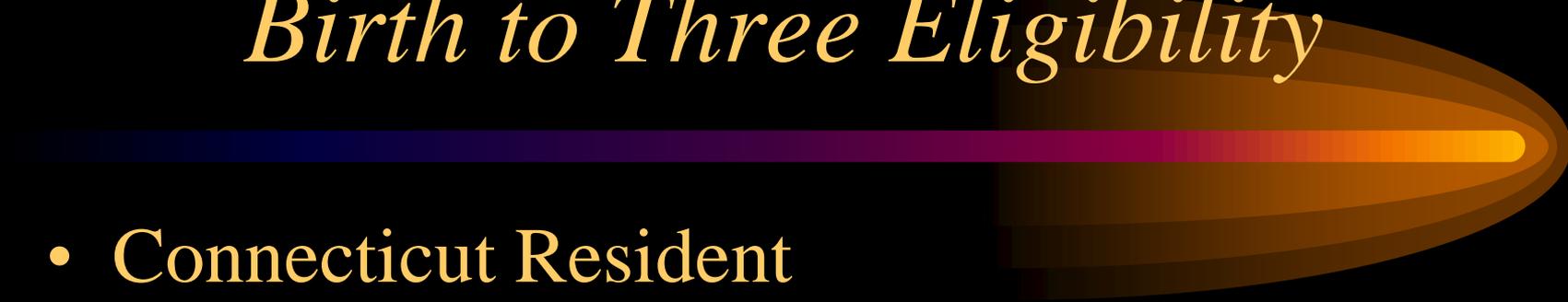


- Individualized Family Service Plan
- State Funded
- Due to state budget decrease for Birth to Three, families establish a schedule of fees to pay for services.

Mission: To strengthen the capacity of families to meet the developmental and health-related needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities.

(Birth to Three Brochure)

Birth to Three Eligibility



- Connecticut Resident
- Under the age of 36 months and experiencing:
 - A significant developmental delay
 - Have a diagnosed physical or mental condition with a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay

Research Question

According to the perspectives of day care providers, what are the challenges and benefits of having the Birth to Three Program in day care centers?

How are the day care workers involved with the program?

Significance



- Developmental Milestone
- Family Involvement seen as ultimate success of the program.

“Because the Bt3 Program is focused around family support, you want parents to feel that you’re the next best thing than “mom” to help her child with his/her development.”

- Day Care Teacher

Significance to Other Research

- “Integration of Children with Moderate and Severe Handicaps into a Daycare Center” (Templeman, T. P., Fredericks, H.D. & Udell, T 1989)
- “The Gap: Parental Knowledge about Daycare.” (Shpancer, Noam; Bowden, Jessica M.. Et al 2002)

Thesis

- According to perspectives of day care workers, the day care centers' involvement with the Birth to Three Program is seen as successful.
- Birth to Three is beneficial for all parties involved when the child and specialist involves the rest of the class and day care teachers. Working together motivates teamwork and builds a better understanding for the child's need.
- Birth to Three becomes challenging when there is little communication among the specialist, day care providers, as well as the parent of the child

Methods



- Primary Source Interviews (15)
 - Birth to Three Specialists (3)
 - Day Care Providers (10 day care workers, representing 6 day care centers)
 - Day Care Directors (2)
- Observation of Evaluations of Day Care/Birth to Three Sessions.
 - Weekly visits to Birth to Three organization, “Little Stepping Stones” for 4 hrs.

Interpretation and Analysis

- The Bt3 Program is beneficial when the specialist and child integrate into the classroom for the session.

“At times, the child will leave with the specialist to work on necessary development skills. However, I have seen most progress with the child when she is working with other children, as well as having all day care teachers present. When the specialist and child is behind closed doors, I am unable to fully understand what I need to work on with the child outside of the session” –Day care teacher

Interpretation and Analysis

- **A challenge for day care workers, as well as the specialists is communication.**

“Communication eliminates confusion. Many of the teachers have expressed frustration for not having enough time to speak with the specialist before or after the session. Sometimes there are directions on the review sheet that are unclear to the teacher, and she is unaware of what she needs to work on during the week” –Day Care Director

Conclusion

- Day care workers perceive that the program contributes positively to the day care classroom when the specialist and child are integrated with the rest of the class, and are not working behind closed doors.

- Involvement of all parties

- However:

Communication among teachers, specialists as well as parents needs to be strengthened.

Suggestions for Improvement



- According to the Day Care teachers:
 1. Communication needs to be more frequent.
 2. There needs to be weekly or at least monthly meetings where specialist, day care teacher, as well as the parents should meet to discuss development.
 3. More integration into the classroom, or assign a day care teacher to leave the room to work along side the specialist outside of the classroom.

Implications for Future Research



- Comparison of day care visits to home visits, are there differences?
- Is there more progress in one setting over the other?
- When examining integration into education, how do children who solely received home visit sessions compare to those who were in day care, as well as received home visit sessions?