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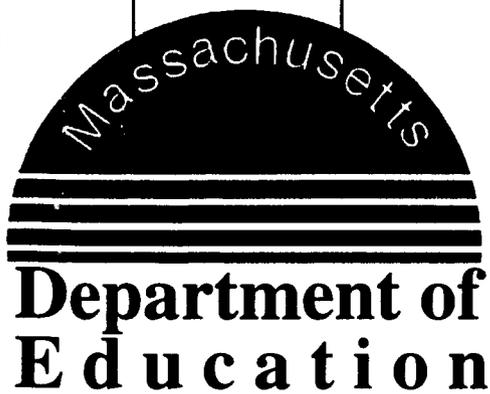ED 453 951   PS 029 534

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ABSTRACT
          This report presents the fourth study conducted by the
Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council since its inception in 1985,
an investigation focusing on how interagency collaboration occurs in local
early childhood programs in Massachusetts and whether mandating interagency
councils is effective in promoting collaboration. The report also examines
philosophical issues related to collaboration through a review of extant
research. Based partially on the findings of surveys examining the degree and
quality of interagency collaboration, six communities were selected for
in-depth study using ethnographic methods. Teams of two interviewers visited
each site, interviewing individuals involved in the collaborative effort and
attending advisory council meetings. Each team compiled a report and met with
the Future Trends Subcommittee to examine findings. The case studies in this
report characterize the cultures of the six communities as bureaucratic,
entrepreneurial, communal, or paternalistic. Understanding the culture of
each community was critical in leading the Council to the conclusion that
there are several ways for communities to collaborate. Findings indicate that
interagency collaboration helps children and families, increases community
involvement in schools, leads to a coordinated system of service delivery,
leads to improvement in the quality of services, and is efficient and cost
effective. Based on the information from the study and a review of recent
literature, the Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council recommended
four strategies for policymakers and organizational leaders in fostering
interagency collaboration: (1) consider the culture; (2) create a climate for
collaboration; (3) involve a broad constituency; and (4) support
collaborative efforts. The report's four appendices describe the study
methodology, contain a checklist summarizing the factors found to facilitate
long-term collaborative relationships, present a sample survey, and summarize
information on the impact of budget cuts for local agencies. (Contains 34
references.) (KB)

Massachusetts

Department of
Education

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE
AND EDUCATION :
Working Together To Meet
Family Needs

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Education

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present this reprinted 1992 report by the Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council. The report has been much in demand since 1992, and to meet the interest of the community we are reprinting it for continuing distribution. Biannually, the Advisory Council conducts a study and presents a comprehensive report on early childhood care for children from birth through eight to the Board of Education. This report is the fourth study undertaken by the Council since its creation in 1985 by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15, Section 54.

The first of the Goals 2000 education goals states that "By the year 2000, every child will start school ready to learn." High quality care and education, along with a system of comprehensive services to young children and their families will be needed to ensure that this goal will be met. The current structure of federal, state and local agencies and organizations is fragmented, with services delivered by agencies with differing philosophies, standards and regulations, and funding structures. While no single agency or organization has the resources to provide adequate services unilaterally, they may be able to work together and combine resources to collaboratively meet family needs.

A survey of local early childhood advisory councils in Massachusetts indicated that in many communities, collaborative efforts have been successful, but others were struggling to establish and maintain collaborative relationships. The Council wanted to examine the factors that seem to affect interagency collaboration. The report examines the philosophical issues of collaboration through a review of research, and describes how interagency collaboration is taking place in local early childhood programs in Massachusetts.

The study found that:

- Collaboration helps children and families
- Collaboration increases community involvement in schools
- Collaboration leads to improvement in the quality of services
- Collaboration is efficient and cost-effective and can result in both short and long-term savings

This report will be useful to those involved in collaborative efforts at many levels - state and federal agencies; school and program administrators; teachers and program staff; and families. We hope it will stimulate collaboration in communities where it does not currently exist, and enhance it in communities where collaborative efforts are already underway.

Sincerely,

Robert V. Antonucci
Commissioner of Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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WORKING TOGETHER:
An Ethnographic View of Interagency Collaboration

Report on Future Trends in Early Childhood
Volume IV
1992

Massachusetts Department of Education
and
Massachusetts Early Chilhood Advisory Council to the Board of Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 1991, President George Bush announced AMERICA 2000, a national priority for the nineties and a strategy toward reaching six national education goals agreed on between the President and the nation's governors. The first national education goal (U.S. Department of Education, 1991) states:

"By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn:"

- *All disadvantaged and disabled children will have access to high quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school.*
- *Every parent in America will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day helping his or her preschool child learn; parents will have access to the training and support they need.*
- *Children will receive the nutrition and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies, and the number of low-birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems.*

Who can question the wisdom of these goals and objectives for young children? For those concerned about young children, the question is . . . <u>how</u> will these goals be accomplished?

The ideals proposed are not much different from those of past generations, but the reality is that American society has undergone many changes. It is more difficult now than it was in the past for parents to devote time each day to helping their children learn, since most families are spending more time out of the home than they did in the past. There are many more single parent families and many in which parents have to work two or more jobs, leaving less time available for parents to help their children learn. Many parents question their own abilities to help their children learn. On a more basic level, only when the family is healthy and well-fed can a child be expected to excel in the classroom, yet there are a growing number of families whose health and nutritional needs are not adequately met.

The first national goal recognizes that preventive efforts are valuable. However, the comprehensive services needed to attain that goal are not yet available to families. Limited resources hinder the ability of any single agency to provide adequate services to reach these goals independently. It makes sense for the variety of groups that serve children and families to <u>work together</u> and combine resources as they strive toward the common mission to meet family needs.

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Services for children and families are often delivered by different agencies with different philosophies, regulations and funding structures. Differences can promote competition, misunderstandings and gaps in services. Programs are different because they were developed to address the needs of differing populations of children and families (i.e., children from low-income families are served in Head Start; children with special needs are served in Early Intervention programs and later in special education). This system resulted in a fragmented approach.

Early childhood care and education have become more collaborative in recent years. Barriers among systems of care, service provision and education are being broken down in favor of the needs of the whole child. This more holistic approach has emerged from the recognition that children develop within the context of the family and the community. The vision of what constitutes quality early childhood programming has expanded beyond the classroom and the child, extending to a full array of services available for the child and other family members.

A joint commitment made by several agencies to support children and families represents a departure from tradition. American society has historically promoted competition, hierarchical organization and individualism. Is it now possible for social, health and education programs to support the importance of the individual and at the same time build a sense of community? Can collaboration help fulfill our vision for children and families for the year 2000?

Melaville and Blank (1991, p. 16) define collaboration as follows:
> Instead of focusing on their individual agendas, collaborative partnerships establish common goals. In order to address problems that lie beyond any single agency's exclusive purview, but which concern them all, partners agree to pool resources, jointly plan, implement and evaluate new services and procedures, and delegate individual responsibility for the outcomes of their joint efforts.

Collaboration is a non-hierarchical, cooperative venture based on shared power and authority. In a collaborative relationship, power is derived from knowledge and expertise rather than an individual's position or title. This is not what we have been taught to value most in our 200 year history and it is difficult to let go of old ideas. The question to ponder, therefore, is . . . can we, as providers of services to children and families, accept that collaboration, not competition will benefit our society as we approach the year 2000?

The Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council set out to investigate how collaboration is taking place in local early childhood programs. We found that interagency efforts have been supported in a variety of ways in recent years. The Council itself represents a prototype of interagency collaboration at the statewide level. Established under Chapter 188 (The Education Reform Act of 1985), the Council consists of representatives from 45 different agencies and organizations. Its responsibility is to advise the State Board of Education on matters related to young children. Chapter 188 also mandated the establishment of local early childhood advisory councils, with one of the intents of this mandate to promote interagency collaboration. In its study of future trends in early childhood education, the Council sought to investigate the extent of interagency collaboration at the local level and to explore the effectiveness of mandating interagency councils in promoting collaboration.

To study collaboration, the Council conducted a survey of Chapter 188 early childhood advisory councils in November of 1990. The results of the survey showed that in many communities, collaborative efforts have been successful, but in others there is still a struggle to establish and maintain collaborative relationships. The Council decided that a more in-depth study was needed to examine the factors that seem to affect interagency collaboration. The Council's Future Trends Subcommittee designed a study using ethnographic study methods (a description of the design and methods of this study are found in Appendix A). This report describes what the study, conducted in the spring of 1991, discovered about the factors that contribute to interagency collaboration, as well as some that appear to hinder collaboration. The findings of the report led to the development of a "Checklist for a Healthy Climate for Collaboration" (Appendix B), which may be useful to policymakers and community leaders in assessing steps that need to be taken in collaboration.

The use of ethnographic study methods helped the Subcommittee to understand the variations found in how collaboration was implemented. We discovered that each community had a unique culture that was related to its history and factors such as size, geographic location, socioeconomic status, ethnicity and values. Each culture affected the way in which collaboration was implemented.

The Council developed a theoretical framework characterizing the cultures of the communities we observed as:

- bureaucratic
- communal
- entrepreneurial
- paternalistic

These community cultures, described in case studies, helped us understand the factors that influenced the development of collaborative relationships. Understanding the culture of each community was critical in leading the Council to the conclusion that there is no "right or wrong" way for communities to collaborate. The uniqueness of the culture of each community contributed to the richness of the collaborative efforts we observed.

The study also found that interagency collaboration:
* helps children and families
* increases community involvement in schools
* leads to a coordinated system of service delivery
* leads to improvement in the quality of services
* is efficient and cost effective

Recommendations
Based on the information gained from this study, along with a review of recent literature on interagency collaboration, the Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council recommends the following strategies for policymakers and organizational leaders in fostering interagency collaboration at the federal, state and local levels:

1. Consider the Culture
   * appreciate the impact of culture on the process of collaboration
   * create policies that can be implemented in a variety of cultures
   * understand the specific culture when providing technical assistance
2. Create a Climate for Collaboration
   * build trust and understanding
   * develop a common mission
   * develop policies that support a comprehensive system of services
   * work together to address inequities
   * provide technical assistance to local communities around collaboration
   * recognize and reward collaborative efforts
   * coordinate local groups
   * ensure effective leadership
3. Involve a Broad Constituency
   * ensure that collaboration is representative of the entire community
   * involve families and practitioners
   * include all programs that provide services to young children
4. Support Collaborative Efforts
   * combine funding streams to support a comprehensive system of services
   * share resources to coordinate services
   * provide funding to motivate interagency collaboration

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The goal of the report is to encourage and support agencies and organizations in working together, sharing material and human resources toward the common mission of meeting the needs of children and families. The factors and strategies that have been identified as helpful to collaborative efforts should be useful to organizational leaders as well as policymakers in developing more comprehensive services for children.

Mary was more than frightened. She was desperate. Aching and stiff from a long night of sleeping upright behind the steering wheel of the 1971 Delta 88 she now called home, Mary checked her children, all under six years old, in the rear view mirror. Reflected were four pairs of sleepy eyes, more confused and desperate than her own.

Then she turned her attention to her oldest child, still asleep in the front seat next to her, wedged between a cardboard box of clothing and the passenger door.

"Wake up," Mary said, gently shaking him. Wearily, Timmy cradled his face against the crook of his elbow propped on the armrest that served as his pillow.

"Come on, Sleepyhead," Mary said, "Time for school."

Timmy rummaged through the box of clothes, looking for his favorite sweatshirt. "Why can't I take the school bus like other kids?" Timmy asked as he slipped it on over his head. It was a question Mary had to answer over and over.

"Because we don't live near a bus stop anymore."

"Where do we live?" Timmy asked in a strained voice.

Mary turned her son's face toward her own and looked into his eyes. If only she could make him understand. But he was just eight years old. How could he be expected to make sense out of an eviction notice, when Mary couldn't do it herself.

"Just remember what I told you, Timmy. If anyone asks your address, say you don't know. Say we just moved." She offered her son a smile.

........"Say anything, but please, God, don't tell anyone we live in the car."

As she drove toward the school, Mary hoped no one would notice her or the car. What would happen if the school authorities found out she'd made up the address she'd given on the administrative paperwork? Would they deny the children access to school? Could they take the children away from her?

Mary pulled into a parking spot just far enough away from the school that she could watch Timmy go safely inside, yet not be seen by the teachers who were greeting students as they entered the lobby.

Mary reached across the front seat to brush an unruly curl neatly back from his forehead. "Be a good boy today," she said, as he scrambled out of the car. "Tie your shoelaces," she called after him, but he was already too far away to hear her.

Mary had been sharing a house with another single parent who, unbeknownst to Mary, neglected to pay the rent. Both women and their children were evicted. Out on the street, Mary's overwhelming fear was for her children. Without an address, would they be allowed to attend school? She didn't know. Worse, she didn't know where to look for answers to her questions. She didn't know where to turn for help. She didn't have anyone to trust.

The story of Mary and her children is true. Fortunately, someone spotted the family in the car and reported their suspicions to the school nurse, who tracked Mary down and uncovered the truth. Immediately, a meeting was arranged between Mary and the local ecumenical society, a group of local churches united to pool resources and assist those in need. Because of that contact, the Department of Public Health was alerted to Mary's search for a home for her family. In the meantime, the school system's Parent Teacher Organization provided interim funding which allowed the family to stay in a local motel until suitable housing was found. A short time later, working together, the ecumenical council and the Department of Public Health found a real home for Mary and her children in a new affordable housing complex designed to meet the needs of people like Mary and her family. Today, because of the collaborative effort among the school system, local churches, state government and the parenting organization, Timmy is proud to tell friends his real address, not a made-up one. And he rides the school bus each morning . . . just like the other kids.

Collaboration can take place in many forms and have a variety of effects. At one end of the spectrum, collaboration may simply be a way for agencies and organizations to communicate and make things easier for themselves. At the other, collaboration may be critical to the stability or even the survival of children and families, like Mary's.

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WHY COLLABORATE?

This study began with a survey (Appendix C) sent to all local early childhood advisory councils funded under Chapter 188, the Educational Reform Act of 1985. From these surveys, six communities were selected for further in-depth study. These communities represented urban, suburban and rural areas and illustrated a broad range of interagency collaboration efforts.

Conducting this study was complex because collaboration is about relationships - which are difficult to quantify. A study method was needed that could provide qualitative data on relationships between organizations. The Council decided on a form of inquiry called *focused ethnography*, which draws on research tools commonly used in the fields of anthropology and sociology (i.e., participant observation, interviewing and case study techniques). Ethnography is a useful tool for making sense of the effects of all kinds of policy making. A focused ethnography concentrates on specific policy questions and problems that concern policymakers and administrators. The ethnographic view offers the researcher, administrator or teacher a powerful lens for interpreting programmatic activity, allowing policymakers to see how policies affect children and families. It brings one closer to the issue or problem under investigation. More importantly, it brings one closer to people's lives to show us the ways in which policies are really experienced. For further information on ethnographic study methods, see Appendix A.

The study illuminated convincing reasons for school/community leaders and policy-makers to invest time and effort in collaboration. It showed that collaboration:
* helps children and families
* increases community involvement in schools
* leads to a coordinated system of service delivery
* leads to improvement in the quality of services
* is efficient/cost effective

What follows is a description of how collaboration proved to be beneficial in each of the areas listed above.

COLLABORATION HELPS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Children and families benefit when they know what to expect in programs. Parents can make informed choices only when they know about all the program options available in the community. When agencies share information about programs and services, parents can be given a comprehensive list of options. When parents know that local agencies have worked together, they can trust that program recommendations have not been biased by competition among programs.

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Parents are the most critical decision-makers in the lives of young children, so they should have an active role in decisions related to early childhood programs. Involvement on interagency councils gives parents a voice, keeps them informed, and provides contact with others who share similar concerns about young children. It can be hard

for new residents to get acquainted and become involved in the community, and activities of early childhood advisory councils and preschool programs often give parents opportunities to develop friendships for themselves and for their children. In this study, parent involvement contributed greatly to the success of collaboration efforts and the effectiveness of early childhood advisory councils. In two communities, decisions on program operation directly involved parents as members of advisory councils. In a third community, parents serve as assistant teachers in the preschool program. Parents are valued because they have promoted the preschool program in the community and kept it alive. This kind of involvement benefits individual families as well as the collective "community of families" by enhancing the status of the family's role in children's education.

COLLABORATION INCREASES COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

In school districts where the community was involved, the school became a focal point for community activities. There is growing support for the concept of broadening the scope of services available to families by offering a variety of services in centralized sites (see Lewis, January, 1991). Community involvement in the schools was seen in many ways in the communities studied:

• **Involvement of Families and Local Residents**

"Many of the parents who were involved in the preschool program have continued their involvement in schools long after their children left preschool. Those parents make my job so easy."
An Elementary School Principal

In one community, the production of a holiday audio tape, which began as a fundraising project for the preschool, grew into a full-blown community-wide project. Local organizations and businesses provided funding; community, church and school groups sang, and prominent community leaders performed readings. The "profits" were seen as much in public relations to build community support for children and families as in monetary results.

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- **Involvement of The Business Community**
  Community involvement in schools can extend beyond the families of children enrolled. Support from the business community adds a dimension to public awareness of issues affecting young children and families. Local business and/or civic groups (Chamber of Commerce, etc.) were included in collaborative efforts and on early childhood advisory councils of three of the six communities studied. Bruner (1991) encourages involving the business community on the basis that it provides legitimacy to policy proposals for children and families, and suggests that private sector funding can provide seed funding for innovative approaches. "If corporate leaders become convinced of the value of collaborative efforts, they often can provide funding with fewer strings and regulations attached than the ones that come with public dollars" (p.23). Additional suggestions for business-education partnerships may be found in Zacchei et al. (1991) and NASBE (1991).

- **Involvement of Local Organizations**
  We saw several examples of involvement by local human services organizations in early childhood settings. In one community, senior citizens became involved in the preschool program through a "foster grandparents" program. The senior citizens serve as volunteers in the early childhood classroom, and the lives of the children as well as the senior citizens are enriched through this partnership. In another community, a network of resources has been created for children and families that includes a babysitting list and story hours held in the local libraries. Religious affiliated organizations in the community may also serve as important resources for assistance to children and families, as seen in the story of Mary and her family.

COLLABORATION LEADS TO A COORDINATED SYSTEM OF SERVICE DELIVERY

- **Communication helps to build mutual trust and respect.**
  Communities involved in collaborative efforts had increased and improved communication, and there was better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each agency. Before outreach efforts of the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council brought groups serving young children together, agencies in one urban community worked in isolation, with little relationship between public schools and community agencies. Agency representatives said there used to be a "strong feeling of competition" and that "one day care center didn't speak to another." Regular communication has established trust between agencies. In another community,

  > "... there seems to be recognition of various providers and the importance of each individual piece; service providers are willing and able to provide parents with information about other services, even if they don't provide that service."
  > A Human Services Case Manager

professionals credited interagency efforts for helping them to develop broader, more positive attitudes toward other service providers. They said they have become more trusting of other agencies and that they have a less competitive attitude.

- **Comprehensive services can be offered through collaboration**.
  We visited one community where two public school buildings were designed and constructed specifically to meet the needs of the entire community more effectively. Many programs and services in addition to education are offered in the buildings, including adult education, tutorial and summer programs as well as before/after school programs for students, enrichment events, parenting workshops, community sports programs, dental and well-baby clinics and programs for senior citizens. Some programs are co-sponsored by local businesses, or by social service or health agencies. Programs are overseen by a neighborhood advisory board and coordinated by a public school administrator.

- **Duplication of efforts can be prevented by collaboration**.

> *"We need to work together. The public schools deliver services we can't deliver, but we deliver other, but also necessary, options to the community."*
> *A Child Care Leader*

Combining resources by jointly sponsoring activities like preschool screening and staff or parent workshops can prevent duplication. In one urban community, one agency started out as a "reluctant participant," sending a representative to interagency meetings because it was required and resenting the time the meetings demanded. After participating for several years, however, the agency now recognizes that this time is more than justified by the valuable information exchanged on other early childhood services in the community.

COLLABORATION LEADS TO IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF SERVICES

Collaborative efforts led to improvement in the quality of services available in the communities studied through several strategies outlined on the following page.

> *"Collaboration improves access to information for the whole early childhood community through the building of a common agenda."*
> *A Special Education Administrator*

- **Joint Training**

> "A developmental approach has now been instituted in all the primary grade classrooms in the community, and it has made a tremendous difference in the whole school system."
>
> A Special Education Administrator

Most communities in the study sponsored joint training or inservice education programs for staff and/or families. One rural community, in a joint effort between the public schools and many other agencies, offered a county-wide training program for all human service providers. The powerful effect of joint inservice training for staff was seen in the level of acceptance of a developmental curriculum that was instituted in one suburban community.

- **Shared Expertise**

Sharing expertise can lead to combined programs that incorporate the best features of both programs. In several sites, public schools incorporated Head Start's nutrition and parent programs into their jointly run preschool programs.

- **Early Identification**

Collaborative efforts through one community's Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council created an integrated preschool program with universal access for all residents. Children are identified and served in a non-stigmatizing, environment with which parents feel comfortable. Some children, who would not otherwise have been screened, have been identified as needing special services and have received services early, with many of them not requiring further special education services.

COLLABORATION IS EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE

Collaboration between agencies consolidates a range of professional expertise, financial resources and services, enabling providers to extend available resources and improve the quality and scope of services to children and families. Hodgkinson (1989) says, "We may be able to magnify the effectiveness of each dollar several times through interagency collaboration."

- **Short Term Savings**

Short-term cost savings can be realized by combining procedures and sharing costs. An annual "summit meeting" is held in one of the rural communities we visited, giving key decision makers from major agencies an opportunity to meet to discuss interagency policy issues. The effectiveness of this strategy is demonstrated by the following results: time, money and human resources are conserved through collaborative screening and sharing personnel for therapies; joint training is offered for staff, and joint recruitment utilized for enrollment. Agency administrators viewed the summit meetings as critical to the future of the collaboration.

- **Long Term Savings**

  Long-term benefits were realized for both the public schools and for children with special needs in one community, through an integrated preschool program developed by the early childhood advisory council. The program has been effective in meeting children's individual needs, and as a result, the majority of children on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) in the program leave special education and require fewer services in elementary school. Creating an integrated preschool program within the public schools resulted in long-term savings in another community where administrators reported that this saved the school system from having to send children with special needs to out-of-district placements each year.

  Additional references on enhanced resource utilization as a result of collaboration may be found in Kagan (1991), Chapter 3.

HOW DOES COLLABORATION HAPPEN?

As policymakers, the Council members were interested in what we could do to encourage collaboration. In looking at the evolution of collaboration in six local communities, we found that collaborative efforts were initiated for a variety of reasons. Institutions were motivated to collaborate by both extrinsic and intrinsic forces.

- **Extrinsic Forces**: In some communities, collaboration was motivated by state policies mandating collaboration. In others, agencies collaborated because of diminishing resources, because no single institution was able to meet local needs, or because the quality of services was being negatively affected due to lack of coordination.

- **Intrinsic Forces**: Some institutions collaborated because they felt it was the right thing to do. Some collaborated to ensure that what was done was in their own best interest; or they offered assistance to others knowing they might someday need reciprocation. Altruistic motives, relating to a desire to serve the best interests of children and families in the community, seemed to foster collaborative efforts that were most beneficial to children and families.

We found that collaboration is occurring in many different ways in the communities we studied. Collaboration is shaped by the culture in which it occurs. By culture, we mean the way in which things get done. In this case, the part of the culture explored relates to the way the community is organized - how decisions are made. The organizational cultures of the six communities studied were characterized in the four ways described below. Each community studied did not fall neatly into one "culture" but included mixes of several cultures. The way we characterized the community was by the predominant culture found in the school and early childhood settings we visited. None of the characterizations should be considered to be mutually exclusive. Each of the cultures can have positive as well as negative connotations, and none should be interpreted as "right" or "wrong," but simply as a way of understanding how a community makes decisions. Understanding how a community operates is useful to policymakers who are struggling to support local diversity and stimulate collaboration.

Organizational Cultures: A Theoretical Framework

- **BUREAUCRATIC**: characterized by an adherence to rules or policies. Communities with a bureaucratic culture may collaborate because they "have to," in order to meet mandates or regulations. Acceptance of formal rules, policies and procedures can help people implement change. Mandates, while not enough to ensure collaboration on their own, can provide a stimulus for initiating interagency efforts. Interagency efforts may begin with compliance and evolve into true collaboration.

Advantages	Disadvantages
- Clear hierarchy of responsibility and job parameters	- Often slow to adopt something new
- Procedures are independent of the players (system can continue if people leave)	- Many levels of command to work through to get things approved
	- System can be confusing or overwhelming to newcomers or outsiders

- **COMMUNAL**: characterized by sharing and subscribing to an altruistic ethic which strives for the common good. Communities with a communal culture may collaborate with the goal of generating the greatest benefit for the local population. The definition of what is for the "common good" is critical.

Advantages	Disadvantages
- Builds community support through active involvement	- Final outcome may be different from original purpose due to diversity of input
- Strives for consensus	- Focus on local groups may result in the interests of larger agencies, or organizations serving the broader community being shut out
- Mutual support is available among organizations	

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- **ENTREPRENEURIAL**: characterized by the creative use of resources to find practical solutions to problems. The principles of market ideology are likely to be exemplified, with agencies negotiating and making trade-offs to meet their own needs and the needs of the children and families they serve. Collaboration may occur when a problem arises and there is mutual recognition that no single agency is able to solve the problem independently. Entrepreneurship is often associated with settings where there is greater access to resources, with attending pressure from residents to maximize the use of those resources.

Advantages	Disadvantages
- Builds community interest and appreciation by using local skills and talents	- Can encourage bargaining for special interests, rather than community interest
- Develops new ideas and approaches	- Can evolve into supporting the "enterprise" as opposed to original purpose
	- Participants may have to sacrifice some goals to achieve others

- **PATERNALISTIC**: characterized by reliance solely on the leadership. The leadership provides for the community's needs without requiring community participation in decision making. Leaders oversee the system and make decisions for the benefit of others. A paternalistic culture can favor collaboration if the leadership perceives that collaboration is in the best interest of the community and supports it.

Advantages	Disadvantages
- Can be beneficial for communities where collaborative systems are starting to grow; committed leaders can build clear philosophy and mission	- Decision making tends to be *for* rather than *with* other members of the community
- Tends to have a consistent focus across all issues	- Difficult to move without pre-approval of the leadership
- Leaders can provide a vision for innovation	- Dependent on the leaders; with changes in leadership, the system may disintegrate

The following section provides an overview of each of the six communities that were visited as part of the study and how collaboration efforts were affected by the existing cultures. We have typified the communities illustrated by the type of culture that seemed to predominate, but readers should keep in mind that a mixture of styles was found in most communities. The names of the communities have been changed for the purpose of anonymity.

South Wayne: An Example of Collaboration in a Bureaucratic Culture

South Wayne is an urban community with a population of about 100,000 of whom about 65% are of an ethnic/language minority. The unemployment rate has risen from 8% to over 19% in recent years. About 2,400 preschool children are served in various preschool programs throughout the city including child care, private preschools, Head Start and public school programs. The Chapter 188 Integrated Preschool Program which includes an extended-day component, is run by Head Start in a public school building. A formal agreement has existed between the public schools and Head Start for several years. The Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council oversees this joint program, and the community action league that administers the local Head Start program plays a key role on the advisory council.

There are many private day care centers in the city, as well as a children's rehabilitation center that offers developmental and orthopedic evaluations, therapies, health services and educational classrooms for children with severe handicaps. There is no representation from either of these interests on the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council. An "Interagency Council" was formed several years ago to develop community awareness about child care and serve as an information clearinghouse to facilitate communication. This council includes representatives from the Child Care Resource & Referral Agency, the public schools, the rehabilitation center, the special needs advisory committee, and the Department of Public Welfare, along with local industry and civic organizations. This Council, which has broad-based community support, does not coordinate with the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council.

Many of the activities of the early childhood advisory council in South Wayne exemplify what happens in a **bureaucratic** culture. A bureaucratic culture is defined as doing what is required by law, regulation or policy. This is seen in South Wayne's history of doing things "by the book." Those involved in the Chapter 188 early childhood grant have done what was required by the mandate. The original Chapter 188 grant proposal was written unilaterally by the public school's grant writer, with "sign-off" requirements on the grant application interpreted as a pro forma exercise. Collaboration, involving joint decision-making, was implied but not specified in the grant guidelines. It appears that the letter, rather than the spirit, of

the law has guided the work of the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council. As an example, despite a large bilingual population, the coordinator of the bilingual education program had, at the time of the study, been unable to become a member of the early childhood advisory council since the required membership on the council did not specify the bilingual community.

The early childhood community in South Wayne does collaborate effectively in many ways for the benefit of children and families. The collaborative programming with Head Start is one example. Other efforts revolve around inservice training which includes staff of the public schools, private and public agencies and parents. When training funds to the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency were cut several years ago, the Chapter 188 program and Early Intervention contributed funds to enable staff training to continue. A resource library developed by Head Start will soon make developmentally appropriate materials available to all children and adults in South Wayne, such as discovery kits, professional books, and videos.

Implications for Working with Bureaucratic Cultures: Some communities need help in moving beyond the letter of the law. At the policy making level, clarification or expansion of legislative language may be needed to support collaborative efforts in communities with a bureaucratic culture. Bureaucratic cultures may be more likely in federal and state agencies, and in urban settings, where multiple private and public agencies operate simultaneously. Because of the number of agencies and the larger population served, the need for formal agreements regarding protocols and expectations increases. The hierarchy of large, complex agencies makes it difficult to gain approval of interagency agreements, and agencies may need guidance and/or mediation in developing agreements that are mutually acceptable. Policies that encourage collaboration need to be sensitive to the complexity of existing structures and need to require regular review of agreements and policies on a local level to ensure their relevance. At the local level, it would make sense to combine community energies by coordinating multiple councils, which can be accomplished through shared representation.

Winterhaven: An Example of Collaboration in a Communal Culture

Winterhaven, settled in the mid-1600's, is a homogeneous, middle-income rural community of about 25 square miles with a population of about 4,000. While the community historically has been agricultural, the farm economy is now suffering. Many residents live and spend a majority of their time in the community and many families have lived there for generations. There is a strong work ethic, a high value placed on education, and a tradition of self-sufficiency. There are no center-based child care programs available in Winterhaven, although there are a few family child care providers. Child care, when needed, is generally provided by extended family

members (grandparents, aunts, uncles). It is common for mothers to remain at home during child-rearing years.

The approach to early education in Winterhaven has changed dramatically recently, as a result of a turnover in the school administration (superintendent, special education director and elementary principal, and the hiring of an early childhood coordinator). A few years ago almost one third of kindergarten age children were being held out of kindergarten based on the results of a "readiness" test. The school curriculum was compartmentalized down to the first grade (subject areas were separated and taught by different teachers, necessitating children changing classes). Parents were not involved in decision making.

When the new special education administrator found out about the availability of Chapter 188 funding for early childhood programs, she suggested to a group of interested parents that the town should apply. This group evolved into the first early childhood advisory council. With the help of the special education administrator who wrote the planning grant, this group planned the program, conducted the needs assessment, and hired the early childhood coordinator.

A communal ethos is illustrated by Winterhaven's use of Chapter 188 funding to create an integrated preschool program with universal access, providing all preschool children in the community with the opportunity to attend preschool. The universal model makes it possible for all children to receive services, and for those with special needs to receive services without being stigmatized. In addition, since parents often did not take advantage of screening provided by the school, several children have had the benefits of early therapeutic services who would not have otherwise.

While there are no formal collaborative agreements between organizations, there are informal linkages between the preschool program, early childhood advisory council, family day care providers, the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency and the Early Intervention program. The early childhood advisory council is made up primarily of parents of children in the preschool program. Council members are involved in all aspects of planning and implementing the program, including grant writing; fundraising, decisions on tuition, etc. For the convenience of the many council members who are parents, council meetings are held during the day, in the midst of children's activities.

Implications for Working with Communal Cultures: The study found that in communities with a communal culture, collaboration was more likely to take place among local organizations than with larger statewide agencies. In these communities, collaboration may be enhanced by personal relationships. The tendency to rely on informal communication among organizations that are familiar with each other can result in exclusion of larger agencies, particularly those based outside the

town, who might need to be involved. Policymakers may need to consider including language that ensures the opportunity for involvement of all organizations that could potentially provide services to children and families, even if those services are not being continuously utilized. In rural settings, the fact that various social services may be located a great distance away from the community may make it difficult for staff from different agencies to attend meetings. Regular community outreach to all agencies (social services, public welfare, Early Intervention) should be encouraged, even if representatives are unable to attend meetings regularly. Alternative methods of communication can be utilized to ensure these agencies a voice (newsletters, written messages, telephone conversations).

Mount Wesley: Another Example of Collaboration in a Communal Culture

Mt. Wesley is a regional school district consisting of two small communities in a rural area. One community has considerable poverty (AFDC and unemployment rates of 14% and 1/3 of the children receive free lunch); many residents are employed in blue collar positions in local factories. The other community is primarily middle class, with many residents commuting to nearby cities to work. There is a "small town" spirit that could be described as "Yankee New England." One of the key factors in the culture in Mt. Wesley is geographic isolation. Child care is provided primarily by extended families or by a few family child care providers. Few public services exist in the area: there is no doctor, hospital, or public transportation nearby. Social services, the Department of Public Welfare and an Early Intervention Program are all nearly an hour away. If a family has a car, the distance between towns and services is workable, but families without transportation have a difficult time accessing services.

The Chapter 188 preschool program, which started three years ago, is housed in a former music room in the high school. Children attend either two mornings or two afternoons per week. One third of the slots are reserved for children with special needs, with the rest distributed through a lottery system. The Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council is primarily made up of parents, public school staff and owners of private preschools in the area.

While there are no written interagency agreements defining various agencies' roles, public school staff are knowledgeable about services available and assist families in accessing them. The relationship of the public schools with other state level agencies is functional and related to individual cases; there are no regular meetings, they communicate as needed. Collaboration takes place primarily among local organizations. The library and elementary school serve as clearinghouses for dissemination of information to the community.

A communal culture is illustrated in many ways in Mt. Wesley. Local families in need are assisted through a town emergency fund. Repeatedly, residents have

willingly sacrificed their own interests for the benefit of others. For instance, the owners of two private preschools were involved in the development of the Chapter 188 preschool program. Although they knew their programs would lose some enrollment with the opening of a public preschool program, they voted to proceed, believing it was in the best interests of children with special needs to start an integrated program, and in the interest of the community in general, as many local families could not afford to send their children to private preschools. In another situation, when the council voted on whether children should attend the preschool program for more than one year, parents on the council voted against their own self-interests and set a one-year enrollment limit to enable other children to participate in the program. The communal spirit was seen in the planning for a new elementary school. Because the building includes more space for early childhood programs than the public school presently needs, the public schools are considering using space to increase support for families by making a classroom available to a private child care provider free of charge. The communal ethos was also illustrated in the way activities are implemented: when the preschool program moved into the local high school, the renovation of the classroom galvanized the energy of both the council and the school system. Council members helped to paint and adapt the classroom to the needs of young children; industrial arts classes made shelves and other furniture for the classroom; art classes made decorations for the walls. The home economics department initiated a child development class with a practicum component in the preschool. Because of this broad involvement, the preschool program became highly visible and received tremendous support within the school system.

An **entrepreneurial** aspect to the culture of Mount Wesley surfaced in the fundraising effort (described earlier), when the production of a holiday audio tape enlisted the involvement of numerous local organizations including businesses, community, church and school groups. This cooperative venture was profitable in human as well as economic terms, building good will and cementing organizational and personal relationships.

Implications: (See Implications for Working with Communal Cultures, p.14).

James River: An Example of Collaboration in an Entrepreneurial Culture

James River is a predominantly middle class, suburban community of approximately 23,000, with a localized low-income population. The schools are overcrowded, yet the town failed to support a new building plan, perhaps because only about 26% of the population have school age children. There are few large agencies in the area, so most of the collaboration takes place among local organizations and through the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council. Interagency procedures are in place for transitions between Early Intervention and

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the public schools, but other linkages between programs are mostly informal.

There are a number of private child care programs in the community. The director of one private program has served on the Chapter 188 advisory council since its inception and currently serves as its chair. Staff of private programs are invited to participate in training provided by the public school's early childhood center. Inservice training provided through the Chapter 188 early childhood grant is seen as responsible for implementation of a developmental curriculum in the public school's kindergarten and first grade in addition to the preschool program.

The culture in James River also exhibits a strong emphasis on creative problem solving, illustrating an **entrepreneurial** approach. The problems of lack of local services and equity of services for preschool children have been addressed in several ways. An early childhood center, established in the public schools four years ago, includes full-day integrated preschool and kindergarten classes and special education preschool classes. Child care services have been built into the early childhood center. Before and after-school and summer programs are available on a tuition basis. A social service agency is housed in the same building, where a variety of services are offered including an after-school program, a teen program, counseling to families in crisis, and community advocacy around issues like subsidized housing and food banks. In addition to the early childhood center, a tuition-based "laboratory style" preschool program is housed in the local high school, where high school students serve as classroom assistants. The staff of this program work closely with staff from the early childhood center. Children are enrolled in this program through a lottery system.

The local media are used in James River as an important link for public awareness and to inform the community about topics like school-based management and training programs for high school students. The regular appearance of the superintendent of schools on cable television has provided positive publicity for school programs. The superintendent also writes articles for the local paper and volunteers in the kindergarten classroom, providing visible educational leadership to the community. These linkages have been effective in meeting local needs. For example, when the school nurse appeared on cable television discussing the problem of hunger among local families, donations of food were left at her office.

Potential community needs are anticipated and strategies to address these needs are discussed in advance in James River. For example, when school administrators studied the problem of low test scores, they found that most children from the low-income area of the community did not attend preschool, while a higher percentage of children from other areas in town did. With another subsidized low-income housing complex planned, the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council has already discussed options for increasing parent training workshops and other strategies to meet the needs of young children and their families.

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<u>Implications for Working with Entrepreneurial Cultures</u>: Entrepreneurial cultures require flexibility to incorporate their own unique traditions and philosophies and to be creative in solving local problems. Policymakers need to support local efforts to solve problems in ways that will be uniquely relevant. Flexibility in local, state and federal policies can enable communities to develop new ways to combine resources to solve local problems and meet family needs.

Ellis Falls: Another Example of Collaboration in an Entrepreneurial Culture

Ellis Falls is a regional school district encompassing several towns in a rural area. Many socioeconomic, cultural, urban and rural patterns are represented within the school district, from low to high income; from farming/agricultural areas to white collar suburban neighborhoods, to urbanized centers. There are also mixed cultures and minority populations. There are two integrated preschool programs in Ellis Falls: one run by the public schools, the other jointly run by the public schools and Head Start.

Interagency collaboration began more than ten years ago in Ellis Falls, after a county-wide collaborative that served children with special needs dissolved when one community withdrew following the passage of "Proposition 2 1/2." Faced with the problem of trying to maintain the level of services to children with special needs, the remaining towns each assumed a portion of the collaborative. Ellis Falls opted to take on the preservation of integrated preschool placements. Shortly afterward, a county-wide project was initiated between the public schools, Early Intervention, Department of Youth Services, Department of Social Services, and Department of Mental Health to develop an interagency agreement to help children with special needs make the transition from one program to another.

There are presently <u>two advisory groups</u> involved in interagency collaboration in Ellis Falls which overlap to some degree, but each has its own distinct and unique function. One, the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council deals with matters related to public school preschool programs and handles issues involving *all preschool children (<u>with and without special needs</u>) in the school district*. Membership includes public school administrators, teachers and parents, and other groups that have a direct relationship with the public schools (i.e., Early Intervention is involved because children with special needs served by EI transition into the public schools; Head Start is involved because it shares resources with the public schools in the joint preschool program). The other group, the county-wide Interagency Advisory Committee, focuses on *young children <u>with special needs</u> throughout the entire county*. Agencies with a broader focus (Department of Social Services, Department of Public Health, Community Resource & Referral Agencies), while not involved on the local Chapter 188 council, <u>are</u> involved on this committee. There is shared representation

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and communication between the two councils.

An **entrepreneurial culture** is exemplified in a variety of ways in Ellis Falls. It emerged when the public schools' special education administrator solicited the help of the local Head Start program in the effort to preserve integrated preschool placements. Slots were made available to income-eligible children with special needs, launching the joint preschool program. The joint program is financed by combining resources from several sources within the public schools and from Head Start: children with special needs are funded by the public schools; an equal number of income-eligible children without special needs are funded by Head Start, and a few children without special needs attend on a tuition basis. This results in a program that is integrated to include children from various income groups. Two Early Intervention centers provide services to children with developmental delays from birth to three, and the EI administrator has been a key leader in interagency collaborative efforts in the region.

Because of the positive experience in developing a county-wide interagency transition agreement, the special education administrator submitted a proposal to participate in the Massachusetts Department of Education's Collaboration for Children Pilot Project in 1985. This was a three-year statewide project designed to facilitate transitions between programs for young children with special needs. Three communities received funding to develop models of interagency collaboration in transition practices for urban, suburban and rural areas. Participation in the Collaboration for Children Project enabled Ellis Falls to expand interagency efforts to surrounding communities.

The experiences gained through their prior efforts in interagency collaboration and through the Collaboration for Children Project have led to a formalized interagency support system for children and families in Ellis Falls. Written policies and agreements are in effect that have been signed and are followed by all the local institutions. Agencies sponsoring programs for children and families understand who does what, where resources are located and who to contact about specific problems. Because formal interagency agreements have been developed and implemented, Ellis Falls has now reached an advanced stage of development in the collaborative process.

Implications: (see Implications for Working with Entrepreneurial Cultures, p. 18.)

Jefferson City: An Example of Collaboration in a Paternalistic Culture

Jefferson City is an urban community that is the largest city in the county and serves as the seat for major health and human service agencies in the area. The population is about 50,000, a decrease of 20% in the past twenty years. Welfare rolls have increased and unemployment stands at 18%. For twenty years, one major industry employed up to 20% of the city's work force; it now employs less than 10%.

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Services to preschool children in Jefferson City are provided by several agencies including child care facilities of varying sizes, the public schools and Head Start. Head Start serves almost 300 young children in a multi-community catchment area. Two Head Start classrooms are housed in the public schools. The agreement between Head Start and the public schools has never been put in writing, but it is honored as a "gentlemen's agreement."

A **paternalistic culture** has evolved in Jefferson City, and has become comfortable and familiar. For many years, the community relied on the company employing a major part of the work force to "take care of things." The community has come to trust and rely on having decisions made for them. Collaboration on the early childhood advisory council "fits" with a paternalistic cultural context. The assistant superintendent acts as chair of the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council, setting the agenda, leading the two annual council meetings and writing the Chapter 188 grant. The early childhood advisory council was described as having a "narrow focus, specifically related to the grant," with the purpose to review recommendations and sign off on the grant application. Interviews confirmed that council members see their mission as reviewing and giving written approval for the Chapter 188 Early Childhood Grant. Collaboration was not seen as part of the purpose of the early childhood advisory council. Head Start has its own advisory council, and the two councils do not share membership as they do not perceive their missions as overlapping.

A paternalistic culture may embody elements of other cultural styles, depending on the personal philosophy held by the leaders. The literal interpretation of the purpose of the Chapter 188 early childhood advisory council may illustrate a **bureaucratic** ethos. An **entrepreneurial** approach was illustrated eight years ago, when, before the Chapter 188 grant program, the public school superintendent created a committee to study the status of early childhood education and assess programming needs. This was an innovative step by the public school administration in recognizing the importance of early childhood education. The collaborative effort between Head Start and the public schools can also be characterized as entrepreneurial. The public school system provides classroom space, two teachers and aides, and transportation as well as therapy services for children with special needs. Head Start provides classroom supplies and equipment, a teacher and an aide, as well as expertise in parent involvement, health and nutrition. Joint in-service training is also provided by Head Start.

Local leaders in Jefferson City support collaborative efforts and community involvement through other entrepreneurial projects. One is a "community schools project" in which a comprehensive array of services in addition to education are offered in two public school buildings which were designed and built to specifically to accommodate this collaborative model. An administrator, paid through the public

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schools, coordinates the programs and services; a neighborhood council oversees the project operation. Another collaborative effort is a "cities in schools" project, through which the public schools, working with local government, business and local service agencies have been successful in reducing the number of school dropouts and children at risk. Both these projects operate with the full endorsement of the leadership. A paternalistic cultural may sustain and advance collaborative efforts if they are supported by those in leadership roles.

<u>Implications for Working with a Paternalistic Culture:</u> Creating policies acceptable in a paternalistic culture necessitates having key community leaders invested in implementing the policies. Because paternalistic cultures may also embody characteristics of other cultural styles, it is important for policymakers to make an effort to clearly understand all the factors that influence the local culture and utilize appropriate strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FACILITATING COLLABORATION

There are many factors that affect collaboration. In an effort to present a comprehensive view of collaboration, we reviewed literature from many sources. Our recommendations are based on information from the literature as well as evidence from our own study. We have tried to address the factors that influence collaboration from the positive strategic standpoint of what needs to be done to make collaboration work, while outlining possible pitfalls along the way. Some factors not seen in this study that may present barriers to collaboration are outlined in other documents (Kazuk, 1980; McLaughlin & Covert, 1984; Missouri University, 1989; Stafford, 1984; United States Department of Health and Human Services, 1991; Vermont State Department of Education, 1987; Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction, 1989).

Awareness of the factors that influence collaboration will enable agencies to take steps to prevent common problems from occurring. Policymakers, legislators and local leaders should be aware of these factors and strategies when entering into collaborative efforts.

1. **CONSIDER THE CULTURE**:
   It is important to consider the culture in which collaboration will take place and to structure policy making and technical assistance accordingly. This is not to imply that any of the cultural styles described in this report is preferable or superior. Collaboration can work within any of the cultures described (see pages 9-11 for a description of bureaucratic, communal, entrepreneurial and paternalistic cultures characterized in this study).

   • **Appreciate the Impact of Culture on the Process of Collaboration**
     The culture of a setting (an agency, organization or community) is made up of all the beliefs and behavior patterns that affect its population at a given time. Understanding how settings operate (an historical perspective of their beliefs, organizational structure and how decisions are made) makes policymakers more sensitive to the viewpoints and needs of those who will be involved in the collaborative process.

   • **Create Policies that Can be Implemented in a Variety of Cultures**
     An understanding of the diversity of local cultures will help policymakers to develop initiatives that can be implemented in a variety of cultures and to understand variations in implementation. It may also help policymakers to anticipate problems or barriers to collaboration and build in safeguards or strategies for finding solutions.

- **Understand the Specific Culture when Providing Technical Assistance**
  Ethnographic study methods may be a useful tool in helping policymakers to better understand the culture of local communities, thereby enabling those who provide support and technical assistance to adapt processes to fit local needs.

2. CREATE A CLIMATE FOR COLLABORATION
Collaboration is more likely to occur if it is supported at the source of policy making, where policies and regulations are developed and monitored. Local, state and federal governments can play a critical role by supporting flexibility in program management to allow optimal service delivery.

- **Build Trust and Understanding**
  Mutual understanding and respect are the foundation for trust between agencies. Philosophical differences between agencies or organizations need to be worked out gradually. Working relationships need to be established before people can make decisions for the common good, particularly if those decisions are not in the immediate best interest of everyone involved. Opportunities for communication and sharing information can be a valuable starting point because they give program providers openings to discuss philosophy and programmatic differences, to understand what other programs in the community are doing and why. An example of the benefit of communication was seen in one community, when differences arose between the public schools and Early Intervention. A series of meetings was arranged to talk things through, and although early meetings were bitter and characterized as having a "us/them mentality," the group continued to meet and work on the issues. Following the meetings, a regional conference was held where issues were presented from all perspectives (Early Intervention, public schools and parents). The process of jointly planning the conference helped to develop trust between agencies.

  Local early childhood advisory councils have been shown to be a productive means of promoting communication among agencies and have provided a sound foundation for collaborative efforts. The Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council urges continued support for these councils. Presently, local early childhood advisory councils exist in at least 112 Massachusetts communities that receive funding under Chapter 188 Early Childhood Grants. A recommendation for continuation and expansion of early childhood advisory councils has also been made in the Massachusetts Education Inventory (Challenge to Leadership, 1991).

- **Develop a Common Mission**

  Once trust and understanding between institutions have been built, steps can be taken to develop a common mission to serve the needs of young children and families. Discussions will lead to professional growth on all sides as people reflect on what is best for children. The professional expertise of each participant can be shared in building more effective programs for children.

- **Develop Policies That Support a Comprehensive System of Services**

  The most critical step in developing comprehensive services that must be taken at the policy making level, is to **address differences in regulations and standards**. Issues related to standards and regulations should be addressed at the state or federal levels. The study found that differences in regulations and standards were of greater concern to people who had to deal with the issues on a day to day basis (program staff and building principals) than to upper level administrators. Differences also were more problematic when programs were jointly run, creating a new entity and raising questions about which standards prevail and "who's in charge." Problems caused by differences in regulations and standards in the communities studied included differences in service areas, differences between Head Start and public school programs, and differences in standards between the Office for Children and public school preschool programs. Suggestions for dealing with these differences are outlined below.

  Differences in service areas: Policymakers should create committees to develop uniform service areas and interagency standards for programs for young children. In Massachusetts, differences between agencies are compounded by the fact that the various agencies divide the state into different service areas. For example, the Department of Social Services (DSS) assigns children and families to individual social workers on a case by case basis rather than geographically. Social workers in rural areas may be assigned children and families across a large geographical area, making it hard for regionally assigned staff to build relationships with personnel in community-based agencies.

  Differences between Head Start and public school programs: In joint programs, when the programs have different standards, it is often necessary for everyone to abide by the more stringent regulations. For example, in one joint program, all the health and nutrition issues are handled by Head Start because of the federal standards that must be met. All children in the program are treated as if they were Head Start children, requiring that identical daily meals that fulfill Head Start nutritional standards be provided for all children in the program. Head Start covers the cost of meals for the income-eligible children, but the public schools must assume the cost of meals for the rest of the children.

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Differences in Standards Between the Office For Children and Public School Preschool Programs: In Massachusetts, private preschool programs are licensed by the Massachusetts Office for Children, and must meet OFC licensing requirements. Because Head Start programs are considered private preschool programs, they come under the jurisdiction of the Office for Children. Public school preschool programs are exempt from OFC licensing requirements, however, preschool programs funded under Chapter 188 are required to follow the Department of Education's Standards for Preschool Programs, which **meet or exceed** OFC requirements. While the Department of Education recommends that all public school preschool programs (e.g., integrated preschool programs funded with special education funds) follow these Standards, they are not required to do so. This creates an inequity between programs. When programs are jointly run by Head Start and public school systems, administrators are often confused as to which standards prevail. The Office for Children and the Department of Education have worked together to make standards more compatible, but because of existing laws and regulations, differences have not been eliminated.

- **Work Together to Address Inequities**
  Salary Inequities: Salary inequities are common among early childhood programs with different funding sources. Among public school, Head Start and private programs, there is often a wide discrepancy in salaries of people performing similar responsibilities. A recent study showed that the average teacher in public school-based programs earns $14.40 per hour, the average Head Start teacher earns $9.67 per hour, while the average teacher in center-based settings earns $7.49 per hour (United States Department of Education, 1990). Such inequities are a potential source of staff, administrative and personal conflict. In one community where a program is jointly run by Head Start and the public schools, the teachers function as a team, with similar responsibilities, but there is a considerable salary difference. The public school teacher functions as "lead teacher" as a matter of policy. The role differentiation has so far been supported by the public school teacher's advanced qualifications, but if the two teachers were equally qualified, differences in salary and benefits could create conflict. Task forces should be formed to study issues around salary differentials between programs and develop strategies for minimizing or eliminating these differences.

Differences in Staff Qualifications: A comprehensive system of training and certification for providers of services to children from birth to eight would provide consistency in professional qualifications and performance, foster developmentally appropriate programs for young children and would help to reduce inconsistencies

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between programs. This would help to create more equitable staff salaries and a consistent career ladder. Agencies could jointly develop mutually agreeable standards of staff qualification. A comprehensive system of training would also require ongoing inservice training and staff development to keep program staff informed.

- **Provide Technical Assistance Around Collaboration**
  Training and technical assistance are critical to successful collaboration. Collaboration requires support for developing joint policy, implementing joint activities and building consensus. The study found that the level of collaboration on local early childhood advisory councils was related to the amount of technical assistance communities received from the Department of Education. Technical assistance needs to be flexible in the context of the culture of the community. Collaboration can be better fostered through facilitation than regulation.

- **Recognize and Reward Collaborative Efforts**
  Successful achievements in accomplishing interagency initiatives should be recognized and these achievements disseminated. For example, the interagency teams from the communities involved in the Collaboration for Children Pilot Project later became involved in training other local teams. This experience not only recognized them as leadership models for other professionals, but helped them sort out and reflect on their experiences, reinforcing their commitment to collaboration.

- **Coordinate Local Groups**
  When there are a number of advisory groups, coordination among them is important. If there is more than one local advisory council for early childhood, the leadership of the various councils should meet to ensure they are not duplicating efforts. If mandates are similar, the councils may decide to combine. If mandates are different, but services need to be coordinated, regular meetings of the leaders of different councils should be scheduled. In one community studied, there are five different advisory committees involving parents, each with its own separate focus (Bilingual; Special Needs; Remedial Education; Early Childhood and Head Start). As a result, parents are pulled in many different directions, making it difficult to develop any united effort or voice to benefit all children. A more appropriate solution would be a joint council. State and federal guidelines for each of these programs require advisory councils, but creative solutions can satisfy state and federal requirements while providing a more comprehensive approach.

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- **Ensure Effective Leadership**
  Effective leadership has been shown to be a key element in the success of any effort (Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council, 1989). In the communities where collaboration was most successful, one person assumed primary leadership for the collaborative efforts. Effective leaders involved others in activities and were willing to allow them to assume active, decision-making roles. This was exemplified in one rural community where a key leader provided a role model for collaboration by giving parents skills that he hoped would enable them to take over his role. He empowered parents by giving them opportunities to take over leadership roles and mentoring them in the process.

3. INVOLVE A BROAD CONSTITUENCY

- **Ensure that Collaboration is Representative of the Entire Community**
  At the state and federal levels, the culture of local communities should be addressed in guidelines for the composition of advisory councils (e.g., there should be a linguistic minority objective stating that in communities where more than a certain percentage of the population is bilingual, a bilingual representative should be included on the council). Efforts need to include <u>ALL</u> those who provide services to young children, with and without special needs, from birth to eight. This is especially important at the local level: if there are Early Intervention or Head Start programs from which children transition to public school programs, representatives from these programs should be included on early childhood advisory councils. Private preschool and child care programs along with family day care providers need to have a voice, and the perspectives of different cultural and linguistic groups need to be represented. In addition, the business community and local government may also be key players and may represent untapped resources. All organizations that provide services to children need to be involved in collaborative efforts. This concept is supported by the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education's Proposal for a Legislative Action Plan for Systemic Reform of Massachusetts Public Primary and Secondary Education (MBAE, 1991) which calls for *"Consultive, Participatory Governance"* in school leaders reach out to, consult and involve key stakeholders in the educational system including "employees of the school system (teachers, administrators, services and support personnel), students, parents, public officials, citizens, community agencies and businesses," along with parents (p.54).

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- **Involve Families & Practitioners**
  It is important for policymakers at all levels to involve families as well as practitioners to ensure the voice of those who will be affected by policies and those who will be responsible for implementing them. They should be a part of interagency groups at the federal, state and local levels and be encouraged to become actively involved in decision-making for their own children and for the larger early childhood community. Beyond recruiting the involvement of families in the collaboration process, a continuum of family support and training services should be assessed and coordinated across agencies to ensure continuity for families. This would be particularly valuable during times of transition.

4. PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

- **Combine Funding Streams to Support a Comprehensive System of Services**
  Different funding streams can intensify competition between programs and prevent a comprehensive service system. Internal structures at the federal or state level compel programs to focus on specific populations (a child's age, family income, special needs, etc.). Combining funding streams would reduce competition for funding and enable a more holistic approach to meeting children's and family needs. Support for combined funding of programs needs to be set within a larger framework of federal and state policies which promote programs that are comprehensive and which serve diverse populations.

- **Provide Funding to Motivate Interagency Collaboration**
  While collaboration is not dependent on money, the study indicated that funding can motivate agencies to collaborate. Providing funds in the early stages of collaboration can set the stage for local agencies to assume the necessary costs incurred at later stages when they can see the benefits of collaboration. Collaboration can be fostered by attaching mandates for interagency networking to funding, to ensure that various agencies meet regularly to share information. While recognizing that mandates are not enough to ensure collaboration, this study reinforced the concept that mandates can, and often did, serve as the first step toward collaborative efforts, providing a forum for sharing information and concerns and setting the stage for building trust.

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Key leaders interviewed had differing perspectives on the optimal climate for establishing collaborative efforts and the role of resources in initiating them. Some felt that <u>declining resources</u> stimulated collaboration, while others felt that <u>increased availability of resources</u> made people more receptive to "sharing the wealth" and developing collaborative endeavors. It is possible for collaboration to take place in times of adequate resources as well as in times of economic recession. It may be more difficult to find staff time during recession and budget deficits, however, the need to pool resources is greater and collaboration is more needed.

> *"In times of prosperity, when programs are thriving, they don't need each other as much, but in times of scarce resources, agencies need to be interdependent."*
> **A Head Start Administrator**
>
> *"Collaborative efforts are more likely to survive when they are initiated in a climate of prosperity, because key leaders would be more likely to have time and energy available for commitment to a larger vision. If a strong foundation for collaboration is established in prosperity, it is likely to continue in times of adversity because of the infrastructure that exists.*
> **A Public School Administrator**

- **Share Resources to Coordinate Services**
  Combining funds is another strategy for sharing resources. While communities are not permitted to intermingle different grant funds, it is possible to meet the needs of children and families by combining funds so that one grant builds on the services of another. We found that combining funding from Early Childhood, Remedial Education (Chapter I) and Special Education grants was common. We also found many examples of joint programs (e.g., Head Start/public school programs). Coordinating services in joint programs can be difficult because it requires cutting through red tape. For example, in one community, the public schools paid for transportation for children with special needs, while Head Start paid for transportation for their low-income families. A joint bid was considered as a possible way to save costs, but local transportation companies would not accept a joint bid. Head Start found they could purchase services at a lower rate than that charged by the public school supplier, so separate companies transported the two groups of children to the program. The two buses arrived up to 45 minutes apart, so arrangements had to be made to ensure that buses arrived simultaneously. Acceptance of a joint bid by the transportation company would have prevented these problems. The larger community needs to be educated about cost savings in joint bids and encouraged to accept them. Conserving and sharing resources is a pressing need in the Commonwealth, due to state budget cuts. Information on how budget cuts impacted on local collaborative efforts is included in Appendix D.

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CONCLUSION

A comprehensive support system for young children and their families is needed if we are
to meet the first national education goal. Begun at the prenatal stage and continuing
through an entire life cycle, a comprehensive support system will yield high returns for
families, for communities and for our nation. **Collaboration** between agencies provides
an infrastructure for a comprehensive system of family supports. Children and families
are better served when agencies collaborate. This study found that policymakers can
support interagency collaboration at the federal and state and local levels and assist
communities in building and maintaining collaborative efforts.

The local case studies described in this report illustrate how differently collaboration is
being implemented in various communities. These variations reflect the rich diversity of
the communities where services are delivered. This study supports the belief that
collaboration must be locally relevant; that communities benefit from initiatives that
allow for adaptation based on local needs. For policymakers, this study reinforces the
importance of recognizing local control and offering communities choices by
demonstrating that although there were differences in implementation, the spirit of
collaboration has been incorporated in many communities.

A powerful tool for policymakers interested in making policies locally relevant is
ethnographic study methods. These methods can be useful in helping policymakers to
understand how policies affect agencies and families. The study suggests that policy-
makers can vary their approach to policy implementation according to the culture of the
community or the way a community makes decisions. Policymakers can learn a
tremendous amount about how different community cultures respond to policies and
make appropriate changes/adaptations.

Another way interagency policies can be made relevant is by making policy
recommendations rather than legislative mandates. This ideology was used in the
development of the Statewide Transition Policy (in Warren & Putnam-Franklin, 1991)
and it has proven effective in assisting communities in developing interagency
agreements that are meaningful and in which each of the participating agencies holds a
vested interest.

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This study documented that in Massachusetts, a framework for strong, community-based services for young children and families already exists in local early childhood advisory councils, which function as important systems of communication among local agencies providing services to young children and their families. The Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council urges continued legislative support of collaboration. Communities seeking to establish mechanisms for interagency collaboration may wish to adopt or support models similar to the early childhood advisory councils. A handbook outlining the framework for local early childhood advisory councils is available from the Bureau of Early Childhood Programs (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1989).

Collaboration can expand institutional capabilities, bringing together the resources of each participating program to insure the best possible start for young children. This will happen only if those who make policy and control funding are willing to support joint efforts with policies and funding.

Collaboration can provide the cornerstone to the national goals for education. This study proves that collaboration can be beneficial to all involved. Using collaboration as a cornerstone to service provision challenges us all to lower institutional, philosophical and financial barriers and join together to support children and families - and each other, by working together.

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APPENDIX A

STUDY METHODS

Study Method: Focused Ethnography

The study was designed as a focused ethnography, a form of qualitative inquiry which draws on the research tools of anthropology and sociology. Focused ethnography differs from the more open-ended ethnography of an anthropologist or sociologist, however, in that it focuses on fairly specific policy questions and problems that are of particular programmatic concern to a "client" - a program administrator or policy maker. This approach has been described as a client-centered or decision-oriented educational research (Cronbach and Suppes, 1969; Cooley and Bickel, 1986). A focused ethnography is a form of research that is interested in discovering information needed by a client for program improvement. It has also been described as "action research" (Passmore and Friedlander, 1982) and "participatory research" (Brown, 1985).

Ethnography provides a *way of seeing* or looking at human conduct. It presumes that the best way to understand human behavior is to watch it unfold within the specific context in which it occurs. Conduct is interpreted as dependent on the conditions (e.g., social, political or cultural) which shape it. Under this view, human conduct is ongoing and occurs in interaction with others in specific times and in specific places. A focused ethnography obliges the user to interpret social activity as a product of the many conditions that affect it. It forces us to consider the complexity of cultural behavior and to understand lives *as they are lived*, not as they are imagined. This is a research technique that can help the user to see human behavior as a multi-faceted activity which cannot be fully understood outside its experienced context.

The purpose of ethnography is never to simplify the fullness of the human experience, but to uncover it for all to see. The fullness of the collaborative experience could not be captured through a survey technique, which has many limitations. In designing this study, ethnography was seen as a good complement to the survey, by getting behind the survey to see and experience collaboration as it is lived. This method was selected by the Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council as a mechanism for determining how to best support local agencies working to develop a coordinated system of services for young children.

Further information about qualitative research and ethnographic study methods may be found in Kincheloe (1991), Marshall and Rossman (1989) and Patton (1991).

Site Selection

A survey was mailed to all Chapter 188 early childhood coordinators in October of 1990 to gather information about the degree and quality of interagency collaboration that was taking place in local communities, particularly through the efforts of Chapter 188 early childhood advisory councils. Based on these self-reports and input from Department of Education early childhood staff, six communities were selected for in-depth study using ethnographic methods. These included sites from urban, suburban and rural communities in various parts of the state and illustrated communities across the spectrum in regard to interagency collaboration. Communities with "communication only" between agencies were identified as having a low level of collaboration; those with coordination between agencies without sharing of resources were identified as having a moderate level of collaboration, and communities in which there was a sharing or combining of material or human resources or joint efforts such as staff training or production of informative materials for the public were identified as having a high level of collaboration. Other variables taken into consideration in site selection included changes in funding in Chapter 188, the level of intra-agency collaboration within the LEA (special education, Chapter 188 and early childhood) and strong parent involvement.

The Interview Process

Teams of two interviewers were formed using volunteers from the statewide Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Bureau of Early Childhood Programs and the wider early childhood community. Interviewers participated in three days of training by an experienced ethnographer, which included participating in the development of a format specifically designed for this study. Each team spent one to two days in their assigned site, interviewing individuals involved in various aspects of the collaborative effort in each community, and attending advisory council meetings to gain a broad perspective on collaboration. Each team compiled a report on its findings, and over the course of the next six months, interviewers, along with the Future Trends Subcommittee met several times to evaluate findings and develop this Report on Future Trends.

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APPENDIX B

CHECKLIST FOR A HEALTHY CLIMATE FOR COLLABORATION

The following list summarizes the factors found to facilitate and lead to the building of long-term collaborative relationships.

___ There is a comprehensive awareness of the needs of local children and families as well as an awareness of available local resources.

___ There is broad community representation including key players from all organizations that provide services to young children.

___ The culture and population of the community are fully represented; any and all significant populations are offered a voice.

___ Parents are included in the governing structure.

___ There is a common philosophy and commitment to serve the needs of children and families by all individuals involved in service provision.

___ There is joint decision-making; a democratic process in which all participants feel that they have an active role in decision-making, and feel invested and empowered to meet local needs.

___ There is mutual respect for the limitations imposed by each bureaucracy and a mutual understanding of the spirit of the mandates and responsibilities of each agency.

___ There is flexibility within the limitations of each organization. This may include a willingness to make adaptations to fit community needs (one administrator in the study described this as the philosophy of "at times we'll use your regulations and at other times you'll use ours)."

___ Regular and open communication is maintained through meetings, mailings, events.

___ Responsibilities are well-defined and communicated to avoid duplication of efforts.

___ Organizational and leadership roles have been jointly developed and mutually agreed upon.

___ There is strong and consistent leadership.

___ There are collaborative activities which include all service providers such as joint training for parents and staff.

___ There is a permanent collaborative structure in place which has written policies and guidelines.

___ Linkages are built in through formal interagency agreements.

___ There is sharing of materials, funding and human resources.

___ There is joint long and short-term planning with timelines

___ Staff time is allotted for collaborative efforts.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE SURVEY

The survey on the following pages was sent to all Chapter 188 Early Childhood Coordinators, with a cover letter containing the following information:

The Future Trends Subcommittee of the Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council would like your assistance in completing the enclosed survey. The Subcommittee has designed this survey in preparation for the Report on Future Trends in Early Childhood Education which will be presented to the State Board of Education. The Subcommittee would like to learn as much as possible about local efforts to develop comprehensive services through interagency collaboration. The Subcommittee also hopes to examine common problems faced by agencies serving young children and their families, particularly those that have resulted from recent budget cuts.

The enclosed survey has been designed to gather information on the role of early childhood advisory councils in developing programs that are equitable and provide for comprehensive, coordinated services for young children. We would appreciate your assistance in completing the survey. It may be helpful for you to enlist the input of the Chair of your local early childhood advisory council and complete the survey jointly.

FUTURE TRENDS SURVEY 1991

Community:_____

Name of person completing survey: _____

Position:_____   Telephone: _____

Address:._____

What group or agency do you represent? _____

Name of Chair of local Early Childhood Advisory Council: _____

Address: _____   Telephone: _____

When does this person's term of office end? _____

Definitions:

- **Agencies** - Those bodies which are involved in providing services to young children and their families, and shall be presumed to include public schools and private preschool programs, Early Intervention piograms, Head Start programs, special needs programs and child care programs.
- **Collaboration** - Two or more agencies working together in a cooperative manner toward the common goal of meeting the needs of young children and their families.
- **Comprehensive Services** - A variety of services that may be needed by young children and their families are available and accessible to families in or near their own community.

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3) What steps have been taken in your community to minimize the need for children to make transitions between programs? Please describe below. (Eg. establishing full day programs; establishing or providing space for child care programs in school buildings; after school child care; transporting staff; integrated preschool program, etc.)

4) In your community, to what degree do agencies share information on children's needs for services?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	rarely	occasionally	frequently	routinely

Please indicate below the organizations that share information. Describe in the space provided how and when information is shared and who facilitates the sharing of information:

5) How have local early childhood needs been assessed in your community?

6) In your community, do agencies share information on the services they offer for children and families?

1	2	3	4	5
no sharing	sharing in a few programs	sharing among half the programs	sharing between most programs	sharing between all programs

7) Have linkages between programs and agencies been established (eg. agencies in the community jointly sponsor preschool screening; opportunities for joint staff training; joint sponsorship of parent workshops/support groups, etc.)?

1	2	3	4	5
no established linkages	in planning stages	linkages have been developed	linkages are being partially implemented	linkages are being fully implemented

Please describe:

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In the following questions, please circle the number that best describes your community. (If you wish to comment on any questions, please feel free to use the back of the page).

1) When was your Early Childhood Advisory Council established?

2) Does your Chapter 188 Early Childhood Advisory Council's interagency governing structure include parents and a broad representation of major agencies providing services to children? (*) Please check below the organizations, individual and agencies represented and indicate the number of individuals in serving in each capacity if known:

_____ Elementary Principal(s)   _____ Teacher(s)
_____ Public Child Care Program(s)   _____ Private Child Care Program(s)
_____ Head Start   _____ Early Intervention
_____ Local Resource & Referral Agency   _____ Parents
_____ Special Education   _____ Private Preschool Programs
_____ Family Day Care   _____ Representative(s) of local
_____ V.N.A.   _____ Business Community
_____ Office for Children   _____ Human Services Representative
_____ Private counseling agency   _____ Local Housing Authority
_____ Regional Early Childhood Specialist (D.O.E.) _____ Other(s): (Please describe)

(*) Please provide a membership list and attach any brochures, membership materials or bylaws.
The following questions are related to transitions between various programs (Early Intervention, Head Start, private preschools, child care, etc.) and procedures and activities that have been developed between agencies and programs to facilitate transitions in your community. Established procedures may be followed to varying degrees by different programs. Please try to evaluate the degree to which procedures are being followed in your community.

2) a) *Transitions within the day* (i.e., between preschool and child care program)

1	2	3	4	5
no established procedures	in planning stages	procedures have been developed	procedures are being partially implemented	procedures are being fully implemented

b) *Transitions from day to day* (eg., if children attend one program part-time, only 2 or 3 days per week and another program part-time)

1	2	3	4	5
no established procedures	in planning stages	procedures have been developed	procedures are being partially followed	procedures are being fully followed

c) *Annual transitions* (eg., from Early Intervention to Head Start; EI to public or private preschool program; Head Start to a Child Care Program)

1	2	3	4	5
no established procedures	in planning stages	procedures have been developed	procedures are being partially followed	procedures are being fully followed

45.

12) Has your Early Childhood Advisory Council established a formal collaborative structure which includes policies and guidelines? (*Please attach copies of policies and guidelines*).

1	2	3	4	5
not yet	in planning stages	procedures have been established	procedures followed by some agencies	procedures followed by all agencies

13) Has your Early Childhood Advisory Council established a process for evaluating its interagency initiatives?

1	2	3	4	5
not yet	in planning stages	a process has been established	process has been implemented	information has been used to improve council operation

14) Is the structure of your local Early Childhood Advisory Council flexible and can it adjust to necessary changes (eg. membership can expand if new programs develop in the community which should be included)? _____ Yes _____ No

Please describe:

COLLABORATION, CONTINUITY AND EQUITY

15) List the different ways agencies collaborate in your community (i.e., advisory councils, sharing funding, joint training, screening, transportation, programs, etc.):

16) What do you think makes collaboration work in your community?

8) To what degree is collaboration **adversely affected** by differences between agencies in salaries, benefits and working conditions?

1	2	3	4	5
severely	a great deal	to some degree	very little	not at all

Please describe:

9) To what degree do differences in program standards between agencies **adversely** affect interagency collaboration?

1	2	3	4	5
severely	a great deal	to some degree	very little	not at all

Please describe:

10) Is there an adequate supply of high quality * early childhood services available in the community for families/children who need and want these services? * Quality as defined by Chapter 188 Early Childhood Standards and/or Office for Children regulations)

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	to some degree	moderately	to a great degree	supply meets demand

11) a. Has the Chapter 188 Program(s) made arrangements with other agencies to pool resources in order to expand or improve services to children (i.e., developing joint programs)?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	in planning stages	to some degree	moderately	to a high degree

   b. What role, if any, has your local Early Childhood Advisory Council played in making arrangements for pooling resources?

19) In your community, are funding streams coordinated to provide comprehensive early childhood services?

    A. Does the Chapter 188 program provide services to children who are subsidized by other agencies (eg. DPW, DSS)? _____ Yes _____ No

    B. Does the Chapter 188 program fund children who are served primarily by other agencies (eg., Head Start, child care, private programs)? _____ Yes _____ No

    C. Describe any other examples of mixed funding:

20) Briefly, what do you think needs to happen in order to achieve the goal of a comprehensive system of early childhood services in your community?

EFFECTS OF BUDGET CUTS ON INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION:

21) From the last school year to this school year, have there been significant changes in the services provided by the various agencies in your community (i.e., have offices consolidated; have programs changed their hours)? _____ Yes _____ No _____

    If yes, please describe these changes.

17) a. List the key individuals who were involved in designing the collaborative structure in your community. Include their positions and whether they are still there.

17) b. If key individuals have left, has the collaborative effort continued? Yes _____ No _____

   c. If the collaborative effort has continued after the departure of key individuals, to what do you attribute its continuity?

18) a. Is there more than one early childhood council in your community or immediate area? If so, please check as many below that apply:

   _____ Mayor's Early Childhood Council   _____ OFC Council for Children
   _____ Early Intervention Parent Advisory Council   _____ CCR&R Advisory Council
   _____ Early Intervention Program Advisory Council _____ Early Childhood Directors'
   _____ Early Childhood Directors' Council   _____ Head Start Advisory Council

   Other(s) _____ (Please describe below):

   b. Do members of your Council serve on any of these? (Please star *)

   c. If there is more there one early childhood council, is there collaboration between them? Yes _____ No _____ Describe how they collaborate below:

22) Please describe any ways in which budget cuts have affected the operation of the Early Childhood Advisory Council in your community (i.e., changes in meeting schedules; membership; meeting attendance, etc.):

23) Have there been recent losses or changes in positions in agencies in your communities due to budget cuts (eg., have individuals taken on more responsibilities or hours)? _____ Yes _____ No
If Yes, please describe below.

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APPENDIX D
THE IMPACT OF STATE BUDGET CUTS ON INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

The impact of budget cuts summarized below represents information collected in the Fall of 1990, before the most recent round of budget cuts reduced local funding even further.

- **Services to children are in jeopardy in many communities.** In many communities, there is a growing fear that, despite the obvious benefits of collaboration, the public school systems will be unable to take on the financial responsibility for preschool programs out of local funds if Chapter 188 funding is lost. At the same time, services to children in child care have been severely cut. One community in the study was considering incorporating a tuition system, which could make the program inaccessible to many families.

- **Geographic isolation makes human services difficult for families to access.** In rural areas, further budget cuts may intensify this problem. For example, in one community, the nearest Department of Social Services Office is an hour away; cuts in state funding may cause it to be moved to another location nearly two hours away.

- **Fewer accessible supports for families of children with special needs.** Some communities participate in interagency cost-sharing in cases of children with multiple service needs. A case was described in which, after extensive negotiations between the Department of Social Services, the evaluators and parents, it was agreed that a residential placement was appropriate. After the child had been accepted at the residential school, the public schools decided not to be involved in a cost sharing plan and the parents were advised to select an alternative placement. The parents rejected the educational plan, and the residential school threatened to fill the child's place with another student. In the past, an OFC advocate could have called the Department of Education's regional education center for assistance in ensuring that the issue was resolved in a timely manner. However, the regional education centers have been eliminated, along with OFC advocates. How will such problems be solved in the future given that the minimal supports available are now all located in the Boston area; will families and children find their way to the services they need? Many supports for families with substantial needs have been eliminated in the recent past.

- **Agency representatives are no longer able to participate on advisory councils.** In some communities this is because of lack of time due to increased responsibilities. In one community, both the Early Intervention administrator and the representative of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency have had to eliminate or cut back on participation on the council due to time or budget constraints.

- **Staff and parent training have been cut or lost in many communities.** In one community in the study, the reduction of training has slowed the pace of change toward a developmental curriculum from preschool through third grade. Budget cuts have prevented them from providing parent workshops on developmental curriculum that were seen as critical.

- **Loss of Office for Children advocates.** Another critical interagency casualty is the Office for Children. The Office for Children's advocacy activities were cut last year and eliminated from this year's budget. One Office for Children advocate interviewed was very concerned about how families would connect with the appropriate social services. That morning, there was a call from a woman worried that her neighbor's children were being abused. It took four phone calls before the woman reached someone at OFC who could provide her with information on how to file a complaint on suspected child abuse. Some suggest that Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies could assume the responsibilities formerly taken on by regional OFC advocates. CCR&Rs serve as the "hub" of information regarding day care services to communities. These agencies can be valued advocates for child care providers. While networking among agencies and educational institutions occurs informally, fostering collaboration among child care providers, human services agencies and schools is not presently a function of CCR&Rs. In Jefferson City, the OFC liaison had an important role in assisting collaboration between private day care, nursery schools and Head Start and brought them together to meet regularly to talk about common issues. This ended in 1990 when the OFC office closed, and the group no longer meets.

- **Loss of Department of Education Regional Offices.** The elimination of regional education centers has had an impact on local communities in a variety of ways. One way is the loss of technical assistance to local school systems. Regional early childhood specialists provided information to early childhood programs on issues such as developmental curriculum, interagency collaboration and integration of young children with special needs. Technical assistance also helps local schools to provide training for parents and staff of public as well as private programs. Decreased local aid has caused many staff layoffs, leading to shifting of positions. Early childhood program staff who are new to their positions are in particular need of technical assistance. Because of changes in the Department of Education's staff due to budget cuts, many communities have had irregular and inconsistent technical assistance over the past few years. One urban community studied had six different liaisons in six years. The closing of regional education centers has already had a tremendous impact on that community because of its geographic isolation, with little likelihood that the situation will be alleviated in the near future.

- **Loss of key local leaders.** In communities where systems of communication are informal and there are no interagency agreements, the loss of key people in public schools and other agencies could mean the loss of communication between agencies. One solution to ensure maintaining collaboration is to formalize interagency agreements. However, there is no guarantee that interagency agreements will be implemented if there is not a level of trust between agency personnel.

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- **Lack of time to participate in innovative programs.** Potentially beneficial plans have already been jeopardized or curtailed in some communities. In one community, several years ago the public schools worked with area human service agencies to develop an interagency plan to coordinate service delivery to children with multiple needs requiring diverse, costly services such as residential programs. A cost-sharing plan was developed between the agencies, but unfortunately, it never got past the planning stage because the public school special education administrators were forced to drop out of negotiations when they were asked to take on additional job responsibilities within their school systems.