

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 470 382

EC 309 258

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TITLE A Regional Program for Preschool Handicapped Children: 1983-1984 Outreach Project. Final Summary Report.
INSTITUTION Putnam and Northern Westchester Counties Board of Cooperative Educational Services, Yorktown Heights, NY.
SPONS AGENCY Special Education Programs (ED/OSERS), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 1984-09-26
NOTE 52p.; Appendixes are not included in the ERIC version.
CONTRACT G008301370
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Standards; *Disabilities; Early Intervention; Information Dissemination; Models; *Outreach Programs; *Preschool Education; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; *Regional Programs; State Standards
IDENTIFIERS New York

ABSTRACT

This final report summarizes the activities and outcomes of a federally funded outreach project designed to provide training and materials to educators interested in replicating key aspects of the Regional Program for Preschool Handicapped Children, located in New York State. All the major objectives of the project's outreach efforts during the 1983-1984 funding period were met. Over 3,000 agencies were reached by initial or secondary awareness strategies. Project staff participated in 6 national, state and local conferences. Full replication training was provided to 36 classroom sites serving over 400 students. Training in one or more model components was provided to an additional 64 sites. A parent handbook was developed, field tested, printed and distributed to Regional Program parents. Another publication, "Standards for Excellence: Recommendations for Preschool Special Education in New York State," was developed, published and disseminated to more than 800 individuals and agencies throughout the United States. This report describes each of the program's components, discusses the project's evaluation processes, and reviews its major findings and recommendations. Materials related to the project are appended. (SG)



A REGIONAL PROGRAM

Board of Cooperative Educational Services
Putnam/Northern Westchester

FOR PRESCHOOL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

ED 470 382

1983-84 OUTREACH PROJECT

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

CFDA No. 84-024B

Administered by:

Special Education Department
Putnam/Northern Westchester
Board of Cooperative Educational Services
Yorktown Heights, New York 10598
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Project Director: Carol S. Eagen
Grant Number: G008301370
Project Number: 024BH30044

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Part I - PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

All grantees are required to complete Part I of the Performance Report.

Date of Report:	Grant Number:	Period of Report:
September 26, 1984	G008301370	From: July 1, 1983 To: June 30, 1984
Grantee Name and Descriptive Title of Project: Regional Program for Preschool Handicapped Children Handicapped Children's Early Education Program Outreach		

CERTIFICATION: I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief this report (consisting of this and subsequent pages and attachments) is correct and complete in all respects, except as may be specifically noted herein.

Typed Name of Project Director(s) or Principal Investigator(s): Carol S. Eagen	Signature of Project Director(s) or Principal Investigator(s): <i>Carol S. Eagen</i>
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PART II - PROJECT SUMMARY

All grantees are required to complete Part II of the Performance Report.

All grantees are to compare (in a narrative format) actual accomplishments over the grant award period to objectives contained in the originally approved grant application and, when appropriate, subsequently approved continuation applications. In addition to discussing project/program accomplishments and milestones, grantees should discuss slippages in attainment of program objectives and target dates and reasons for slippages where any differences occurred between originally stated objectives and the actual outcome of activities. This includes any failure to carry out all funded activities. When the output of the grant can be readily quantified, such data should be included -- and related to cost data for the computation of unit costs. When appropriate, utilize quantitative projections, data collected, criteria, and methodologies used to evaluate project/program accomplishments. Discuss reports made by or to professional journals, other publications, and professional conferences.

Grantees are also encouraged to highlight those phases, strategies, or products of their project/program which proved most successful.

Further monies may be withheld under these programs unless this report is completed and filed according to existing law and regulations (34 CFR Part 300).

1983-84 OUTREACH PROJECT
FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

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HIGHLIGHTS

The Regional Program's Outreach efforts during the 1983-84 funding period were quite impressive.

The major objectives of the Outreach Grant for 1983-84 were met. Highlights included:

- o Over 3000 agencies were reached by initial or secondary awareness strategies
- o Project Staff participated in 6 National, State and local conferences
- o Full replication training was provided to 36 classroom sites serving over 400 students
- o Training in one or more model components was provided to an additional 64 classroom sites
- o The Parent Handbook was developed, field tested, printed and distributed to Regional Program parents
- o Parent Group Meetings: Techniques & Topics is in its second printing
- o A total of 223 manuals were purchased during the 1983-84 Outreach year. This represents a 44% increase over the previous funding period
- o A Memorandum of Understanding with the New York State Education Department was signed by the New York Consortium of HCEEP Projects
- o Standards for Excellence: Recommendations for Preschool Special Education in New York State was developed and published by the New York State Consortium and disseminated by the Regional Program to over 800 individuals and agencies throughout the United States
- o Over 10 agencies representing at least 50 classroom sites have requested training in one or more components during the 1984-85 Outreach funding period.

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Description of Program

Context

The Regional Program for Preschool Handicapped Children is a cross-categorical early intervention program for preschool children with special needs. The program, which originated in 1976, consists of three components -- A Home Program for children birth to age three, a Classroom Program for children ages two-and-a-half to five, and an Outreach Program that provides training and materials to educators interested in replicating key aspects of the Regional Program. The Classroom Program has received national and state validation(1).

The Classroom Program serves eligible children from a consortium of 18 school districts in Northern Westchester and Putnam Counties of New York. Enrollment is open to any preschool child who exhibits one or more of the handicapping conditions defined for children in New York State. At present the Program serves mildly or moderately impaired children with the following handicaps: emotionally disturbed, hard of hearing, deaf, learning disabled, mentally retarded, orthopedically impaired, speech impaired, visually impaired and other health impaired. Program eligibility is determined by the Program's central screening committee following a comprehensive screening and

(1) The Preschool Program was deemed exemplary by the U.S. Department of Education Joint Dissemination Review Panel in June, 1981. It is one of 200 projects across the country that have received this federal stamp of approval. Additionally, the program was validated by the New York State Department of Education in June, 1982

assessment by a transdisciplinary team. Eligible children are assigned to one of five classroom sites located in Montrose, Yorktown Heights and Mahopac, New York. During the 1983-84 school year, 110 children participated in the Classroom Program.

Program Goals and Services

The overall intent of the Classroom Program is to improve children's academic and social functioning so they may be placed in the least restrictive environment upon reaching school age. To this end, the Classroom Program has five major goals:

1. To identify and serve handicapped children, ages 2-1/2 to 5, from the eighteen member school districts in the BOCES region;
2. To develop individualized educational plans jointly with parents that indicate the goals and objectives appropriate for each child's special needs;
3. To effect significant improvement in each child's a) language, b) perceptual, c) motor, d) social-emotional and e) general cognitive skills;
4. To help parents of handicapped children understand their child's special needs and, where appropriate, carry on remediation activities in their home; and,
5. To make specific recommendations to local school district personnel about participating children, so that appropriate planning can take place for each child.

To achieve these goals, the Classroom Program provides a series of intensive learning experiences for participating students. Children spend 2-1/2 hours per day, five days per week, over a ten-month period in classrooms staffed by a full-time special education teacher and teacher aide team with support from parent volunteers. A speech and language pathologist, psychologist and social worker who also work

within this setting are available on a part-time basis.

Program Key Elements

The Classroom Program is uniquely defined by three broad key elements:

1. Interactive Teaching Process
2. Transdisciplinary Training, Assessment and Consultation Model
3. Parent Involvement Model

Within these key elements are sub-elements that define the broad dimensions more specifically. Each key element is described below.

The Interactive Teaching Process involves the integrated use of three important teaching strategies - diagnostic-prescriptive teaching, language intervention and positive reinforcement. While each of these educational techniques often exists in preschool handicapped programs, it is the frequent and simultaneous use of all three techniques that characterize the Classroom Program approach. The Interactive Teaching Process is further characterized by the conditions under which the teaching occurs. Specifically, the following conditions must be in place in classroom sites: a) staffing patterns, where a teacher-aide team and a speech/language pathologist are present in the classroom on an on-going basis to provide comprehensive instructional services; b) a structured daily routine of classroom activities that is followed consistently and is designed to include individual, small group, and large group activities; c) heterogeneous grouping wherein student membership in small groups is rotated in order to prevent isolation of children on the basis of ability, handicap or

other noticeable features; and d) the use of play as an instructional mode in all classroom activities. These conditions provide the framework for the teaching strategies utilized in the Interactive Teaching Process.

The Transdisciplinary Training, Assessment and Consultation Model provides team consultation and the delivery of services to children within the classroom setting in order to eliminate the stigma associated with pull-out approaches. This model is characterized by the on-going and consistent services provided by the program's team. The same six individuals are involved in assessing the child's needs, developing her/his educational plan, delivering program services, and planning or coordinating current and future placements.

In terms of the third key element, the Parent Involvement Model, parents of students are involved in all aspects of the program from initial intake through classroom instruction and future placement. They can become involved through the Parent Volunteer System, through group meetings where ideas and information on parenting and child development are exchanged, and/or through participation during transdisciplinary team assessments.

The chart on the following page lists the key elements and sub-elements of the program. Appendix A provides a complete listing of key elements, sub-elements and those specific indicators that define the elements in observable terms.

CHART 1

KEY ELEMENTS AND SUB-ELEMENTS OF REGIONAL PROGRAM

INTERACTIVE TEACHING PROCESS

Structured Routine

Staffing Patterns

Heterogeneous Grouping

Individualized Instruction

Role of Play

Language-Based Approach

Positive Reinforcement

TRANSDISCIPLINARY TRAINING, ASSESSMENT AND CONSULTATION MODEL

Transdisciplinary Team Approach

Intake Evaluation

PARENT INVOLVEMENT MODEL

Parent Volunteer System

Parent Involvement Activities

The Regional Program for Preschool Handicapped Children was funded as an HCEEP Demonstration Program from September 1978 to June 1981 and as an Outreach Program since June 1981. The main goal of the Outreach Component is to upgrade programs and services available for preschool handicapped children. The more specific intent, however, is to facilitate the replication of the Regional Program classroom intervention model or components of the model by other early childhood service providers. The project is designed for replication in its entirety, or by component, in the community, state or country. In achieving these goals, Regional Program staff have used a variety of dissemination strategies. These strategies are discussed in the present report. In addition, evaluative data are provided that document the effectiveness of the Program's outreach efforts.

SECTION II

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The evaluation of the Outreach Program was conducted by Matrices Consulting Group of Fairfield, Connecticut. The study was undertaken to provide an objective third-party assessment of the Regional Program's outreach efforts (Objective 8 and Subobjective 8.1 to identify activities and effectiveness). To conduct this study, the evaluation design incorporated both a theoretical framework for organizing the variables to be addressed, and a methodological plan for structuring the data collection efforts. These aspects of the design are briefly described below.

Theoretical Framework

The task of transferring the success of an innovative project to other districts or agencies is not a discrete phenomenon. Rather, it is a process - a series of planned interactions that occur over time and result in certain specified outcomes. Over the past two decades, a variety of models have been proposed for systematically viewing this change process. These models provide useful frameworks for organizing a program's structure, interactions, activities and outcomes into a set of relevant dimensions. The models also present useful paradigms for evaluating program operations and effects.

Matrices' approach to the Regional Program evaluation was based upon a model of educational change that specified several interrelated stages in the change process. The model organizes these stages according to Processes and Outcomes. Two types of Process

stages or activities were included in the evaluation:

- o Initiation activities designed to make potential adopters aware of the Regional Program and to build their interest in eventual adoption;
- o Installation activities undertaken to assist adopters with the implementation or actual use of the Program Intervention Model or components of that Model.

For each of these activities, a number of pertinent variables were explored. The main intent was to provide answers to the following questions: What was done?, How well was it done?, and Did it make a difference?

Additionally, three clusters of Outcome activities(2) were examined in the evaluation; these activities are:

- o Implementation or the extent to which the Regional Program Intervention Model was operational at replication sites;
- o Impact or the Program's capacity to effect student change at replication sites; and,
- o Incorporation or the degree to which replicators could be certified as demonstration sites for Regional Program activities.

Again, a number of important issues were explored within each of these areas. The specific methodological procedures for studying the Process and Outcome activities are discussed below.

(2) For the 1983-84 evaluation, implementation was the only Outcome area examined. Impact and incorporation will be studied in subsequent years, once the key elements of the Regional Program are firmly established in adoption sites.

Methodological Plan

Processes

To gather information pertaining to the Regional Program's Process activities, the evaluation relied on two major sources of data:

1) Dissemination Logs, and 2) Questionnaires. The Dissemination Logs were developed by the evaluators and maintained by the Project staff.

They included the following:

- o Outreach Services Log
- o Awareness Session Log
- o Awareness Mailing Log
- o Materials Distribution Log
- o Training Log
- o Summary Log
- o Follow-up Services Log

Data from these logs were synthesized by the staff, and the tabulated information was then transferred to a series of Summary Forms. The summarized data were used to address a number of variables, including the type of activities conducted and the extent to which a broad range of agencies and individuals participated in these activities.

Four Questionnaires were developed for the evaluation of Program Processes:

- o Awareness Session Participant Reaction Form
- o Materials Reaction Form
- o Training Session Participant Reaction Form
- o Technical Assistance Reaction Form

The Questionnaires were used to gather information about the quality and effectiveness of the Process activities from the standpoint of the user.

Outcome

As noted earlier, the 1983-84 evaluation study focused upon only one Outcome area - program implementation. The prime evaluative concern within this area was determining the extent to which the key elements of the Regional Program were evident in adoption sites. To gather this information, a staff member at each adoption site (designated as a Program Monitor) was asked to systematically track the implementation process and, at certain benchmarks, to communicate the results to the Regional Program staff by completing a series of assessment instruments. The specific instructions for completing these duties were presented in the Program Monitor Manual(3) which was distributed to all replication sites.

Two instruments were used by Program monitors to assess the degree of implementation:

- o Start-up Phase Checklist
- o Installation Phase Checklist

The instruments provided information about program usage, that is, the number of Program key elements that were implemented by adopters and the percent of time replicating staff spent in roles and behaviors associated with these key elements. A total of five adopter sites provided implementation data during the current year. Data were analyzed and interpreted for each of these sites.

(3) The Program Monitor Manual, which was prepared by Marilyn Musumeci and Susan Koen from Matrices Consulting Group, is available from the Regional Program.

SECTION III

FINDINGS

- o PROCESSES

- Initiation

- Installation

- o OUTCOMES

PROCESSES

The evaluation findings related to Program Process are presented according to the two Process activities: Initiation and Installation. In discussing these activities, the presentation is organized by the key questions raised earlier:

1. What was done?
2. How well was it done?
3. Did it make a difference?

Responses to these questions indicate the range and effectiveness of the Program's diffusion activities.

Initiation

What Was Done?

The first step required in any successful replication effort is to create awareness of the innovation among the widest pool of potential adopters.

To inform local school districts and agencies about the Regional Program, the staff used a variety of awareness strategies. These included first-step techniques such as mass mailings, newsletters and personal contact with potential adopters, and more in-depth methods such as awareness presentations, demonstrations, consultation and materials development/distribution. The primary objectives related to these activities were: Objective 1 - Exchange information through awareness activities with other projects and agencies and Objective 2 - to develop, refine and disseminate additional products related to the adoption of the Regional Program.

Initial Awareness

1. Awareness Mailings. Large-scale awareness mailings was one tactic used by the Regional Program staff to inform agencies about their services. The mailing consisted of a brochure that concisely described the Program and a series of leaflets that provided information about the Program's key elements. Subobjective 1.1 of the Regional Program's 1983-84 Outreach Grant proposed to disseminate information to state and local education agencies and organizations which express interest in the program.

Among the targeted groups that received awareness mailings during the past year were: 1979-84 participants of the Program's awareness presentations; statewide professional organizations serving handicapped children; National Headstart, CEC and AAMD Conference participants. See Appendix B for request for information letters.

2. Newsletters. Newsletters offer an excellent means of reaching diverse audiences and stimulating their interest in an innovative program. Subobjective 1.6 was to disseminate information about the Regional Program using mass media, newsletters and journal articles.

During the past year, several articles describing the Regional Program appeared in local newspapers and educational newsletters. The publications included: Newsbriefs, a newsletter distributed by the Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions, the New York State Education Department, The Reporter Dispatch - the local newspaper serving Westchester, Rockland and Putnam Counties of New York; Bedford Newsletter; BOCES Boardgram; BOCES Reporter; SAANYS News and Notes, a journal distributed to all

administrators in New York State, the Westchester Association for the Education of Young Children Newsletter. See Appendix C for copies of articles.

3. Personal Contact. Personal contact, either through telephone calls or face-to-face meetings, was a strategy frequently used by staff to attract interest in the Regional Program. The personalized approach enabled staff to provide awareness information, answer questions and encourage further involvement in the Program. Telephone contact was usually initiated by practitioners interested in Regional Program services. Conversely, face-to-face contact was generally initiated by Program staff at conferences, awareness sessions or other program events.

In-depth/Secondary Awareness

1. Awareness Conferences/Presentations. Awareness Conferences typically bring together several projects to make presentations to school or agency personnel interested in learning more about innovative programs. The advantage of this strategy is that it allows relatively low-cost, personalized exposure of projects to a relatively large number of interested people. The Regional Program staff conducted four types of awareness presentations during the past year: general sessions that provided an overview of all Program services; component sessions that focused upon one Program component, e.g., Parent Volunteer System; poster sessions where staff presented the Program as a whole or one of the components through poster displays and a brief oral presentation; and displays where products and materials developed by the Regional Program were arranged for perusal

at educational booths or fairs. These activities were done to complete Subobjective 1.3 - participate in two National, two Regional and one State conference, Subobjective 1.4 - conduct 20 short term awareness workshops and Subobjective 1.5 - conduct two "services and training conferences" within New York State.

LIST OF NATIONAL, STATE REGIONAL CONFERENCES

General Awareness Sessions

- New Family Projects, Skidmore College, Saratoga, New York, September 1983
- Services and Training Conference, Syracuse, New York, November 1983
- Mahopac Library Parenting Group, Mahopac, New York, February 1984
- Mahopac Carmel Newcomers Club, Mahopac, New York, March 1984
- Paterson Library Parenting Group, Paterson, New York, April 1984
- The Parent Connection, Shrub Oak, New York, May 1984
- Glencove Head Start, Glencove, New York, May 1984
- Flying Goose Day Care Center, Peekskill, New York May 1984
- Suffolk II BOCES, Patchogue, New York, June 1984
- Suffolk III BOCES, Dix Hills, New York, June 1984

Conference Presentations

- a. Northeastern Educational Research Association Annual Convention
Ellenville, New York, October 1983
Classroom Program of the Regional Program for Preschool Handicapped Children: New York State Validated Program
- b. Interact Conference
Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, November 1983
Strategies for Team Building and Problem Solving
- c. A Regional Demonstration Program Services and Training Workshop
Syracuse, New York, November 10, 1983
The Regional Program Training and Consultation Services
- d. CEC International Conference
Washington, D.C., April 1984
Interactive Teaching Process
Parent Volunteer System

Display Booths

- a. Taking Charge: Confronting Issues in The Early Education of High Risk and Handicapped Children
Syracuse, New York, October 1983
- b. 1983 HCEEP/DEC Conference
Washington, D.C., December 1983
- c. CEC International Conference
Washington, D.C., April 1984
Joint booth with HCEEP Outreach Projects (JDRP Approved)

See Appendix D for conference listings and thank you letters.

2. Demonstrations. Demonstrations afford school district personnel an opportunity to examine the operational qualities of an innovation; this is usually accomplished by day-long visits to the project site. Subobjective 1.2 stated that Regional Program staff would conduct visitor orientations for targeted programs and decision makers.

The demonstrations conducted by the Regional Program enabled over 70 visitors to observe classrooms where they could actually witness the Program in action, and talk directly with teachers to learn "first-hand" about the daily functioning of the Program. Additionally, visitors were shown the slide presentation and given a Visitor Orientation Package that provided in-depth descriptive information about the Program, and material related to Program adoption. The following visitor orientations were conducted:

- Former Parent Coordinator, Toledo Public Schools, Preschool, Toledo, Ohio
- Psychologist, Cornell Medical Center, White Plains, New York
- Director, South Salem Nursery School, South Salem, New York
- Staff of Rockland Early Years, Peekskill, New York
- Kindergarten Teacher, Greenburgh Public Schools, Greenburgh, New York

- Administrators, Suffolk BOCES III, Dix Hills, New York
- Graduate Students, SUNY Purchase, New York
- Director, Respite Rockland and Orange County
- Students, Manhattanville College, New York
- Administrator, Broom County BOCES
- Clinical Staff, Wappingers Falls School District
- Speech Pathologist, Cleary School for the Deaf, Long Island, New York
- Psychologist, Brookfield Public Schools, Brookfield, Connecticut
- Speech Pathologist and Teacher, Madison/Oneida BOCES, Rome, New York
- Preschool Supervisor, Washington-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES, Glens Falls, New York
- Education Director, Glens Falls United Cerebral Palsy, Glens Falls, New York
- Assistant Director of Special Education, Madison/Oneida BOCES, Verona, New York

See Appendix E for thank you letters.

3. Consultations. The Regional Program staff offered consultation in a variety of areas to the staff of potential adoption sites. This year, replicators were assisted in identifying their needs, trouble-shooting and in general organizational planning. Subobjective 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 stated that the Regional Program would conduct needs assessment and provide assistance to target programs regarding funding and staff selection. The following is a list of consultations conducted during the 1982-83 school year.

- Rockland County A.R.C., Blauvelt, N.Y. (program development)
- Special Education Department, Rockland County BOCES, West Nyack, N.Y. (staff training)
- Regional Associates, State Education Department, Peekskill, N.Y. (training available)
- Westcop, White Plains, N.Y. (staff training)
- Special Education Department Madison-Oneida BOCES, Verona, N. Y. (programming issues)
- Superintendent, Oneida Public Schools, Oneida, N.Y. (replication)
- Putnam County Planning Department, Carmel, N.Y. (transportation and funding)
- Member of Board of Education, Beacon Schools, Beacon, N.Y. (developing a preschool program)
- SETRC Coordinator, Rockland County BOCES, Nyack, N.Y. (staff training)

- Speech Pathologist, Danbury Hospital, Danbury, Conn. (funding)
- Speech and Hearing Department, St. Francis Hospital, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. (funding and screening)
- Westchester County Medical Center, Valhalla, N.Y. (referral procedures)
- Speech Pathologist, Union East Elementary School, Cheektowaga, N.Y. (funding issues)
- Training Specialist, Portage Project, Portage, Wisc. (Program Standards)
- Family Information Referral Service Team, White Plains, N.Y. (programming issues)
- Psychologist, Chautauqua BOCES, Fredonia, N.Y. (programming issues)
- State Education Department, Albany, N.Y. (federal project issues)
- Early Childhood Directions Center, White Plains, N.Y. (funding issues)
- WARC, White Plains, N.Y. (funding issues)
- St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES, Canton, N.Y. (programming issues)
- PARC, Carmel, N.Y. (funding, transportation and programming)

4. Product Development/Distribution. Objective 2 was to develop, refine and disseminate additional products related to the Regional Program. Products were distributed to interested agencies during the past year. These included:

The Parent Volunteer System, A Manual and An Activity Catalog for Teachers: A manual utilized in training early childhood teachers in a system of involving parents as volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis.

A Guide for Creating Community Awareness and Developing Interagency Cooperation: A "how-to" manual for developing a process of interagency cooperation within a program's locale.

The Transdisciplinary Training, Assessment and Consultation Model: A comprehensive manual used in training special education personnel (teachers, psychologists, social workers, speech and language pathologists and consultant specialists) in staff training, child assessment and teacher consultation.

Parent Group Meetings - Techniques and Topics: A manual for teachers' use describing the importance of parent involvement, staff roles, and techniques for developing monthly parent group meetings.

The Preschool Project Manual: A manual which facilitates the orientation of staff members to the goals, procedures, requirements and services involved in the preschool program.

The Curriculum Model for a Regional Demonstration Program for Preschool

Handicapped Children: A manual which describes the specific curriculum approach of the BOCES Preschool Program.

The Transition Program: Preparing for School: A manual which describes the methods for organizing a transition class for Kindergarten children with special needs and provides ideas for individualizing instruction for kindergarten readiness.

Preschool Play: Observation and Implementation: This product describes the importance of observing children's level of representational play and provides suggestions for facilitating higher levels of play.

Subobjective 2.1 stated that the Regional Program would develop new written materials including the The Parent Handbook: A Guide to the BOCES Preschool Program (working title had been A Complete Guide for Parents of Preschool Handicapped Children) and the "Interactive Teaching Process Guide, both of which are described below.

The Parent Handbook: A Guide to the BOCES Preschool Program: A complete guide for parents of preschool handicapped children. This guide was written by project staff and has been distributed to parents of children currently enrolled in the Regional Program. It includes a description of the services provided in a question and answer format. (Appendix F.)

The Interactive Teaching Process Guide: This manual which will serve as an expansion of the Curriculum Guide, is currently in outline form. Members of the Regional Program staff have been contributing materials. (Appendix G).

Outreach Newsletter: A newsletter was published and distributed in the Spring of 1984. (Appendix H). It was sent to over 3,000 preschool service providers, government agencies and Special Education Departments nationwide. Reactions to this newsletter have been very favorable and many requests for products have been received.

Through the initial awareness efforts of the Regional Program, individuals from over 2500 different agencies were provided with Program information. Sixty percent (60%) of these agencies were preschool programs (76% public; 24% private). The remaining were medical, social service agencies institutes of higher education, and state agencies. The most common method used to reach the agencies was

the awareness mailing - over 55% were contacted in this fashion. The second most common method was newsletters and publicity.

Secondary or in-depth awareness information was provided to 723 different agencies. The major strategy for providing this detailed description of the Regional Program was the awareness presentation. A total of 600 school districts and agencies attended awareness presentations. To serve these districts, 14 different presentations were held in New York State and the District of Columbia.

Product distribution was the second most common method of providing in-depth awareness information to potential adopters. Manuals and reports were sent to 80 different agencies with each agency receiving an average of two products; a total of 223 products were distributed. The distribution of products crossed state lines; agencies from 26 different states received these program materials. Moreover, products were distributed to agencies from four different countries - Canada, Spain, Germany and Israel.

A broad range of agencies were involved in secondary awareness activities. The majority were preschool programs - 60% of all agencies reached - although there was representation of medical, social service and state agencies.

In terms of secondary awareness, 90% of the activities conducted or materials distributed were as a result of agency requests. This would suggest that the combination of initial and secondary outreach efforts undertaken attracted the attention of many practitioners and encouraged them to seek more information about the Regional Program.

In summary, through the Regional Program's Initiation activities, over 3,000 different agencies across the country were provided with either initial or secondary awareness information.

How Well Was It Done?

The assessment of quality was accomplished by gauging the extent to which activities and materials were favorably received by potential adopters. Both awareness presentations and program products

were evaluated in this regard.

Participant reaction to the Program's awareness presentations was determined by administering a questionnaire to a sample of agencies attending the sessions. The Awareness Session Questionnaire required participants to rate various aspects of the presentations, including the content, organization, handouts and trainer skills. A total of 90 agencies completed the Forms. On a five-point Likert-type scale (5=high;1=low), the majority of respondents gave ratings of 4.0 or above for most questionnaire items. The overall mean rating for the items was 4.7 (range 4.0-4.9; 3.0 is usually thought of as "average".) See Appendix I for participant reactions to awareness presentations.

Reactions to the Regional Program's products were obtained by a mail survey to a random sample of agencies that had received this material. The questionnaire required individuals to rate their reactions to the products according to quality indicators such as: organization, motivational quality, scope/coverage, objectivity and clarity. A total of 107 surveys were sent with a 77% return rate. Of the 16 items included on the form, the overall average was 4.3 (range 3.5 - 4.4). The highest rated items related to the organization of the products and the relevance of Products to needs of preschool children.

In summary, the Regional Program's awareness presentations and products were well received. Agencies from across the country gave above average ratings on questionnaire items that tapped such attributes as organization, content, coverage, motivational quality and trainer skills.

Did It Make a Difference?

To a large extent, the success of awareness campaigns can be gauged by the number of agencies interested in installing a program in their home site. To determine the impact of the Regional Program's initiation activities, therefore, we compared the number of agencies that were made aware of the Program to the number that eventually participated in Training. For this comparison, secondary awareness strategies were examined because one would not expect an adoption of the Regional Program to occur on the basis of initial awareness alone; the tremendous investment of time and resources needed to implement this comprehensive Program would require that replication site staff be introduced to the model in a more intensive way, either through presentation, on-site demonstrations or project manuals.

The results of the comparison between secondary awareness strategies and training are found in Table 1. In interpreting this data for each strategy, two factors must be considered: 1) the number of agencies trained regardless of the number initially contacted (Column II); and 2) the number of agencies trained as a proportion of those contacted, i.e., the "yield" (Column III). With respect to the first factor, awareness presentations and consultations produced the most trainings - while products and efficacy presentations did not result in any trainings. On this basis, the presentations and consultations would appear to be equally effective strategies; conversely, products and efficacy presentations seemed equally ineffective in generating further agency involvement in the Program. In terms of the yield, however, consultations far surpassed awareness

presentations. That is, of the number of agencies contacted by consultations, almost one half were eventually trained; yet, only 1% of the agencies involved in presentations were trained. These in-depth strategies would have to be judged as the most effective in producing trainings.

Table 1
IMPACT OF REGIONAL PROGRAM INITIATION EFFORTS

Secondary Awareness Strategy	I Number Agencies Contacted	II Number Agencies/ Sites Trained	III Percent Contacted Who Were Trained
Awareness Presentation	600	5	1%
Demonstration	22	--	--
Consultation	17	9	53%
Program Products	80	--	--
Efficacy Presentation	<u>4</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL	723	14/100 Classroom Sites	2%

In summary, the Regional Program's Initiation efforts resulted in a large number of requests for further information from agencies across the country. Moreover, 14 of these agencies representing 100 classroom sites were trained to replicate the Program model or components of the model at their home sites. See Appendix J, requests for training. The most successful awareness strategy for generating agency interest in adopter training was consultation.

INSTALLATION

What Was Done?

Installation is the second stage in the change process. During this stage, school districts and agencies are trained to manage and operate a program, and then provided with follow-up technical assistance (TA) to support their implementation efforts. Objective 3 stated that training and technical assistance would be provided to at least 10 sites. These activities are discussed on the following pages.

Training. The Regional Program training process consists of an Orientation Conference and several workshops that directly correspond to the key elements of the Program. Subobjective 3.3 was to conduct staff training in one or all of the model components. Subobjective 3.4 stated that two training conferences would be conducted at the Regional Program. This was modified based on needs assessments with programs trained which preferred to have training conducted at their own site. These workshops are: the Interactive Teaching Process (ITP) Workshop, the Transdisciplinary Training, Assessment and Consultation Model (TD) Workshop, the Parent Volunteer System (PVS) Workshop and Parent Group Meetings (PGM) Workshop. Agencies intending to replicate the Regional Program and/or program components are required to participate in the Orientation Conference and specific workshops. The Orientation Conference and the Workshops are described below.

1. Orientation Conference. This half-day session introduces agency personnel to the key elements of the Regional Program, and to the theoretical bases of these components. The session mainly consists of an oral presentation with media back-up.

2. Interactive Teaching Process Workshop. The ITP workshop, a one-day session, trains teachers and classroom personnel in the synchronistic use of three teaching strategies: diagnostic-prescriptive teaching, language intervention, and positive reinforcement. Activities include: videotapes of interacting strategies, structured classroom discussion, role plays of language intervention, and review of the theoretical foundations of the Process. Trainees receive a copy of the Curriculum Model for a Regional Demonstration Project for Preschool Handicapped Children for use in this workshop.

3. The Transdisciplinary Training, Assessment and Consultation Model Workshop. The TD workshop requires two days to train teachers, supervisors and clinical personnel in adopting the Transdisciplinary Approach. First day activities include: a general introductory presentation, an in-depth description of the team assessment process, videotape previews of a team meeting and participant involvement exercises. During the second day, the role of parents in this process is discussed, a case study is reviewed and an actual pre-assessment case conference is conducted. Copies of the Transdisciplinary Model Manual are also available for participant use.

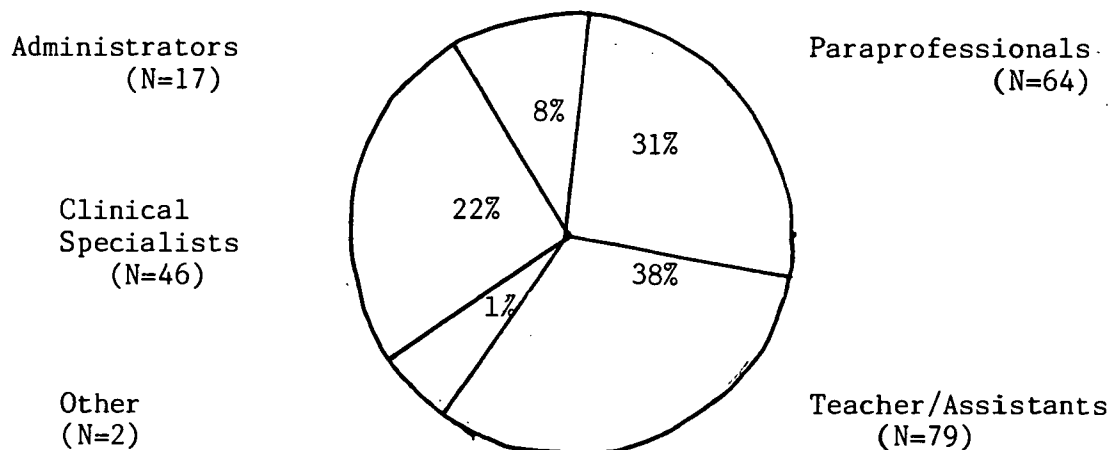
4. Parent Volunteer System Workshop. A one-day workshop is conducted to train teachers and classroom personnel to adapt the parent volunteer system and other parent involvement activities to the needs of their program and program parents. During the PVS Workshop, participants are led through the steps for developing parent participation plans (instruction cards) according to the classroom daily routine. Additionally, schedules and activities used in developing appropriate parent orientation and training sessions are demonstrated and alternative uses of the system are discussed. All participating agencies receive copies of the Parent Volunteer System Manual and Activity Catalog.

5. Parent Group Meetings - Staff Training Workshop. This one-day training workshop involves participants in activities designed to develop skills in planning and leading educationally focused parent group meetings. The workshop includes a review of the rationale, purpose and staff feelings about parent group meetings. Successful methods for involving parents and maintaining their interest are discussed. Participants will develop meeting formats and plan several meetings based on prioritized topics. Recommended parent meeting agendas and resources will be provided. Finally, a discussion of the teacher's role in the meetings will conclude the workshop. The Parent Group Meeting - Teacher-Training Manual is provided to participating agencies.

During the past year, Program staff conducted training workshops for 100 sites. See Appendix K for thank you letters. The chart

on the following page lists the agencies and training provided. Two hundred and eight (208) individuals from the sites attended the training sessions. These participants represented various staff types, although the majority were teachers and paraprofessional (see Figure 1). It is important to note that administrators from the sites were present at the training sessions. This finding is significant in view of past research which tells us that administrative support is crucial to the successful adoption of an innovation.

FIGURE 1
BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING
THE REGIONAL PROGRAM TRAINING SESSIONS



REPLICATION AND TRAINING SITES

SEPTEMBER 1983 - JUNE 1984

Name and Address of Agency	Number of Full Time/Part Time Staff	Source of Funding	Model Components Used	Number of Children and Handicapping Condition	Improved Services at Existing Program	Number of Classrooms Using Model Components
Tioga County Head Start 231 Main Street Owego, New York 13827	28	Federal Grant	Parent-Team Involvement Model	110 - all handicapping conditions	yes	5
Rockland County BOCES 61 Parrott Road West Nyack, New York 10994	21	State Ed. Dept. Co. of Residence	Transdisciplinary Model	40 - multihandicapped	yes	4
Recap Head Start 157 Linden Avenue Middletown, New York	20	Federal Grant	Interactive Teaching Process Parent Volunteer System	73 - all handicapping conditions	yes	4
Putnam Association for Retarded Citizens Kent Center Carmel, New York 10512 (Retraining of New Staff)	18	Family Court	Parent-Team Involvement Model	35 - all handicapping conditions	yes	4
New Family Project Skidmore College Saratoga Springs, New York 12866	13	United Way N.Y.S. Department of Mental Hygiene State Ed. Dept.	Parent-Team Involvement Model	24 - all handicapping conditions	yes	2
Madison/Oneida BOCES Spring Road Verona, New York 13478	14	Family Court Co. of Residence	Parent Volunteer System Interactive Teaching Process Transdisciplinary Model Parent Group Meetings	52 - all handicapping conditions	yes	5
Oneida City Schools Oneida, New York	4	Family Court Co. of Residence	Parent Volunteer System Interactive Teaching Process Transdisciplinary Model Parent Group Meetings	10 - all handicapping conditions	yes	1

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REPLICATION AND TRAINING SITES

SEPTEMBER 1983 - JUNE 1984

Name and Address of Agency	Number of Full Time/Part Time Staff	Source of Funding	Model Components Used	Number of Children and Handicapping Condition	Improved Services at Existing Program	Number of Classrooms Using Model Components
Westcop/Head Start 172 South Broadway White Plains, New York	7	P.A. 26 H.E.W.	Transdisciplinary Model Parent Volunteer System Interactive Teaching Process	189-all handicapping conditions	yes	30
Westchester Association for Retarded Citizens Preschool Program 74 Westmoreland Avenue White Plains, New York	16	Family Court Co. of Residence	Parent Volunteer System	55 - all handicapping conditions	yes	5
Lifeline Center for Child Development 80-09 Winchester Blvd. Queens Village, N.Y. 11427	17	Family Court	Interactive Teaching Process	36 - emotionally disturbed	yes	4
Rockland County ARC Cottage Lane Blauvelt, New York 10913	36	Family Court State Ed. Dept.	Transdisciplinary Model	60 - multihandicapped	yes	8
New Rochelle Pre-K Head Start City School District Barnard School 129 Barnard Road New Rochelle, New York 10501	26	Federal Grant N.Y.S. Ed. Grant New Rochelle City Schools	Parent Volunteer System	252	yes	14
Yonkers Pre-Kindergarten School 25 579 Warburton Ave. Yonkers, New York 10701	15	N.Y. State Grant Yonkers City School	Parent Volunteer System	120	yes	8

REPLICATION AND TRAINING SITES

SEPTEMBER 1983 - JUNE 1984

Name and Address of Agency	Number of Full Time/Part Time Staff	Source of Funding	Model Components Used	Number of Children and Handicapping Condition	Improved Services at Existing Program	Number of Classrooms Using Model Components
SteppingStone Day School 98-02 62nd Drive Rego Park, New York 11374	18	N.Y.C. Board of Ed Family Court	Parent Involvement Model	56 - all handi- capping condi- tions	yes	6
The Life Skills School 97-30 Queens Blvd. Rego Park, New York 11374	15	Family Court	Parent Involvement Model	40 - all handi- capping condi- tions	yes	home-based program

Technical Assistance. Once adopters are trained to implement the key elements of a program, technical assistance is generally provided to support on-going implementation activities. Regional Program staff provided follow-up technical assistance to all of the agencies trained. Several methods were used to deliver this TA including: follow-up visits, telephone consultation and materials distribution. Generally, the purpose of this assistance was to:

- a. help staff to improve their interactive teaching skills and their approach with parent volunteers;
- b. provide feedback on the transdisciplinary team assessment process;
- c. assist the project supervisor in program evaluation; and
- d. informally discuss problems relating to working with children, parents and team members.

In summary, as a result of the Regional Program's training efforts, 208 staff members from 100 classroom sites were trained to implement the key elements of the Program or model components. Each of these sites was contacted for follow-up support.

In addition, the Regional Program Adoption Site Consortium has been established with the directors and head teachers of all replication sites (Woodstock, Warwick, South Orangetown Preschool Programs and The Westchester ARC, Madison/Oneida BOCES Preschool Program, Oneida City School District Preschool Program and Westchester Cooperative Opportunity Program (Westcop)) and potential replicators to determine follow-up services needed by adopters. At this meeting, The Project Monitor Manual was distributed to all new adopters and evaluation procedures were reviewed. Information on the formation and

membership of New York State Chapter of Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children was also distributed. See Appendix L for minutes of this meeting. Objective 6 stated that the Regional Program would prepare trainers from designated demonstration sites. Adopters indicated that they would not be able to provide training to other interested agencies or sites. However, they would serve as demonstration sites and conduct visitor orientations which would include reviewing the core elements that have been adopted and inform potential replicators of the availability of training through the Regional Program. Outlines of the workshops conducted for replicators were distributed so that replication sites could provide training in the model components to all new staff hired after the training by RP has been completed. Replication sites have requested this assistance and consultation is provided prior to and following these in-service workshops.

How Well Was It Done?

To assess the quality of the Regional Program's training efforts, questionnaires were administered to staff members at each of the sites. The Training Questionnaire(4) required staff to rate each of the four workshop sessions according to 11 quality indicators (e.g., content, organization and trainer skill). A total of 150 individuals completed the forms (72% of those trained); their reactions

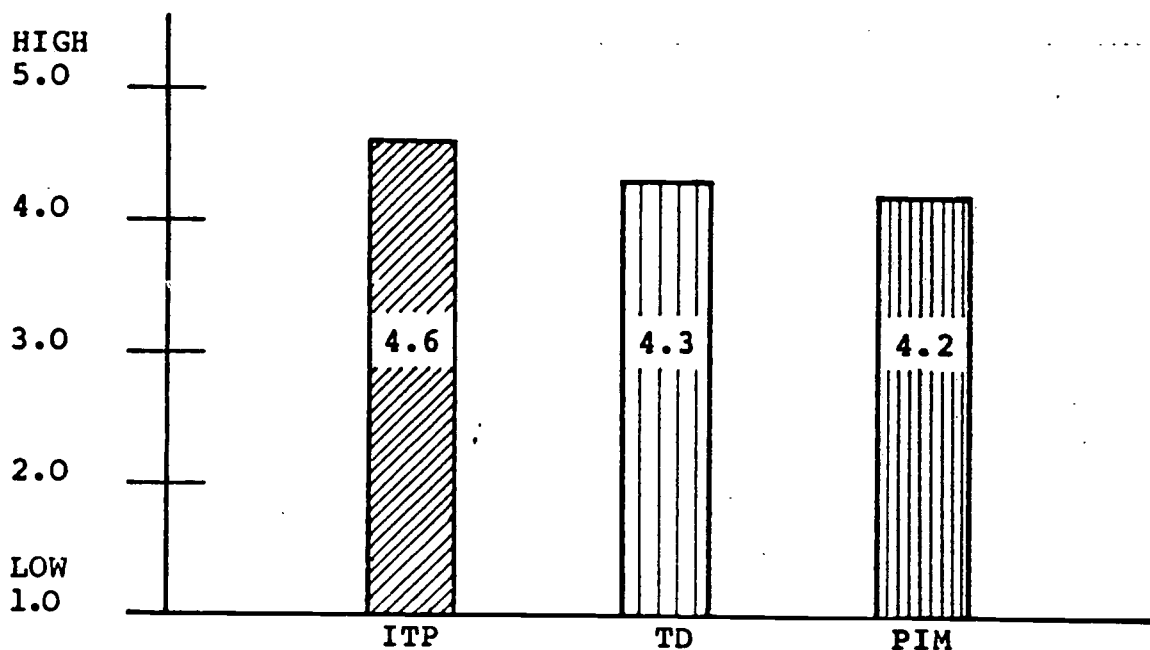
(4) This Questionnaire consisted of two sections - one measuring workshop quality, and the other measuring workshop effectiveness. Effectiveness ratings will be discussed in the next section.

to the ITP, TD, PVS and PGM(5) sessions are shown in Figure 2. The means depicted in this figure are based on the average scores for all 11 quality items; a five-point rating scale (1 = low; 5 = high) was used.

As the graphs indicate, all three means were above 4.0 on a five-point rating scale. These above average results are highly significant in that studies have found a strong correlation between training satisfaction and adoption success. That is, if site staff are not motivated at the time of training, there is little likelihood that they will successfully implement an innovative project.

FIGURE 2

PARTICIPANT REACTIONS TO CORE TRAINING WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED
BY REGIONAL PROGRAM STAFF



(5) Data from the PVS and PGM were combined to yield one workshop rating for the Parent Involvement Model (PIM)

Did It Make a Difference?

To determine if the Regional Program's Installation activities were effective, we focused upon the cornerstone of these activities - training. Our intent was to assess the knowledge and skills acquired by replicators as a result of their Program training experiences. To do so, Section II of the Training Questionnaire was administered to staff following their participation in the workshop sessions. See Appendix M for Specific Workshop Participant Reactions. This section of the instrument consisted of three scales; each scale assessed staff capabilities to implement one of the Program's key elements (i.e., either the Interactive Teaching Process, the Transdisciplinary Team Model, the Parent Volunteer System or Parent Group Meetings). Assessments were made through staff ratings of a series of items (eight on each scale). A five-point rating system was used; the following anchor points were provided as rating codes:

- 5 - Can apply without further help
- 3 - Can apply only with assistance
- 1 - Not prepared to apply at all

The results of these ratings are graphically depicted in Figure 3; again, the means represent the average of the items for each of the scales.

These data indicate that site staff felt very capable of implementing the key elements of the Regional Program; overall mean ratings for each of the three scales were above 4.0. Not only were the total means above average, but most individual items on these scales also were rated above 4.0. Staff, thus, felt reasonably confident to

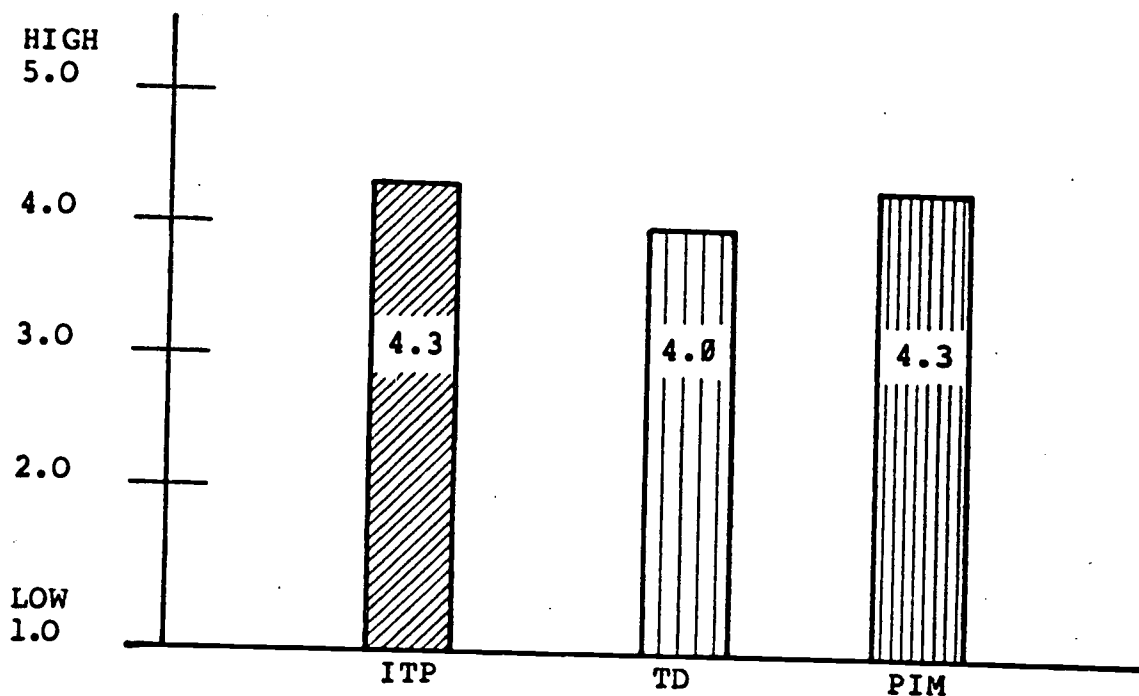
apply such Program techniques as:

- developing written transdisciplinary team reports
- conducting a child assessment
- modeling or expanding a child's language production
- developing parent involvement instruction cards
- conducting training sessions for parents interested in volunteering

Based on these positive ratings, it is clear that the Regional Program's training workshops were effective in raising the knowledge and skill levels of participants.

FIGURE 3

PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
ACQUIRED AS A RESULT OF CORE TRAINING WORKSHOPS



OUTCOMES

IMPLEMENTATION

In the study of program implementation, the fidelity of adoption, that is, the extent to which the key elements of the Regional Program were evident in sites replicating the entire Program model was examined. During the 1983-84 year, 36 classroom sites elected training in all key elements. The implementation study was undertaken for 6 classroom sites that were trained in 1983-84.

Fidelity of Adoption

The approach to examining adoption fidelity was based upon a belief that implementation involves several layers of change in program users: changes in their behavior (Do they follow the set of key elements which uniquely define the innovation?); changes in their technical understanding (Have they internalized the knowledge and skills necessary to operate the program?); and changes in receptivity (Are they committed to the program?). Subobjective 3.5 was to evaluate the training and technical assistance provided to replication sites.

Program Usage

To assess the level of program usage, Program Monitors completed implementation checklists to determine the extent to which the key elements were in place in each site. Specific findings indicated that 65% of the process and structural elements necessary to

initiate the Regional Program and ensure its effective daily operation were fully implemented in all replication sites studied.

Technical Understanding

To assess the level of technical understanding among program users at replication sites, information was obtained from both staff members and parents. Two questionnaires consisting of several scales, i.e., knowledge, skills, attitude and perceived change, were distributed in this regard. Replication staff were asked to complete the Knowledge and Skills Scales to determine their overall understanding of program concepts and key elements. Parents were asked to complete only the Knowledge Scale.

The mean ratings for staff and parents surpassed 4.0 on the Knowledge and Skills Scales which suggests a high level of technical understanding. Both groups gave consistently high ratings to items such as goals, philosophy, instructional techniques and curriculum. Moreover, staff felt very capable of implementing various program activities.

Receptivity

Within the area of program receptivity, two issues were examined: staff and parent satisfaction with the project and parent commitment. Satisfaction was assessed through the administration of the Attitude Scale; commitment was studied by analyzing parent response to the Perceived Change in Child Scale, and by determining if parents were willing to recommend the program to others.

The level of receptivity among staff and parents was well above average. Parents, particularly, held extremely positive views and supported the program through a variety of involvement activities.

In terms of perceived student changes, the overall rating given by parents was above average. Parents felt their children made comparable gains in speech/language skills, physical/motor skills, social skills and self-help skills. A particularly encouraging finding was that 98% of the parents said that they would recommend the program to another parent; their open-ended comments further substantiated their commitment to the program.

SECTION IV

GENERAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

GENERAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

General Outreach Activities were conducted to increase awareness of the need for and availability of services for preschool handicapped children and to upgrade program services particularly in New York State. Objective 4 and Subobjective 4.1 of the 1983-84 Outreach Grant proposed to stimulate state awareness of the need for New York State mandates and Subobjective 4.2 was to expand communications networks to expand interagency consultation and child find efforts.

The New York State Consortium was formed in the fall of 1981 and consisted of the project directors of all New York State HCEEP projects. During 1983-84, the Regional Program participated in four meetings of the New York State Consortium.

The New York State Consortium has signed a memorandum of understanding with the New York State Education Department. The purpose of this agreement is to identify areas of cooperation that can be addressed by both parties in an effort to maximize resources on behalf of preschool handicapped children. Consortium members will furnish SED with pertinent data concerning their programs, progress and outcomes.

The State Education Department will keep consortium members abreast of new programs and legislation as well as informing the preschool service providers of the availability of training and consultation which consortium members can provide. (See Appendix N for Newsbriefs, Vol. VII, No. 6.)

New York State Consortium Members also produced a document

entitled Standards for Excellence: Recommendations for Preschool Special Education in New York State. The Regional Program distributed it to the New York State Education Department, Preschool Programs and Directors of Special Education in New York State, N.Y.S. Legislators, County Executives, SIG Recipients, and HCEEP Demonstration and Outreach Projects. Reactions to this monograph have been extremely positive. (See Appendix O for sample letters from legislators, etc.).

The New York State Consortium is in the process of developing a second monograph entitled Standards for Excellence: Recommendations for Preschool Special Education Teacher Competencies in New York State. Since there is no specific certification for preschool special education, this has been an area of concern for leaders in the field in New York State.

Other Activities

Objective 5 proposed to offer outreach assistance to higher education agencies and Subobjective 5.1 proposed to provide seminars to colleges or universities. One seminar was presented to special education graduate students at Manhattanville College as part of their course "Developmental Problems in the Preschool Child."

Visitor Orientations were conducted for faculty and students from the State University of New York, Purchase, Manhattanville College, New York University, and Mercy College. A member of the faculty at Manhattanville College is on the Advisory Council for the Regional Program.

During the 1983-84 year, the Regional Program Staff participated as field testers for the ECO Assessment Materials produced by the Nisonger Center staff of Ohio State University. The Regional Program staff view such interagency cooperation as extremely important to the field of early childhood special education.

SECTION V

SUMMARY

SUMMARY

The Regional Program continued its impressive record as an HCEEP Outreach Project during the 1983-84 funding period. All major objectives for awareness, product development and distribution, training in model components and technical assistance met or exceeded the anticipated results. The evaluation of the program's efforts indicate high productivity, high satisfaction ratings from replication site staff and high implementation data.

The Regional Program has continued to foster interagency cooperation throughout New York State. Close contact with the New York State Education Department has enabled New York State service providers to receive information on services and training available not only from the Regional Program, but also from other HCEEP funded projects.

Through the efforts of the New York State Consortium, communication between SETRC's, ECDC's and preschool special education service providers has increased.

As a result of these and other awareness strategies, training requests for the 1984-1985 funding period have tripled, indicating the continuing need for the services provided by the Regional Program Outreach Project.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	Key Elements
APPENDIX B	Information Request Letters
APPENDIX C	Publicity
APPENDIX D	Conference Listings and Thank you letters
APPENDIX E	Thank you letters - Visitor Orientations
APPENDIX F	The Parent Handbook A Guide to the BOCES Preschool Program
APPENDIX G	Interactive Teaching Process Guide - Outline
APPENDIX H	Outreach Newsletter
APPENDIX I	Awareness Presentation Reactions
APPENDIX J	Requests for Training
APPENDIX K	Thank you letters - Training
APPENDIX L	Adoption Site Consortium Meeting Minutes
APPENDIX M	Training Workshop Participant Reactions
APPENDIX N	Newsbriefs - Memorandum of Agreement Article
APPENDIX O	Program Standards - Letters of Acknowledgment



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