

Regional Evaluation: CONCLUSIONS

Data obtained from the four target groups over the first phase of the evaluation process show early signs that the EIIS initiative is having positive impacts on the communities' capacity to meet the needs of children with ASD and their families. In this first evaluation phase, service providers across the Region indicate that EIIS is beginning to facilitate collaboration across disciplines and improve access to resources, information, networking and training specific to ASD. Data obtained from physicians indicates an awareness of the EIIS initiative and a willingness to refer families for service. Schools report the need for improved access to support services, which the EIIS Autism Teams hope to address through transition planning. Overall, families report being satisfied with the quality of the preschool services they receive, but indicate that services are not always available or accessible when needed.

The data summarized in this evaluation will be used to make comparisons following the second phase of the regional evaluation planned to begin in September 2003. At that time the EIIS Autism Teams will have been operational across the Region for more than one year and will have had an opportunity to implement many of the proposed service enhancements.

With early indications of increased awareness of ASD and additional opportunities for training and collaboration, it is expected that the target groups will continue to report an improved capacity to meet the needs of children with ASD. It is anticipated that service providers, educators and physicians will report more available programming specific to children with ASD, more satisfaction with the transition process, and more confidence in developing and implementing intervention plans. As services are enhanced, one would also expect families to report more positive impacts of the EIIS initiative. This might include easier access to local service providers, earlier identification and diagnosis of children with ASD, greater access to follow-up services, more involvement in IFSP planning, and a reduction in some of the barriers that make accessing services difficult.

For more information regarding the implementation of the EIIS initiative in Western Nova Scotia, or to obtain copies of the evaluation questionnaires, please contact the EIIS regional coordinator.

Early Identification and Intervention Services

Denise Vacon - Special Needs Support Coordinator
46 Parade Street, Yarmouth, NS B5A 3A9
ph: (902) 749-5667 fax: (902) 749-5697
email: dvacon@swrsb.ednet.ns.ca