

RESOLUTION NO. 119

ESTABLISHING A POLICY FOR EARLY INTERVENTION PROVIDER REFERRALS

Introduced: 3/10/08

By Mr. Nichols and Social Services Committee:

WHEREAS, The Early Intervention Program created by Congress and administered by local social services districts is an evidence-based program designed to prevent long term disabilities by identifying and treating physical and cognitive deficiencies in children under three, and

WHEREAS, Albany County is dedicated to providing the best quality of care for Early Intervention and has committed millions of dollars to fund high quality services for Early Intervention in an effort to maximize treatment to early childhood, and

WHEREAS, Service providers are contracted by the County to provide therapy services to children in need of Early Intervention Program services including special education, speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, music therapy, play therapy, assisted technology and social work services, and

WHEREAS, Early Intervention is a parent and child-driven program in which providers and county service coordinators guide care and treatment plans in the child's natural and least restrictive environment, usually the home, and

WHEREAS, All providers of Early Intervention Services should have equal opportunities to offer services to children in Albany County based on the decision of the parent or legal guardian and not solely on the recommendation of a county employee, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Department for Children, Youth and Families shall develop a complete directory of all providers under contract with Albany County for Early Intervention Services, delineated alphabetically by last name and arranged according to professional service provided and shall include the business address, telephone number(s), email address, year of certification, and a brief description of their experience, qualifications and specialty areas similar to what is currently provided to parents of preschool aged children in the Committee on Preschool Special Education program and similar to physician directories provided by health care plans, and, be it further

RESOLVED, Such directories shall be provided to every parent or legal guardian of any child upon being found eligible for Early Intervention services in

Albany County and such directory shall include an “Early Intervention Bill of Rights” in the front section of the directory that shall include but not be limited to established rights of children and families receiving Early Intervention Services, and other rights such as the right to choose and change service providers, the right to reject any service provider, the right to change service coordinators and the right to an independent evaluation, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That any county employee whose employment is connected in any way to the Early Intervention Program is hereby prohibited from recommending any specific service provider or agency provider unless specifically requested in writing by the parent or legal guardian of a child eligible to receive Early Intervention Services and upon such request shall fully explain that the right to choose a provider fully rests with the parent or legal guardian of a child eligible to receive Early Intervention services, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That this new policy shall take effect 30 days after the enactment of this resolution and all providers under contract with the County shall be notified of this new policy immediately upon enactment of this resolution and shall be given ten business days upon receiving such notice to provide the Department for Children, Youth and Families with the necessary information needed to publish the directory, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate State and County Officials.

Referred to Social Services Committee. 3/10/08
Adopted by voice vote. 4/14/08