



C O M M E N T S

CHRIS
Newsletter

Summer
2001

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1

CHRIS Data Shines

The School Board of Broward County has embraced the Sterling Quality Criteria. Florida businesses, agencies and school systems use Sterling to measure quality operations. One of the essential elements is Information and Analysis, which examines an organization's performance measurement system and how the organization analyzes performance data and information. Questions addressed are: what data will need to be tracked to confirm the accomplishment of the goals established for this issue/process, are the necessary systems in place to track these data, and when will these data be analyzed to determine the status of the goals and objectives for this issue or process?

The growth and demographics of Broward County continue to increase at a tremendous rate. FDLRS/REACH was asked to support the request for additional staff for a preschool assessment team. The Children's Registry and Information System (CHRIS) data set was the perfect tool to assist in this effort. Data compiled over a 5 year period indicated increases in the following: (1) the number of new referrals, (2) the number of children transitioning from Part C to Part B services, and (3) the number of children screened and referred to

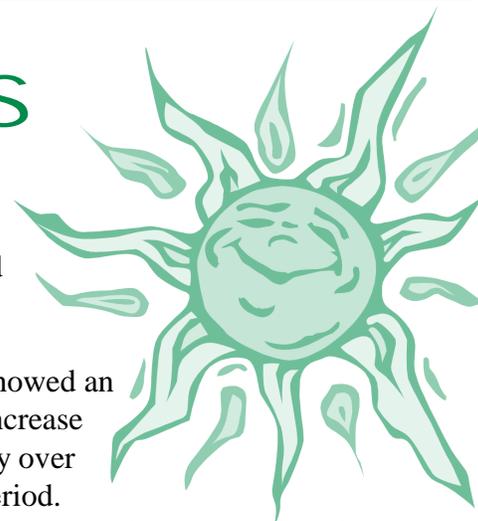
preschool and area staff for evaluations and staffings.

The numbers showed an almost 100% increase in each category over the five-year period.

This information along with other supportive documentation was shared with area and district staff, board members and the superintendent. As a result, funding was approved for a 4th preschool assessment team, consisting of an ESE educator, a speech/language pathologist, a psychologist and an audiologist. The impact of the 4th team has significantly improved the transition process, moving the district closer to its goal of a seamless system from Part C to Part B services. Additionally, the wait time for screenings has been drastically reduced and children previously on hold for evaluations are now being scheduled without delay.

The data gathered to support the district's need for personnel is a "sterling" example of the effectiveness of the CHRIS project as a tracking tool. The CHRIS database will continue to be used to plan, manage and evaluate future directions for FDLRS Child Find and to support district preschool initiatives for students with disabilities.

By: Gwen Lipscomb, FDLRS/REACH Coordinator and
Dr. Ellen Breslow, FDLRS/REACH Child Find Specialist



Inside this issue

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All Sites is All Right

As you know we have been upgrading all the sites with the new All Sites Report and FileMaker 5.5. The new All Sites Report is programmed to help keep our data consistent. For this reason it was decided that old data will be permanently set for the All Sites Report. You can still update the data in CHRIS but prior report years will be based on data that will be set using the following schedule:

July '99 - June '00 - Set during '01 upgrade

July '00 - June '01 - Will be set by the sites in November - December '01

July '01 - June '02 - Will be set by the sites in November - December '02

All data you would like included in the report must be entered before above dates. The program will be run at the sites using an automated program which was installed at each site. If you have any further questions on how this works, please call the CHRIS Help Desk 800-231-5747.

Good-bye and a Big THANK YOU

This year in TAWG rotation we said good-bye to some of our Advisory Board members, Debbie Crowder, Alina Diaz and Ward Spisso. We also bid farewell to Dr. Shihfen Tu, the CHRIS Project Director. Shihfen has taken a faculty position at the University of Maine, she and her family moved to Maine this summer. However she may still write an article for a future *CHRIS Comments* to give us an update on her venture to the North. Stay tuned and see information on the back page about Christine, our new CHRIS Project Director.



Debbie and Shihfen wave good-bye at their last TAWG meeting

A Parting Note from Debbie:

The best thing about serving on the CHRIS TAWG Advisory Board has been meeting people from across the state that use CHRIS data in so many different ways. There is always something new to learn, including the logic and thinking behind many of the data entry issues we deal with in Child Find. CHRIS has always been important to me as a case management tool, but the data is becoming increasingly important to other stakeholders. In my new position as Pre-K Coordinator for the Martin County School District, I already miss CHRIS and can see a need for utilizing CHRIS data in my programs. It has been fun watching CHRIS evolve up close.

*Thanks for the opportunity!
Debbie Crowder*



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CHRIS Comments
Newsletter Schedule for 2001-2002
August, November, February, May

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The CHRIS Technical Advisory Work Group

TAWG

THE 2001-2002
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

On June 1st we had our most recent TAWG Advisory Board meeting. Sadly, we said good-bye to the departing members; however, we are happy to announce that we have six new Advisory Board members. In addition, four of our current members agreed to stay on one more year to maintain continuity for the Advisory Board. We highlight two of the new members below. Look for the rest of the new members in upcoming *CHRIS Comments* issues. Thank you to the outgoing members and welcome to the new members.

GWEN LIPSCOMB

Gwen is the FDLRS/REACH Coordinator in Broward County and the BISCS FDLRS Regional Contacts team member for Region 5. As a former Child Find Specialist, Gwen brings an experienced user perspective to the TAWG Advisory Board and can voice the needs of Child Find Specialists as well as FDLRS Managers. Gwen will provide invaluable feedback and input regarding the future direction and effectiveness of the CHRIS project.

DANA WILCOX

Dana is a Child Find Specialist with FDLRS/Alpha in Palm Beach County. He has worked with Child Find for 21 years. As DBA for the FDLRS/Alpha CHRIS database, he has attended and participated in many of the CHRIS-related trainings and conferences available since CHRIS was initiated. Dana has always been a strong believer in CHRIS and has watched the program grow to meet the ever-changing needs of the Child Find system. This is why Dana now would like to support the development and continued growth of CHRIS by joining TAWG.

Cathy Bonnell ²	FDLRS Support
Janet Brashear ²	PK Specialist
Gail Brown ²	FDLRS Child Find
Olga Camacho ⁴	CHRIS Project Programmer
Martha Cromwell ³	FDLRS Child Find
Christine Delgado ³	CHRIS Project Director
Karen Denbroeder ³	DOE Data Management
Susan Duffy ¹	FDLRS Support
Annie Garber ³	CHRIS Project Manager
Yvonne Gray ²	ESE Administrator
Gwen Lipscomb ¹	FDLRS Manager
Stephanie McAliley ¹	Part C Data Manager
Ruthie Rieder ¹	PK Specialist
Irene Savary ¹	ESE Administrator
Keith G. Scott ⁴	CHRIS Principal Investigator
Rachael Spanjer ³	BISCS Staff
Carole West ¹	DOE Part C
Dana Wilcox ¹	FDLRS Child Find
Don Woods ³	FDLRS Manager

¹ New Members

² Continuing Member

³ TAWG Executive Board

⁴ Upon Special Request



Yvonne, Janet, and Cathy - staying on another year



Dana and Gwen at their first TAWG Advisory Board Meeting

CHRIS Comments
Schedule for 2001-2002
August 2001
November 2001
February 2002
May 2002

Greetings from Christine, the New Project Director

As you may have heard, or read on page 2, Dr. Shihfen Tu has taken a faculty position at the University of Maine. I was fortunate enough to replace her as the Project Director of CHRIS and would like to introduce myself. I have been involved in research at the University of Miami for the past 7 years. My research interests have focused on the development of communication in infants, particularly the relationship of early eye contact and gestures with later language and social skills. The ultimate goal of this research is to develop assessment instruments that will enable the earlier identification of children at-risk for autism and other developmental delays.



I am very impressed by the amount of effort it takes to identify and assist children with disabilities and hope that CHRIS continues to be an integral tool in serving these special children. To that end, I plan to work with the rest of the CHRIS team to improve the program to best meet the needs of all CHRIS users. In addition, I plan to utilize the data collected to examine the impact of early identification on school performance and the regional and demographic differences in prevalence rates of disabilities. Watch for summaries of these and other studies in future newsletters. If I can be of any assistance please do not hesitate to contact me at cdelgado@umiami.edu.

*Best Wishes,
Christine Delgado, Ph.D.*



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