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October 13, 2003

MEMORANDUM #03-51

TO: Administrators, Exceptional Student Education

FROM: Shan Goff

SUBJECT: Request for Comment - Draft Position/Policy Paper on Provision of Early Intervention in Natural Environments

For several years Florida's Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program (EIP) has been in the process of moving toward a service delivery model that predominantly provides services and supports for infants, toddlers and their families in natural environments that recognize families' daily activities and routines. During this time, changes were made in policy, workgroups and stakeholder groups were convened and provided recommendations, experts were consulted and offered guidance, and individual EIPs took the initiative to develop pilot projects. Florida's Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program is now at the critical juncture where it must move forward.

Beginning July 1, 2004, all newly referred children in Florida's Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention system will be served in natural environments in the context of each child's and family's everyday routines, activities, and places. The draft position/policy paper on Provision of Early Intervention in Natural Environments has been developed to provide a comprehensive position and policy statement and set forth not only the conceptual framework for a new service delivery model, but to provide the requirements and processes to guide Early Intervention programs in the initial implementation of these changes. The paper has been posted to the internet at the following website: <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/cms/EIPStakeWrkGrp.htm>.

SHAN GOFF
Chief

Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services

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An opportunity to provide feedback on the draft policy paper is being provided to the public by having a public comment period through the month of November. All public input must be received in writing by email, fax or mail. Since we invite you to provide input, we are requesting that you submit your comments to the Department of Education no later than the close of business, November 17, 2003. Your comments will be forwarded to the Department of Health no later than the close of business on November 30, 2003. It is anticipated that the policy paper will be finalized and disseminated statewide by the end of December 2003.

Please submit your feedback to

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SG/cwm