

# WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING EARLY SUPPORT FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS PROGRAM COST STUDY

## Study Overview

### *What is the project's background?*

In September 2010, DEL launched a year-long study to determine the costs and revenues for providing birth to three **Part C early intervention services** across Washington state. The study will help the ESIT program build a sustainable, equitable, and cost effective funding system for providing services. Our consulting team, Berk & Associates and Emerald Consulting, is leading this project, which is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This cost study will also support the broader System Improvement Project ([www.del.wa.gov/development/esit/system.aspx](http://www.del.wa.gov/development/esit/system.aspx)).

### *What are the components of this study?*

The year-long study has several components:

- **ANALYSIS OF PART C EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM IN WASHINGTON:** This is the major effort of the study, aimed at collecting and analyzing data for providing public early intervention services in the state.
  - **DATA COLLECTION:** Collect data on administrative structures, funding sources and amounts, number of children served, costs, and other information.
  - **DATA ANALYSIS AND FINANCIAL MODELING:** Develop a detailed analysis and description of the Washington system for administering early intervention services.
- **RESEARCH IN OTHER STATES:** Identify and interview several other states, focusing on lessons learned and the potential application of those practices for Washington.
- **OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:** Develop options and recommendations that DEL can use to support effective service administration at the local level for children and families with disabilities or developmental delays and that local entities can use to better leverage available funding sources.

### *How will the data be collected?*

The initial data request is being sent to all Local Lead Agencies in Washington, and we anticipate a second round of data collection targeted at school districts and other local service providers, followed by interviews and site visits:

- **Round 1 Data Collection: Local Lead Agencies.** Collect data from 35 geographic service areas.
- **Round 2 Data Collection: School Districts and Service Providers.** Collect data from some districts that are providing direct early intervention services or contracting directly with service providers, and a sample of service providers.
- **Agency Interviews and Site Visits.** Identify up to 10 agencies that represent different administrative structures, different geographic regions of the State, and other unique factors and conduct detailed interviews and site visits with those agencies.

**How will the data be used?**

Gathering and analyzing this data will allow us to have a complete picture of early intervention costs and available funding across Washington State. From this data, we will be able to identify the following:

- Funding inequities across the state
- Key factors that influence costs
- Best practices for leveraging different funding sources like Medicaid and private insurance

ESIT will share the results of this effort with stakeholders and use the data collected to inform policy decisions around system improvements and the allocation of Federal Part C funding.

**What is the schedule for this study?**

The following is the tentative schedule, which may be subject to change:

**Data Collection**

- Send out data request to Local Lead Agencies by **December 31, 2010**
  - Conference call with LLAs to answer data request questions: **January 12, 2011, 2-4pm**. We may also set up other times to answer questions, and LLAs are always welcome to contact our consulting team with any questions.
- Receive completed data requests from LLAs by **January 31, 2011**
- Send out Round 2 data request to school districts and service providers by **Mid-February, 2011**
- Receive Round 2 data request by **Mid-March, 2011**
- Conduct agency interviews and site visits by **Mid-April 31, 2011**

**Data Analysis and Recommendations Development**

- Data analysis: **February – May, 2011**
- Other states research: by **March, 2011**
- Develop options and recommendations: **May – June, 2011**
- Final report to ESIT: by **September 30, 2011**

**Who should we contact if we have any questions?**

For **general questions about the study**, please don't hesitate to contact:

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For **questions about the data requests and data analysis**, please don't hesitate to contact at any time:

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