

# MNDEC Newsletter <http://www.mndec.org/>

Minnesota Division of Early Childhood

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## President's message

*Chris Hansen, MN DEC President*

Spring and summer months hold the promise of renewed energy, time with family, and the joy of watching our youngest children exploring. Whether it is watching a one year old toddling in the sand for the first time, a two year old trying the park equipment with a new perspective, a three year old experimenting with puddles or a four year old taking part in summer library programs; the days are rich and full. At MN-DEC we wish you the fulfillment of a spring and summer full of wonder and opportunities for learning that will grow your practice and your perspective.

MN-DEC was proud to host the annual **Spring Practitioner's Conference** in March. It was a very well attended event with about 275 practitioners from around the state joining together for learning that promoted and inspired quality in Early Childhood. (See article below.) We now look forward to **the Minnesota Early Intervention Summer Institute** planned by partners in the Higher Education Consortium. This will be held at St. John's University June 11-13. Look for a MN-DEC presence with the ever popular **DEC Wine Reception** planned for Thursday night, June 12.

As we look to the next school year please mark your calendars for the Council of Exceptional Children **Division of Early Childhood International Conference to be held in St. Louis, Missouri on October 7-9, 2014**. Conference registration is open and you can find all the information on the website, <http://www.dec-sped.org> We are always proud to see so many Minnesota presenters at this international conference!

The ever popular **Fall Leadership Conference** will again be held at Rutgers in October. This year the date will be later in October than typical. **Mark your calendars now for October 29-31, 2014**. We promise to have you on the road home by noon on the 31<sup>st</sup> so that you can meet your trick or treaters for a fun Halloween night. Registration will be sent out in late August or early September to all DEC members and information will be available on our website. ([www.mndec.org](http://www.mndec.org)) Please remember to register early to be guaranteed a lodging spot at Rutgers!

We have been busy with updating and fine tuning our **MNDEC website**. We now have a spot for posting Early Childhood Special Education open positions. School districts can post openings for staff working in any ECSE program. All the instructions on how to post are on the website ([www.mndec.org](http://www.mndec.org)). We are hoping that districts as well as newly licensed teachers and veteran staff will find this a helpful resource.

If you are not already a DEC member, please consider joining now to become a part of this strong professional organization in our state. Thank you for your continued dedication to our field and for inspiring excellence each day as you meet the needs of children and families throughout our state.

Sincerely,

Chris Hansen, MN-DEC President

## State Update

Michelle Dockter- Professional Development Specialist

The Centers of Excellence for young children with Disabilities

Exciting changes are unfolding in the CoE. We have re-conceptualized and are reinforcing our capacity to provide effective professional development by partnering with local programs to meet local capacity and need. The CoE will be providing access to methods of building strong foundational skills necessary for professionals in order to build program quality.

The CoE will continue to offer evidence based & supported innovations that focus on building strong social/emotional skills (birth through 5), and effective, routine-based interventions for infants/toddlers as well as ECSE students aged 3-5. All of these innovations will be installed locally, with district leadership support, using sound practices of Implementation Science. CoE staff will be working with local programs and their leadership team to explore and implement practices that will affect ECSE program quality.

Over the past 4 years, members of the current ECSE Staff in your program may have been involved in one or more of the innovations offered through the CoE. As we move forward, we will be asking local leaders to re-commit this human resource to the work of building local capacity. If that individual is interested and leadership approves, the skills of these individuals will be utilized in a training capacity to scale up the effects of the innovation within ECSE programs.

If you have specific questions about the CoE please contact:  
Michelle Dockter- Professional Development Specialist  
[Michelle.Dockter@state.mn.us](mailto:Michelle.Dockter@state.mn.us)

## Higher Education

*Aaron R. Deris- Mankato State University and Kellie Krick Oborn- St Thomas University*

The seven state approved early childhood special education licensure programs (University of MN- Twin Cities & Duluth, St. Thomas, MN State University, Mankato & Moorhead, St Cloud State, and Southwest State University) have combined expertise and resources to start a marketing campaign to recruit practitioners to the field. Please be on the lookout for marketing materials at the Summer Institute at St. John and the MNDEC Fall Leadership conference. Here is a sneak peak if you have a QR reader-



## Barb Hustad receives the Practitioner of the Year Award for 2014

Barb is an Occupational Therapist currently working in the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School District. She has many years of experience working in early childhood programs, making a difference for countless children and families. Barb has influenced the field by her mentorship, communication, problem solving and conflict resolution skills. Many teachers and parents are struck by her calm demeanor, excellent listening skills, willingness to learn and ability to guide. Barb has embraced the field of Early Intervention and she is a mentor to many. Barb was nominated for this award by her colleagues and by a parent. MN DEC is happy to present Barb Hustad the Practitioner of the Year Award for 2014.

## March 2014 Spring Practitioner's Conference

A heartfelt thank you to all who attended, presented and volunteered at our very successful March Practitioner's conference this year. We had excellent attendance, fantastic speakers and very positive reviews from attendees. We were happy as well to have dodged the multiple snow storms and cold weather days so that everyone could travel safely to the Twin Cities area. Our Thursday evening presentation included a cultural panel, with facilitation from Hope Biesel. The evening was enlightening for all and gave food for thought that lasted well beyond the conference. Dr. Benton Johnson II, came to us from Illinois and shared his perspective during a keynote and a break out session on the impact of poverty and how we can be responsive as practitioners. Many commented on how this topic was relevant to their work and current populations. We learned to look at poverty and culture through a different lens. The conference again had many presenters from our own programs around the state and from our leaders at MDE. Practitioners shared with each other ideas that work, books they had written, ideas they had tested and dug deeper into topics that were relevant to all. We were pleased to introduce the Practitioner of the Year for 2014, Barb Hustad. Barb works as an Occupational Therapist in North St. Paul, Oakdale and Maplewood and was highly recommended for this award by colleagues and a parent. Thank you to all who contributed to this successful conference and to the Marriott hotel for providing support and a wonderful site.

Chris Hansen and Louise Rath, MNDEC conference co-chairs

## Mini Grants

The Minnesota Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) has devoted the proceeds from the silent auction, held annually at the Division's fall conference, to fund practitioners who wish to engage in action research efforts within their district programs. This year the one \$500 mini grant was awarded to Eden Prairie School District Early Childhood Special Education. The grant is to support work on building evidence-based tools and materials used to support young children with challenging behaviors in preschool classrooms. The plan involved development of materials and tool kits to be accessible to all students and the provision of training on how to use the materials appropriately. The Eden Prairie team will provide information on their work in a future newsletter. Look for future notification of mini grant application for 2014-15 this fall. Grant applications are found on our website. [www.mndec.org](http://www.mndec.org)

## Welcome our new officers to MNDEC for 2014-15

If you have interest in joining DEC or in participating in a leadership role either on the board or in conference planning please let us know by emailing [info@mndec.org](mailto:info@mndec.org). We continue to work to increase accessibility of board meetings to members around the state. Board meeting schedule is published on our website and any DEC member is invited to attend.

President: Aaron Deris, Minnesota State University Mankato

President Elect: Judy Beaton, Eden Prairie Schools

Past President: Chris Hansen, SouthWest Metro Educational Cooperative

Secretary: Heide Muhs, Forest Lake School District

Treasurer – To be determined

New Members at Large:

Lisa Brinkley, Prior Lake Savage School District

Pam Morrison, Stillwater Public Schools

Jodi Altringer, Buffalo, Hanover, Montrose Public Schools

Donna Miller, Centers of Excellence for Young Children with Disabilities

Ann Schmitz, Mankato Public Schools

## Article Summary

Liz Barnett, MA, CCC-SLP, MNDEC newsletter editor, website manager

Although we are highly aware of the need to use Evidenced-Based Practice, it can be a daunting task to determine the quality of the evidence. In an intriguing article in the Spring 2014 journal *Exceptional Children*, Howard Goldstein, Kimberly C. Lackey and Naomi J. B. Schneider provide a user-friendly graphic, similar to that found in *Consumer Reports*, to demonstrate their framework for evaluating single-subject experimental designs (SSED) and group design studies. Check out their article *A New Framework for Systematic Reviews: Application to Social Skills Interventions for Preschoolers With Autism* (Vol. 80, No. 3 pp. 262-286, *Exceptional Children*). Each study was analyzed using a 1-4 rating scale for each criterion under the areas of design characteristics, measurement and reliability features, general characteristics and results and external validity. The graphic provides a visual ranking of the studies with the highest rated at the top. The authors note that some low ratings were due to omissions of criteria in studies and may not indicate poor results.

## Do you have an ECSE question?

The Minnesota Department of Education Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) leadership team now has a general email address that can be used to submit any ECSE question, birth to five. The emails will be answered in a timely manner by members of this team. Email questions to: [mde.ecse@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.ecse@state.mn.us)



## Resources

**Looking for a job in ECSE?** [www.mndec.org](http://www.mndec.org) .

**Minnesota Centers of Excellence** has a very well developed website. [www.mncoe.org](http://www.mncoe.org)

**Minnesota Parents Know** <http://parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/index.html> Provides trusted parenting information, resources, and activities to help your children grow, develop, and learn from birth through high school. Links, podcasts, videos, newsletters, and how-to-connect to programs for parents of children of all ages and abilities are available. Many materials are translated or presented in additional languages.

**National Implementation Research Network (NIRN)** NIRN's mission is to "contribute to best practices and science of implementation, organization change, and system reinvention to improve outcomes across the spectrum of human services". <http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/> Go to their website and you will find a resource titled [Implementation Drivers: Assessing Best Practices](#) .

**PACER's Early Childhood** website <http://www.pacer.org/ec/>

**Help Me Grow** <http://www.helpmegrowmn.org/>

An interagency initiative of the State of Minnesota (Department of Education, Department of Health and Department of Human Services) partnering with all local service agencies.

**Head Start Center for Inclusion** <http://depts.washington.edu/hscenter/>

**Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)**  
<http://www.challengingbehavior.org/>

**Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)**  
<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>

**Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Effective School-wide Interventions and Supports** <http://www.pbis.org/>

## Professional Organizations

**The Division for Early Childhood (DEC)** <http://www.dec-sped.org>

**Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)** <http://www.cec.sped.org>

**The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** <http://www.naeyc.org>

## News and Events

June 12-13, 2014 Summer Institute planned by the Minnesota Higher Education Consortium:  
Evidence-based Practice for Working with Young Children and Their Families

October 7-9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 International DEC Conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri [www.dec-sped.org/conference](http://www.dec-sped.org/conference)

October 29 – 31, 2014 ECSE Fall Leadership Workshop at Ruttgers