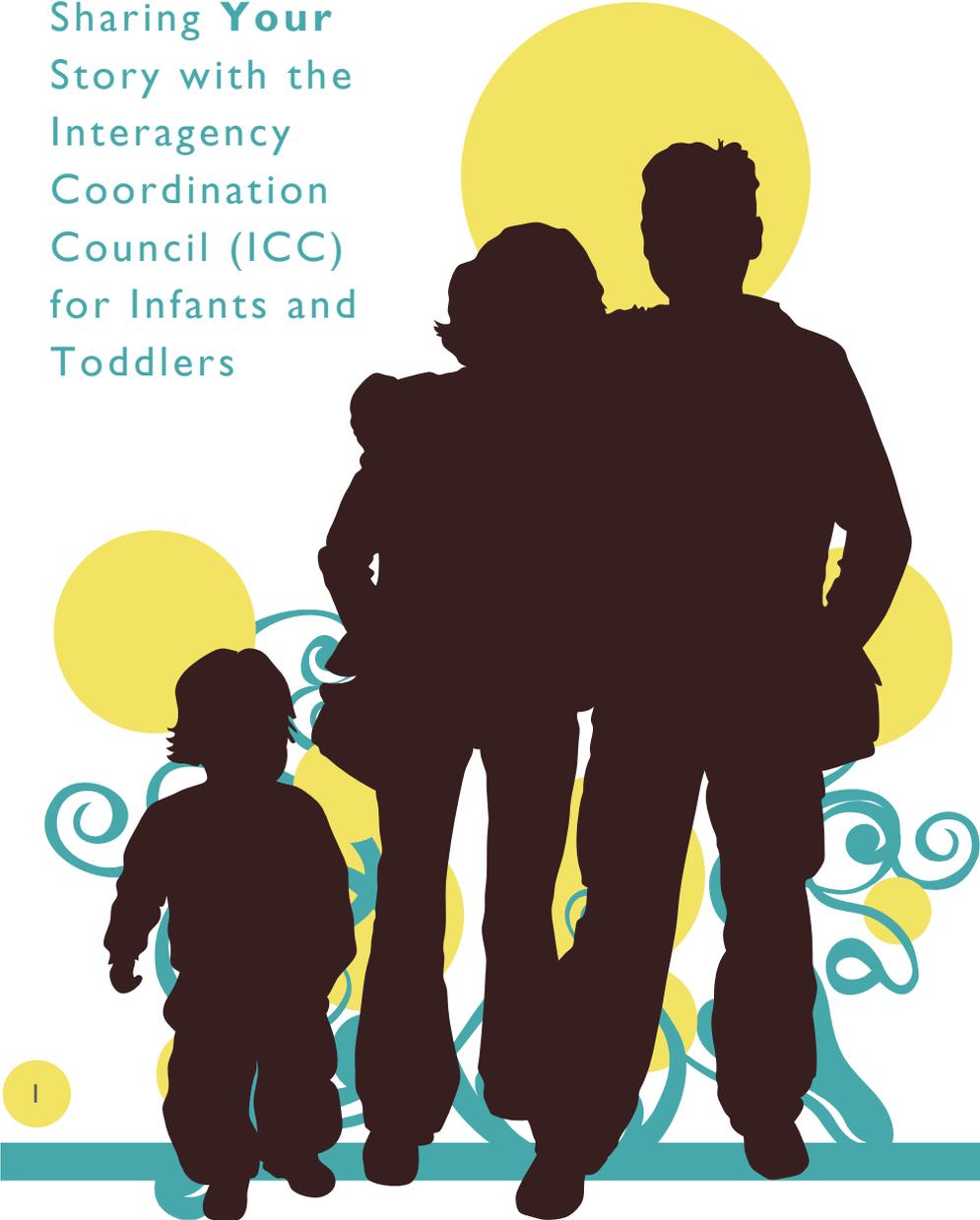


THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY STORY

Sharing **Your** Story with the Interagency Coordination Council (ICC) for Infants and Toddlers



From One Parent to Another

When my children first qualified for Early Intervention Services, I had many needs, concerns and often felt overwhelmed.

I struggled, at first, learning a lot of information, some to help my child and some to work the process of services.

As time progressed, I had many people asking me about our story. Sometimes it was doctors, sometimes it was friends, members of our family, and occasionally even strangers.

I have had many opportunities to share my family's experience about Early Intervention.

I have found the parts of our story that I share vary depending on:

- ◆ Whom I am sharing it with;
- ◆ Why I am sharing it;
- ◆ The amount of time I have to share it.

When I shared our family's story with the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC),

I chose to share:

- ◆ How I first made contact with the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP);
- ◆ The concerns I had for my children's development;
- ◆ The difference AzEIP services have made in my family's life;
- ◆ The changes I would make to improve the system/process.

What you share may depend on:

- ◆ Your child's experience
- ◆ Your family's experience
- ◆ What you feel is appropriate to share

How does sharing your story with the ICC benefit you?

- ◆ It helps the ICC to know how families feel about the process;
- ◆ It can help the ICC understand improvements that can be made;
- ◆ It can give a voice to your experiences, frustrations, and gained knowledge.

When sharing your story with the ICC, please remember:

- ◆ You have 10-15 minutes;
- ◆ You can share your story in many formats, such as in person, by video or letter;
- ◆ You can present information individually or ask an ICC member or friend to interview you; or
- ◆ You can share photos, a slide show or anything that will help you share your story in the way you are most comfortable.

Some suggestions to reduce your stress:

- ◆ Bring a friend;
- ◆ Practice before you come;
- ◆ Bring props (pictures, etc) to help explain your story;
- ◆ Telling your story may bring up some feelings. It's normal. If you feel upset, pause and give yourself a moment before continuing;
- ◆ Remember that the ICC is here to learn from you and support you.

Organizing Yourself to Share Your Story (a guide is provided on the next page)

Beginning:

- ◆ Introduce the people involved in your story;
- ◆ Help the audience understand by giving a brief description of your family's background.

Middle:

- ◆ Focus on 2 or 3 main points;
- ◆ Add relevant details and examples for each point (chosen previously);
- ◆ It can give a voice to your experiences, frustrations, and gained knowledge;
- ◆ Build the understanding of the audience.

End:

- ◆ Bring the different aspects of the story together;
- ◆ Review and summarize;
- ◆ Leave time for questions.

My Story Builder – a Guide

Purpose?

Why are you telling your story?

Audience?

Who will you be telling your story to?

Location?

Where will you be telling your story?

Beginning: Introduction

Introduce yourself and share child/family information that you want the audience to keep in mind. Briefly explain what you'll be talking about. Let them know that you appreciate the opportunity to speak with them.

Middle: Body of Your Story

Choose two to three main points for your story. Think of details or examples that would help the audience understand each point. Consider sharing what was most important, helpful or positive for your family, and/or what would have been more helpful and positive for your family.

End: Conclusion

Wrap up your story. Take time to restate your main points and repeat what you want the audience to leave with or remember about your story. You may also want to answer questions. Thank the audience.



Main Point(s)

Details of each
Main Point

Positive
experiences
and/or recom-
mendations
related to each
main point

What is the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)?

A Governor appointed group of family members, providers, state agencies staff, and others who share the responsibility for helping children who have developmental delays and their families.

What does the ICC do?

The ICC advises and assists the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) in:

- ◆ Developing policies and practices that ensure that early intervention services are family-friendly and supportive, and that transition for toddlers to preschool or other appropriate services is smooth;
- ◆ Learning from and work with the community to address concerns;
- ◆ Developing family and community information, such as surveys, and handbooks;
- ◆ Preparing the State's policies and the Application for Federal Funds;
- ◆ Preparing an annual report to the Governor and the Secretary of Education on the status of early intervention in Arizona.

How can you share your family's experience?

Contact the vice-chair of the ICC or the AzEIP office (602) 532-9960, toll free in Arizona (888) 439-5609 for an opportunity.

When does the ICC meet?

The ICC meets from 11:30 am - 2:00 pm in Phoenix on the second Friday the following months: January, March, May, August, September, and November. Phone conferencing is available.

How can I find out more about the ICC?

www.azdes.gov/AzEIP/ICC

How can I apply to be a on the ICC?

<http://azgovernor.gov/bc>

Special thanks to the West Virginia Interagency Coordinating Council, which developed and shared much of this information about preparing to share your story.



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GCI-1081APAMPD (1-13)

