



# Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for Infants and Toddlers

## Family Engagement Committee Meeting Minutes - Approved 04.10.25

Virtual Meeting

March 13, 2025

9:30am - 11:00am

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### Attendance

#### Members

Sandra Caudillo (present)  
Alissa Eromae (present)  
Robin Hale (late)  
Alison Lucas (present)

Dani Merrill (present)  
Sonia Samaniego (present)  
Laurie Shook (absent)  
Neil Tift (absent)

#### Staff (AzEIP)

Jerrilene Antone Morton (present)  
Tanya Goitia (present)

Amanda Honeywood (absent)  
Lisa Vallee (absent)

#### Public

None

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### Minutes

1. Call to Order: meeting called to order by Alissa Eromae at 9:41am
2. Read Public Member Notice - no one from the public was in attendance so this wasn't read
3. Minute Approval from February 13, 2025 Family Engagement Committee Meeting
  - a. Sonia motioned to approve the minutes from February 13, 2025
  - b. Sandra seconded the motion to approve the minutes from February 13, 2025
  - c. Dani, Alissa, Sandra, Sonia, and Alison approved the minutes from February 13, 2025
4. Discussion Items/Topics
  - a. Community Feedback - There was a robust discussion on community feedback and stakeholder concerns in a variety of areas including:
    - i. Funding: Questions were shared regarding the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) funding and how it affects services for families with children birth-3. Committee members discussed that the shortfall is primarily due to a significant increase in Arizona's population requiring support and greater utilization of existing services by DDD members. There was consensus that it is important to emphasize that this shortfall is not

- due to mismanagement or overutilization of any specific program. Members discussed that the concern was shared with Ena Bins, the Part C Coordinator for AzEIP. Ena Binns assured that AzEIP and DDD's budgets are administered separately. Members were also informed that AzEIP and DDD are working closely to assess any potential impact.
- ii. Federal Updates: The Committee discussed that the Department of Education workforce is reportedly being cut in half. Members had questions about how this change might impact services eventually. Members are concerned about AzEIP federal funding under IDEA and the impact on families and providers. Members discussed that many families are unsure what to expect or to think. Families have shared concerns about 504 plans and how they might be impacted. The ICC Executive Committee shared with families that AzEIP will continue as is, no services have been changed as AzEIP continues to provide services until there are any notifications otherwise.
  - iii. Family Engagement: The Committee discussed if there are upcoming forums that can be shared with families. AzEIP discussed the new AzEIP Family Forum being offered on April 29. The forum will be called AzEIP Family Connection and will be marketed to all AzEIP families. The Committee also discussed opportunities to use the ICC Facebook Page as a tool to share information on legislation bills, resources and how families can share opportunities to contact their representatives or advocates. Committee members shared that Raising Special Kids (RSK), the Parent Training and Information Center, has resources and information available to families on the RSK website: <https://raisingspecialkids.org/resources/legislative-resources/>.
  - iv. Community Partnerships: Essential Therapy Solutions (ETS) met with Phoenix Children's Hospital (PCH) and clarified the AzEIP process, excited for this collaboration, referrals, and understanding how AzEIP works. ETS attended Pediatric Update Conference at PCH; would be good for AzEIP and/or this committee to be present next year. The Department of Health Services (DHS) provided focus groups with families of children with special health care needs. Families received information from other families and the community, not from government agencies or doctors. Upcoming DHS Town Halls are on April 9 5pm-6:30pm and April 14 9:30am-11am. DHS town halls are for families to share what was learned from last year's focus groups and potential action items- virtual (English); also planning Spanish town halls.
  - v. Advocacy: The Committee discussed creating a liaison, group, and/or short training to reach out to health care providers, including pediatricians/specialists across the state, due to concerns about families being referred late and pediatricians not knowing to refer. This is also a concern for children with vision and hearing issues. Members expressed concern that pediatricians are telling families the child will be fine and then the child doesn't get to AzEIP until they're almost 3, doctors are not screening because they don't know how and families need screening to move on and access services. Families don't always know they can refer on their own and can refer more than once if not eligible the first time. The Committee would like a way to partner with pediatricians and other community programs. Families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) shared through the DHS focus groups that they want more providers who are trained in working with kids with ASD. Committee members discussed that it is important to share information about Disability Rights Arizona with families who may need additional advocacy because they can help advocate, write letters, and provide support. The Committee also agreed it is important for providers to be present and share comments when there are public comment opportunities at AzEIP, DHS, and the legislature.
- b. Family Story - a family is scheduled to share their story at the next ICC meeting on March 20, 2025. Two possible families have also been identified for the May 22, 2025 ICC Meeting.

- c. Rack Card for ICC and AzEIP - Draft Rack Card for ICC finalized and will be sent to DES Public Information Officer for creation.
  - d. Develop Next Meeting Agenda
    - i. Community Feedback
    - ii. Family Story
    - iii. Rack Card for ICC and AzEIP
  5. Action/Follow-up - Request clarity from AzEIP leadership about what this committee is able to share on the ICC Facebook page.
  6. Public Comment - None
  7. Adjourn - meeting adjourned by Alissa Eromae at 11:15am
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The Interagency Coordinating Council may hear items on the agenda out of order. The Council may discuss, consider, act, or solicit public comment regarding a matter any time on the agenda. **This agenda is subject to amendment up to 24 hours before the meeting.**