

**EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION AND CLINICAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**  
**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON**

**PROGRAM GOALS**

The major goal of the Early Intervention Program is to expand and improve educational and therapeutic services for infants and young children who are at risk and disabled and their families. Underlying this goal or purpose is the assumption that improving and expanding services will effect positive change in children and their families which, in turn, will result in their positive contributions to the community and society. Assisting individual children and their families to become independent and productive yields a benefit to the individual and family as well as to the greater society.

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Organizationally the Early Intervention Program is located in the College of Education at the University of Oregon. Its personnel training programs are administered through the Special Education and Clinical Sciences department while the research and demonstration components are associated with the Center on Human Development and the University of Oregon Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UOCEDD). The Early Intervention Program has four interrelated components: Personnel preparation, special education, outreach, and research. Figure 1 shows the current organizational structure of the Early Intervention Program.

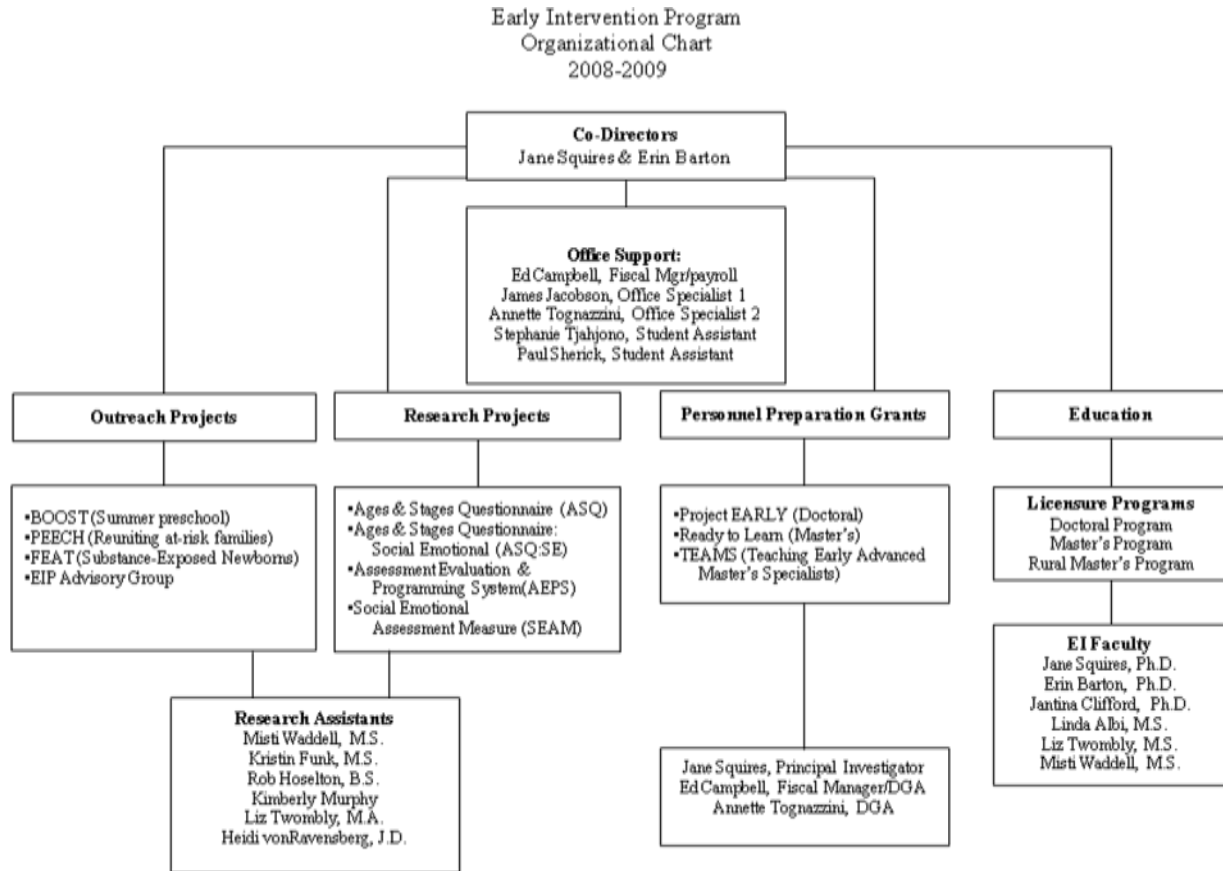


Figure 1. Early Intervention Program Organizational Chart

## PERSONNEL PREPARATION

The Early Intervention Program was established at the University of Oregon in 1978 by Dr. Diane Bricker. At that time, the Center on Human Development housed several classes that served infants and preschool children with disabilities; however, no formal program in Early Intervention existed in the College of Education.

In 1979 the first personnel preparation grant from the Early Intervention Program was submitted to the then Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped. This training grant application was approved and formal training of master's degree Early Intervention personnel began in 1980. Although no formal training option in Early Intervention existed for doctoral students, the area began attracting leadership students in the early 80s as well. In 1984, the Early Intervention Program was awarded its first leadership training grant. In 1990, the Early

Intervention Program began rural-based training of masters level personnel. Faculty and supervisors delivered training on site in selected rural areas throughout Oregon. Table 1 shows the number of students who have graduated from the Early Intervention doctoral, and masters on-campus, rural and CDS/EI programs.

Table 1

*Total Number of Early Intervention Ph.D. and Masters Students*

<i>Status</i>	<i>Ph.D. (1980-2009)</i>	<i>On-Campus Masters (1979-2009)</i>	<i>Rural Masters (1990-2009)</i>	<i>CDS/EI Masters (1983-2009)</i>
Graduated	44	335	86	107
Currently Enrolled	8	0	4	8

In January 1995, the Teacher's Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) established a new endorsement in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education. The Early Intervention Program was instrumental in the development of this state teaching licensure as the course work and competencies of the Early Intervention Program served as a model for the development of this state endorsement.

In addition to the graduate Early Intervention master's and doctoral training programs, the faculty in the Early Intervention Program have worked closely with the School Psychology faculty to train school psychologists to work with young children with disabilities. The Early Intervention faculty have also collaborated with the Communication Disorders & Sciences faculty to prepare communication specialists to work with young children with disabilities and their families; the first training grant to support the CDS/EI collaboration was received in 1983. Between 1979 and present, 24 grants have been awarded to EIP faculty. Table 2 contains a list of the recent personnel preparation grants, awarded to the Early Intervention Program in the last 10 years. Faculty, staff, training efforts and products have had a major impact on the field of personnel preparation in early intervention, early childhood special education and early childhood in Oregon, nationally, and internationally.

Table 2

*Early Intervention Program Personnel Preparation Grants 1999-2009*

<i>Award period</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Amount</i>
9/1/2007-8/31/2011	U.S. Department of Education	Ready to Learn: Preparing Master's Level Interventionists and Early Childhood Special Educators for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	\$789,454
9/1/2007-8/31/2010	U.S. Department of Education	Teaching Early Advanced Master's Specialists (TEAMS)	\$791,304
9/1/2007-8/31/2011	U.S. Department of Education	Project EARLY: Early Literacy, Social Competence, and Positive Behavior Support Leadership Program	\$798,251
9/1/2002-8/31/2007	Office of Special Education Programs	Infant Family Specialist Personnel Project (IFSP II)	\$1,495,400
9/1/2002-8/31/2006	Office of Special Education Programs	Leadership Personnel Preparation Program	\$799,828
9/1/1999-8/31/2002	Office of Special Education Programs	Infant Family Specialist Personnel Project (IFSP)	\$874,214
<b>Total Awards</b>			<b>\$5,548,451</b>

Early Intervention faculty and staff have also made significant service contributions to the field and to state and local Early Intervention programs. For example, Dr. Squires serves on several journal editorial boards, several state committees or task forces, and is a strong contributor to the department, college and university. Table 3 contains a list of current Early Intervention faculty; these faculty participate in integrated teaching and research activities.

Table 3

Early Intervention Faculty

<i>Name</i>	<i>Dates of Employment</i>	<i>Appointment</i>	<i>Source of Support</i>
L. Albi	1998-present	Senior Research Assistant	Grant-related
E. Barton	2008-present	Assistant Professor	State funds
D. Bricker	1978-2006	Professor (Emerita)	State funds, grant-related
J. Clifford	2006-present	Research Associate	State funds, grant-related
J. Squires	1988 - present	Professor, Sr. Res. Associate	Grant-related, university
L. Twombly	1991-present	Senior Research Assistant	Grant-related
M. Waddell	1984-present	Senior Research Assistant	Grant-related

## **RESEARCH AND OUTREACH**

Prior to 1999, the EIP received over 35 grants and contracts from federal, state, and private sources. Since 1999, the Early Intervention Program has been awarded an additional 12 research, demonstration and outreach projects. Table 4 contains a list of these projects, years of support and total amount of the awards since 1999.

Table 4

## Early Intervention Research Projects 1999-2009

Dates	Agency	Project title	Amount of grant
1/1/2009-1/1/2010	University of Oregon Baney Fund	Examining the Efficacy, Acceptability and Maintenance of a Family-centered PBS Approach to Food Refusal Behaviors in Young Children.	\$7,522
2/6/2009-2/6/2011	University of Oregon Fairway Endowed Faculty and Outreach Funds	Examination of an activity-based approach to teaching play and other functional skills to children with autism in inclusive settings.	\$24,202
3/1/2008-2/28/2009	Oregon Department of Education	Oregon's Early Childhood Inclusion Collaborative	\$9,000
1/1/2008-5/31/2009	Oregon Department of Education	On-line ASQ System in Oregon	\$25,340
8/1/2007-7/31/2011	Institute of Education Sciences	Project SEAM: Preventing Behavior Disorders and Improving Social-Emotional Competence for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities	\$1,385,742
6/1/2007-5/31/2010	University of Oregon Fairway Endowed Faculty and Outreach Funds	Implementation of Best Practices to Enhance Social and Emotional Development for Young Children with Disabilities and	\$25,000

		their Families	
9/15/2006- 9/14/2009	Northwest Health Foundation	Parents' Early Education for their Children (PEECH)	\$135,000
9/1/2005- 8/31/2010	Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Children's Bureau	Family Early Advocacy and Treatment (FEAT)	\$1,095,000
4/8/2003- 10/31/2007	U.S. Department of Education	Creating Systems Change for Children with Disabilities (CASCADES)	\$349,996
9/1/2002- 8/31/2006	Administration on Children, Youth, and Families	Improving Mental Health in Children Served by Early Head Start (Head Start-University Research Partnership grant)	\$799,821
10/1/2002- 9/30/2005	Office of Special Education Programs	Directed Research: Improving Mental Health in Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities	\$537,003
9/1/2001- 8/31/2005	Office of Special Education Programs	Demonstration Project: Access for Children to Early Services (ACES)	\$697,384
7/15/1999- 7/16/2001	Organon Pharmaceuticals	Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection/In Vitro Fertilization Follow Along Study	\$98,000
10/1/1998- 9/20/2001	Office of Special Education Programs	Parent Early Evaluation of Kids (PEEK) Outreach Project	\$449,404
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$5,638,414</b>

These projects are described in detail below.

**Examining the Efficacy, Acceptability and Maintenance of a Family-centered PBS Approach to Food Refusal Behaviors in Young Children**

The goals of this project are to increase positive interactions around mealtimes for caregivers and children with feeding problems and to teach caregivers effective strategies to increase and maintain food intake in their children.

**Examination of an Activity-based Approach to Teaching Play and other Functional Skills to Children with Autism in Inclusive Settings**

The purpose of this project is twofold. The first purpose is to provide professional development training on evidence based practices for the inclusion of children with autism to teachers in preschools classroom in Lane County. There are close to 100 children with autism receiving services in Lane County, over two thirds of these children receive services in community inclusive preschools, and most teachers are not trained to modify their curriculum for these children. The second purpose is to investigate the effects of a training package designed to increase the teachers' use of effective instructional procedures on child's performance of targeted objectives. The PI and research assistant will train teachers to embed evidence based prompting procedures into their daily preschool activities. Children with autism are hypothesized to increase their play skills and other functional skills (i.e., language, social skills). The results will inform future research and practice for young children with autism.

**ODE Oregon's Early Childhood Inclusion Collaborative**

The Oregon Department of Education awarded a contract in 2008 to the Early Intervention Program (EIP) at the University of Oregon to assist with the provision of inclusive services for young children with disabilities. Training and evaluation for statewide collaboration efforts to increase options for young children with disabilities in typical settings is the focus, as well as meeting State Performance Plan targets.



**ODE Online ASQ Screening System in Oregon**

In 2008, the Oregon Department of Education awarded a contract to the Early Intervention Program (EIP) at the University of Oregon to establish and field test an electronic web based version of a developmental screening questionnaire for potential use for statewide screening of infants and preschoolers at risk for developmental disabilities. The EIP is test piloting the electronic questionnaires in two counties with state-wide implementation a final goal. New funding is expected to continue the implementation process during 2009-2011.

**Project SEAM: Preventing Behavior Disorders and Improving Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities**

The goal of Project SEAM (Social Emotional Assessment Measure) is to conduct psychometric and experimental studies on an innovative tool for assessing and monitoring social emotional and behavioral development in infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families from birth to 3 years. Developmental theory emphasizing a transactional, organizational model of early development combined with behavioral theory, emphasizing positive behavioral support and functional analysis provide the framework for the SEAM. The SEAM assessment was designed to assist in prevention and early identification of social emotional difficulties and behavior disorders, as well as optimizing positive parent-child interactions in the first years of life. The four-year project, awarded in 2007, includes two years of instrument refinement and validation and a year of experimental studies in which the effects of the SEAM on infant/toddler social-emotional competence and academic readiness will be investigated. The fourth year will focus on data analysis, finalization of the SEAM assessment, initial curriculum development, and dissemination. Project SEAM is a collaborative project involving the University of Oregon Early Intervention Program, Pennsylvania State University, and Part C early intervention programs in Oregon and Pennsylvania.

**Implementation of Best Practices to Enhance Social and Emotional Development for Young Children with Disabilities and their Families**

The goal of this outreach project is to assist Early Intervention/Early Childhood (EI/EC) personnel throughout the nation in acquiring and applying effective screening, assessment/evaluation and intervention practices related to enhancing the social-emotional development of young children with disabilities.

### **Parents' Early Education for their Children (PEECH)**

Parents' Early Education for their Children (PEECH) is a collaborative endeavor directed by the Early Intervention Program in collaboration with the Relief Nursery's Accessing Success Program, Therapeutic Early Childhood Program, and Adult and Child Mental Health Services. This project provides critical parenting education and support and infant mental health services to vulnerable families with infants and toddlers who have been prenatally exposed to illegal drugs and alcohol. Identified gaps in these service delivery areas will be filled by providing classroom-based and support group interventions. PEECH responds to the growing numbers of infants exposed prenatally to illegal drugs and their families by providing family-centered mental health and parenting services.

Parents come from one of two populations not receiving services: 1) parents who are being reunited with their children after foster care, due to substance abuse issues; and 2) parents who have been incarcerated and are returning to the community and parenting their children for the first time. Gaps in service delivery are filled by providing effective interventions that prevent mental health and developmental disabilities. Peers who have been successful in parenting and drug treatment assist interventionists. In addition, this project focuses on gathering data on outcomes of identified infants and their families as well as continued assessment of related unmet needs in Lane County.

### **Family Early Advocacy and Treatment (FEAT)**

The University of Oregon Early Intervention Program and Child Rehabilitation Center/Oregon Health Sciences University, joining with child welfare, health, drug treatment, early intervention, and mental health agencies have been awarded a five year project for the development and replication of a comprehensive, family centered model for identifying and serving families with children prenatally exposed to illegal drugs. Developing an optimal, effective model of policies

and procedures to implement provisions of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) for substance exposed newborns is the purpose of Project FEAT. Currently, significant identification and treatment barriers exist including inconsistent maternal drug testing, referral, and follow-up services as well as no clear Oregon state policies related to prenatal drug exposure and CAPTA.

Project FEAT objectives include model development consisting of: 1) state level interagency Perinatal Working Group to develop policies and procedures for identification, referral and treatment of prenatally drug exposed infants and their families; 2) local Perinatal Working Group to further define policies and procedures at a local level; 3) full time Family Advocate to support and coordinate culturally-appropriate services for children and family members; 4) on-going evaluation process designed to improve community collaborations, measure child and family outcomes, and refine the model.

### **Creating Systems Change for Children with Disabilities (CASCADES)**

This federally funded outreach project, funded between 2003-2007, provided training and technical assistance for early intervention personnel interested in improving services to young children with disabilities and their families. A statewide train-the-trainer approach was included to maximize the impact of the provided training and technical assistance. Much of the focus was on assisting “trainers” to become experts in the use of a curriculum-based measure called the *Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System*.

### **Improving Mental Health in Children Served by Early Head Start (Head Start-University Research Partnership grant)**

Healthy emotional development in children is critical for positive mental health outcomes. Low-income families who may be exposed to a multitude of risks such as neighborhood violence, inadequate nutrition, and little or no access to mental health services, the development of positive mental health outcomes may be particularly challenging. The University of Oregon Early Intervention Program joined Southern Oregon Early Head Start Program and Umatillo-Morrow Early Head Start to improve mental health services to targeted Early Head Start children and their families. The four-year project included four years of intervention designed to prevent or

ameliorate mental health problems in Early Head Start families. An innovative home visiting program was designed to enhance parent-child interactions, increase home visitors' knowledge and skills regarding mental health issues, and improve the quality of home. A quasi-experimental design was used; both intervention (e.g., experimental) and comparison groups at each site received mental health training and interventions in the course of the project. A combination research approach with diverse methodologies was used including correlational, descriptive, experimental, and naturalistic case studies.

### **Directed Research: Improving Mental Health in Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities**

The University of Oregon Early Intervention Program joined in a partnership with EC CARES, the Lane County EI/ECSE provider, and OCDC's Migrant Head Start to improve mental health services to targeted children and families served in Oregon under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The proposed project included three years of intervention designed to prevent or ameliorate mental health problems in children and families served under Part C. A home visiting program designed to enhance parent-child interactions, increase home visitors' knowledge and skills regarding mental health issues, and improve the quality of home visits was implemented and evaluated.

### **Access for Children to Early Services (ACES)**

This federally funded demonstration project focused on improving community-based early identification systems for infants, toddlers, and preschool children who are at risk for social-emotional and behavioral disabilities in Oregon. Targeted objectives included working with agencies that served young children who are at risk to refine and implement a collaborative, community-based, multi-agency early identification approach; replicate and evaluate the model in ethnically diverse settings; evaluate the cost, effectiveness and satisfaction of the model; and replicate and disseminate the model nationally. Migrant Head Start, Head Start, and Healthy Start programs in Oregon participated.

### **Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection/In Vitro Fertilization Follow-Along Study**

Approximately 400 children conceived by assisted reproductive technologies (ART) were monitored using the *Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ)*. Children conceived by intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) are thought to be at greater risk for genetic and developmental anomalies because of human manipulation of sperm and eggs inherent in the ICSI procedure. After four years of developmental monitoring, there were few differences on the ASQ between children conceived by ICSI and those conceived by conventional in vitro fertilization. Continued monitoring of the children with the addition of a naturally-conceived comparison group is planned.

### **Parent Early Evaluation of Kids (PEEK) Outreach Project**

Project PEEK studied the validity, reliability, utility, and cost of incorporating a parent-completed developmental screening tool into regularly scheduled pediatric well child visits. Finding and serving infants and young children with developmental needs is a national priority under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Identifying and intervening during a child's early years is believed to improve developmental outcomes, support families, and save resources for school districts and society at large, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends. Project PEEK collaborated with local pediatricians to develop and evaluate an easily implemented, low cost system to identify children in need of further evaluation and possible early intervention/special education services.

### **ASSESSMENTS**

Since its inception, faculty in the EIP have been national and international leaders in the development of assessments for preschool age children. These assessments include the *Ages and Stages Questionnaires*, currently the most widely used screening instrument for young children in the world; the *Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System*, one of the top rated and mostly widely used curriculum-based measures for young children, and a newly developed tool, the *Social Emotional Assessment Measure*. Research on these three instruments is continuing here at the UO as well as at several sites in the U.S. and international settings.

### **Ages and Stages Questionnaires: A parent-completed child-monitoring system**

The Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ): A Parent-Completed, Child-Monitoring System, Third Edition, is a first-level comprehensive screening program. The ASQ screening system is composed of 21 questionnaires designed to be completed by parents or primary caregivers, from 2 months to 5 ½ years. In most cases, these questionnaires accurately identify infants or young children who are in need of further evaluation to determine whether they are eligible for early intervention services. The first edition of the ASQ was published in 1995, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition in 2009. A normative sample of 15,000 children/parents assisted in the renorming studies for the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, using both web-based and paper/pencil versions. The ASQ has been translated into over 10 languages and is being administered in every state in the U.S. China, Korea, India, Spain, Canada, Chile, Thailand and Vietnam are among nations using the ASQ for early identification of developmental delays.

#### **Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE)**

Research on the psychometric properties of the ASQ:SE has continued during the past three years. Thousands of children and families from diverse backgrounds have participated in normative studies. Reliability studies, including internal consistency and test-retest reliability, have been completed as well as concurrent and discriminative validity studies. The ASQ:SE appears to identify children who need further assessment for difficulties related to social and emotional competence. The ASQ:SE was first published in Fall 2001 and is being used statewide in early identification systems in several states including Oregon, Minnesota and Illinois as well as in local and regional programs.

#### **Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS)**

The AEPS is an assessment/evaluation system with associated curricula and is a functional and accurate measurement tool for young children with disabilities. More than an assessment measure, it is a comprehensive and linked system that includes assessment/evaluation, curricular, and family participation components for infants and children birth to age 6. Since the AEPS became commercially available in 1983, requests for trainings have been extensive, and has been supported through outreach grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education programs and is the number one tool chosen by both Part C and Part B programs for

OSEP reporting. The AEPS is now on its second edition, and is available in books and DVD, as well as an interactive web-based form.

### **Social-Emotional Assessment Measure (SEAM)**

The SEAM (Social Emotional Assessment Measure) is designed to conduct psychometric and experimental studies on an innovative tool for assessing and monitoring social emotional and behavioral development in infants, and toddlers with disabilities and their families from birth to 3 years. Developmental theory emphasizing a transactional, organizational model of early development combined with behavioral theory, emphasizing positive behavioral support and functional analysis provide the framework for the SEAM. The SEAM assessment was designed to assist in prevention and early identification of social emotional difficulties and behavior disorders, as well as optimizing positive parent-child interactions in the first years of life.

### **CURRENT STATUS**

During the 2009-2010 academic year, 10 students participated in the Early Intervention doctoral program. All of these students were full time and engaged in a range of learning activities including supervision, grant writing, data analysis, and teaching. In addition, 32 students participated in the Early Intervention master's degree program and 4 in the rural off-campus program. The majority of these students received their initial state teaching license in EI/ECSE when they graduated in August, 2009. A federal training grant from the Office of Special Education Programs provides support for the master's students, and assists in covering supervision and faculty costs.

The Early Intervention Program has implemented a unique teacher training project that provides master's students with an opportunity to design and run an activity-based intervention classroom for preschool children with special needs. In addition to providing a valuable experience for students, the program provides much needed summer services for young children who might not otherwise receive intervention services during the summer months. The program serves 8-10 children with special needs and includes several typically developing peers. The Early Intervention Program collaborates with EC CARES, Lane County's early intervention/early

childhood special education agency, to offer the summer classroom as a placement option for children who are newly eligible for special education services in Lane County.

Research and training activities are on-going, as described in Table 4. Development of the SEAM curriculum as well as writing for funding to investigate the efficacy of early screening efforts to identify infants and toddlers with autism are the current focus. Systems change efforts related to improving early identification and treatment of infants exposed prenatally to drugs and alcohol are also a priority.

In conclusion, the Early Intervention Program has been a major contributor to research/outreach efforts at the University of Oregon as well as to academic programs. As an integrated unit, research/outreach and academic efforts are truly integrated and each informs the other. Program goals include on-going research, training, outreach, and dissemination related to improving developmental outcomes for young children with disabilities, and at risk for disabilities, and their families.

Jane Squires, Ph.D.

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