

This is FIPP Video Transcript

In 1972, Doctor J. Iverson Riddle, director of what was then known as Western Carolina Center, had a vision that parents of young children with disabilities should receive the support they need to keep their children at home and raise them as part of their family and community. As a result, the Family Infant and Preschool program was established and began a long history of research and practice related to family-centered care and effective help giving.

Now, 50 years later, FIPP family supports are focused in six counties, including Alexander, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, and McDowell, and impact over 500 families each year. Where and how services are provided is critical to achieving child and family outcomes. Decades of research at FIPP and other leading institutions from around the world indicates that children learn by participating in their everyday routines and activities such as mealtime, bathtime, toothbrushing and dressing.

For this reason, FIPP services are not provided in clinics or offices, but at locations where young children would be if they did not have a developmental delay and focus on learning as part of family and community activities. Because the important adults in young children's lives have the biggest impact on learning, FIPP staff focus their efforts on using a coaching interaction style to help parents, grandparents and childcare providers and others know how to help children learn.

In doing so, these individuals can provide children with many more opportunities to use existing skills and learn new ones than would be possible in a therapy session. Instead of sending multiple people to support a family, FIPP identifies a primary service provider who, with assistance as needed from other team members, serves as the program's primary liaison between the team and family.

This approach ensures coordination, collaboration, and continuity of care while minimizing confusion and family time required for visits by multiple providers, with varying priorities. Families in North Carolina and around the world face concerns such as addiction. Children born prematurely. Children with or at risk for disabilities. Generational poverty. Grandparents raising grandchildren. Limited access to high quality, affordable childcare. And gaps in service systems that can allow some children and families to fall through the cracks at FIPP.

At FIPP we understand the challenges facing parents today and our services have adapted to meet the changing needs of families. Consider the Tatum family. Michaela has used a wheelchair her entire life and has a baby, Quinton. Most people, even Michaela's family, did not think she could safely care for her son. FIPP can support Michaela and Quinton, too, with FIPP services. Michaela has her own primary service provider, a physical therapist who has experience working with parents with disabilities and promoting child development.

The physical therapist works with Michaela to help her learn safe techniques for picking up Quinton, changing his clothing, and moving him from room to room. FIPP gives Michaela the strategies and confidence she needs to raise her son, and even to provide support and

advice to other parents with disabilities. In addition to strengthening families, FIPP builds caring and responsive communities.

This is accomplished by sharing what we know works with other programs and professionals through workshops, conference presentations, journal articles, books, and webinars. National professional organizations such as the American Physical Therapy Association, the American Speech Language Hearing Association, the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children, and Zero to Three, have invited FIPP staff members to deliver presentations, participate in workgroups, and lead other initiatives to ensure the use of evidence based early intervention practices by their members.

FIPP work has also been cited in professional journals and reports by numerous organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics. FIPP longstanding record of bridging research to effective practice has established FIPP as a local, state, national, and international resource. Early intervention providers from around the world have come to FIPP to learn about what we do and how to replicate our practices in their own programs through onsite and web-based training, opportunities for staff members have reached nearly 20,000 professionals, impacting the lives of literally thousands of children and their families.

From strengthening families and promoting their children's learning across North Carolina to advancing excellence in early childhood intervention practices around the globe, the Family, Infant and Preschool Program is responding to the need and making a meaningful difference now and for generations to come.