



CHRIS  
NEWSLETTER

SUMMER  
2005

VOLUME  
XIV

NUMBER  
1

## C O M M E N T S

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

2 TAWG MEETING UPDATE

3 DISPROPORTIONATE  
REPRESENTATION AT  
REFERRAL

4 GUIDELINES FOR CITRIX  
USERS

# CHRIS Gold Planning

Aimee A. Echeverri and Olga Camacho

The latest version of our program, CHRIS *Plus* Citrix, is reaching its final stages of conversion. Shortly, all sites will be able to access the statewide master database. As we complete this last step, we already find ourselves planning for the next version of the CHRIS program (CHRIS Gold). To assist with this planning phase, we would like to request feedback from our users regarding the current version of CHRIS *Plus*. User input is one of our greatest resources in the development process. Recently, some sites

have indicated that they are using the Notes field to keep track of consistent information that could be stored in fields if new fields were created. Other centers have conveyed the desire to include data in CHRIS from local Child Find databases. These requests indicate that duplicate data entry exists in some districts. The use of multiple databases to record child information increases the data entry burden and makes locating complete child information tedious. The new version of the CHRIS can be programmed to acco-

modate data from other sources and consolidate data into one system. It has always been our goal to make the CHRIS program the most user friendly database. The upcoming version is no exception. We would like to ask all users to discuss any suggestions for the next version of the CHRIS with your TAWG representative. User requests and suggestions will be discussed at the upcoming TAWG meeting in December. Together, we can map out the CHRIS Gold of tomorrow and produce the best version so far.

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: NEWSLETTER WILL BE DELIVERED VIA E-MAIL

The CHRIS Comments newsletter will now be delivered via e-mail! Starting with this issue, everyone on our mailing list will receive our newsletter in a friendly web format. The CHRIS Comments e-newsletter will continue to be sent out every quarter and include featured articles, upcoming events, program updates, and more. *Please note that this will be the last printed copy of CHRIS Comments that will*

*be distributed.* All future newsletters will be sent directly to your e-mail address. If your e-mail browser is unable to view HTML e-mails, you can access the newsletter from our web site at [www.chris.miami.edu](http://www.chris.miami.edu). If you received a copy of this issue in the mail but did not receive the e-mail version, please update your e-mail address at [chris.um@miami.edu](mailto:chris.um@miami.edu).



# TAWG Meeting Update

Aimee A. Echeverri



The semi-annual Technical Assistance Work Group (TAWG) Advisory Board Meeting was held at the Embassy Suites Orlando Airport Hotel on June 2 - 3, 2005. This was the first Advisory Board meeting to include representation from each of the FDLRS centers. As we mentioned last Fall, additional members were added to TAWG in order to provide all centers the opportunity to participate in the ongoing development of CHRIS. This new format gives us a chance to receive input from a wide variety of FDLRS, Child Find, and ESE personnel. As we move towards the development of the next version of the CHRIS program (CHRIS Gold), the Advisory Board will be instrumental in communicating user requests and making critical decisions.

Major objectives accomplished at the June meeting included:

- Reviewed Citrix conversion process
- Presented new changes to CHRIS *Plus* (upon conversion to Citrix)
- Discussed program requests for CHRIS *Plus* and CHRIS Gold
- Discussed possible data transfer from Part C to CHRIS
- Reviewed CHRIS Gold planning
- Established decisions regarding future program functions

The two day meeting resulted in a good deal of positive feedback from the participants. Many FDLRS representatives were excited to be a part of the decision making process behind CHRIS.

A complete list of the TAWG Advisory and Executive Board members is available online at [www.chris.miami.edu](http://www.chris.miami.edu). Meeting agendas, minutes, and presentations are also available from this website.

**... the Advisory Board will be instrumental in communicating user requests ...**



*TAWG Advisory Board Meeting at the Embassy Suites Orlando Airport on June 2-3, 2005. From Left to Right: Top - Cory Beermann, Keith Scott, Olga Camacho, Carol Brannigan, Ashley Anderson, Lynn Harris, Tracy Carter, Angela Bottom, Carolyn Mellaci, Renee Santillo, Jan McClain, Lisa Sears, Virginia Kantro, Margaret Hill, and Susanna Cossio Bottom - Christine Delgado, Aimee Echeverri, Rachael Spanjer, Patty Smoot, Cathy Hoefling, and Patty Naquin.*



This newsletter was developed by the University of Miami, Department of Psychology, through the Children's Registry and Information System (CHRIS), a special project funded by the State of Florida, Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), through federal assistance under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The CHRIS Comments newsletter provides updates and information for the users of the CHRIS Registry.

Authorization for reproduction is hereby granted to the State System of Public Education consistent with Section 1006.39 (2), Florida Statutes. No authorization is granted for distribution or reproduction outside the State System of Public Education without prior approval in writing.

Copyright © 2005  
State of Florida, Department of State

Editor in Chief, Features  
Aimee A. Echeverri  
[aimee@miami.edu](mailto:aimee@miami.edu)

Principal Investigator  
Keith G. Scott, Ph.D.  
[kscott@miami.edu](mailto:kscott@miami.edu)

Project Director  
Christine F. Delgado, Ph.D.  
[cdelgado@miami.edu](mailto:cdelgado@miami.edu)

Project Manager  
Olga Camacho  
[olga@miami.edu](mailto:olga@miami.edu)

CHRIS Help Desk  
Cory Beermann, Technical Support  
[cory@miami.edu](mailto:cory@miami.edu)

CHRIS Comments  
Newsletter Schedule for 2005-2006  
August, November, February, May

CHRIS Project  
University of Miami  
Department of Psychology  
5665 Ponce de Leon Blvd.  
Flipse Building Room #241  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146-0721

Email: [chris.um@miami.edu](mailto:chris.um@miami.edu)  
Web site: [www.chris.miami.edu](http://www.chris.miami.edu)  
Phone: (800) 231-5747  
(305) 284-5514  
Fax: (305) 284-6992

# Disproportionate Representation at Referral

Christine F. Delgado, Ph.D.



Previous research has indicated that African American and Native American students are often overrepresented in special education while Asian American students are often underrepresented. While racial and ethnic disparities in special education have been well documented, there is very little research on disparities at the point of referral. The investigation of factors affecting referral rates and processes is essential to fully understanding the roots of disproportionate representation in special education.

Data from CHRIS were integrated with Florida Department of Health birth certificate records for 1994 and 1995. Two groups were created:

- **Referred** – children born in Florida with a Referral Date in CHRIS (n = 24,366)
- **Not Referred** – children born in Florida who did not have a Referral Date in CHRIS (n = 348,210)

Child race and maternal ethnicity were obtained from the birth certificate record. Logistic regression was employed to evaluate the association of race and ethnicity with referral status. Logistic regression yields an odds ratio (OR) that indicates the relative increase or decrease in the odds of referral relative to a reference group. White and Non-Hispanic/Non-Haitian were chosen as the reference groups for race and ethnicity, respectively, because they represented the largest groups in Florida. ORs reported were adjusted for the following additional factors: prematurity, birth weight, maternal education, maternal age, maternal marital status, and gender.

For each OR, 95% confidence intervals (CI) were calculated. ORs for which either confidence limit was equal to or crossed 1.0 were not considered meaningful because they did not reach the conventional 5% level of significance.

This study identified disparities in referral rates for preschool children that may well continue through to special education placement in the school years (see Table 1).

Results indicating the overrepresentation of Native American children and the under representation of Asian/Pacific Island children in special education were consistent with previous research. The increased

referral rates for school-aged Black children reported in other studies, however, were not replicated by this study. In this preschool sample, White children were slightly, although significantly, more likely to be referred than Black children.

With regard to ethnicity, the under-referral of both Hispanic and Haitian children was identified. Reasons for the reduced rates of referral for Hispanic and Haitian children are undoubtedly multifaceted and likely include lack of awareness of the availability of services, differences in cultural attitudes regarding disabilities, and limited English proficiency resulting in limited access to materials disseminated by Child Find agencies and reduced ability to communicate with medical, educational, and child care personnel.

*Compared to White children, the odds of referral were*

- lower for Black children
- lower for Asian/Pacific Island children
- higher for Native American children

*Compared to Non-Hispanic/Non-Haitian children, the odds of referral were*

- lower for Hispanic children
- lower for Haitian children

**Table 1. Distribution of Variables and Adjusted Odds Ratios (OR) with 95% Confidence Intervals (CI).**

Variable	Referred N	%	Not Referred N	%	Adjusted OR (95% CI)
<b>Child Race</b>					
White	18,069	74.2	255,965	73.5	--
Black	5,900	24.2	82,635	23.7	0.94 (0.91-0.98)
Asian/Pacific Island	235	1.0	7,661	2.2	0.42 (0.37-0.48)
Native American	137	0.6	1,463	0.4	1.22 (1.02-1.46)
Other	25	0.1	486	0.1	0.76 (0.51-1.14)
<b>Maternal Ethnicity</b>					
Non-Hispanic/Non-Haitian	20,594	84.5	276,565	79.4	--
Hispanic	3,440	14.1	62,992	18.1	0.70 (0.68-0.73)
Haitian	332	1.4	8,653	2.5	0.49 (0.44-0.55)



# Guidelines for Citrix Users

Olga Camacho

Once your site has been converted to Citrix, here are a few guidelines to keep in mind.

### Log Out of CHRIS

If you are away from the CHRIS program for more than two hours, your Citrix session will be logged off. This will cause CHRIS to close improperly and result in your user session remaining active. At this point, a high probability of file corruption exists in the database. As a rule, if you are going to be away from the program for more than 30

minutes, exit completely out of CHRIS.

### Prevent Record Locking

Do not remain on the Child Record Locator screen for long periods of time. If your cursor is left active on a field in this screen, it may cause record locking. Record locking prevents other users from accessing CHRIS.

### Improve Your Searches

As sites are converted to Citrix, there will be an increased number of records in the database. There-

fore when performing a search, include as much information as possible to locate the child's record. This will reduce your chances of producing a found set with more than 500 records.

With your cooperation we can maintain the database in good working order and ensure all users are happy with the power and flexibility offered by Citrix.



University of Miami

Department of Psychology

5665 Ponce de Leon Blvd.

Flipse Building, Room 241

Coral Gables, Florida 33146

66086Y