CHILDREN'S REGISTRY & INFORMATION SYSTEM

C·H·R·I·S

COMMENTS

Hurricane Wilma Survivor: CHRIS *Plus*

Dr. Ellen Breslow, Child Find Specialist
FDLRS/Reach Associate Center

Friday, October 21, 2005, as Hurricane Wilma approached we had several concerns. We needed to unplug the computers, put away office supplies, decide what to do with personal belongings, and choose which items should remain in the office, go out to storage, or be taken home. The one thing we didn't have to worry about was CHRIS!

Prior to the Citrix conversion of CHRIS *Plus*, CHRIS would have topped the list of things to deal with prior to a storm hitting Florida. The server needed to be protected, the data needed to be backed up, and a secure place to store those backups needed to be found.

The FDLRS/REACH (Broward County) offices are located in downtown Ft. Lauderdale at the Kathleen C. Wright School Board building. The pictures illustrate the damage incurred primarily on the west side of the structure. Located among the 40-50 damaged offices was the Child Find office on the 9th floor which was completely destroyed. Fortunately, most of our files and data

sheets were not in the office because they had been stored in other areas of the building, away from the windows.

Immediately following the hurricane, the FDLRS staff were scattered in multiple locations until final safety checks on the building were completed. Six days after the storm, we were able to return to the building, assess the damage for ourselves, and piece together as much as we could to get back to normal. The first official call made from the Child Find team was to the CHRIS Help Desk. The Help Desk was able to assist us with the installation and setup of the Citrix client software on other computers. This enabled us to access the information we needed from remote locations and continue working. The Help Desk staff also assisted us with customizing and printing reports that allowed us to conduct scheduled screenings that week and to contact caregivers to reschedule children's appointments.

At our center, Hurricane Wilma affected a total of approximately 250 families. Our ability to get back to work

Right: FDLRS/Reach office building days after Hurricane Wilma.

Below: Ellen's corner office boarded up and closed until further notice.
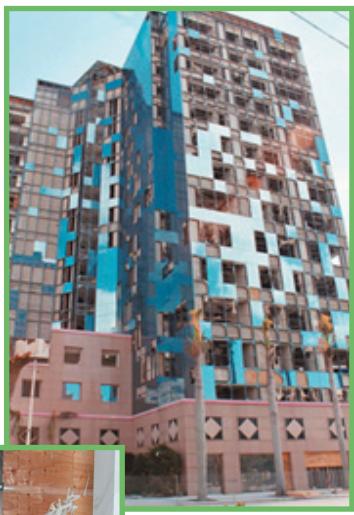
and accomplish those tasks was a testimony to the success of an extremely efficient and effective database. Those of us who work with CHRIS *Plus* and rely on the Help Desk are all aware of the high caliber of professionalism and talent that surrounds this fabulous tool. Kudos and thanks to the CHRIS Team for developing and maintaining a truly model database. CHRIS *Plus* was a "lifesaver!"

TAWG Meeting Update

Aimee A. Echeverri

A meeting of the Technical Assistance Work Group (TAWG) Advisory Board was held at the Embassy Suites Orlando Airport Hotel on Dec. 8 - 9, 2005.

Important topics discussed included:
- CHRIS project update
- CHRIS Gold design plans
- Program issues
- User requests
- Service Plan screen revisions
- Home and Private School referrals
- Early Steps data transfer process
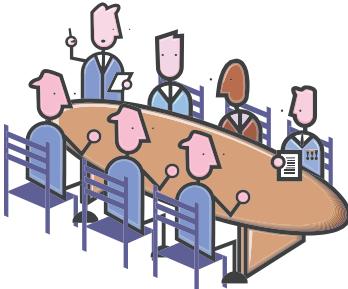
Hello/Goodbye

We would like to welcome our newest members Kathleen Leith (FDLRS/Alpha), Renee Santillo (FDLRS/Crown), Carol Milton (FDLRS/Gateway), and Beverly Atkenson (FDLRS/FSU) to the advisory board.   On the same note, we would like to also say *farewell* and *thank you* to Ruthie Rieder, Dana Wilcox, Gail Brown, Virginia Kantro, and Dr. Keith Scott for contributing their valuable time and input to the advisory board.

Training Update

Aimee A. Echeverri

In 2005, we had an excellent year of training (and welcoming) new users and data facilitators on the CHRIS program. We trained a total of 63 users statewide. Therefore, we can proudly annouce that as of December 2005 we had a total of 253 trained users working with CHRIS.

FDLRS/Hillsborough Associate Center New User Training

Thank you to all of the users who participated in the trainings and to those people who made these sessions possible. Trainings were held at the following locations: University of Miami (CHRIS Headquarters), Sarasota, Pensacola, Hillborough, Lee, Polk, Broward, Pinellas, and Putnam County.

If you would like to schedule a training session at your center or need to send a user to training, please check our website at www.chris.miami.edu/training.htm for scheduled dates or call the Help Desk for more assistance.

Maternal Education as a Risk Factor for Speech/Language Impairments

Christine F. Delgado, Ph.D

Low levels of maternal education at birth are associated with an increased risk for special education placement. Children born to mothers with less than 12 years of education at the time of the child's birth are at increased risk for a variety of disabilities including specific learning disabilities, severe emotional disturbances/emotional handicaps, and mental retardation. Results of studies on the relation between maternal education and speech and/or language impairments have been mixed.   The present study utilized integrated statewide datasets to evaluate the risk associated with maternal education in preschool age children who were born in Florida.

Sample

The sample consisted of children born in Florida from 1994 through 1998. CHRIS records were utilized to categorize children into one of the following four groups:

- *Isolated speech impairment (SI):* a primary exceptionality of speech impairment and no secondary exceptionality (n = 6,835).
- *Language impairment (LI):* a primary exceptionality of language impairment and no secondary exceptionality (n = 2,357).
- *Combined speech and language impairment (CSLI):* a primary exceptionality of speech impairment with a secondary exceptionality of language impairment or a primary exceptionality of language impairment with a secondary exceptionality of speech impairment (n = 3,607).

- *Comparison group:* No primary exceptionality or primary exceptionality other than speech or language impairment (n = 946,177).

Results

Maternal education was not associated with an increased risk for speech and/or language impairments among children whose mothers had a completed 12 years of education or less at the time of the child's birth. Of interest, though, the likelihood of a child being classified as SI or CSLI increased with higher educational attainment (see Figure).

Although higher levels of education do not likely pose an increased biological or environmental risk to the child, these findings may indicate a bias towards the identification of SI in more educated families with higher socioeconomic status. Less educated mothers may not recognize the early signs of SI or may view speech problems as something the child will naturally outgrow. In addition to being more able to identify aberrant speech or language, mothers with higher levels of education may be more aware of the services provided in their communities and recognize the importance of early intervention for improving outcomes. Informing less educated mothers of the early signs of speech and language impairments, the availability of services, and the importance of early intervention could assist in the early identification of children at potential risk for these disabilities.

Additional details of this study can be found on www.chris.miami.edu.
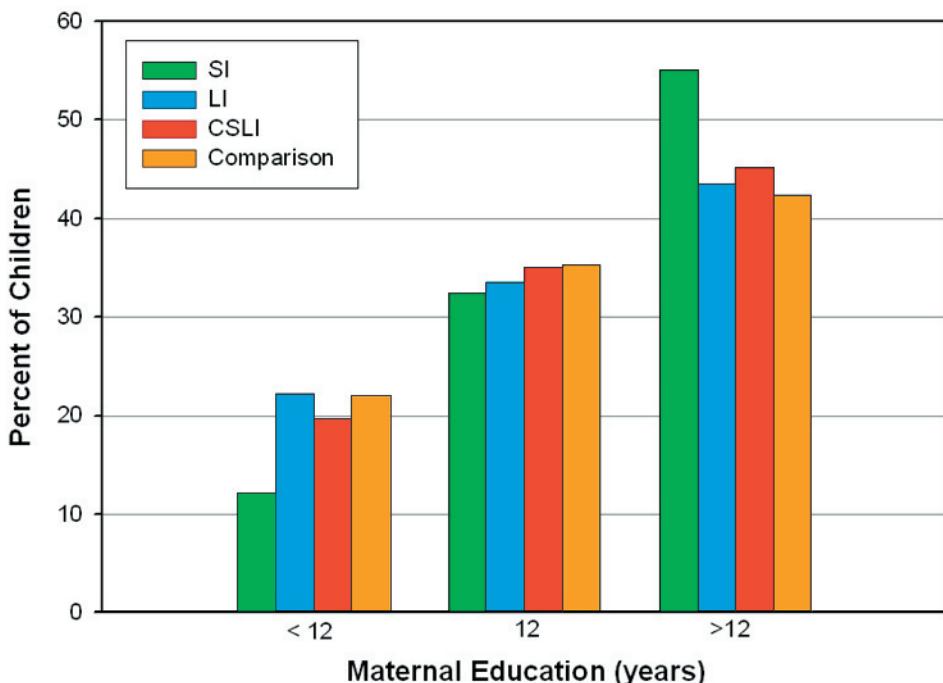
Percent of children with speech and/or language impairments by maternal education.

Help Desk Tips for Reporter

Aimee A. Echeverri

This past year we have seen a steady growth of interest from our users on how to produce custom reports from Reporter. All users have access to Reporter and the ability to make modifications to the report layouts. In the statewide master database, the Reporter file is shared by all the FDLRS sites. As such, please keep the following information in mind when using Reporter:

Duplicate Report Layouts

If you would like to modify a standard tracking report or a functional report from another site, you must first make a duplicate copy of the report for your use. Modifications made to another site's report layout can alter their data results, working scripts, and/or formatting (font, color, field names, etc).

Label New Layouts

Once you have been able to create (or duplicate) a report layout, remember to label the layout with your site name and a working title. For example, *South Referral Report*.

Delete Unused Layouts

To keep the size of the Reporter file manageable, delete any of your site's unwanted or unused layouts from Reporter. Verify that you are only deleting layouts from your site.

ANNOUCEMENTS

CHRIS Training Sessions

If you would like to request a New User, Data Facilitator, or Online Reporter training, please send an e-mail to Cory Beermann at cory@miami.edu. You can also visit the Training web page at www.chris.miami.edu/training.htm or call the Help Desk for more information. Remember, CHRIS trainers can go to your center if there are six or more CHRIS users in your area that are interested in attending training.

CHRIS Survey 2006

If you haven't done so yet, please fill out our CHRIS Survey 2006 to provide us with your feedback. The CHRIS Project is determined to provide the best support and service to its user community. The survey can be filled out online at www.chris.miami.edu or you can download a PDF form and fax it to us at your convenience. The deadline to fill out a survey and receive CHRIS points is *February 17, 2006*. Thank you to those who have already participated!

Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

The TAWG Advisory Board Meeting will be held on May 8-9, 2006 at the Embassy Suites Orlando Airport Hotel. Visit the TAWG web page at www.chris.miami.edu/tawg.htm for more information.

Share a CHRIS story and earn CHRIS Points!

Do you have an interesting CHRIS story that you would like to share with everyone? If so, please email Aimee Echeverri at aimee@miami.edu.

Do you want to be on the CHRIS mailing list?

If you are interested in receiving email annoucements regarding the quarterly edition of the CHRIS Comments Newslettter, send us your email address at chris.um@miami.edu. You will receive a link to our website (www.chris.miami.edu/publications/newsletter.htm) where the newsletter is distributed in Adobe PDF format and can be downloaded and saved onto your local computer. If you cannot open the PDF files, go to www.adobe.com and download a copy of the free Adobe Acrobat Reader.