

Early Intervention Management and Research Group (EMRG)
White Paper No. 4

May, 2009

A Brief History of the Early Intervention Management and Research Group (EMRG)¹

By Diane Bricker, Ph.D., with assistance from the EMRG Board of Directors: , Jennifer Grisham-Brown, PH.D., Carmen Dionne, Ph.D., Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, Ph.D., JoAnn (JJ) Johnson, Ph.D., Marisa Macy, Ph.D., Kristine Slentz, Ph.D., Tracy Thorndike Christ, Ph.D., & Misti Waddell, M.S.

Suggested citation:

Bricker, D., Grisham-Brown, J., Dionne, C., Pretti-Frontczak, K, Johnson J.J., Macy, M., Slentz, K., Thorndike Christ, T., & Waddell, M. (2008) A brief history of the Early Intervention Research and Management Group (EMRG). EMRG White Paper No. 4. Eugene, OR: Early Intervention Management and Research Group (EMRG).

¹ This white paper is the forth of the Early Intervention Management and Research Group (EMRG) White Paper Series: EMRG, Eugene, OR. EMRG is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation created to manage future developments associated with linked measurement and curriculum systems designed to enhance early childhood intervention offered to young children and their families. See www.aesplinkedsystem.com for other white papers in the series.

INTRODUCTION

Beginning in 1999 the AEPS authors began working on changes for the second edition of the AEPS in conjunction with Brookes Publishing. In the summers of 2000 and 2001, AEPS summit meetings were held at the University of Oregon. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the data and input from users of the AEPS that had been gathered since its first publication in the mid 1990's. The purpose of the discussions was to improve the AEPS through thoughtful refinements and modifications. Preparations for the second edition required considerable time and effort commitments by the AEPS authors and was made difficult because no resource base was available to support this work even though authors received modest royalties.

During 2002-03 final modifications and refinements were made to the AEPS and the second edition was published by Brookes in 2004. The problems encountered while producing the second edition made clear that some better mechanism was necessary to assist authors and other contributors in the continued refinement and improvements of the AEPS.

Following the publication of the second edition of the AEPS, a meeting was held in Eugene, Oregon on Oct 11-12, 2004. Participants included: David Allen, Diane Bricker, Jennifer Grisham-Brown, JJ Johnson, Marisa Macy, Kris Slentz, Misti Waddell as well as Jane Squires, Jantina Clifford, Scott Macy, Heather Shrestha from Brookes Publishing and several staff members from EIP. One of the primary purposes of this meeting was to develop a plan for the continued management of the AEPS. The outcomes from this meeting were significant in that the authors and contributors agreed to the following: 1) pursue the development of a non-profit corporation to direct and manage future developments of the AEPS, and 2) direct AEPS royalties from individual authors into the non-profit corporation. Diane Bricker agreed to contact all AEPS authors to obtain written agreement to re-direct their AEPS royalties to a non-profit corporation. In addition, she volunteered to explore non-profit options that would best meet the goals of the group.

On October 13, 2005 a follow-up meeting was held in Portland, Oregon to discuss management options for the AEPS as well as other issues associated with the AEPS. Participants included: Dave Allen, Diane Bricker, Carmen Dionne, Jennifer Grisham-Brown, JJ Johnson, Marisa Macy, Scott Macy, Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, Heather Shrestha, Kris Slentz, Jane Squires, and Misti Waddell. A range of possible management options were presented and discussed. After weighing all possible alternatives, the consensus of the group was to pursue a non-profit 501-C corporation. In addition several important decisions were made. First, the attendees agreed to form a board of directors. Second, the group agreed that the articles and bylaws should emphasize the purpose of the corporation which is to maintain and improve the quality of the AEPS. Third, the group agreed to select a name for the corporation that reflected its purpose.

From November to the next on-site meeting several important actions were undertaken. First letters were sent to all AEPS authors inquiring about their willingness to redirect their AEPS royalties to a non-profit corporation. All but one AEPS author agreed in writing to re-direct their AEPS royalties to a non-profit corporation. Second, through conference calls action was taken to develop a 501-C6 non-profit corporation. Third, a legal consultant was obtained and articles and bylaws were drafted. Fourth, a board of directors was created and officers were elected. The president elect was Diane Bricker, the secretary was Misti Waddell, and the treasure was Marisa Macy.

The next AEPS summit meeting was held in San Diego, CA on February 23, 2006. Participants included the entire Board of Directors: Davie Allen, Diane Bricker, Jennifer Grisham-Brown, JJ Johnson, Marisa Macy, Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, Kris Slentz and Misti Waddell. Heather Shrestha again represented Brookes Publishing. At this meeting the Board of Directors agreed to name the corporation the Early Intervention Management and Research Group (EMRG). In addition, beginning conversations about the development of an on-line version of the AEPS were initiated. Financial operations for EMRG were discussed and agreed upon. Brookes publishing was willing to renegotiate the contract and thereby redirect AEPS royalties from individual authors (with one exception) to the non-profit corporation. Finally, three sub-committees were formed including: training, marketing, and innovations.

On March 10, 2006 the first official meeting of EMRG occurred via a conference call. All board members were present as well as David Atkins, the corporation's legal consultant. During this meeting the corporation's Articles and Bylaws were approved.

April, 2006, an account was established for the corporation and Brookes publishing forwarded to EMRG its first royalty check. Between April and the next on-site meeting held in October, 2006, several conference calls were held to conduct EMRG business. During the spring of 2006, David Allen resigned from the board leaving seven active members.

On October 22-24, 2006 a board meeting was held in Hot Springs, Arkansas with all board members attending as well as Melissa Behm, Heather Strestha, Cathy Costa and Jennifer Reighard as Brookes publishing representatives. At this meeting the majority of necessary procedural policies required by the federal government were discussed and approved. In addition, the board agreed to have monthly phone conferences. A considerable portion of the two day meeting focused on dealing with issues surrounding the development of the on-line AEPS which is to be called AEPSi.

The next semi-annual meeting was held in Louisville, Kentucky on April 20-22, 2007. All board members attended except Misti Waddell. Brookes' representatives included Melissa Behm, Cathy Costa, and Jessica Reighard. At this meeting EMRG funding and reimbursement policies were reviewed. The board decided to maintain the aepslinkedssystem.com web site and to increase the size of the board. Discussions focused on the AEPSi continued.

Monthly conference calls occurred between the Louisville meeting and the second semi-annual meeting of the board held on Oct 27-29, 2007 at Niagara on the Lake. All board members attended. Brookes' representatives included Melissa Behm, Heather Shrestha, and Cathy Costa. Carmen Dionne also attended to explore our mutual interest in her becoming a board member. Topics included approval of EMRG policies and discussion of issues concerning training and the AEPSi. It was also announced that the IRS had given formal approval of EMRG's status as a 501 C-6 non-profit.

Conference calls were held in December, January, February, and March. A board position was offered to Carmen Dionne who accepted and became the eighth board member. The semi-annual board meeting was held on May 21-23, 2008 in Payson, Arizona. All board members attended and Tracy Thorndike Christ was invited to attend to ascertain our mutual interest in her becoming a board member. At this meeting, a preliminary list of changes that would govern work on the 3rd edition of the AEPS was developed and tasks assigned.

Monthly conference calls permitted the board to move ahead with a variety of tasks. The board voted to extend an invitation to Tracy Thorndike Christ to serve as a board member and she accepted. The board is now composed of 9 members. The second semi-annual meeting for 2008 was held in St Paul, Minnesota on Oct 24-27. During this meeting progress was made toward finalizing changes for the 3rd edition of the AEPS. In addition board members agreed to continue monthly phone conferences and to attend two semi-annual meetings.