

Idaho Training Clearinghouse

2002

Annual Training Evaluation Report



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Report Overview

The Idaho Training Clearinghouse was funded by the Idaho State Department of Education (SDE) to create and maintain a system designed to link special educators and parents of special education students with training opportunities offered throughout the state. Our goals are: 1) to increase the knowledge of in-service education opportunities in the state; and 2) to gather information on the impact of in-service offerings. In-service education is widely supported as a professional development tool designed to increase quality service to all children and students. Research and best practice recognizes in-service education as a successful strategy for sharing current best practice with professionals in the field and family members of persons with disabilities.

State departments of education frequently sponsor in-service education and commit shrinking resources to support teacher participation, substitute pay, honoraria for presenters, meeting facilities and travel costs. Despite the commitment of substantial resources in time and dollars, in-service education is often left unevaluated to determine impact or evidence of change (Stowitschek, Cheney, & Schwartz, 2000).

Research reveals the potential impact of in-service training for increasing knowledge and skills among educators and for encouraging the transference of newly acquired information to the classroom or other educational work settings (DeJong & Versloot, 1994). Much of this literature supports the argument that in-service training is an effective mechanism for transferring new skills and knowledge to the work setting. In-service education also provides students, teachers and professionals with the motivation to adapt to new settings and situations (Gardner, 1996). In-service experiences can be enhanced by the existence of positive interpersonal relations between the in-service educator and participants or among those participating. A major factor in the effective transfer of skills and knowledge is a commitment from both teachers and building administrators to the identified in-service topic and the time necessary to allow for successful implementation (Seyler, Horton, Elwood, Carvalho, & Bates, 1997).

Teachers also value practical content and methodology that can be readily adapted to the classroom and provide strategies to improve the learning of their students (Conners, 1991; Smylie, 1988). Joyce and Showers (1980) suggests the transference of new skills is enhanced when learning involves theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and classroom application. Yet, given the pressure-filled lives of teachers and the proclivity for one-day workshops where many concepts are presented, theories of teaching and learning need to be presented in a user-friendly manner for ready application to the classroom setting on Monday morning.

A major purpose of all in-service education is to enhance or change teacher behavior. Change in human behavior is difficult and time consuming. It also involves a component of risk and can result in conflict among those who actively embrace new strategies and those who may resist change (Fullen, 1993; Joughlin, 1992). In order to promote maximum application of new skills, in-service programs must actively address the change process (Fullen, 1991). Another issue discussed in the literature is the cost effectiveness of in-service programs. While agreeing extensive resources are expended upon in-service offerings, Tsang (1999) argues that in-service training is one of the most effective ways to reach participants and is inexpensive in comparison with the costs of reemployment. He recommends the technology should be considered when planning offerings and used to expand application.

ITC staff used the research and best practice literature to inform the development of an evaluation process designed to gather qualitative and quantitative data on the impact of in-service trainings sponsored by the SDE in the year 2001-02. The evaluation process was made accessible through the a web-based survey emailed to all registered training participants six weeks following training. Responses to questions regarding satisfaction with training and application of skills and information to the work setting mirror the literature to date. For example, participants valued hands-on application and reference materials to “take away” from the training. When asked if they had been able to apply knowledge and skills from the training, 60% indicated a positive response. Of the 40% who indicated they had not been successful, 15% of those indicated time to plan and collaborate as an obstacle. Follow-up and support for the change process seems to be evident in many of the trainings sponsored by the SDE in the past year. For example, the Results Based Model is supported by frequent trainings and web-enhanced material offered through the Idaho Training Clearinghouse. Conflict management was offered over a series of workshops with participants having time to apply skills and return to discuss successes or challenges. Assistive Technology has an extensive system of support personnel located throughout the state to address needs of participants following trainings. It would appear the evaluation results of the trainings offered and supported by the Bureau of Special Education at the Idaho State Department of Education indicate successes in critical areas highly correlated with success in the literature.

Training Evaluation Report Addresses

- Satisfaction with training
- Did they implement
- Future needs



This 2002 Annual Training Evaluation Report includes trainings conducted or sponsored by the Idaho Bureau of Special Education from September 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002. Specifically, the report focuses on participants' satisfaction with trainings attended, what participants implemented from the trainings, and future training needs expressed by participants.

Two Sources of Data

1. Training summaries from regional consultants
2. Email follow-up evaluations to participants
 - Rosters sent to ITC
 - Questions designed by SDE
 - 100% contacted (n=852)
 - 23% responded (n=193)



Two pools, or sources, of data were collected and summarized in preparing this report.

1. **Training (face-to-face) evaluation summaries**

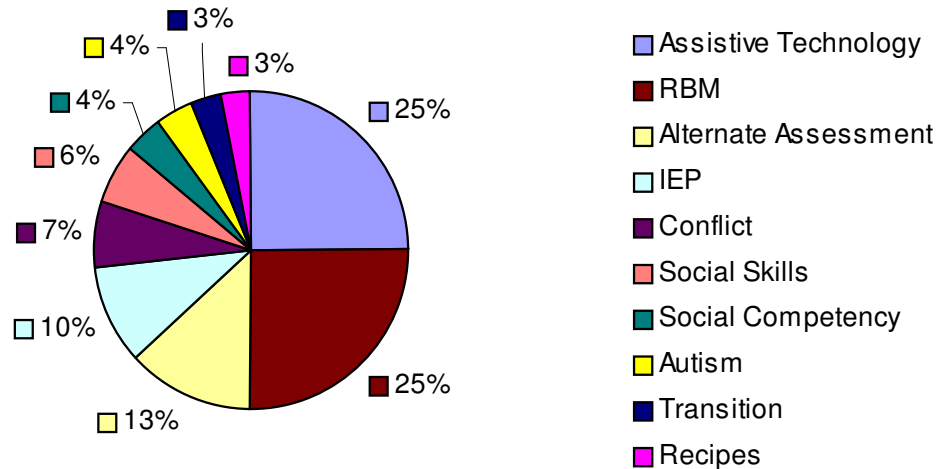
At the end of face-to-face trainings, participants are asked to complete a training evaluation form. These forms are then compiled and summarized. The summaries are sent to the Idaho Training Clearinghouse for analysis.

2. **Email follow-up evaluations**

Six weeks after the face-to-face training, participants receive an email message asking them to complete a brief web-based evaluation form. Submitted information is automatically entered into a database for analysis.

In-service Education Offerings Represented in Report: Summaries

(two or more received)



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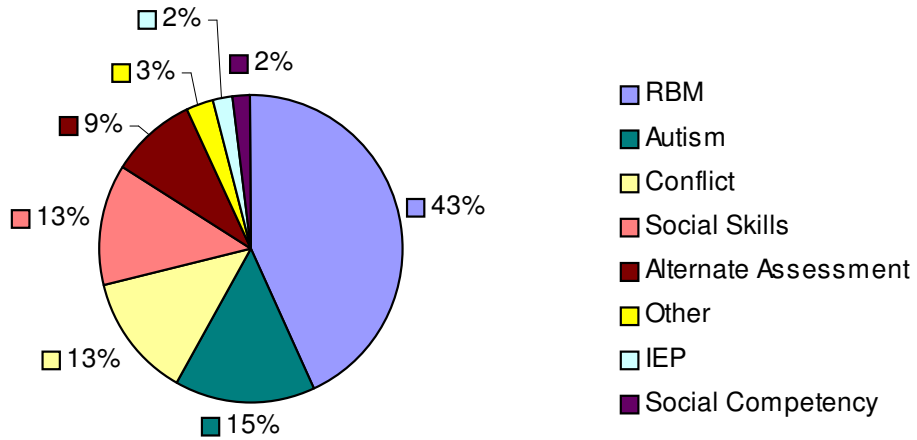
August 2002

Evaluations following face-to-face trainings were summarized and sent to the ITC for analysis. The above slide shows the percentage of respondents from each training topic. Only summaries for which there were two or more on the same subject matter were included in the analysis.

As can be noted, there are ten major categories with assistive technology and Results Based Model (RBM) comprising 50% of the summaries. Another 23% of the summaries were from Alternate Assessment and Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) trainings. The remaining trainings of conflict, social skills, social competency, autism, transition and recipes made up the remaining 27% of the summaries received.

While processing this information, the ITC staff made a recommendation that evaluation forms be standardized across major SDE sponsored trainings within the state to aid in the summary and analysis of satisfaction with training.

In-service Education Offerings Represented in Report Cont.: Email Evaluations



The second pool or source of data are the email follow-up evaluations. The above numbers represent participant responses received from September 1, 2001 through May 31, 2002.

Process Used to Summarize Data

- Quantitative (descriptive) analysis
 - Yes/no questions tallied (email evaluations)
- Qualitative analysis
 - Open-ended questions (email evaluations)
 - Training summaries



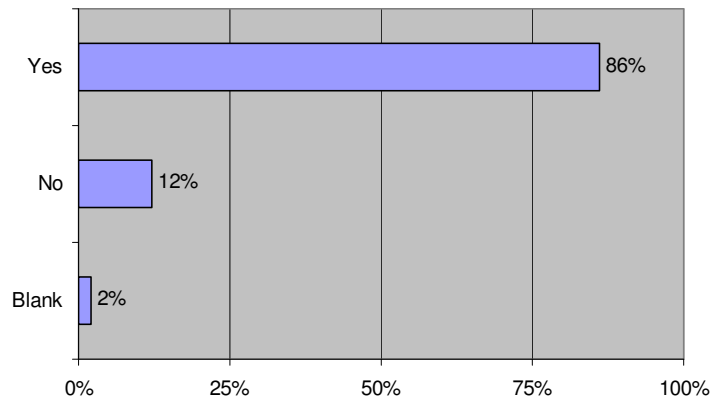
With descriptive (e.g., yes/no, choose from provided options) or numerical data, a quantitative analysis was conducted.

With narrative data, a qualitative analysis for themes was conducted using the a comparative pattern analysis as described in *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (1990) by Michael Quinn Patton.

Results: Email Evaluations

Question 1

- Did you learn any new methods for improving your professional practices or parenting skills?



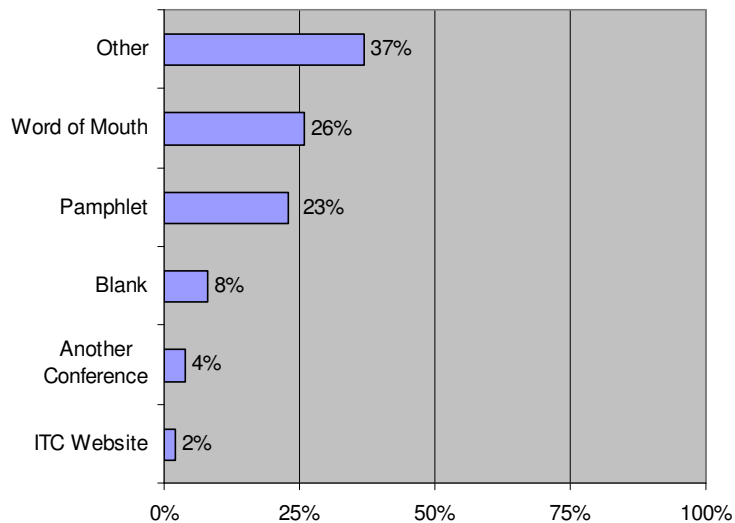
Pages 6 through 18 provide the summarized data, either in chart or narrative form, for the seven questions posed on the email follow-up evaluation form. Unless noted in the title of the slide, the number of respondents for each question is 193.

This was a forced-choice question where respondents had to choose “yes” or “no” in response to a question soliciting information on application of skills learned or reinforced in the in-service training to the work setting. Eighty-six percent of the respondents indicated a positive outcome associated with training.

Results: Email Evaluations

Question 2

- How did you learn of this training?



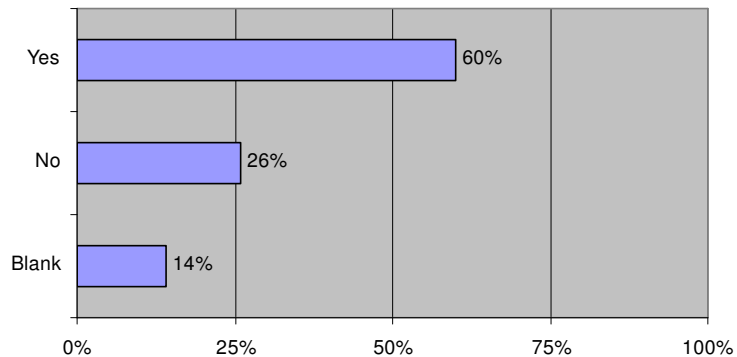
This was a forced-choice question where respondents had to choose one of the above options. Other, a broad and undefined category, was the most frequent response to this question. Word of mouth and the traditional pamphlet were the other popular response to this question.

Of concern was the low response (2%) of the ITC website. The ITC staff recommend a increased marketing of the site. It was also recommended that the ITC site be evaluated in a separate question on the email survey. Recommendations included such options as: Have you used the ITC website? How did you use it? Were you able to gain new information through this medium?

Results: Email Evaluations

Question 3

- Have you had an opportunity to apply the new skills?



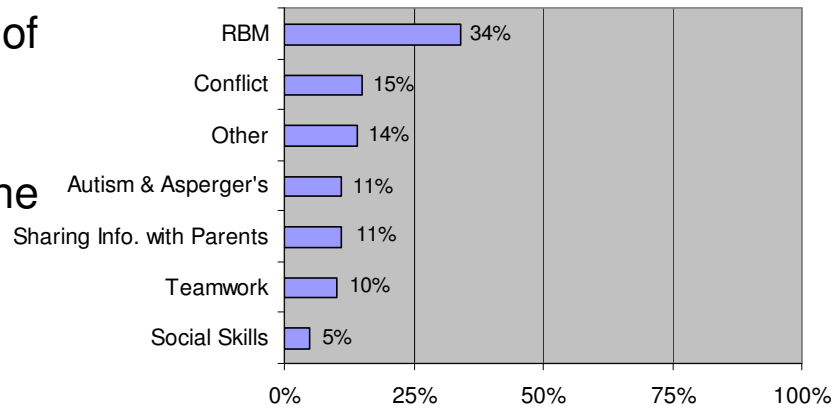
This was a forced-choice question where respondents had to choose “yes” or “no.” Understanding the degree and types of application of skills and knowledge following in-service trainings is critical to evaluating the use of state resources. While this question had very positive results, 60% of the respondents indicated they add applied new skills, the question should be refined to determine what skills have been implemented and to what degree implementation has occurred.

It was speculated that the “no” responses might be influenced by the fact that some skills may not have been applied due to time specific issues. For example, new strategies for IEP review may not have been applied in the six weeks following training, but would be applied later in the year when the IEP team met next.

Results: Email Evaluations

Question 4 (n=114)

- Give an example of how you have applied the new skill and the results.



This was an open-ended question where respondents typed in their replies. A qualitative analysis of responses was conducted and resulted in the identification of the above themes. The themes represent the subject area that respondents mentioned having implemented some aspect of the training and indicate a positive response to training on and use of RBM and conflict. .

Note, there were only 114 responses to this question.

Results: Email Evaluations Question 4 Cont.

- RBM Applications
 - Use of data to monitor progress/graphing
 - General comments
 - I-Plans
 - Problem solving
 - Group processing to make decisions



Pages 10 through 14 provide specific application examples for each of the identified themes, as shown on page 9.

The most often cited examples of how respondents implemented the material/strategies from the Results-Based Model trainings are listed above.

Results: Email Evaluations Question 4 Cont.

- Conflict Applications
 - Leading a conflict management group for students and families
 - Negotiating and compromising with students and family members
 - Using good listening strategies



The most often cited examples of implementing material/aspects from the conflict trainings are listed above. They reflect the broad application of strategies and knowledge to both families and students. Listening strategies also included meaningful communication among and between teachers and other staff in educational settings.

Results: Email Evaluations Question 4 Cont.

- Other: Categories Included
 - Meaningful IEP's
 - Alternative assessment
 - Aligning standards to the curriculum
 - Sharing with other professionals



The above list represents the most often cited examples of implementing training material/aspects as included in the "Other" category. IEP training was frequently cited as a training that produced change in the behavior or an increase in knowledge of those who participated.

Results: Email Evaluations Question 4 Cont.

- Autism Applications
 - Understanding the uniqueness of students with autism
 - Using social stories
 - Collaborating among teacher, paraprofessional and parents
 - Using positive words instead of negative words



The most often cited examples of implementing material/aspects from the autism trainings are listed above. Respondents offered numerous comments on how the information gained in trainings assisted them in working with children with autism in the classrooms and working with families of persons with autism. Family members also indicated the value of the training and how their interactions with a member of the family with autism was positively impacted.

Results: Email Evaluations Question 4 Cont.

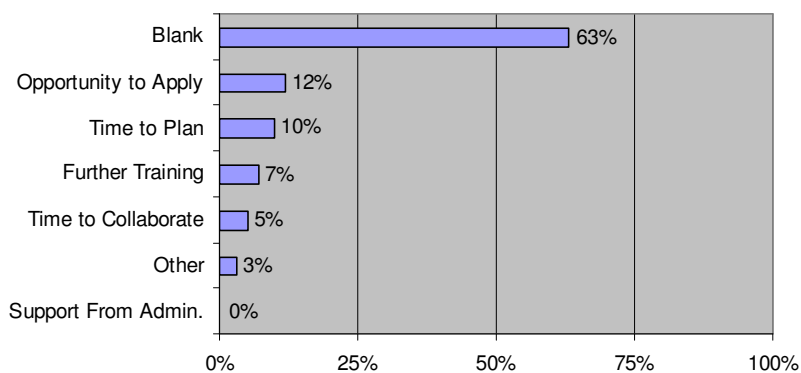
- Parent Applications
 - Involving parents in I-Plans and MDT's
 - Sending home drafts of IEP's and had pre-meetings
 - Sharing data with families
 - Using conflict management strategies to help parents deal with school difficulties



Across all trainings, the above list represents the most often cited examples of implementing training material/aspects with regard to parents and families. Respondents indicated an increase in willingness or ability to include parents in multidisciplinary team meetings and the development of "I" Plans. Teachers indicated an increase in communication around IEP's and evaluation results. Conflict management was also mentioned as a tool to enhance positive family/school relations and communication when difficulties arose.

Results: Email Evaluations Question 5

- What are some additional resources or conditions needed to promote use of the new skill?



Consistent with responses from question 3

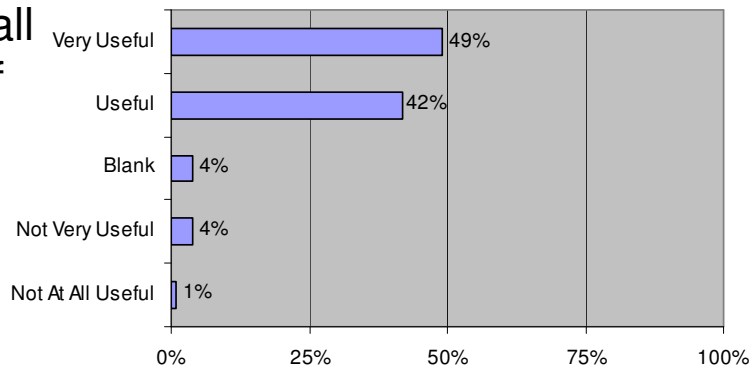


This was a forced-choice question where respondents had to choose one of the above options. In a large case (63%), respondents did not reply, which is consistent with 60% of respondents replying that they had already had an opportunity to implement the new skill. The 12% who responded they had not had the opportunity to apply new skills may be related to timing (e.g., implementation of changes in the IEP process which is time sensitive).

Results: Email Evaluations

Question 6

- What is your current overall evaluation of this training event?

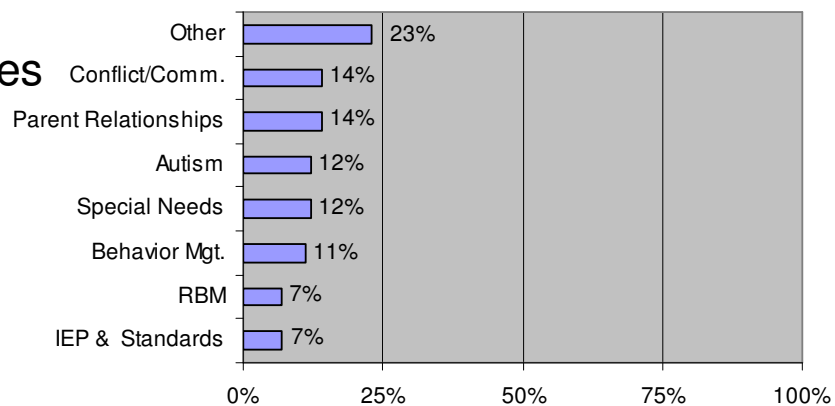


This was a forced-choice question where respondents had to choose one of the above options. As can be noted, almost 50% of the respondents indicated the training, across all categories, was very useful to them in their work setting. Another 40% indicated the training was useful with only 5% indicating a not very useful or not at all useful response. This indicates an overall positive response to the in-service trainings offered by the SDE and included in this summary report.

Results: Email Evaluations

Question 7 (n=100)

- What other training opportunities would you like to see offered...?



This was an open-ended question where respondents typed in their replies. A qualitative analysis of responses resulted in the above themes. The themes represent the subject matters in which respondents stated they wanted more training opportunities. The “Other” category included working with severe populations of persons with disabilities, literacy issues, early childhood, English as a second language, and drug and alcohol issues. The next page details this “Other” category.

Conflict, parent/teacher relationships, and behavior management rated high among respondents with a combined percentage of 39 among the respondents indicating a need for continued training in one of these three themes. This could indicate a continuing positive response to the trainings that have already been offered or indicate a need for new trainings. The need for training in autism and special needs indicates a new set of themes that were not included in the previous trainings.

Note, there were only 100 responses to this question.

Results: Email Evaluations Question 7 Cont.

- Other
 - Severe populations
 - Literacy
 - General
 - Early childhood
 - Social skills
 - Training for paraprofessionals
 - ESL or diversity
 - FAS/drug and alcohol
 - Juvenile justice
 - Parent project



The above list represents the most often cited additional training needs as included in the “Other” category which was discussed on the previous slide. This “Other” category represented 20% of the responses to the question, “What other training topics would you like to see offered?”.

Results: Training Summaries

Likes

- Likes:
 - Handouts, binders, materials to take away
 - Hands-on applications, case studies, examples
 - Presentation style or presenters



Respondents liked to “carry away” material to be reviewed and applied in their work settings. They also indicated a preference for examples and hands-on application through case studies and other examples in the trainings. This response is consistent with the literature on in-service training (Stowitschek, Cheney, & Schwartz, 2000).

To note, web-enhanced trainings can allow participants to select content specific to their needs and settings and to adapt material as needed in a more efficient manner. The ITC has developed a feature to allow trainers recognized by the SDE to post materials on the site for use by participants following face-to-face training opportunities. Application can also be enhanced through use of chat rooms and bulletin boards designed for participants to post questions and solutions for others to read and provide comments. Participants indicated their need to bond with and enjoy the style of the presenter. Positive comments were listed around a didactic style of presenting that engaged the audience and then provided the group with numerous examples and opportunities for practice or application of the material being presented.

Results: Training Summaries Suggestions

- Suggestions for improvement:
 - More time
 - More handouts and better organized handouts
 - More hands-on examples/interaction
 - Changes in presenter's style



Respondents wanted more time with many of the key trainers in topics of high interest such as RBM and conflict management. Their concern with the organization of handouts matches their previously state need for materials to use “back home” or to assist in the application of skills. Participants continued to comment on individual trainer’s style and indicate a preference for an open forum linked with quality content.

Training Summaries Received

Summaries used in the qualitative analysis in preparing this report:

1. Alternate Assessment, September 20, 2001, Coeur d'Alene
2. Alternate Assessment, September 21, 2001, Coeur d'Alene
3. Alternate Assessment, October 11, 2001, Twin Falls
4. Alternate Assessment, October 12, 2001, Twin Falls
5. Alternate Assessment Update, October 15, 2001, Boise
6. Alternate Assessment, October 16, 2001, Boise
7. Alternate Assessment, October 29, 2001, Pocatello
8. Alternate Assessment, October 30, 2001, Pocatello
9. Alternate Assessment, November 1, 2001, Twin Falls
10. Alternate Assessment Core Training, February 25, 2002, Hailey
11. Building Social Competency, January 10-11, 2002, Idaho Falls
12. Building Social Competency, February 21-22, 2002, Pocatello
13. Building Social Competency in Schools, April 29, 2002, Moscow
14. ESY Training, October 31, 2001 (a.m.), Coeur d'Alene
15. ESY Training, October 31, 2001 (p.m.), Coeur d'Alene
16. IEP Training, September 25, 2001, Pocatello
17. IEP Training, September 26, 2001, Idaho Falls
18. IEP Training, September 26, 2001, Twin Falls
19. IEP Training, September 27, 2001 Coeur d'Alene
20. IEP Training, October 30, 2001, McCall
21. IEP Planning, November 7, 2001, Boise
22. IEP Training, November 30, 2001, Pocatello
23. RBM Core Training, October 17, 2001, Middleton
24. RBM Core Training, October 18, 2001, Moscow
25. RBM Core Training, November 14-15, 2001, Burley
26. RBM Core Training, December 6, 2001, Moscow
27. RBM Core Training, December 10, 2001, Burley
28. RBM Core Training, December 12, 2001, Boise
29. RBM/CBM, January 8, 2002, Rockland
30. RBM, January 11, 2002, Worley
31. RBM, January 21, 2002, Filer
32. RBM, January 21, 2002, Burley
33. RBM, January 28, 2002, Burley
34. RBM, January 29, 2002, Burley
35. RBM, January 31, 2002, Boise
36. RBM, February 1, 2002, Moscow
37. RBM, February 4, 2002, McKinley
38. RBM, February 8, 2002, Salmon
39. RBM, February 8, 2002, Heyburn
40. RBM, February 11, 2002, Burley
41. RBM, February 25, 2002, Swan Valley
42. RBM, March 20, 2002, American Falls
43. Recipes, March 6, American Falls
44. Recipes, March 7-8, Shelley
45. Social Skills, November 6, 2001, Coeur d'Alene
46. Teaching Social Skills: Good Talking Words, February 5-6, 2002, Boise

47. Teaching Social Skills: Thinking for A Change, February 6, 2002, Boise
48. Teaching Social Skills to Individuals with Cognitive Impairments, February 5-6, 2002, Boise
49. Teaching Social Skills: Skill Streaming, February 6, 2002, Boise
50. Transition: Young Adult Transition Fair, March 12, 2002, Meridian
51. Transition: Achieving a Comprehensive Transition Service System, March 20, 2002, Boise
52. Working Together Successfully, January 29-30, 2002, Pocatello
53. Working Together Successfully, January 31-February 1, 2002, Twin Falls
54. Working Together Successfully, February 19-20, 2002, Boise
55. Working Together Successfully, February 21-22, 2002, Boise
56. Working Together Successfully, March 4-5, Coeur d'Alene
57. Working Together Successfully, March 7-8, 2002, Moscow
58. World of the Child with Autism, August 21-22, 2001, Location Unknown
59. World of the Child with Autism, January 29-30, 2002, Boise
60. World of the Child with Autism, April 15-16, 2002, Coeur d'Alene

Other summaries received but not used in this report due to not having two or more in one category:

61. Accommodations and Adaptations, October 12, 2001, Harrison
62. Anita Archer, October 9, 2001, Pocatello
63. Negotiation Skills for Educational Administrators, April 22-23, 2002, Coeur d'Alene
64. New Teacher Forum, September 20, 2001, Location Unknown
65. Pre-referral, October 10, 2001, Post Falls
66. Supporting Students, March 14-15, 2002, Location Unknown

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