

## ***Augmentative Communication Referrals Infants and Toddlers***

Early Intervention with Infants and Toddlers who have developmental disabilities is federally mandated by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), PL 105-17. The purpose of early intervention is to enhance the child's development and minimize developmental delays. Assistive Technology and AAC are also mandated by law. IDEA specifies that early intervention include a wide range of diagnostic services, intervention (preferably in the natural environment) and that the intervention involves family members (Culp, 2003).

Augmentative Communication (AAC) for infants and toddlers who are at risk for developing speech should be specified service on an *Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)*. AAC addresses the full range of needs for infants and toddlers, which includes speech, gestures, facial expressions, eye gaze, as well as any aided means of communication. Providing AAC to an infant or toddler who is not yet talking but is at risk for delayed or impaired speech is essential to minimize the infant (and parents') frustration, and to establish a full range of communication options.

The *ACTS Infant and Toddler Referral Form* is for the 0-3 age group. The information on the referral form should be completed by a team member (parent, case manager, speech/language pathologist) and submitted to the ACTS office with relevant reports and documents regarding the infant's motor, sensory, speech, or cognitive functioning. For developmentally challenged infants and toddlers who are receiving Regional Center Services ([Download RegionalCenters.doc](#)), a request for an Augmentative Communication Evaluation must be made to the Regional Center Case Manager. The request for this diagnostic service must be specified in the *Infant's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)*. ACTS is vendorized (Vendor #PG0068, Service Code 112) with Regional Center to provide these services for infants and toddlers. A Purchase of Service Request for 20 hours is requested and the evaluation is conducted within 8 weeks.

If the Infant/Toddler is not eligible for Regional Center Services, then a prior authorization for service can be obtained from the infant's primary health insurance carrier. Contact the ACTS office for further information on prior authorizations for Augmentative Communication Evaluations.

#### ACTS

Dr. Marilyn J. Buzolich, Director

350 Santa Ana Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94127

(415) 333-7739.