

Intensity of Infant Toddler Early Intervention Services in King County, WA: 2005-2007



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What is Early Intervention?

- Therapies, special education and family support
- For infants and toddlers under age 3 who have developmental delay
- Publicly funded



Purpose

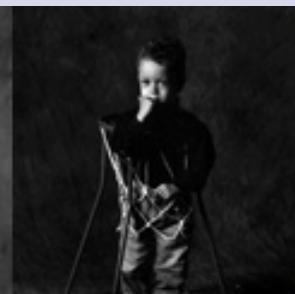
- Is service intensity (hours per month) consistent across King County?
- Has Early Intervention intensity decreased after “Natural Environments” regulation in December 2006?



Natural Environments

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997
- What environments are natural for children?
 - Home, community child care, preschools designed for typically developing children
- King County began *requiring* 65% of all EI services be provided in “natural environments” in December 2006

Pictures of Early Intervention



Photos reprinted from www.boyerc.org,
www.kindering.org, and www.dynamicfamilies.org



Study Methods

- Data Sources – Individual Family Service Plans from the four largest early intervention agencies in King County
- Study Participants – 260 Infants and toddlers who entered services in Jan/Feb 2005, 2006 and 2007
- Variables of Interest – Recommended Service Hours, Location of Services, Agency, Child Characteristics, Child Developmental Level



Child Characteristics

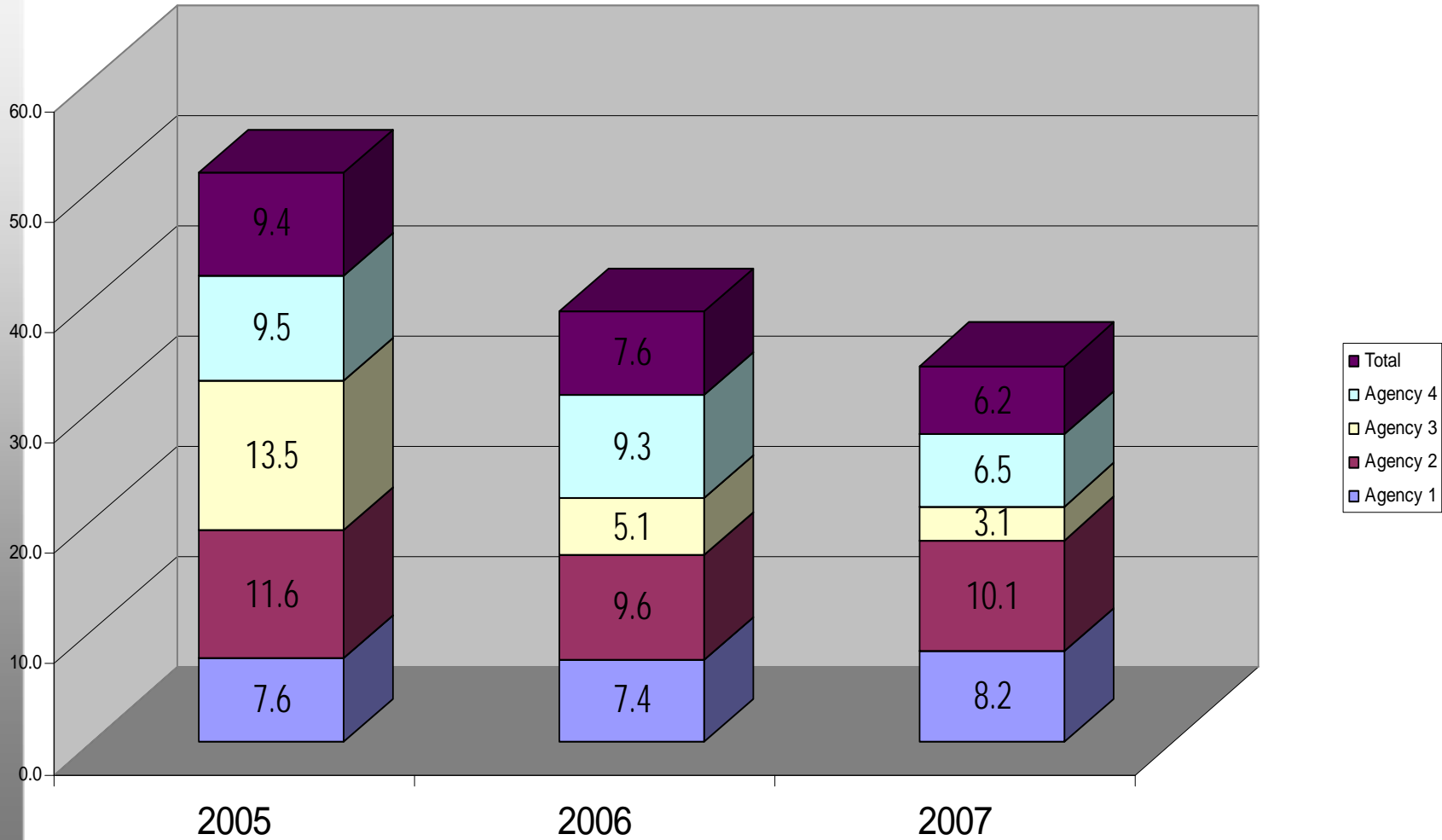
	2005 (n=86)	2006 (n=113)	2007 (n=61)
% Male	66%	72%	54%
Age at Entry	20.5	19.9	19.4
% English-speaking	79%	73%	77%
Min. Delay	42%	36%	48%
Max Delay	16%	19%	16%



Service Characteristics

	2005	2006	2007
NE	8 (9%)	20(18%)	51 (84%)
Frequency			
Classroom	36%	22%	18%
Individual	98%	97%	100%
Intensity			
Classroom	15.4	12.2	11.3
Individual	5.7	5.0	4.1
Total Mean	9.4	7.6	6.2

Service Intensity by Agency





Preliminary Conclusions

- Intensity of Early Intervention varies across the county
- Service intensity decreased over time
- “Natural Environments” restructuring in 2006 likely contributed to decreases in service

Next Steps



- Describe trends by child characteristics
- Determine if differences in service intensity are statistically significant
- Investigate competing explanations



Limitations of Study

- Small number of participants
- Too few time points for time series analysis
- Do smaller EI agencies follow the same trends as the 4 largest agencies?

Public Health Importance



- Increase quality of life
- Promote health of people with disabilities
- Prevent secondary medical conditions
- Eliminate disparities between people with and without disabilities
- Promote equal access to health care



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