

## PRESS RELEASE

CICC Launching National Partnership Campaign to Find and Help Young Children with Special Needs

***Kick-off announcement and "CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System" workshop to take place October 26 at the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C.***

STUDIO CITY, Calif. - Oct. 14, 2004 The Center for The Improvement of Child Caring (CICC) is launching a national campaign to help parents, professionals, agencies, caregivers and others better identify and assist young children with special needs. As part of the launch, the Early Childhood Development Division of the Children's Defense Fund is hosting a free workshop, "Using the CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System as an Early Childhood Education and Early Identification Methodology" at 2 p.m. (EST) on Oct. 26. The Children's Defense Fund is located at 25 E. Street N.W. in Washington, D.C.

CICC Executive Director and founder, Kerby T. Alvy, Ph.D. said, "It is estimated that approximately 75% of the three million children under five who have disabilities and other 'special needs' are NOT being identified and treated by professionals before entering school. As a result, these vulnerable children usually do poorly at school, suffer insults and hardships, often become anti-social, and require remedial and legal services costing taxpayers billions of dollars."

Dr. Alvy, an internationally respected authority on parenting and parenting education, will lead the workshop and discuss how individuals, churches, schools, government agencies and private organizations can partner with CICC in a nationwide effort to significantly reduce the number of children with special needs who go unidentified and untreated.

Dr. Alvy, author of several books on parenting, points out: "The sooner children with special needs can be identified, the faster they, their parents and their families can get the services they require and deserve."

As part of the campaign, CICC has developed and put on the Internet, the CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System. Consisting of a series of age-specific questions, it helps parents and others quickly identify a variety of learning, communication, motor skill and behavioral problems that may not have been recognized or simply overlooked. It also connects them immediately to important community services and agencies throughout the United States that can help.

The CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System has been used successfully throughout the nation by thousands of parents of young children, caregivers, agencies, and professionals in the early childhood education field. It is unique in that it provides - simultaneously - the following three types of services on-line:

- It educates parents and staff about normative child development during their child's first five years of life.

- It assists in identifying whether a young child may have special needs that require professional attention.
- It connects users of the Tool to a wide range of professionals, community resources and educational materials.

The results of the Tool are in the form of a Developmental Profile that can be printed out and shared with others. Dr. Alvy and CICC hopes to bring the Tool - and its benefits to the attention of thousands of parents and others through a series of speaking engagements around the country and through a network of partnerships which are now being formed.