Measuring Outcomes: Where Have We Been, Where Are We Now and Where Are We Going?

Measuring Child and Family Outcomes Conference
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Session Objectives

- Share highlights from the last several years
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Review timeline for the future
- Discuss future issues, challenges, and opportunities
Why the focus on early childhood outcomes?

- Improve results for young children with disabilities and their families
- Meeting a need in the field
- Development of outcomes for general early childhood programs
- Address GPRA and PART
Where Have We Been?
Federal Accountability

- 1994 Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
- 2002 Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART)
  - Both Part C and Part B Preschool categorized as “Results Not Demonstrated” due to lack of outcome data.
  - OMB recommended OSEP develop a strategy for collecting outcome data.
OSEP’s Response to PART

- **Key investments:**
  - 2003 OSEP funds the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Center
  - General Supervision Enhancement Grants (GSEGs) (2004 = 18; 2006 = 9)
  - 2008 OSEP funds second iteration of ECO Center (ECO II)

- Short-term/long-term approach
- On-going stakeholder involvement
- State performance plan / annual performance report (SPP/APR)
Timeline

- 2004-early 2005: ECO generates discussion and gathers input on child and family outcomes
- Summer 2005: OSEP announces the child and family outcomes States must report on through their SPP/APRs
Part C and 619 Child Outcomes (C3 and B7)

Percent of children who demonstrate improved:

- Positive social emotional skills (including positive social relationships)
- Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication [and early literacy])
- Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs
Part C: Family Outcomes (C4)

- Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:
  - Know their rights
  - Effectively communicate their children’s needs
  - Help their children develop and learn
Part B (3-21) Family Involvement (B8)

- Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities
December 2005: States submit plans via SPP on how they will collect outcome data.

April & Sept. 2006: OSEP revises child outcome reporting categories.
Child Outcome Progress Reporting Categories

a. % of children who did not improve functioning

b. % of children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers

c. % of children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it

d. % of children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers

e. % of children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers
Early Outcome Data Submitted

- Feb 2007: States submit “status at entry” child outcome data and baseline data for family outcomes
- Feb 2008: States submit very early child outcome progress data
- Feb 2009: States submitted their second year of child outcome progress data.
Where Are We Now?
Where are we now?

- All States sent in child outcome data in Feb. 2008 and in Feb. 2009, some with very low n’s
- Most States are collecting these data for program improvement purposes as well as for federal reporting
- Focus over the next few years is on the quality of the data
Current Approach

- **Short-term**: obtain child and family outcome data from the States used to *assess program performance at the Federal Level* while also supporting the State outcome data collection used for *program improvement*.

- **Long-term**: Build high *quality* outcomes systems that yield reliable and valid data that can be used for program improvement and accountability.
Proposed Summary Statements

- OSEP has proposed summary statements for States to use to set targets.
  - **Summary Statement 1:** Of those children who entered the program below age expectations in the Outcome Area, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exit the program.
  - **Summary Statement 2:** The percent of children who are functioning within age expectations in the Outcome Area by the time they exit the program.
Where Are We Going?
Timeline – Child Outcomes

- Feb 2010: 3rd time States report progress data. This will be considered Baseline; States set targets using summary statements
- Feb 2011: States report progress data, calculate summary statements and compare to target
- Feb 2012: States report progress data, calculate summary statements and compare to target
Future Issue – Building High Quality Outcome Systems

- Focus over the next several years needs to be on quality and use of outcome data
- Highlights from New ECO II Early Childhood Outcomes Center Re-compete (awarded 2008)
  - Work with small number of States to develop, implement and evaluate a high quality outcomes system framework
  - Work directly with States to increase their capacity to develop and maintain high-quality outcome systems
Future Issue – Improving Outcomes

- What happens once we have good data? How do we improve outcomes?
- Focus has to be on improving outcomes through a system of resources and improved policies and practices
Thank You!!