

Evaluating Outcomes for Young Children with Disabilities: Issues at the National, State, and Local Levels

Kathy Hebbeler, ECO Center at SRI International

Lynne Kahn, ECO Center at Frank Porter Graham
Child Development Institute

Christina Kasprzak, ECO Center at Frank Porter
Graham Child Development Institute



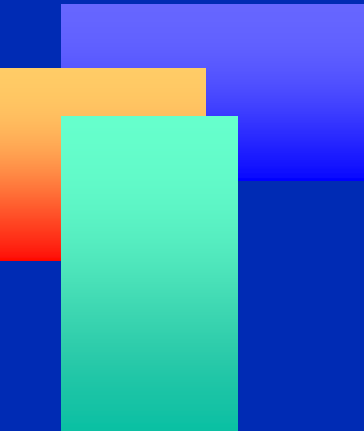
AEA Annual Conference 2007
Baltimore, MD





In This Session

- Why does the federal government need outcome data?
- What is the ECO Center's role?
- What are the federal reporting requirements?
- How are states collecting and reporting data on child and family outcomes?
- What does the move to outcomes data collection mean for practitioners at the local level?



The Federal Need for Outcome Data on Young Children with Disabilities

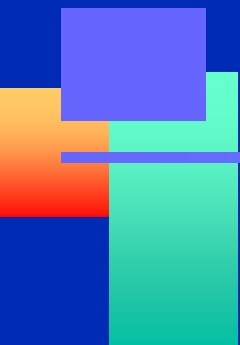
Kathy Hebbeler

ECO Center at SRI International



Why Measure Outcomes?





Critical Events in Accountability for Programs for Young Children with Disabilities

- 1993 GPRA (Government Performance and Results Act) passed
- 2002 PART finds there are no data on outcomes for Part C or 619
- 2003 OSEP begins to ask states for EI child outcome data (and funds the ECO Center!)
- 2005 OSEP releases federal reporting requirements



PART Findings: “Results Not Demonstrated” (2002)

Part C

“While the program has met its goal relating to the number of children served, it has not collected information on how well the program is doing to improve the educational and developmental outcomes of infants and toddlers served.”

Part B Preschool

“The Department has no performance information on preschool children with disabilities served by this program.”

Read more at
Expectmore.gov



GPRA to PART: Intervening Years

- Special Education (K-12) –
 - National study found poor outcomes
 - Push to include students with disabilities in statewide assessment systems
- Early Childhood
 - Debate about whether child outcomes should be measured at all
 - Much discussion of the many problems in trying to measure outcomes for young children with disabilities



Challenges to child outcomes measurement for children with disabilities

- Outcomes are individualized; no consensus on general outcomes
- Extreme diversity in functional levels in the population of children served
- Variety of assessment tools used because no single tool appropriate for the entire population
- Children with severe disabilities will show poor outcomes – would policy-makers conclude the programs were ineffective?



Measuring Child Outcomes for Part C and 619

- The PART findings put an end to the debate about whether or not to do it
- Unfortunately, almost no progress had been made in the intervening years as to HOW to do it

OSEP's Response to PART findings

- Required states to submit outcome data in their Annual Performance Report (APR)
- Funded the Early Childhood Outcomes Center to build consensus, make recommendations, and assist states in developing systems to measure outcomes





Why Collect Outcome Data?

- Federal government is the driving force behind the move to collect outcome data
- However, many state agencies and local programs understand the value of outcomes data for their own purposes
 - To document program effectiveness
 - Increase in funding?
 - To improve programs
 - Identify strengths and weaknesses
 - Allocate support resources, such as technical assistance

What are the Federal Reporting Requirements?





Origin of the Child and Family Outcomes

- ECO Center held stakeholder meetings followed by public comment period
- First, collected themes and ideas
- Then, drafted and re-drafted outcome wording



Result of Process: ECO Center Made Recommendations to OSEP

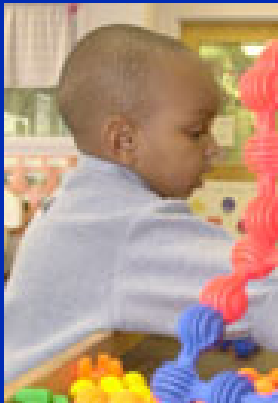
Recommendations on:

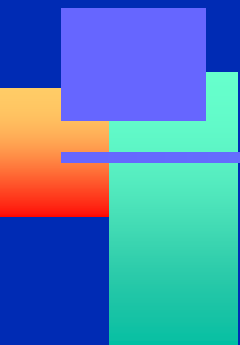
- Child and family outcome statements (February 2005, revised April 2005)
- Categories of information that should be collected about these outcomes (May 2005)

Read more at www.the-eco-center.org

OSEP Reporting Requirements: Child Outcomes

- 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





OSEP Child Outcome Reporting Categories

Percentage of children who:

- a. Did not improve functioning
- b. Improved functioning, but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers
- c. Improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it
- d. Improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers
- e. Maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers

3 outcomes x 5 "measures" = 15 numbers



Reporting Schedule

Reported February 2007

- Entry information: Age expected? Yes, No
- One time requirement
- Reported for children entering between July 1, 2005, and June 30, 2006

Due February 2008

- Data in reporting categories at exit for all children who have been in the program for at least 6 months
- Must be reported for the year beginning July 1, 2006
- Repeat with next year's data in 2009, etc.

State Decisions Related to Building a Child Outcomes Measurement System



- Who provides the data?
- What assessments will be used?
- How often will data be collected?
- When is data collected? (When is it reported?)
- Dealing with multiple sources?
- Dealing with different assessments?
- Etc., etc.

ECO Family Outcomes and OSEP APR Requirements [Part C only]

ECO

- Understand their child's strengths, abilities, and special needs
- Know their rights and advocate effectively for their children
- Help their children develop and learn
- Have support systems
- Access desired services, programs, activities in their community

OSEP

- Percent of families participating in Part C who report that EI services have helped the family
 - Know their rights
 - Effectively communicate their children's needs
 - Help their children develop and learn



OSEP Reporting Requirements Related to Families: Part B (3-21)

- 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



State Decisions Related to Collection of Family Data

- What kind of family data to collect?
- How will data be collected?
- If survey, what survey will be used?
- How often will data be collected?
- Sample?
- When is data collected? (When is it reported?)
- Etc., etc.

Keeping Our Eyes on the Prize

What are we looking for?



High quality state and national data on outcomes for children and families

→improved programs

→improved outcomes