

How Data from the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) Can Be Used to Address the OSEP Reporting Requirement

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Note: Please review the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) before reading this document.

This document explains how the information produced from the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) can be used to classify a child into one of the 5 reporting categories that make up the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) reporting requirement on child outcomes. For OSEP states are required to report on five categories of progress for each of the three child outcomes:

- a. Children who did not improve functioning.
- b. Children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same aged peers.
- c. Children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same aged peers but did not reach it.
- d. Children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same aged peers.
- e. Children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same aged peers.

For more information on the reporting requirement, see the following documents on the ECO web-site at: http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/activities.cfm#Revised_Requirements:

- [OSEP's TA Document for the 5 Reporting Categories](#);
- [ECO's Revised Requirement Document](#) that summarizes the changes to the child outcome reporting requirement, as well as describes the new reporting categories and what they mean. Implications for states in the process of developing their outcomes measurement systems are discussed; and
- A revised [FAQ document](#) on the SPP/APR provided by OSEP.

The COSF is to be completed when the child begins services. Each child will have three numbers (one for each outcome, the answers to questions 1a, 2a, 3a) reflecting the child's functioning at entry. When the form is completed at exit, each child will have the three answers to the "a" questions reflecting functioning at exit along with the three answers to the "b" question (1b, 2b, 3b) about acquiring any new skills or behaviors. (Many states are completing the form more frequently than at entry and exit but these interim ratings are not needed for reporting to OSEP).

Scores of "6" or "7" on the scale reflect age-expected development. A "7" is assigned to a child showing age-appropriate functioning for whom there are no concerns related to the outcome and a "6" is assigned to a child whose functioning is generally considered age-appropriate but for whom there are also some concerns. Children who are rated a "6" or "7" at both time points are children who maintain functioning at a level comparable to same-age peers (OSEP category e). Children who have ratings of "5" or lower at entry and either a "6" or "7" at exit are children who reached a level of functioning

comparable to same aged peers (OSEP category d). Children who move up the scale but did not reach “6” or “7” (e.g., from a “3” to a “4”, a “4” to a “5”, etc.) are children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same aged peers but did not reach it (OSEP category c). Children who obtain the same score at both time points are listed as having improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same aged peers (OSEP category b) except this is not necessarily the case for a child who receives a “1” at entry and exit. For children who show lower functioning relative to same-aged peers (e.g., go from a “5” to a “3”) or are very low functioning (e.g., a “1” at both time points), the “b” question documents whether or not a child has made **ANY** progress (gained even one new skill or behavior). A “yes” to question b for a child who is rated a “1” at both time points or who has received a lower rating at exit would indicate that the child has improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same aged peers (OSEP category b). A child who receives a “no” to the “b” question, meaning the child has not shown any new skills or behaviors related to the outcome between entry and exit would be classified in OSEP category a.

Table 1 provides hypothetical data illustrating results for 10 children on Outcome 2. The COSF was completed twice for these children, i.e., once at entry and once at exit.

Table 1 Hypothetical COSF Data for Outcome 2 at Entry and Exit

Child’s Name	Entry Question 2a	Exit Question 2a	Exit Question 2b	OSEP Category
Tammy	7	7	yes	e
Patty	6	7	yes	e
Jonas	3	5	yes	c
Phoenix	4	4	yes	b
Angela	1	1	no	a
Juan	2	4	yes	c
Terry	1	1	yes	b
Leroy	3	5	yes	c
Maria	4	7	yes	d
Tony	5	3	yes	b

Table 2 shows the percentages for this set of data for the five OSEP categories.

**Table 2
Summary of Results for OSEP Categories**

Category	%
a	10
b	30
c	30
d	10
e	20

Additional information about what OSEP category is produced by various combinations of ratings can be obtained by entering combinations into the ***COSF to OSEP Categories Tutor***, an excel spreadsheet available under “ECO Tools” at www.the-eco-center.org.