

Child Outcomes Summary Form: Working for Quality Data



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Parts B and C Data Meeting
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What we will cover

- Issues in quality data as related to COSF
- What is happening around the country to promote high quality data



Validity

- Validity refers to the **use** of the information
- Are you justified in reaching the conclusion you are reaching based on the data?

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999) by American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council on Measurement in Education



Validity in Accountability Systems

- The question is **NOT** “are the data valid?”
- The question is: “Are the data for valid for the purpose of....?”
 - Are the data sufficiently trustworthy to lead to sound decisions?
 - E.g., funding, TA, focused monitoring, etc.
- How much error is acceptable?
 - There will be error...



Implications for COSF data

- Validity is NOT a characteristic of an assessment or measurement device.
- It is a characteristic of the **data** produced by the tool and how these data are **used**.
- Implications: State A's COSF data could be valid; State B's COSF data could not be.



Implications for States using COSF

- Need to examine the conditions under which COSF data are more or less valid
- Need to structure the conditions to increase the likelihood of generating valid data with the COSF process.



So how does a state increase the validity of its COSF data?

- Intentionally design and build a multiple component system for child outcomes data collection that creates conditions for quality data at multiple steps in the data collection process.
- Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the components
- Adjustment as necessary



Procedures to Promote Quality

- Preparing for data collection
 - Adequate training and communication
- During data collection
 - Commitment to the data collection
 - System of supports for the “data providers”
- After data collection
 - Data entry
 - Data follow up
 - Data analysis



Quality of the process: Preparing for data collection

Initial Training

- [Start-up] Procedures for training providers in the use of the COS process
- Procedures for getting new providers trained?
- Procedures for filling knowledge gaps identified in the COSF training
 - E.g., Typical child development



Quality of the process: Preparing for data collection

Follow up Training and Communication

- Procedures for checking whether all of the [data] providers understand what they are to do?
 - At the end of training
 - Over time
- Do all participants (local administrators, providers, families) know *why* the data are being collected?
- Is there a process for ensuring that previously trained providers are still implementing appropriately? (preventing “drift”)



Quality of the process: Preparing for data collection

Follow up Training and Communication

- Procedures for addressing the questions that providers have as they implement the COS process

****What do we know about one shot trainings??****



What's happening out there?

- Lots of activity related to training, the development of training materials, train the trainer, etc.
 - Training consortium
 - Use of the web – AK
 - Development of support materials – VA
 - Development of videos for training and followup - IL

- Insert screen print of AK web site



- 
- Insert a screen print for VA

- 
- Insert a clip of the video.....



HI “Road Trip”

- Face-to-face meeting with teams implementing the COSF
- Talked to them about the why
- Learned a lot about how they were implementing and the kind of issues they were encountering
 - How can we make the process work better for them?



Quality of the Process: During Data Collection

Commitment to the data collection critical at all levels of the system (state administrators and staff, local administrators, providers, families)

- ❑ Do providers understand the importance of the activity?
 - ❑ Training
 - ❑ Attitude
- ❑ Has the system been designed so providers (and families) will receive benefit from collecting and providing data?
 - ❑ Reporting
- ❑ Do providers know someone will be checking on what they are doing?
 - ❑ Ongoing quality assurance procedures



Quality of the Process: During Data Collection

Supports

- ❑ Has the process been designed to make it as easy and to take as little time as possible? (Can any part be streamlined?)
 - ❑ Time as an enemy of the COSF process
 - ❑ Proposition: Quality rating require rich sharing of information about the child
- ❑ Is a knowledgeable person observing or tracking data collection activities and providing feedback in a timely manner?
- ❑ Is there a way for providers to get ongoing questions addressed?



Helping providers adjust the process

- HI: Where to put the COSF discussion in the IFSP process?
- VA: Using the 3 outcomes as an organizing device for assessment reports and program planning
- KS: Use of video to study and code what goes on during the discussion



Quality of the Process: After Data Collection

Data entry

- Are there safeguards to minimize data entry errors?

Data follow up

- Verification: Is there a process in place for checking [a sample of] records for accuracy and completeness?
- Is there a process for providing timely feedback when errors are discovered?



Don't forget the obvious

- Procedures for data entry
 - Error prevention
 - Make it easy for data to be correct; hard to be wrong
 - Error checking
 - Inconsistent responses; COSF calculator
 - Minimizing missing data
- Power of electronic entry



Data Verification/Quality Assurance

- Spot checking of COSF records
 - 1) Is there sufficient evidence/documentation to justify the rating?
 - 2) Is the evidence consistent with the rating provided?
- Purpose?: Monitoring of individual programs or records vs. systems issues



Quality Assurance Work

- New York Record Review Study
 - Developing protocol to pilot with sample of records in two communities
- North Carolina
 - FILL THIS IN.



Surveys and Videotaping

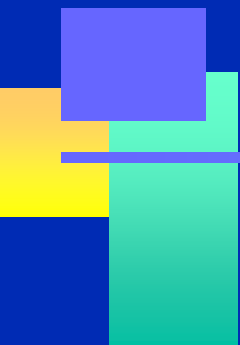
- Look at systems issues = the overall process
- KS studies
 - Survey of providers
 - Questions about who, how, level of confidence, etc.
 - Videotapes
 - Who, time, topics, use of evidence, etc.



Quality of the Process: After Data Collection

Data analysis

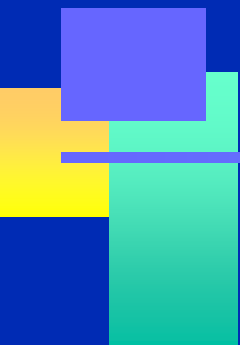
- Cleaning individual data: Are there procedures for identifying out of range values, anomalies, incomplete data?
- Are analyses being conducted to identify unexplainable variations, strange patterns, etc.?
- Is there a process for providing timely feedback when errors are discovered?



The data can be considered valid for conclusions related to program effectiveness and program improvement when:

1. The n is sufficiently large.
2. The overall pattern in the data looks reasonable (no unexplainable variation)
3. The data are representative of the state.
4. The pattern for various subgroups in the data looks reasonable (no unexplainable variation)
 - By locality
 - By disability
 - By ?, ?, ?

- 
- For more information on this, see slides for the Workshop for December 2007 at _____.



COSF Meets the X Files: In Search of the Unexplainable

Entry and Exit Ratings for each outcome

- Mean ratings and distributions
 - Are they similar? If not, is the difference understandable (and consistent with the hypothesis that quality data are being collected?)



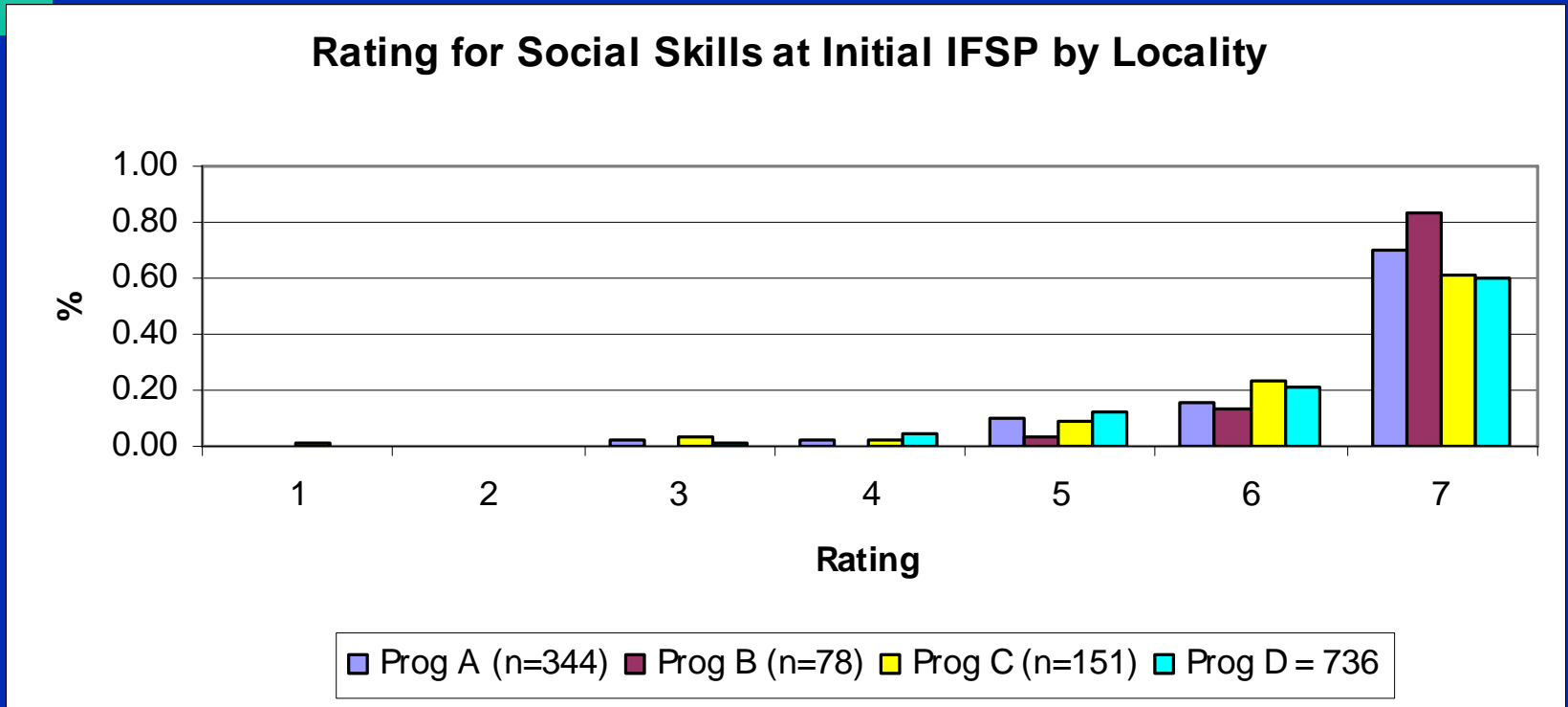
COSF Community of Practice

- Focused on data analysis.
- Opportunity to look at data across states and learn about new ways to analyze data.
- See www.the-eco-center.com for more information.

Mean Entry Scores by Program

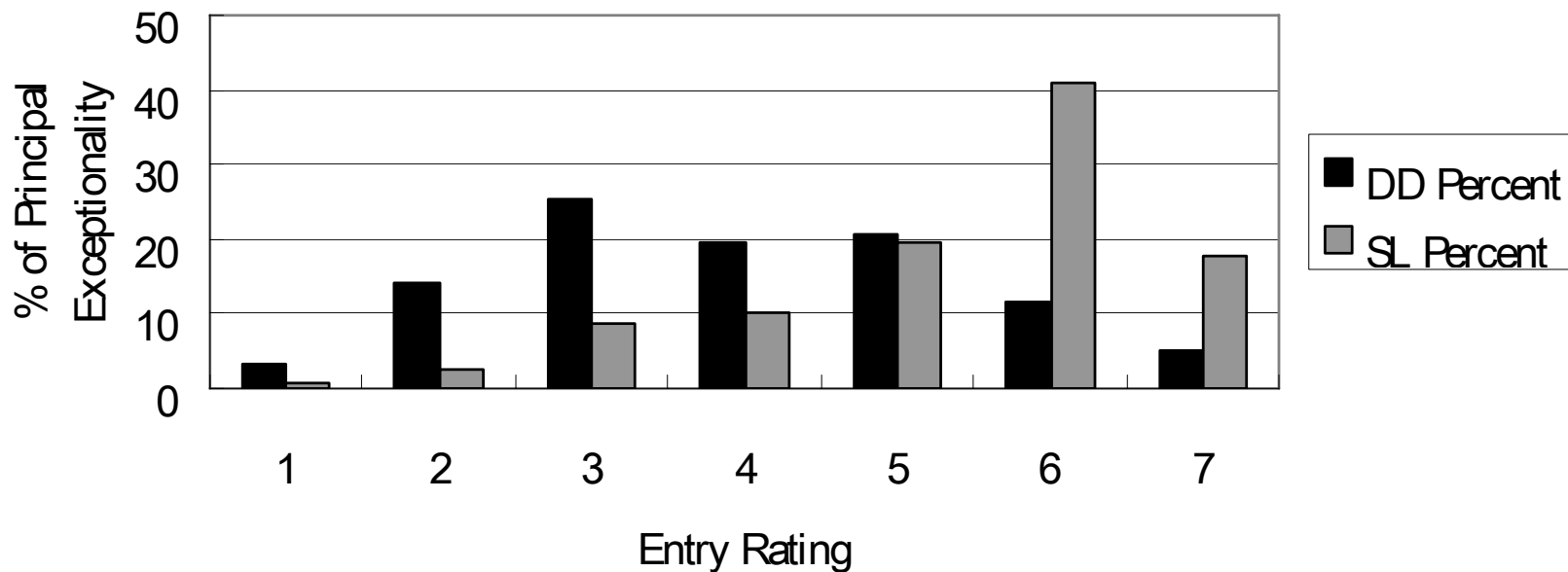
	Social-Emotional Skills	Acquire and Use Knowledge and Skills	Appropriate Action
Program for Children with Delays (N=1774)	5.9	5.3	5.1
Program for Environmentally at Risk (N=1311)	6.4	6.4	6.4

Entry Distribution by Locality (LEAs, local program)



By Type of Disability

Social Entry Rating by Principal Exceptionality





Building quality into the state system

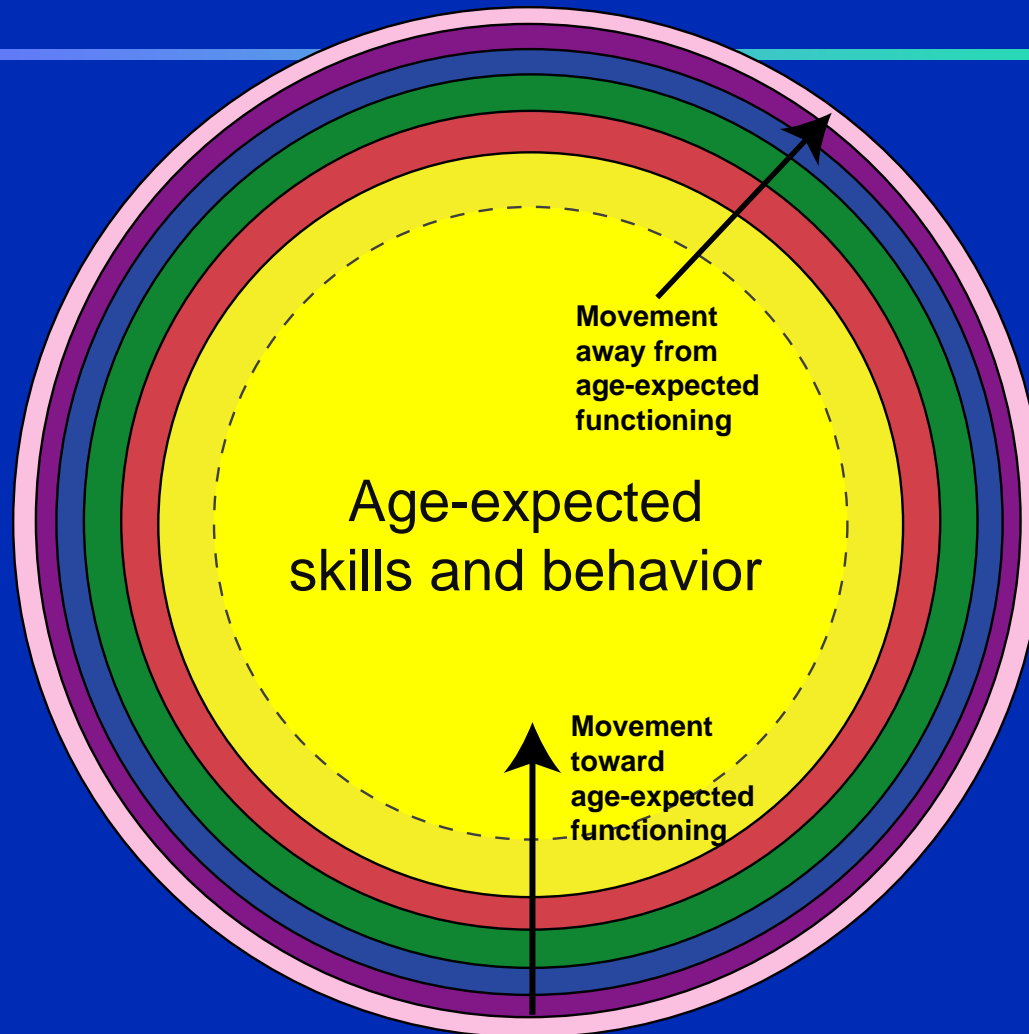
- Keep errors from occurring in the first place
- Develop mechanisms to identify weaknesses that are leading to data collection errors
- Provide ongoing feedback including reports of the data to programs and providers



Comparability of Data

- How can we compare data from different states?
- How can we compare data when programs are using different tools?

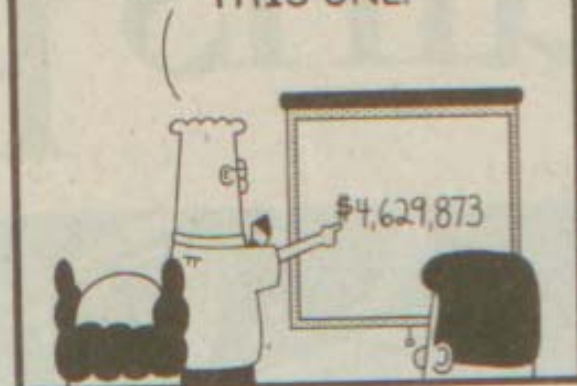
Thinking About the Achievement of Each Child Outcome



Dilbert

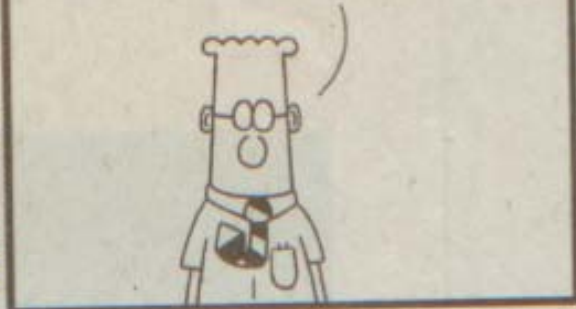
By Scott Adams

I DIDN'T HAVE ANY ACCURATE NUMBERS SO I JUST MADE UP THIS ONE.

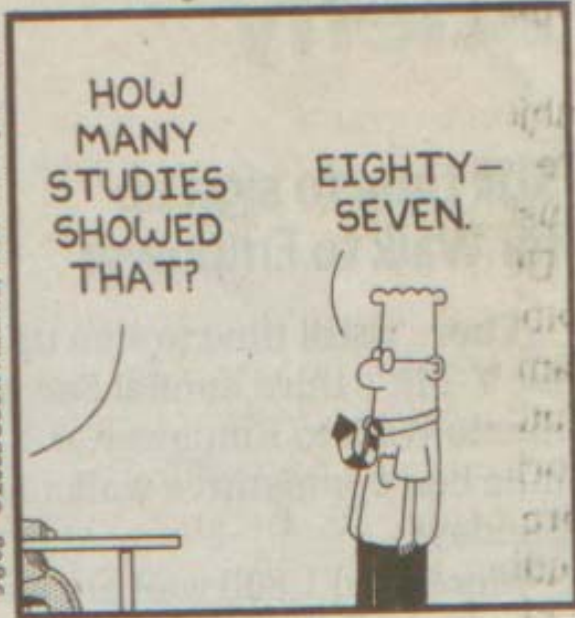


STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT ACCURATE NUMBERS AREN'T ANY MORE USEFUL THAN THE ONES YOU MAKE UP.

www.dilbert.com scottadams@aol.com



HOW MANY STUDIES SHOWED THAT?



EIGHTY-SEVEN.

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FMA

Findings

Meanings

Action

Findings

- Findings are the numbers
 - 10% of families responded
 - 45% of children were in OSEP category b
- The numbers are not debatable (assuming the numbers are correct...)



Meaning

- The interpretation put on the numbers
- Is this finding
 - Credible? (Based on valid data?)
 - Good news?
 - Bad news?
 - News we can't interpret?



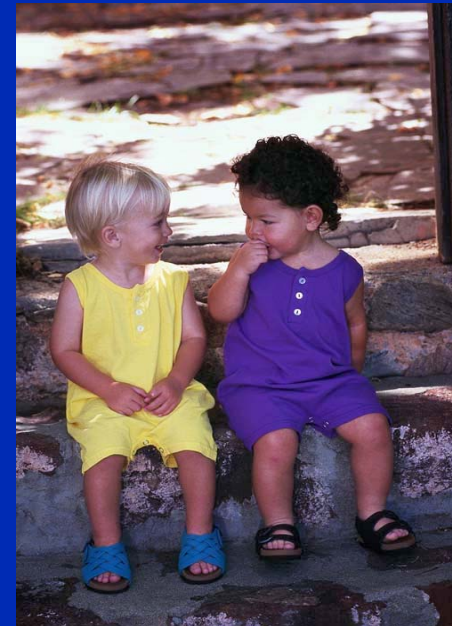


Meaning

- Meaning is debatable. Reasonable people can reach different conclusions from the same set of numbers
- Stakeholder involvement can be helpful in making sense of findings
- To interpret meaning, sometimes we analyze data in other ways (ask for more findings)

Putting Meaning on the Data

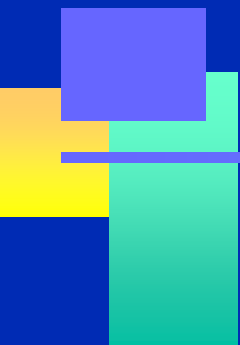
- What are alternative explanations for the finding?
- Are there other ways of looking at the data that might provide insight into a possible explanation?
(i.e., should we run more analyses?)





Action

- Given the meaning put on the findings, what should be done?
- Possible actions:
 - Continue quality assurance activities to improve the quality of the data
 - Accept the data as credible and develop recommendations based on the findings
- Action is always debatable – and often is debated
- Another role for stakeholders



Contact information:

www.the-ECO-Center.org

or e-mail to staff@the-eco-center.org

