

## **Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) Professional Development Materials and Activities**

### **Unit 4. COSF Data Analysis and Use**

#### **COSF Data Analysis and Use Slide Set and Activities**

This set of slides and activities focus on how to look at data:

[http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/ppt/Data\\_analysis\\_slides.ppt](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/ppt/Data_analysis_slides.ppt) The first section of slides explains the relationship between entry and exit COSF data and the five progress categories that are reported to OSEP. The second section of slides addresses how to look at data for data quality assurance purposes. The last section addresses how to look at data for program quality (program improvement) purposes.

#### **Getting to the progress categories from the COSF data**

Slides 5-27 explain the 5 OSEP progress categories in terms of developmental trajectory. The slides plot entry and exit ratings on a graph depicting level of functioning and age in months. The line that connects those data points shows the child's developmental trajectory. Examples are provided for each of the 5 progress categories. An activity to accompany the slides, described below, gives entry and exit ratings and asks the learner to determine in which progress category the child would be reported. As a result of reviewing these slides and translating COSF ratings to federal categories, the learner should:

- Understand what gets reported to OSEP and where those numbers come from,
- Understand how the COSF ratings relate to federal reporting,
- Describe COSF ratings from entry to exit in terms of developmental trajectory, and
- Appreciate the importance of the yes/no progress question at exit on the COSF.

Slide 28 highlights the calculator states and programs can use to translate COSF entry and exit ratings into progress categories for federal reporting. A 'tutor' version of the calculator, showing how it works, can be found at this link:

[http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/xls/COSF\\_to\\_OSEP\\_Calculator\\_TUTOR%2010-24-06.xls](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/xls/COSF_to_OSEP_Calculator_TUTOR%2010-24-06.xls)

#### **Promoting quality data through data analysis**

Slides 29-37 address looking for patterns in data to check for quality. The slides have fake data to illustrate patterns that might be expected or unexpected at entry. Participants should discuss why variations exist and what to do about it. For example, if an agency shows very few children entering services at age level is it because the agency serves very involved children? Or is it because COSF users are not comfortable with, or don't understand, the rating category of 7? If you have access to state and local data and can prepare some similar slides or handouts with real data, participants can discuss real agency variation and can look for real data quality issues.

As a result of reviewing these slides, the learner should:

- Think about patterns of data that might be expected for entry and exit,
- Think about patterns of data that might be UNexpected, and
- Consider data quality issues that unexpected patterns might imply.

## **Using data for program improvement**

The last section of the PowerPoint presentation, slides 38-51, discuss how to use outcomes data for program improvement. Looking at data for program improvement means checking out the evidence (the numbers), making inferences (placing meaning on the numbers), and deciding action (determining what to do about it). Look at data is part of the ongoing improvement cycle that agencies and programs use to reflect upon where they are, where they need to be, and how they will get there. A learning activity to accompany these slides (see below) has participants reviewing child outcomes data (evidence), discussing what the numbers may mean (inference), and proposing some strategies for improvement (action). As a result of reviewing these slides and participating in the activity, the learner should:

- Know how to review evidence,
- Know how to infer meaning, and
- Know how to come up with action steps.

### ***Activity: COSF to Federal Progress Categories***

Individuals review sample COSF entry and exit rating scores for several children and then determine the federal reporting category in which each child is reported. Ask participants to complete the exercise on converting the COSF data to progress categories, individually or in pairs. Review the exercise, one example at a time. Ask participants to share their answers. Provide correct answers and explanation, as needed. Use the following handouts:

- [Table Explaining Federal Reporting Categories \[PDF\]](#)
- [Exercise: COSF to progress categories \[PDF\]](#)

See the trainer materials at this link – for the answers!!

- [COSF to OSEP reporting \(with answers\) \[PDF\]](#)

Time check: This activity should take about 10 minutes.

### ***Activity: Evidence-Inference-Action Description:***

Participants review child outcomes data and discuss possible inference and action using this handout:

- [Evidence-Inference-Action Worksheet \[PDF\]](#)

Discuss the possible inferences and actions that might be made based on the evidence. Remind participants that one possible inference is 'the data are not quality data' and the corresponding action(s) would relate to improving the quality of the data.

Time check: 15-20 minutes