



*What Counts:  
Measuring the Benefits of  
Early Intervention in  
Hawai'i*

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*With assistance from the*  
**Early Childhood Outcomes Center**





# *Logistics for the day*

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## ★ Agenda

- Lunch arrangements
- Snacks
- Small groups

## ★ Facilities

## ★ Questions

- Ask at any time
- Write down 3 questions you have right now



# Overview

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- ★ Why collect Goals data?
- ★ Understanding the Child Goals
- ★ Assessing the accomplishment of the Child Goals
- ★ Using the Child Goals Summary Form
- ★ Practice with the Child Goals Summary Form
- ★ Working with families and the IFSP team
- ★ Logistics



## *Why collect data on how child and family benefit from EI services?*

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- ★ Program improvement
- ★ Federal interest: OMB/OSEP
- ★ Justification for funding
- ★ Families want to know what benefits they can expect
- ★ Research



# *The Overarching Goal for Early Intervention*

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“...To enable young children to be active and successful participants during the early childhood years and in the future in a variety of settings – in their homes with their families, in child care, in preschool & eventually school, and in the community.”



# *EI Goals for Children*

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1. Children have social and emotional skills (including positive social relationships).



2. Children learn and use knowledge and skills.



3. Children take action to meet their needs.



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*Understanding the  
3 Child Goals ...*



# *Goals are Functional*

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- ★ *Functional* refers to things that are meaningful to the child and his/her family in the context of everyday living.
- ★ Refers to an *integrated* series of behaviors or skills that allow the child to participate fully and successfully now, and prepare for future success.





# *Functional goals are not...*

- ★ a single behavior
- ★ the sum of a series of isolated behaviors or “splinter skills”

## ***Such as....***

- Knows 10 words
- Smiles at mom
- Stacks 3 blocks
- Pincer grasp (picks up a raisin)
- Goes up and down stairs with one foot on each stair



# *Goals are Functional*

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- ★ Not “domains” based – not trying to separate child development into traditional areas (communication, gross motor, etc.)
- ★ Emphasize how the child is able to carry out complex meaningful behaviors
- ★ Meaningful behaviors often involve multiple “Domains”



# Thinking Functionally

## ★ **Not just....**

- Know how to make eye contact, smile, and give a hug
- Know how to imitate a gesture when prompted by others
- Use finger in pointing motion
- Show a skill in a specific situation

## ★ **But does he/she...**

- Initiate affection toward caregivers and respond to others' affection
- Watch what a peer says or does and incorporate it into his/her own play
- Point to indicate needs or wants
- Use a skill in actions across settings and situations to accomplish something meaningful to the child



# *Call and response*



★ Knows her sister's name



★ Knows hidden object is still "there"



★ Can imitate most sounds except "f", "l", "sh"

★ Holds fat crayon in fist

What would a child use this skill for?

(What is its function in the child's life?)



# *Functional Goals*

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- ★ What does a child typically do?
- ★ Actual performance across settings and situations
- ★ How child uses his/her skills to accomplish tasks
- ★ Not the child's capacity to function under ideal circumstances or what s/he has done once or twice.



# *Children have positive social relationships*

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## ★ Involves:

- Relating with adults
- Relating with other children
- For older children- following rules related to groups or interacting with others

## ★ Includes areas like:

- Attachment/separation/autonomy
- Expressing emotions and feelings/Empathy
- Learning rules and expectations
- Social interactions and play



# *Children learn and use knowledge and skills*

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## ★ Involves:

- Thinking
- Reasoning
- Using symbols and language
- Understanding physical and social worlds
- Remembering
- Solving problems

## ★ Includes:

- Early concepts – mirror, symbols, pictures, numbers, classification, spatial relationships
- Imitation
- Knows something hidden is still there
- Expressive language and communication



# *Children take action to meet their needs*

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## ★ Involves:

- Taking care of basic needs like hunger, warmth, security
- Getting from place to place
- Using tools
- In older children, contributing to their own health and safety







# *Taking action to meet needs*

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## ★ Includes:

- Integrating fine and gross motor and communication skills to complete tasks
- Self-help skills (e.g., dressing, feeding, grooming, toileting, household responsibility)
- Acting on the world to get what one wants
- As child gets older, takes **APPROPRIATE** action to meet needs





# *Issues*

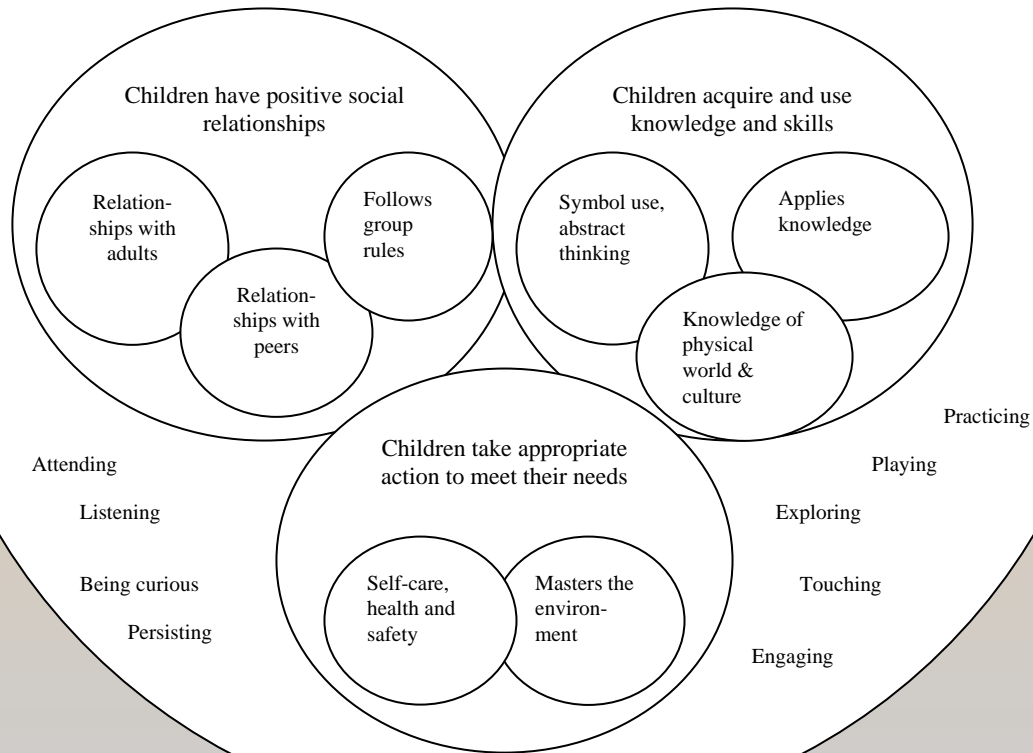
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- ★ There is overlap across the Goals (because behavior is integrated)
- ★ Goals vs. IFSP Outcomes & Objectives
- ★ There are important processes that underlie the Goals but are not the same as the Goals
  - e.g. paying attention, listening, curiosity, persisting, practicing, exploring, touching

# Understanding the Child Goals

*To be active and successful participants  
now and in the future  
in a variety of settings*



# Alternative Ways of Thinking about Child Development

**Overarching Goal:**

Children will be active and successful participants now and in the future in a variety of settings.

**Child Goals:**

Children have positive social relationships

Children learn and use knowledge and skills

Children take appropriate action to meet their needs

**Domains:**

Communication

Cognition

Social-Emotional

Self Help

Motor

**Content Areas:**

Language Arts

Math

Music

Science

Social Studies

Art

*Note: Each of these can be broken down further into sub-areas*

**Processes:**

Memory

Self-regulation

Recognizing and interpreting sensory input

Listening

Attending

Etc.

**Body Functions:**

Vision

Hearing

Movement  
-flexibility  
-strength  
-postural response

Speech production

Etc.

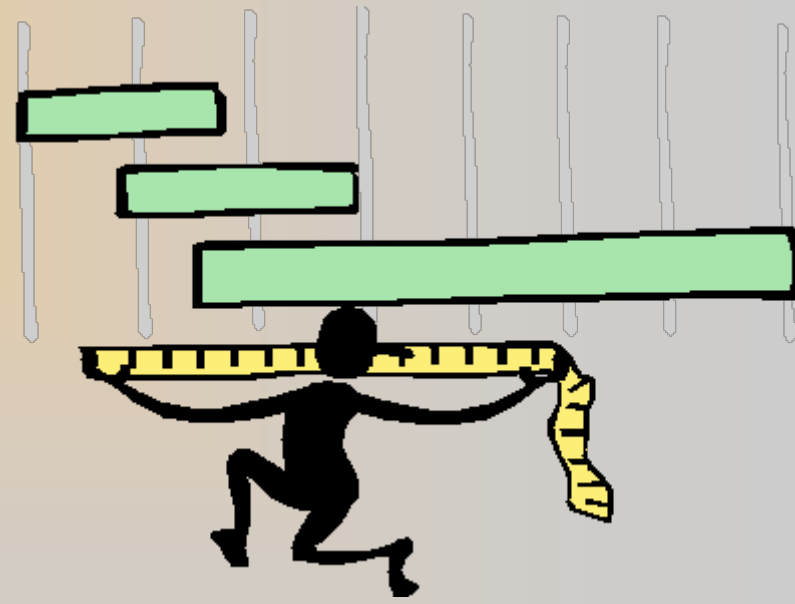
*Example of how movement can be sub-divided*



# *Indicators for Child Goals*



- ★ Percentage of children making progress on each goal and
- ★ Percentage of children who are functioning typically when they leave EI services.





# *Important Issues Related to Accountability*

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- ★ No service system can guarantee the achievement of any Goal involving children or families
- ★ Achieving a Goal occurs as a result of a variety of factors, only one of which will be services and supports provided through early intervention



# *Important Issues Related to Accountability*

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- ★ Even in the best system, some children will not achieve all of the desired Goals
  - Early intervention will not “fix” children
  - Children with severe disabilities will make very slow progress toward these Goals
  - But we do not know what any individual child is capable of achieving



# *The Bottom Line Related to Achievement of the 3 Goals*

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Early intervention should strive to achieve the 3 Goals for **all** of the children receiving services.





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# *Assessing the Accomplishment of the 3 Goals*



# *Critical Assumptions Related to the 3 Goals*

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- ★ Achievement of the Goals is age-based, i.e., children of different ages will demonstrate achievement in different ways
- ★ There are many pathways to competence for children with atypical development (e.g., using sign language, walker, wheel chair).



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# *Using the Child Goals Summary Form*





# Measurement Strategy for Child Goals: EI Programs

- ★ *Who:* IFSP team
- ★ *When:* Initial, Review & Annual meetings & Exit meetings





# *Features of the Summary Form*

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- ★ Based on child's ***functioning***
  - ***what child generally does*** across settings and situations,
  - ***not what a child can do*** under ideal circumstances.
- ★ Rating is based on child's functioning ***compared to other children the same age*** – distance from typical



# *Key Points*

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- ★ *Assumption:* Children can be described with regard to how close they are to age expected behavior for each of the 3 Goals
- ★ By definition, most children in the general population behave in an age-expected way in each Goal area
- ★ By providing services and supports, early intervention is trying to move children closer to age expected behavior
- ★ Some children will never achieve this



## *Key points*

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- ★ Documenting children's *movement toward typical development* is one type of evidence that early intervention is effective
- ★ Documenting each child's *progress* in the Goal areas is another type of evidence





# Measurement Strategy for Child Goals: EI Programs

- ★ *Who:* IFSP team
- ★ *When:* Initial, Review & Annual, & Exit meetings
- ★ *How:* Rating on each goal based on
  - ☑ PLOD
  - ☑ Family & provider input
  - ☑ Assessments
  - ☑ Last IFSP objectives







# *USING the Present Levels of Development (PLOD)*

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- ★ PLOD summarizes input from all involved providers and from parents
- ★ PLOD usually shows information everyone agrees is true



# *Challenges in using PLOD*

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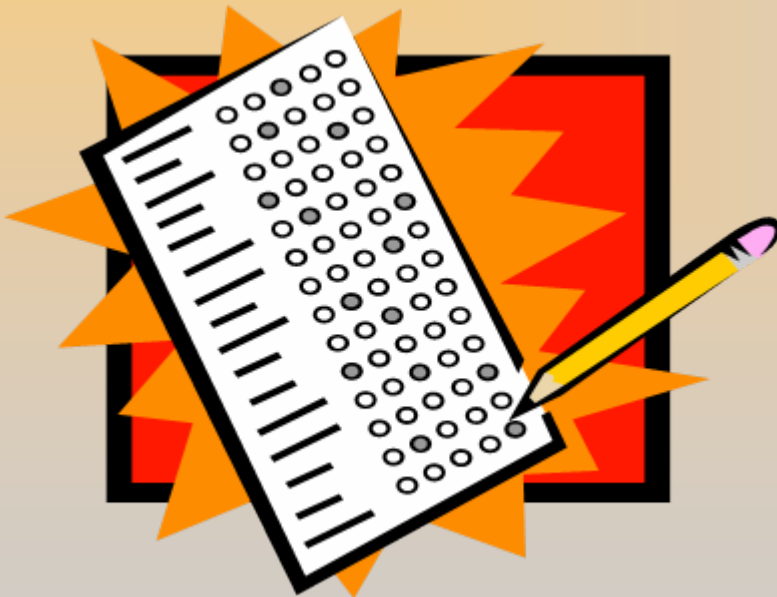


- ★ PLOD is organized by domains
- ★ PLOD may not explicitly compare behaviors to expected behaviors
- ★ PLOD may show child behaviors in “ideal” situation – “Peak” skills, not skills shown in most everyday settings and situation.
- ★ Requires thought, creativity, discussion & problem solving by IFSP team to translate to functional goal areas, compare to expected levels of development, and focus on everyday behaviors



# *So why not use assessment results?*

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- ★ There is no assessment tool that assesses the 3 Goals directly



# *The Assessment Lens*



- ★ Each child is an integrated collection of many behaviors, skills, traits, abilities, strengths, and needs
- ★ What any individual assessment “tunes into” depends on the orientation of the professionals who developed it
- ★ Their professional training and values provided an “organizing framework” for how they see children and development





# *The Assessment Lens*

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- ★ Each assessment carries its own organizing framework
- ★ Many are organized around domains
- ★ But what is covered in the domains isn't the same, even if the domain names are the same – which they often aren't



# *Currently Available Assessments*

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★ Each assessment sees children through its own lens



★ Each lens is slightly different

★ Lenses are not right or wrong



★ Key question: How much information will the assessment provide about the attainment of the 3 Goals?



# *Crosswalks*

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- ★ The ECO Center has developed crosswalks for the HELP, ASQ and some other assessments
- ★ Crosswalks give a visual indication of how the assessment covers the 3 Goals
- ★ Crosswalks show which areas/sub-areas map to which Goal



# *So we need the Child Goals Summary Form because*

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- ★ No assessment instrument assesses the 3 Goals directly
- ★ The functional goals do not correspond to domains or assessment results
  - Goal 1...





# *Conclusion*

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- ★ Assessment information can be very useful but it needs to be understood and used in the context of each functional Goal.





# *BREAK TIME!*





# *The Forms*

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- ★ **Family Form:** Use for the conversation
  - **3 Goal pages**
  - **2 questions per Goal**
  
- ★ **Data recording form:**
  - **Cover page + 1 page**



# *The 2 Questions*

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a. Has the child shown any new skills or behaviors related to \_\_\_\_\_ since the last Goals summary? (yes-no)

b. To what extent does this child show behaviors and skills related to this Goal appropriate for his or her age across a variety of situations?

(Rating: Not yet ... Completely)



# *The Progress Question* *(1a, 2a, 3a)*

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- ★ Compares child to his/her own past behavior
- ★ Has the child shown **ANY** new skills or behaviors in the goal area since the last rating?
  - Yes or No
- ★ Small steps of progress count!
- ★ Examples....
- ★ Most will check “yes”



# Summary ratings (Not yet ... Completely)

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- ★ Give an overall sense of child's current functioning in 3 areas



- ★ They are ***not***:

- Information on the services provided themselves
- The family's satisfaction with services
- An explanation of **why** the child's functioning is at that level





# *Summary rating*

## *(Not yet... Completely)*

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- ★ Reduces rich information from a discussion of observations and assessments into a rating to allow a summary of progress across children
- ★ Does not provide information for planning for the individual child. Information at the rich, detailed level will be more helpful for intervention planning purposes.



# *Ratings on the 3 Goals*

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- ★ Ratings on 3 Goals should be reported for **every** child enrolled.
  
- ★ Ratings are needed in **all** areas even if:
  - No one has concerns about a child's development in one or more areas





# *Determining a rating*

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- ★ There are many different ways that children can function effectively
- ★ Effective functioning that takes forms that are less common should not receive low ratings, unless
  - The pattern of behavior relied on may interfere with future development



# *Assistive Technology and Accommodations*

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- ★ Ratings should reflect the child's level of functioning using whatever assistive technology or special accommodations are present in the child's usual settings



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*The Hard Part ... The Rating*



# *Comparison Ratings for the Goals*

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- ★ The group making the rating needs to reach consensus on one of seven categories.
- ★ Descriptions are given for each category
  - Not Yet
  - Emerging
  - Somewhat
  - Completely



## *Comparison Ratings for the Goals, continued*

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- ★ Check the “**between**” boxes if the child’s functioning is “in between” higher and lower categories.
  - That is, the child functions better than the lower category, but not quite as described in the higher category.



# *Completely*

- ★ Child shows behaviors and skills expected in **all** or **almost all** everyday situations that are part of a child's life
  - home, store, park, child care, with strangers, etc.
- ★ Behaviors and skills are considered **typical** for his/her age.
- ★ No concerns about delays on any of the components of the global goal area.



# *Somewhat*

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- ★ Child shows expected behaviors and skills **some of the time across situations**
- ★ Behaviors and skills are a **mix** of appropriate and not appropriate
- ★ May act more like a **slightly younger child**
- ★ Some behaviors or conditions may be **interfering** with child's ability to achieve age-expected behavior and skills



## *Between completely and somewhat*

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- ★ Child's functioning is generally considered typical for the child's age **but** there are some concerns about the child's functioning.





# *Emerging*



- ★ Child does **not yet** show behaviors and skills expected of a child this age in any situation.
- ★ Behaviors and skills **include immediate foundational skills** which prepare for age-expected skills.
- ★ Behaviors may be more like those of a **younger child**
- ★ Some behaviors or conditions may be **interfering** with child's ability to achieve age-expected behavior/skills.



## *Not Yet*



- ★ Child does **not yet** show behaviors and skills expected of a child of his/her age in any situation.
- ★ Behaviors and skills **do not yet include any immediate foundational skills** upon which to build age-expected skills.
- ★ Behaviors may be more like those of a **much younger** child
- ★ Some behaviors or conditions may be **seriously interfering** with child's ability to achieve age-expected behavior and skills



## *None Quite Fit?*

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- ★ Use the in-**between** categories for children who have some characteristics of two different descriptions.





# *If the Child's Functioning is Comparable to Same Age Peers*

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★ **“Completely”**: typical, no concerns

\*If child continues to develop along these lines, prospects are good that the child will do well next year, the year after, and will enter kindergarten “ready to succeed”\*

★ **“Between completely and somewhat”**: generally age appropriate but there are some concerns; “low typical”

\*If child continues to develop along these lines, there could be a problem in the future. There is some chance that the child would **not** enter kindergarten “ready to succeed”\*





# *Explaining the rating*

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- ★ Why explain the rating?
- ★ Noting new information on the PLOD





# *What helps explain a rating?*

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- ★ Items that show a child's skills and behavior in everyday situations



- ★ Items directly related to the Goal Area

- ★ Items which cover the breadth of the Goal Area



- ★ Items that show the child's behaviors which are at or closest to expected behaviors



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*Let's see how we can use the  
Child Goals Summary Form*





# *LUNCH TIME*







# *Summary Ratings Reflect Global Functioning*

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- ★ Ratings on each Goal are a snapshot of
  - The whole child
  - Functioning
  - Across settings and situations
- ★ Rather than
  - Skill by skill
  - In one standardized way
  - Split by domains



## *Critical issues related to the 3 Goals*

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- ★ Goals refer to how a child functions across a variety of settings so include any assistive technology or supports the child typically uses
- ★ Goals reflect the child's everyday functioning – not what the child is capable of under the ideal or highly unusual circumstances





# *Small group instructions*

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★ Find your group

★ Review the IFSP and case study and assessment

45  
minutes

★ Focus on the “B” question:

➤ Talk about information you need for Goal 1

➤ Use what you have to choose a category

➤ Repeat for Goals 2,3

➤ Note what you want to bring to large group





## *Including families in the discussion*

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- ★ Family input is critical
  - Family members see the child in situations that providers do not
- ★ Many parents have some ideas about what behaviors are expected around what age, but
- ★ There is no expectation that all parents will be able to determine if what they are seeing is typical or age appropriate



## *We need to think about:*

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- ★ How can we prepare families for this process?
- ★ We will be comparing each child to a typically developing child. How can we phrase our questions and explain why/what we are doing so parents will be as comfortable as possible?





# *When to introduce to family: ideas from Pilot Programs*

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- ★ At intake when discussing IFSP process
- ★ At intake when discussing what program provides
- ★ At family assessment, discuss child's status in 3 Goal areas
- ★ Mail forms to family before IFSP meeting
- ★ Discuss at meeting before IFSP meeting



## *How to introduce to family*

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- ★ Explain why – we want to improve what our program does for children
- ★ Explain that it is required
- ★ Discuss the functional goals – give examples, emphasize typical child behavior – parent knows most about this





# *Why compare child to an average child?*

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- ★ So we can combine information from all children to get an overall picture of whether our program is reaching our goals
- ★ Example: height





# *BREAK TIME*





# *Facilitating the discussion*

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- ★ Use all providers on the team
- ★ Use provider family knows best
- ★ Introduce the Goal – discuss the breadth of the Goal, what all it includes, examples
- ★ Take the time to explore what each person knows about the child's behaviors in this Goal area



## *Facilitating, continued*

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- ★ Include descriptions of expected age-appropriate behaviors as you talk about this child's behaviors
- ★ Find out what the parent knows about typical children the same age as their child
- ★ Summarize discussion in terms of the category labels.
- ★ If there is no disagreement, check the category.



# *Handling disagreements*

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- ★ Prevent disagreement by listening and framing during discussion
- ★ If one person disagrees with a description of the child's behavior, or with the rating:



## *Handling disagreement, cont.*

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- Ask the person to describe what behaviors or skills s/he has observed, and whether that is a typical or “once in a while” behavior
- Ask the person to describe the setting/situation where s/he observed the behavior
- Make sure you are both talking about the Goal area – go back to description of Goal.





## *Handling disagreement, cont.*

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- ★ Be open to learning new things about the child that you may not have seen
- ★ Share what you have observed, why you believe it is typical behavior, related to this Goal area
- ★ Share how you have learned about age-expected behavior and what you know in this Goal area





## *Handling disagreement, cont.*

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- ★ Go back to the PLOD/assessments and make sure items you are talking about are noted there, or add them
- ★ Don't get stuck on coming to agreement if everyone is within one rating category of each other
- ★ Try to focus rating discussion as a summary of what has been said about the child, not as “choosing a category”





## *If you just can't agree, or it is taking way too long*

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- ★ Note this on the Child Goals Summary Form; write down areas of disagreement
- ★ Discuss with your supervisor
- ★ Your supervisor can approve leaving the Goal rating for this Goal blank, and noting why on the form; you may develop different ways to talk to the Team member who disagrees and resolve it at the next meeting.







# *Let's practice introducing and facilitating: 30 minutes*

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- ★ Find your partner
- ★ Agree on one person to play a parent, one a provider
- ★ Review the case scenario
- ★ “Parents:” Use your own judgment of how to respond to the “provider” in your group.
- ★ Note what you’d like to bring back to large group.



# *What Counts timeline*

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- ★ 3 programs piloted initial draft forms and processes for two months
- ★ Initial implementation started April 1, 2006
  - Data will become “baseline” for OSEP
  - EIS program, Healthy Start & PHN in three communities have been trained and are implementing measurement



## *Timeline continued: You're Next!*

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- ★ At your next IFSP meeting, use the What Counts form to rate the child's functioning on the 3 Goals.
- ★ Your data will be part of OSEP baseline data.



# *Logistics of implementation*

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- ★ Forms handling
- ★ Program managers will have electronic copies of all forms
- ★ Each program will decide how to get paper forms in time for IFSP meetings
- ★ Data handling:
  - “The EI Nightmare”
  - There WILL be an electronic data system
  - It is not ready yet
  - Your program will save all paper Summary Forms until it is possible to enter data.



# *Ongoing support*

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- ★ Site visit or joint meeting in about a month
- ★ FAQs
- ★ Email Beppie or Kathy
- ★ Kathy Kubo will be transitioning into the What Counts Coordinator role this summer



# *Coming in September...*

## *A Family Survey*

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- ★ Measures family benefit from Early Intervention
- ★ Uses the 5 Family Goals
- ★ Care Coordinators will give survey to each family
- ★ Family will mail survey to EIS



*Did we answer your questions?*

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# *Please Share Your Ideas*

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- ★ Please be aware of
  - what works,
  - what doesn't work,
  - what is clear,
  - what is not clear
  
- ★ Help us figure out how to make this work better





## *Contact:*

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*What Counts* website:

<http://www.wcp.hawaii.edu/>