

Early Childhood Accountability in Pennsylvania Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose of Measuring Child Progress

1. Why are we measuring child progress?

The US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires every state to collect accountability data to determine the effectiveness of the Part C (infant/toddler) and Part B preschool early intervention programs.

The purpose of a statewide process for measuring child progress on outcomes is to link assessment to early learning outcomes using those established by OSEP, to align learning expectations with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards (including the Infant/Toddler Standards once developed), to avoid redundant measurement of child progress, and to create greater continuity and coordination among our early learning programs.

2. What are the three OSEP child outcome indicators?

OSEP is asking each state to measure children's progress across the following three child outcome measures.

- a. Positive Social Emotional Skills (including social relationships)
- b. Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills (including early language/communication and early literacy for preschoolers)
- c. Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs

The child outcome indicators, with the exception of the focus on early literacy skills in preschool, are the same in both the infant/toddler and preschool early intervention programs.

3. What developmental areas to the child outcome indicators cover?

Positive Social Emotional Skills (including social relationships)

- This includes the skills and behaviors that infants, toddlers and preschoolers use across settings to:
 - Build and maintain relationships with adults and other children
 - Behave in a way that allows them to participate in a variety of settings and situations
 - Understand and follow social rules
 - Regulate their emotions

Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills (including early language/communication and early literacy for 3-5 year olds)

- This includes the skills and behaviors that infants, toddlers and preschoolers use across settings to:
 - Think, reason, remember, and solve problems
 - Understand and use symbols that will build to early literacy skills
 - Engage in daily learning opportunities through appropriately manipulating toys and objects
 - Use vocabulary, through spoken, signed or augmentative systems, to communicate in increasingly complex forms

Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs

- This includes the skills and behaviors that infants, toddlers and preschoolers use across settings to:
 - Take care of basic needs (e.g., expressing hunger, dressing, feeding, toileting, etc.)
 - Contribute to own health and safety (e.g., follows rules, assists with hand washing, avoids inedible objects, etc.)

- Get from place to place (mobility) to participate in everyday activities and routines
- Use objects as tools in appropriate ways (e.g., forks, pencils, strings attached to objects, switches, etc.)

4. Do the child outcome indicators match the Early Learning Standards for Preschool and the standards being developed for infants and toddlers?

The Early Learning Standards (preschool and infant/toddler) are being matched to the child outcome indicators. The child outcome indicators, established by OSEP, are being adopted by Pennsylvania's early care and education programs as the indicators to measure child progress.

5. Why is OSEP interested in only three outcome indicators and not in the five developmental domains?

The three outcome indicators were chosen based on national stakeholder input and recommendations by the Early Childhood Outcome Center. Many stakeholders expressed concern that using an approach that separates children's development into discrete domains is not consistent with the integrated nature of how young children develop and goes against integrated and transdisciplinary intervention models. Additionally, since the emphasis in working with young children with disabilities is on developing functional skills, the three child outcomes indicators represent critical functional outcomes that young children need to be successful in every day activities and routines. These indicators incorporate but also integrate developmental domains.

6. Can a county or MAWA use IFSP/IEP outcome/goal attainment to address the child outcome measures?

No, OSEP is interested in data being collected in all three areas for all children receiving early intervention services, regardless of the type of services the child is receiving. IFSP/IEP outcomes/goals would not necessarily provide data on all three areas. Additionally, the child outcomes measures require comparing children's functioning to same-aged peers, something IFSP/IEP goal attainment data couldn't provide.

7. Are we mandating a curriculum?

No. While some of the anticipated final tools are associated with curricula, all can be used with a variety of curricula. PDE and DPW are not mandating the use of a specific curriculum in early intervention.

Child Progress Measurement Tools

8. What child outcome measurement tool(s) are to be used in Pennsylvania in 2007-2008?

Starting on July 1, 2007 through to June 30, 2008, any of the following tools may be used to measure child progress:

- Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI or BDI II)
- Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC)
- Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)
- High Scope Child Observation Record (preschool and infant/toddler versions)
- Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP-3) and the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP)
- Developmental Observation Checklist System (DOCS)
- Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment (preschool and infant/toddler versions)
- Work Sampling System (preschool) and the Ounce Scale (infant/toddler)

9. What if our program is not currently using any of these tools that are required for 2007-2008?

The statewide measurement tools were chosen based on information gathered during the child assessment forums and a survey of tools currently used in Pennsylvania for measuring progress. Most early intervention programs reported that they used one of the assessment tools on the list. Any use of alternative measurement tools to report data are subject to written approval and must be discussed in advance with your Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) contact.

10. What child outcome measurement tools are to be used in Pennsylvania in 2009?

Over the past year, OCDEL staff in early childhood and early intervention have been reviewing the research on three anticipated child progress measurement tools and assessing the efficacy of combining statewide data on three tools, the cost implications of providing training three tools vs. one tool; and the database implications of three tools vs. one tool.

Based on the information reviewed, OCDEL has determined that the Work Sampling System (for preschool age children) or the Ounce Scale (for infants and toddlers) will be the required assessment tools for measuring child progress after June 30, 2009. The Work Sampling System and Ounce Scale were chosen because they:

- Have the ability to align with any early childhood curricula, including Creative Curriculum or High Scope.
- Align with Key Learning Areas in the Early Learning Standards for both preschoolers and infants and toddlers.
- Demonstrate good technical adequacy.
- Can be used with a wide range of learners, including those with developmental delays or disabilities.
- Have reasonable costs associated with implementation.
- Can be used as part of on-going assessment (e.g., over multiple times).
- Can be used to inform teaching practices.
- Will allow for easy entry into a statewide database.

11. How will the tools for measuring child outcomes be phased in?

There are new timelines for early intervention programs to begin to use the Work Sampling System/Ounce Scale. These timelines recognize that while some early intervention programs have not invested in a particular tool for measuring child progress, other programs have been using the High Scope COR or Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuums. The new timelines provide more time for early intervention programs who are using a specific child progress measurement tool such as the COR or Continuum to switch to the Work Sampling System/Ounce Scale. During the phase-in process all early intervention programs will have ample opportunity to make thoughtful decisions about the process they will use to measure child progress and will have ample opportunities to ensure that all staff can collect accurate, reliable data. The new timelines are:

In 2007-2008, all county and MAWA early intervention programs must use one of the following tools to measure child progress. Any use of alternative measurement tools to report ECAP data are subject to written approval and must be discussed in advance with your OCDEL contact.

- Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI or BDI II)
- Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC)
- Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)
- High Scope Child Observation Record (preschool and infant/toddler versions)
- Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP-3) and the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP)
- Developmental Observation Checklist System (DOCS)
- Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment (preschool and infant/toddler versions)

By July 1, 2008, all early intervention programs must switch to Work Sampling System/Ounce Scale unless they are using the High Scope COR (infant/toddler and preschool), or Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuums (infant/toddler and preschool). Programs using the COR or the Continuum may choose to switch to Work Sampling/Ounce Scale or add it to their assessment process but the change is not required this year. Because of the investment some local programs made in the COR or Continuum; additional time is being allotted to allow them to make decisions about the alignment of their assessment process. If an early intervention program is using the Creative Curriculum or High/Scope Curriculum but not COR and Continuum they are expected to switch to the Work Sampling/Ounce Scale at this time.

By July 1, 2009, all early intervention programs will be required to use either the Work Sampling/Ounce Scale for ECAP data collection

12. Is Pennsylvania mandating the evaluation tools that must be used for determining eligibility?

Not at this time. Our first effort is to standardize the process for measuring child progress. These tools are not being mandated for the determination of eligibility for the early intervention program.

13. There are some children, because of their type or level of disability who can have a difficult time showing progress on common child measurement tools? How can we measure the progress these children are making?

All children in early intervention, regardless of their type or level of disability, must have their progress measured using one of the approved tools. A common set of measurement tools will allow for more accurate, reliable information to determine the effectiveness of the early intervention program. It is understood that for some children supplemental assessments may be necessary in addition to the common measurement tools, in order to accurately determine progress.

14. For children who have more severe disabilities, can you use the infant/toddler version of a tool even if the child is chronologically older? For example, can you use the Ounce when the child is preschool age?

Look to the test administration manual for details of the efficacy of using a tool that was meant for a younger child. However, many curricular-based tools have overlap between the items on the infant/toddler and preschool versions. This may allow you to better show progress over time.

15. What connection, if any, will there be between the anticipated approved tools for 2009 and the currently approved tools? At the MDE, will teams use one tool to determine eligibility and then another tool to set the progress baseline?

In 2007-2008, if an early intervention program is using one of the approved tools to determine eligibility, they can also use that information for completing the ECAP data collection forms. Work Sampling System and the Ounce Scale, the tools required for use in collecting ECAP data after July 1, 2009, are not tools that can be used for determining eligibility for early intervention.

Which Children Must Have Data Collected?

16. Which children are to be included in the measurement of child progress?

Measurement of child progress will begin with all infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who are determined eligible for the early intervention program on or after July 1, 2007. Those children who participate in the infant/toddler early intervention tracking program will not be included in the measurement of child progress. Children who participate in childcare, preschool, Head Start, Early

Literacy and other early learning programs will be phased-in to the common process for measuring child outcomes.

17. Do programs need to assess children in all three outcome areas even when it is not an area of concern?

Yes

18. What are the implications for reporting on outcome areas for which children had no developmental concerns? (i.e., speech only child with no other delays)

Some children, for example children with only concerns about their speech skills, may have skills that are comparable to same-aged peers on some of the child outcomes. In these cases, the child's entry rating would be either a 6 or 7 and, assuming they do not regress, their exit rating will also be a 6 or 7.

19. Can a child be performing at age appropriate levels on all three outcomes and still be eligible for early intervention services?

Yes. A child may meet eligibility for early intervention and still be at age appropriate levels on the child outcomes. For example, an infant with down syndrome may be at levels comparable to typical peers on each of the child outcomes but yet is eligible for early intervention. In another example, a preschool child with an articulation disorder may be eligible and may also be performing at age-appropriate levels on all of the child outcome indicators. Remember, the assessment of a child's progress with ECAP is not related to the determination of eligibility.

What is the General Process for Collecting Data?

20. Does the term "days" in relation to timelines, refer to calendar or school days?

All references to "days" refer to calendar days.

21. Who should be on the team to collect both entry and exit data?

One IEP/IFSP team member should take responsibility for collecting the entry and exit data. In this instance, the "IEP/IFSP team" refers to the implementation or service delivery team. This team member may often be the primary early intervention staff supporting the child and family. While the parent/family member is a key member of the data collection team, the responsibility for collecting the data and completing the data collection forms lies with the designated IEP/IFSP team member.

22. Should the team member responsible for reporting the data set up a specific appointment to measure progress?

No, the reporting of child progress data is part of the ongoing progress monitoring that is completed with every child. It should be gathered as part of the ongoing early intervention services or program day in which the child and family participate. It is NOT completed or billed as a separate evaluation or therapy session. The discussion of the child's developmental level or progress should occur as part of a service visit or program day; a separate meeting is not needed.

23. Who is a same-aged peer for an infant who was born premature?

For premature infants, use their chronological age to compare to the skills of same-age peers.

24. Why are we only going to measure entry and exit data? It would really help the child's program if I could monitor this on a more frequent basis.

Starting July 1, 2009, all infant/toddler and preschool early intervention programs will gather entry, exit and annual data on all children. It is anticipated that the annual data will gathered as a part of the annual review of the IFSP/IEP.

25. What effect, if any, will the child outcome measurement system have on the requirement in the infant/toddler program for quarterly progress updates?

Infant/toddler requirements for quarterly progress updates are related to how well the child is progressing on IFSP outcomes. The system for measuring child outcomes is a way of measuring child progress against a standard of typical child development. Both methods are required and inter-related.

26. Who is responsible for collecting ECAP data on children who are place in Approved Private Schools (APS)?

The early intervention program that is responsible for the development of the child's IEP or IFSP will also be responsible for ensuring that child outcome data is collected. While staff at the APS or any typical childcare program may be collecting the data but it is the responsibility of the early intervention program to ensure that that the data is collected and submitted to the state database.

What is the Process for Collecting Entry Data?

27. Which children will need entry data?

All infants, toddlers and preschoolers who are found eligible for the early intervention program on or after July 1, 2007 will need to have entry level data gathered on all three of the child outcome indicators. The date that the child is found eligible for early intervention is the date that the evaluation team determines that the child is eligible for early intervention.

28. If a child was found eligible for the early intervention program prior to July 1, 2007, do we need to go back and gather entry data?

No. You do not need to gather entry data if the child was found eligible for early intervention prior to July 1, 2007. Eventually, we will have entry and exit data on all children in early intervention.

29. When must child's entry data be gathered?

The team, including the family, must gather the entry data within 60 calendar days of the development of the child's initial IEP/IFSP.

30. How do we score entry data?

For each of the three Child Outcome Indicators, the child's current performance is scored on a 7 point scale. Lower numbers on the scale indicate more distance between the child's performance and the performance of typically developing children. A rating of a 6 or 7 is used for age-appropriate performance. Use the Decision Tree to help make a determination of the child's current performance. Circle one number for each child outcome indicator on the Child Outcome Summary Form (COSF).

- **7 (Completely):** Child shows functioning expected for his or her age in all or almost all everyday situations that are part of the child's life. Functioning is considered appropriate for his or her age. No one has any concerns about the child's functioning in this outcome area.
- **6:** Child's functioning generally is considered appropriate for his or her age but there are some significant concerns about the child's functioning in this outcome area. These concerns may be

substantial enough to suggest monitoring or possible additional support. Although age-appropriate, the child's functioning may border on not keeping pace with age expectations.

- **5 (Somewhat):** Child shows functioning expected for his or her age some of the time and/or in some situations. Child's functioning is a mix of age appropriate and not age appropriate behaviors and skills. Child's functioning might be described as like that of a slightly younger child.
- **4:** Child shows some but not much age-appropriate functioning.
- **3 (Emerging):** Child does not yet show functioning expected of a child or his or her age in any situation. Child's behavior and skills include immediate foundational skills upon which to build age appropriate functioning. Child shows these immediate foundational skills most or all of the time across settings and situations. Functioning might be described as like that of a younger child.
- **2:** Child's behavior and skills include some immediate foundational skills but these are not displayed very often across settings and situations.
- **1(Not Yet):** Child does not yet show functioning expected of a child his or her age in any situation. Child's skills and behaviors also do not yet include any immediate foundational skills upon which to build age appropriate functioning. Child's functioning might be described as like that of a much young child.

31. What's considered age appropriate or 'normal' on the 7 point scale?

Both the scores of six and seven on the scale are considered typical behavior. A rating of 7 is indicated when the family may have a concern where extra support is needed to promote development. However, the area of concern is not a precursor of a significant developmental problem. A rating of 6 would be indicated when the family's concern is significant to watch closely.

- For example, a 7 would be used when a parent has concerns about a child who is very shy but whose behavior is age appropriate or a child who has temper tantrums which may be expected given the child's age.
- For example, a 6 would be used when a child is showing age expected behavior now, but the child's development is not keeping pace or the child is showing early signs of possible developmental problem.

32. What does "Immediate Foundational Skills" mean?

Immediate foundational skills are skills that are conceptually linked to later skills and immediately precede the later skills developmentally. Immediate Foundational Skills serve as the foundation for later skill development. Teachers and interventionists often use foundational skills to help children move to the next level developmentally

- For example: Children play alongside one another before they interact in play. Playing alongside one another is an immediate foundational skill for interactive play.

33. Is the COSF another assessment tool?

No, the COSF is not an assessment tool. It is a summary tool that is designed to provide an overall sense of the child's current functioning. It is a tool designed to reduce information from one child's assessment and observation into ratings to allow a summary of progress across children.

34. How was the COSF designed?

The COSF is a summary scale that is based on a developmental framework. It assumes:

- Children develop new skills and behaviors and integrate those skills and behaviors into more complex behaviors as they get older;
- These skills and behaviors emerge in a somewhat predictable developmental sequence in most children.
- The development of children with disabilities can be compared to the development of their same-age peers.
- Some of the skills and behaviors that develop early serve as the foundation for later skills and behavior, or expressed another way; later skills build on earlier skills in predictable ways.
- Some children's development is characterized by delays, meaning they acquire skills and behaviors at a substantially slower pace than other children.
- Some children's development is atypical in that their functioning is so different from that of other children their age that it is considered outside the limits of age expected behavior for children of that age.

35. What is the process for the responsible team member and the family to score the COSF?

The responsible team member and the family should use part of a typical intervention session to score the COSF. In general, the steps are:

- Review the assessment tool results and any other pertinent information on the child's performance
- With the family, discuss the child's current performance across settings and situations
- Use the Conversation Starters if you get stuck
- Jot down your notes on the note taking side of the form. Use the note taking side of the form to describe the evidence that led to the selected rating. This page of the form is optional.
- Use the Decision Tree for the COSF to guide your ratings. Decide which rating best describes the child's current performance across settings and situations
- For Section A - Circle only one number on the COSF form for each child outcome indicator.
- For Section B, the last question, discuss with the family if the child shown any new skills or behaviors related to the outcome since the last ECAP data collection.

What is the Process for Collecting Exit Data?

36. When do we begin collecting exit data?

We will need to collect exit data on any child who leaves early intervention on or after January 1st 2008 and who has had at least 6 months of consecutive service

37. Which children will need exit data?

Exit data should be gathered for those children who have received at least 6 months of consecutive early intervention services prior to exiting and who are leaving the early intervention program for one of the following reasons:

- No longer eligible for early intervention because the child no longer meets eligibility criteria;
- Anticipated move out-of-state;
- Parent withdrawal of their child from early intervention;
- Transition from the infant/toddler program at age three years; or
- Transition to Kindergarten.

Exit data is needed 60 days prior to the child's sixth birthday. The team should gather the exit data point at age 6 years, even if the child remains in the early intervention program beyond that age.

38. What does “6 months of consecutive early intervention services mean”? What if our preschool program is closed for a week during the six months prior to the child’s transition?

Planned breaks in service delivery do not count as a break in consecutive services. Planned breaks include breaks due to the program calendar, planned service breaks in an IFSP/IEP services or typically scheduled vacations by family or early intervention staff.

39. When must the child’s exit data be gathered?

Exit data must be collected within 60 calendar days prior to the child’s anticipated exit from the infant, toddler or preschool early intervention program. The child’s appointed team member and the family should determine the child’s level of progress. If the anticipated exit doesn’t happen as scheduled, do not use that data as the exit data point; obtain a new measurement of progress closer to actual exit.

40. At exit from infant/toddler or preschool early intervention, how should the team make a determination about the child’s skill level and progress on each child outcome?

The team should reach consensus on the determination of the child’s abilities for each outcome and the amount of progress the child has made. The determination of the child’s progress is based on information from one of the approved child outcome measurement tools. Remember, any use of alternative measurement tools to report data are subject to written approval and must be discussed in advance with your Office of Child Development and Early Learning contact. Your team should also use the ECO Center crosswalks as guidance to determine which test items best relate to which child outcome indicators. The Early Childhood Outcomes Center has crosswalks on most of the approved tools.

Based on the needs of the child and family, you may need to review other existing forms of data, in addition to the data from an approved tool, in order to determine the child’s progress. Other information to gather may include, but is not limited to, parent and clinical observations, early intervention case notes or progress summaries, information on the child’s skills gathered by the service coordinator, MDE eligibility results, and baseline or progress information found in the IEP or IFSP reflect the child’s current functioning across the typical settings and situations that make up his/her day.

The determination of skill level should reflect the child’s typical functioning across settings, not his/her capacity to function under ideal circumstances. If assistive technology or special accommodations are available in the child’s everyday environments, then the determination of child’s abilities should describe the child’s functioning using those adaptations.

41. How much change in the child’s abilities needs to be made in order to call it progress? How much progress is progress?

Progress across each of the three Child Outcome Indicators is made when there is any level of change in the child’s performance. Progress can be reflected in:

- An improved score on a child measurement tool;
- A change in the developmental age score on a child measurement tool;
- A single new skill that was reached; or
- The child needing less assistance to perform a skill.

42. Who should be providing input into the decisions about progress?

One member of the IFSP/IEP team (IEP/IFSP team refers to the implementation/service delivery team) will be given the responsibility to complete the data collection form. As appropriate, other team members can share progress notes/reports, data charts on IFSP/IEP outcomes, or other materials that will assist the team in making a decision about progress.

43. What criteria will be used to measure how much progress the child has made?

Each infant, toddler and preschooler's progress will be measured by comparing the difference in the ratings between the entry and exit data. However, this comparison will be made automatically by the ECAP database. The child's team will not need to make that decision.

44. A child in our county program was in our program for less than 6 months when they moved out of state. What data do I need to gather?

If the child was found eligible for early intervention on or after July 1, 2007, you would have collected entry data at that time. Since the child was not in the program for 6 consecutive months prior to exiting, you do not need to collect exit data.

45. A child has been receiving services from us for over a year, but then did not receive services for 4 months because of illness and hospitalizations. What data do we need to report?

Report only entry data. In this example, if the child was found eligible for early intervention on or after July 1, 2007, you would have collected entry data. No exit data would be collected until the child received at least 6 months of consecutive services prior to exit. Remember, planned breaks in service delivery do not count as a break in consecutive services.

What are the Data Collection Requirements Around Transition Times?

46. At the age of referral, the child was almost ready to transition to the MAWA preschool program. Who should be collecting data at what times?

Entry data should be collected on all children who were found eligible for early intervention on or after July 1, 2007. Follow the procedures you already have in place related to the development of an IFSP/IEP for a child who is referred to the infant/toddler program close to their third birthday.

If an IFSP is developed then that IFSP team (IFSP team refers to the implementation/service delivery team) is responsible for gathering entry data prior to the transition at the child's third birthday. If an IEP is developed, the IEP team (IEP team refers to the implementation/service delivery team) is responsible for collecting the entry data.

Exit data is only collected on those children who have received 6 consecutive months of service prior to their transition out of the early intervention program. Since, in this example, the child would not have received 6 consecutive months of service prior to the transition to the MAWA, then no exit data is collected by the infant/toddler program.

47. Some preschool children in early intervention are over the age of 5 years but have not yet transitioned to the school district. What data must be collected and when?

For children who stay in early intervention the extra year past preschool (don't transition to Kindergarten at the typical age), the final exit data should be gathered within 60 days prior to the child's 6th birthday, even if the child remains in early intervention past his/her 6th birthday.

48. When a child moves from one county or MAWA program to another county or MAWA program, do we need to gather entry data for our county's program?

No, when the child is moving from one county to another county or from one MAWA to another MAWA, the sending county/MAWA should send documentation of the child's entry data to the new county/MAWA. This entry data serves as the entry data for county/MAWA who receives the child. No exit data is needed by the sending county/MAWA. If for some reason there has been an

interruption of services for more than 60 days, than the receiving county/MAWA should gather entry data as they would for a new child.

49. Can the exit data from infant/toddler program count as the entry data for the preschool early intervention program?

Yes. The exit data from the infant/toddler program should serve as the entry data for the preschool early intervention program. The exit data should be shared with the preschool program as part of the transition process.

50. Who is responsible for collecting entry/exit data at transition, the preschool program or the infant/toddler program?

Both programs have responsibility to gather and share child progress data. The infant/toddler early intervention program must collect the exit data and ensure that it is received by the preschool program as part of the child information that is shared at transition. The preschool early intervention program must have entry data. If for some extenuating circumstances, the preschool can not get exit data from the county early intervention program, then the preschool program should gather their entry data. This should not be a frequent occurrence. County and MAWA early intervention programs are encouraged to use their interagency agreement process to finalize some of the local details around sharing child progress information. Please refer to the Early Intervention Transition Guidelines for ideas on interagency agreements.

Communicating Progress to Families

51. Do I have to give a copy of the COSF to parents?

Yes. The COSF should be shared with the family in the same way you share all progress information. Parents should receive a copy of the completed COSF. After entering the data, you can print the completed form from the web based data collection system. Parents should also get a copy of the ECAP parent fact sheet.

52. Does the team member responsible for completing COSF need to set up a special meeting to review the child progress data?

No. The review of the child's skills and progress necessary to complete the COSF should occur as part of a typical early intervention service session or program day. Like with all reviews of progress, it should be done as part of the ongoing provision of quality early intervention services.

53. Should a copy of the COSF be included in the child's record?

Yes.

54. What if the family and I do not reach consensus about the child's skills or the amount of progress s/he has made?

If parents are key partners in supporting their child's development, then information on their children's skills and progress should not come as a surprise. As part of the ongoing discussion of progress, early intervention staff and parents should have developed shared understanding and agreement of the child's skills and abilities.

55. The preschool program in our area serves children in typical child care programs and the parents are not at the site. How can we involve them in completing the data collection form?

If the parent is not at the site where services are delivered, then the responsible team member can involve the family through combinations of phone conversations, email or regular mail. If a meeting is already scheduled within the right timelines for completing the COSF, then it can be done at that meeting. However, an additional face-to-face meeting with the parent, just to complete the COSF is not needed.

Database Questions

56. When should the team member responsible for gathering the COSF be entering it into the database?

Within the 60 day timeframe, the team member should have gathered the entry/exit data, reviewed it with the family, completed the data collection form and entered the data into the database.

57. Why does the MAWA/county supervisor have to review the team member's data? Are they overriding their decisions about the amount of progress that has been made?

The MAWA/county supervisor does not change or override the team decision of the child's skills and progress. The MAWA and county supervisors have a responsibility to collect correct information. As part of that responsibility for quality control, they will need to review the child outcome data entered to ensure that there is no missing or blatantly incorrect information. For example, the MAWA/county supervisor should review the data to make sure that measurement criteria for each child outcome indicators have been checked or to make sure that the child's date of birth doesn't fall after the IFSP/IEP development date. .

58. How often should the county/MAWA supervisor be reviewing and approving the data entered by team members?

On an ongoing basis, both the county early intervention program and the MAWA supervisors should review the data entered by their staff for any missing or incorrect information. The data should be reviewed and approved based on the timelines for submission of PennData and EIRS data to the state. The timeline for EIRS data review is the tenth day of each month and the timeline for Penn Data review is the fifth day of each month.

59. What software do I need to enter COSF data into the database?

You will not need any special software to enter child data into the database. You will need a computer with internet access.

60. Not all of my staff have computers. How are they going to enter their data?

Local programs have the flexibility to determine their own process to enter their child outcome data. The COSF are available in hard copy and can be used to gather and record information if not directly at a computer. The team member can enter data later at the office. Some programs may wish to have one staff person dedicated to entering the child outcome data.

61. What is the state's role in reviewing the child outcome data in the database?

As part of the statewide supervision of the early intervention program, OCDEL has responsibility for ensuring that counties/MAWAs are gathering all needed data according to timelines, ensuring that data is complete, and for ensuring that data is gathered for all appropriate children. These responsibilities are similar to those that already exist for PennData and EIRS.

62. Do I need to have my computer at the family's house in order to enter the data online?

No. You do not need to enter the data in the presence of the family.

Fiscal Concerns

63. Who is going to pay for purchasing the new tool?

The list of tools was developed based on those tools most often used in early intervention programs. Almost all early intervention programs reported using one of the identified tools. Purchase of early intervention tools and materials are considered overhead costs and are not directly reimbursed. OCDEL is investigating potential group discounts from publishers.

64. How will we be reimbursed for the tasks related to COSF data?

The child outcome measurement process has been designed to be part of ongoing progress monitoring procedures and so no additional costs to implement are anticipated. The entry and exit data reporting should be gathered as part of a typical service delivery session or program day, not as a separate meeting, so there should be no additional services outside of what is already part of the IFSP/IEP.

65. Who is going to pay to train my staff on how to use the COSF and the approved tools?

OCEL, through EITA, will be providing free staff development opportunities on both the data collection process and the anticipated final three outcome measurement tools. Training costs should not be a burden.

Training Support

66. How are my staff going to learn how to collect child data?

OCDEL, through EITA will be providing many different local and regional opportunities for staff to learn the process for collecting child outcome data. EITA staff will also be available for local training and technical assistance on the use of the entry/exit data collection forms following these dates.

In addition, OCDEL will be holding monthly conference calls to address implementation issues (last Wednesday of the month starting in August) and will be updating this FAQ on an ongoing basis. Any questions to be included on the FAQ can be emailed to ecap@pattan.net. Updates will be posted to the PaTTAN website (www.pattan.net).

67. How are parents going to learn about the child outcome measurement system and their role in the process?

OCDEL, through EITA will be developing a set of materials for parents in the early intervention program. These materials will provide an overview of the child outcome indicators and will explain the purpose and process for collecting child outcome data. An ECAP parent fact sheet has been developed and is available on the PaTTAN website (www.pattan.net).

68. Are you going to be providing training the Work Sampling System and Ounce Scale?

During the fall/winter of 2007-08, EITA will be offering statewide, regional and local trainings that focus on implementation of the Work Sampling System and Ounce Scale. A statewide training plan is under development and will be disseminated as soon as it is finalized. Training will not be provided on those tools that will not be approved for use past July 2009.