

PART C SPP/APR 2009 INDICATOR ANALYSES
(FFY 2007-2008)

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INDICATOR 1: TIMELY RECEIPT OF SERVICES

Completed by NECTAC

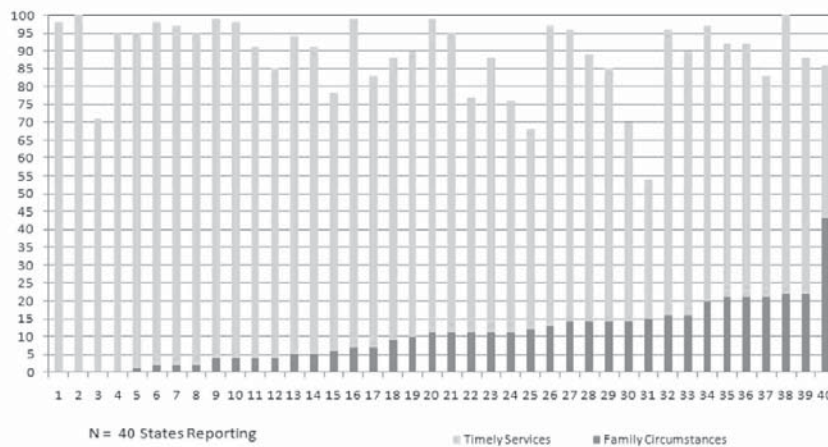
INTRODUCTION

Indicator 1, percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who receive the early intervention services on their IFSPs in a timely manner, is a compliance indicator with a target of 100% with each State determining what constitutes timely services. In responding to this indicator, States could use data from monitoring or the State data system. In either case, the data is based on actual number of days, not an average number, between parental consent, or the date specified on the IFSP for the initiation of services, and the provision of services. The analysis of Part C Indicator 1 is based on a review of FY 2007 Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for 56 States and jurisdictions. For the purpose of this report, the term “State” is used for both States and jurisdictions.

In responding to Indicator 1, States were asked to provide the criteria used to determine which infants and toddlers received IFSP services in a timely manner and which did not. States were also asked to account for the untimely receipt of services for infants and toddlers, (e.g., when the States’ criteria were not met, what were the causes for delay and which delays were due to exceptional family circumstances documented in the child’s record).

States were allowed to count as timely those delays due to family circumstances. Not all States reported delays attributable to family circumstances. However, of the 40 States reporting this data, on average they added 11% (delayed for family reasons) to the total services reported as timely. States reported a range from zero to 43% of all children with delays due to family circumstances. As shown in Table 1, delays for family reasons accounted for a significant number of children. Yet only a few States mentioned the need to critically examine these numbers to assure the delays were coded appropriately or if program supports could shorten the timelines for these families.

Table 1: Percent Attributable to Family Circumstances



DEFINING TIMELY SERVICES

Of the 56 States and jurisdictions in the analysis, most States defined timeliness of services to be within 30 days from parent consent. Over the past two years, three States with shorter timeframes changed their definition. For States whose requirements were shorter than 30 days, four out of five showed progress, although none of the programs were able to provide services to more than 85% of children in a timely manner. Several States with stricter definitions are considering the impact of their definition on the ability of the State to reach the 100% target for this indicator.

Table 2: Number of States and Definition of Timeliness

Definition	Number of States
30 days	33
Less than 30 days	5
More than 30 days	3
Date specified on IFSP	8
Option of either IFSP specified or a number of days from the IFSP initiation date	7

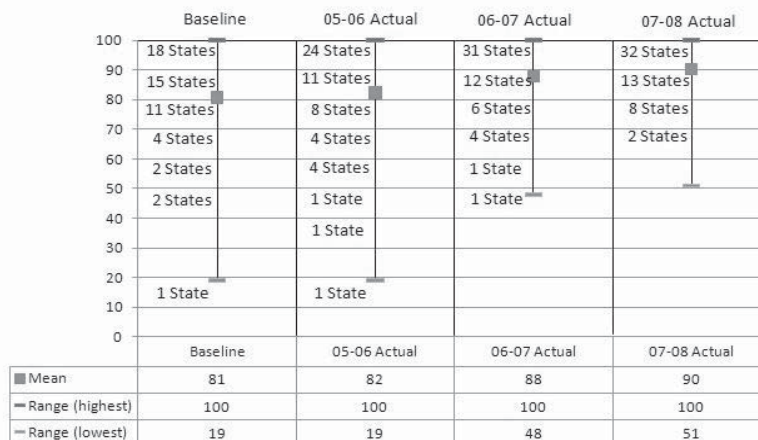
COMPARISON OF BASELINE AND PERFORMANCE OVER TIME

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE

As reported in their FFY 07 APR reports, six States provided timely services to 100% of infants and toddlers with IFSPs compared to three States at baseline. The number of States meeting the requirement for at least 90% of children has nearly doubled (from 18 to 32) since FY 2004. Improvement from FFY 06-07 to FFY 07-08 was minimal, however the mean has risen nearly 10 percentage points over the four years of reports on this indicator.

Table 3 shows the distribution of baseline and actual performance for States reporting baseline and FFY 07 data for Indicator #1. Baseline data is available for all but three States and actual data for FY 2007 is available for all but one State.

Table 3: Comparison of Baseline, Actual 05-06, Actual 06-07, Actual 07-08

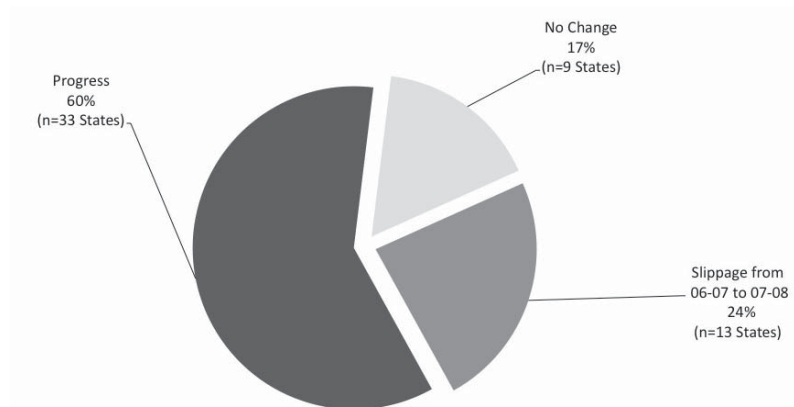


PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Summarizing progress made since the last year, it is interesting to note that of the nine States that reflected no change, all had achieved between 95% and 100% compliance with this indicator. Merely considering States that increased percentages as progressing does not fully explain how the country is doing with timely services. For example, compare a “progress” State that gained 10 percentage points to achieve 89% to a “no change” State that maintained 100% over one year. If the 17% of States that maintained substantial compliance were also coded as “progress”, then 76% of States are making progress towards full compliance or maintaining substantial compliance with timely service provision.

For the States that showed slippage in their performance, the mean slippage was 7.65 percentage points with a range of 1 point to 30 points. In this report States that gained or dropped less than one percentage point were counted in the no change category. One State did not provide valid and reliable data for FY 2007 and was not included in the following summary of progress.

Figure 1: Progress/Slippage from FFY 06-07 to 07-08



Explanation of Progress

States have been making steady progress in this indicator, from 33% of States at baseline to 80% of States in FY 2007 reporting timely services for at least 90% of children with IFSPs. Forty-five of 56 States provided services to at least 80% of all children in a timely manner.

States attributed progress in timely services to specific actions taken in the State. Many States continued to provide clarification on criteria for timeliness of services. For example, States indicated that there were inconsistencies in the way providers were interpreting the definition of timely services. One State discovered that programs began counting after the projected date listed in the IFSP instead of beginning the count from the date that parent consent was provided. To achieve more clarity, States revised procedures/ policy documents and sent the information to the field in order to eliminate inconsistent practices.

In addition, there are continued efforts to modify data collection systems to ensure collection of appropriate data. States indicated that increased scrutiny in monitoring this indicator has led to greater understanding and compliance with timely services. States were able to help programs identify the reasons for the delays and to develop strategies to improve timelines.

Training and technical assistance aimed at programs needing additional supports, and focusing on efforts to recruit more providers and/or staff also led to progress in meeting the criteria for timely services. For long term strategies refer to the section on Improvement Activities.

Explanation of Slippage

States that did not meet the 100% target for timely services were asked to account for the untimely receipt of services to infants and toddlers (e.g. the system causes for delay and the delays were due to exceptional family circumstances, documented in the child's record). Most States provided information about why services to children were not provided in a timely manner.

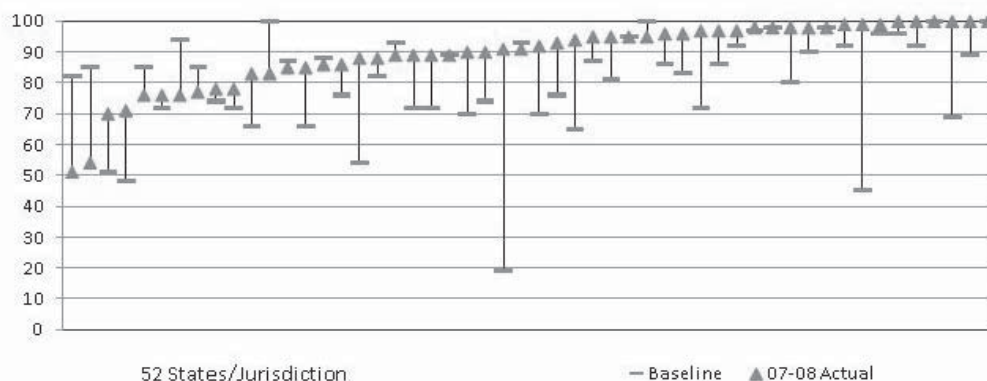
The most frequently cited reason for slippage or lack of progress in providing services in a timely manner continued to be personnel shortages. More than twenty States indicated that they were not able to provide services to children and families in a timely manner because of personnel shortages, staff turnover and a lack of therapists in rural areas of the State. Some States reported that providers were compelled to halt or suspend receipt of referrals because they did not have the capacity to serve additional children.

Budget deficits in some States resulted in hiring freezes. For example, one State experienced staff vacancies as large as 19 FTE during the year. Additional funding issues were related to provider rates that are not competitive for the market and delays in billing and insurance authorization. The lack of adequate funds combined with increases in the number of children in early intervention created stress on the system making it difficult to continue to meet timely services deadlines. States also reported that they were struggling to find ways of paying for services in natural environments.

A few States (9) still reported issues with inadequate data. These included instances where there was either no documentation in a child's record regarding the cause of delay and/or the actual start date, or their data system was unable to capture the causes for delay.

Although many States did not reach the required 100% compliance target, the trajectory from baseline to performance reported in FY 2007 shows sustained progress in meeting the target for timely services.

Figure 2: Trajectory from Baseline to Actual Performance in FFY 07-08



ACTIONS TAKEN BY STATES DETERMINED TO NEED ASSISTANCE FOR TWO YEARS (NA2)

IDEA identifies specific technical assistance or enforcement actions that the Secretary must take under specific circumstances that are aligned with each of the determinations with the exception of "Meets Requirements". If a State "needs assistance" for two consecutive years, the Department must take one or more enforcement actions including requiring the State to receive technical assistance, designating the State as a high-risk grantee, or directing the use of State set-aside funds to the area(s) where the State needs assistance.

Twelve States were determined to be in Needs Assistance for two consecutive years based on noncompliance with timely services. States receiving such designation were required to report in the FY 2007-08 APR the specific actions taken to address compliance with this indicator. All States reported taking multiple actions to address compliance including the following (in decreasing order):

- Half of the NA-2 States indicated that they received direct technical assistance and consultation from one or more of the OSEP TA centers (NECTAC, SERRC, WRRRC, MSRRC, and DAC)
- An equal number stated that they accessed products and materials on the TA centers' websites including the APR calendar resources and APR analysis documents
- States provided training and technical assistance to early intervention personnel
- States attended professional development opportunities and national conferences, namely National Accountability Conference, the OSEP National Early Childhood Conference, and participated in OSEP conference calls
- States improved data systems, increasing monitoring, data tracking, and reporting requirements and requiring corrective action

- States also reported using TA to address the following:
 - Policy clarification
 - Billing and funding strategies
 - Changed configuration of staff
 - Explored service provision models

USE OF OSEP TA CENTERS

NECTAC provided information to all States. Most States sent representatives to national conferences, such as the OSEP National Early Childhood Conference, the Annual Inclusion Institute and the ECO Conference. Additionally, NECTAC staff co-planned and co-presented at RRC regional meetings.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

States reported focused activity in identifying and correcting noncompliance in order to improve the provision of services in a timely manner. This scrutiny has enabled States to report verification of correction within one year or if longer than a year, subsequent correction, resulting in slow but steady progress. Improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 1 were reviewed in order to determine the types of improvement activities used by States.

- A. Technical assistance, training, or professional development related to the importance of timely provision of service, communicating new or existing definitions of timely services and changes to the State data system. Ongoing technical assistance was provided in response to specific needs identified through local monitoring with some States reporting monthly instructional meetings, and training on training for service coordinators. States also contracted with national experts to provide training on providing services in natural environment, on using a primary service provider method or transdisciplinary teaming.
- B. Improve systems administration and monitoring: States employed a more rigorous program of monitoring during the year to include requiring either corrective action plans or improvement plans for programs not in compliance with the State's definition of timely services. States assisted local programs to examine the causes for delays and developed strategies to eliminate barriers to timely services. Some States adopted new certification and competencies and engaged program directors more actively in program review. For continued noncompliance, sanctions were applied.
- C. Activities related to accurate and improved data collection and reporting continued for many States. States modified data systems, tools, and procedures to better identify local compliance and to assist programs in collecting data and in tracking. Activities addressed documentation of reasons for delays and capturing the start dates of all services. State staff conducted data verification activities, employed data specialists, put together work groups to study, analyze data, and develop recommendations and plans to improve data collection.

- D. Increase/Adjust FTE. Personnel shortages were cited frequently as a reason for delay in providing services in a timely manner. States reported studying and analyzing of the shortages and personnel needs. There were a number of efforts to recruit and retain providers. Some States were able to get funds to hire additional providers (especially therapists), contract with new vendors, and increase provider rates to become more competitive. Plans to provide incentives and to reduce cumbersome procedures were developed. States continued to explore models that involve using staff differently, such as primary service provider, coaching, consultation, or teaming.

CONCLUSION

States that made the most progress in providing services in a timely manner employed multiple strategies to improve compliance. When issues were identified, they were systematically addressed through corrective action plans. Local programs received regular visits and were offered technical assistance and support. In addition, States shifted priorities and identified additional financial resources. States that consistently identified barriers and addressed them systematically were able to make progress.

INDICATOR 2: SETTINGS

Completed by NECTAC

INTRODUCTION

The text of Part C Indicator 2 reads as follows: “percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.” This summary of Part C Indicator 2 is based on a review of Annual Performance Reports (APR) for FY 2007-08 of 56 States. For the purposes of this report, the term “State” is used for both States and territories.

Indicator 2 documents state performance regarding the extent to which early intervention services for eligible children are being provided in “natural environments.” OSEP instructed States to use the 618 settings data tables as their data source for calculations of performance. Several States included data from additional sources, such as local program data, parent surveys, chart reviews and quarterly monitoring data.

For this analysis, all data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

STATE CRITERIA FOR DEFINING NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS (FY 2007-08)

Data Sources

The 618 data tables used for this collection period were revised in 2006. There are now three reporting categories, a reduction from the previously required eight categories. The revised categories are now “home”, “community-based”, and “other”. In the revised 618 tables, “home” and “community-based” are the settings that correspond with children served in the “natural environment”. Instructions for the revised tables now use the “other” category to code settings such as provider locations, hospitals, residential schools, and programs for children with delays or developmental disabilities as the “non-natural environments”. Previously “other” was used to code many natural environment settings in the community such as libraries, recreation centers, gyms, etc. The instructions for this year’s APR were not yet revised and therefore did not match the settings descriptions from the 618 data tables. The APR instructions for this reporting period asked for “Percent of Infants and Toddlers with IFSP’s who primarily received early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.”

COMPARISON OF SERVICES IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS FY 2005, 2006 AND 2007:

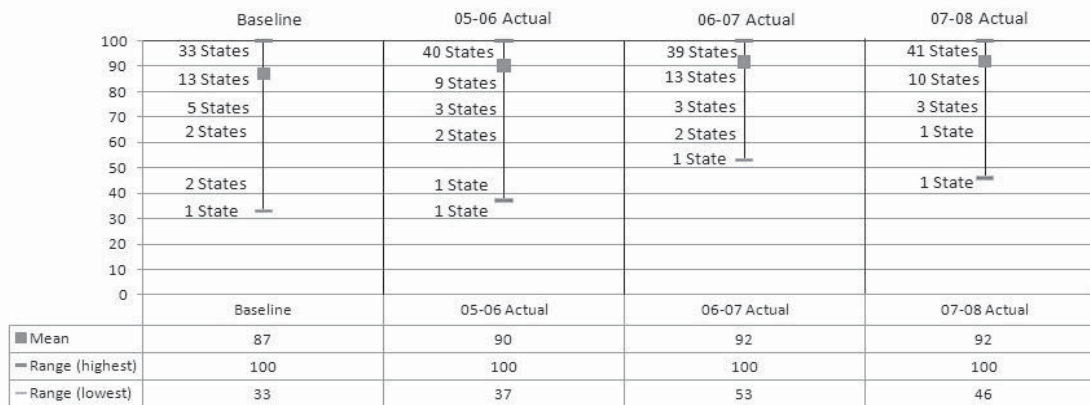
For FY 2007-08 reporting period 31 States were at or above 95% of services being provided in home or community settings—the natural environment. Six States reported services in the natural environment between 90% and 94%. Seven States reported services in the natural environment between 85% and 89%. While there are a large number of States (37) reporting that over 90% of services are provided in the natural environment, eight States fell at or below 84% with the lowest two States reporting actual data at 63% and 46% respectively.

Table 1 compares the three reporting years of actual data and the number of States for each percentage category.

Table 1: 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 Actual Data

Percentage of services in natural environments	2005-06 Number of States in each percentile distribution	2006-07 Number of States in each percentile distribution	2007-08 Number of States in each percentile distribution
98% to 100%	17	22	26
95% to 97%	13	8	5
90% to 94%	8	7	6
85% to 89%	6	10	7
80% to 84%	3	1	3
70% to 79%	4	3	3
60% to 69%	2	2	1
45% to 59%	1	1	1

Figure 1: Comparison of Baseline, 05-06, 06-07 and 07-08 Actual Data



When comparing the trend data from baseline through actual data for each reporting year, there is little significant change in range or mean. The mean of actual performance (FY 2005) was 90%. The mean of actual performance for FY 2006 was 92%. The mean of actual performance for this reporting period is again 92%. This appears to be due to the high number of States whose original baseline was above 90% and continue to remain within the 90–100% range. There has been some movement in the bottom range States, one State has fallen to 43% and a second State is at 63%.

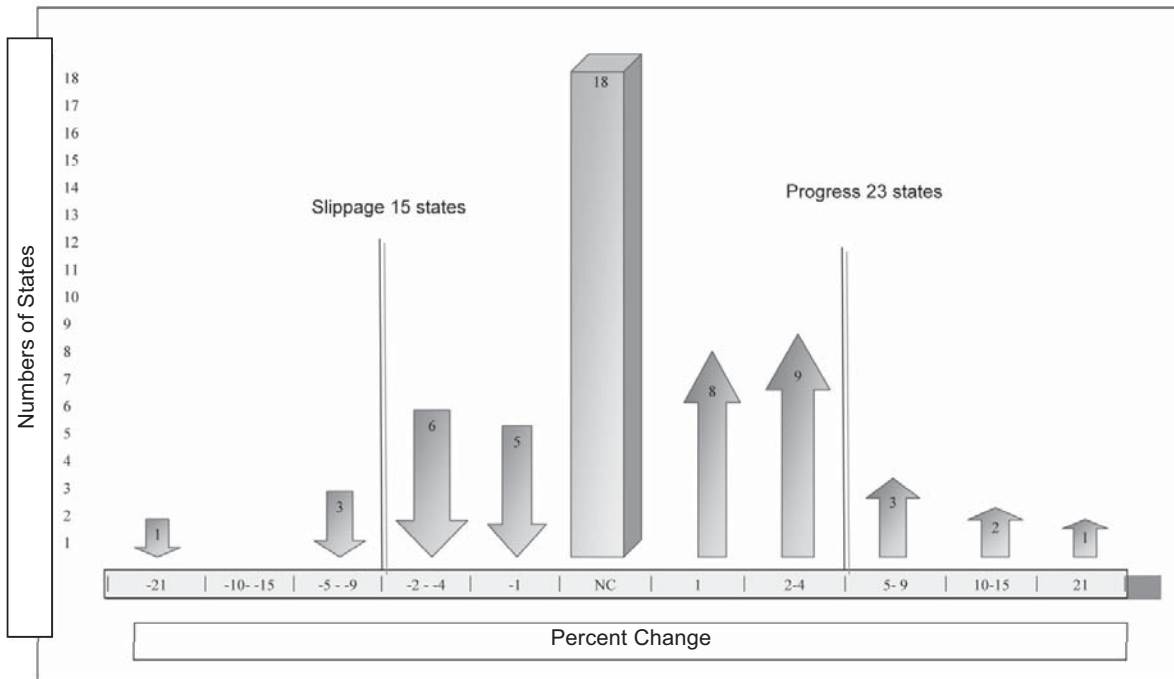
As previously Stated, Indicator 2 is a performance indicator. States individualize services to meet the specific needs of each child. There is NOT an expectation that 100 % of all

services must be provided in the natural environment. There will be some variation each year depending on the needs of eligible children of each State. However, two States reported in FY 2007-08 that all children are received services in home or community settings.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Figure 2 below represents progress and slippage of the 56 States reporting on actual performance for FY 2007-08 compared to FY 2006-07 actual performance.

Figure 2: 2007-08 Progress/Slippage Data: Number of Percentage Points



Explanation of Progress

For this analysis progress is defined as a one, or more, whole percentage point increase from the FY 2006-07 actual percentages of children served in the natural environment. Twenty-three States demonstrated progress in FY 2007-08. Of the 23 States, eight States made progress of 1%, nine States made progress of 2–4%, three States made progress of 5–9%, two States made progress of 10–15%, and one State reported a 21% increase from FY 2006-07.

Table 2: Six States Experiencing the Most Significant Progress in 2007-08

Baseline	06-07 Actual	07-08 Actual	Progress in 07-08
44	60	81	+21
45	62	74	+12
71	78	88	+10
92	93	99	+7
91	90	95	+6
62	85	90	+5

Of the six States making the most progress for this reporting period, three States moved from very low baselines to reporting in the 80th and 90th percentiles. The State showing the most progress did not report an explanation for this progress and did not specifically list any improvement activities. However, the State named several of the OSEP funded TA centers and one University as providing assistance during this year.

The other five States showing the most progress mentioned reasons for their progress. The reasons included better data collection and training of the new categories, requirements that programs that did not meet the State's target analyze reasons and create corrective action plans, rate increases for providers, individualized TA to local programs, and training for service coordinators and direct service providers.

All six of these States reported on the same improvement activities as the previous year. This may indicate that progress takes time when activities are working.

The other 17 States that demonstrated progress between one and four percentage points, reported factors that contributed to their progress. These factors included training and technical assistance provided to program providers on various aspects of serving young children and families in home and other community settings, improved data collection, clarification of reporting categories, or training for data operators.

Many States described training materials the State had developed and implemented. Progress was also attributed to expansion of community partners and settings through memorandums of agreements, trainings, and collaborative activities. Six States specifically mentioned working with "Expanding Opportunities" or "SpecialQuest" teams in their explanation of progress. Two States mentioned giving financial incentives to local programs that reached or exceeded the State target as well as penalizing those that did not.

Explanation of Slippage

Slippage, for this reporting period is defined as a one percentage point, or greater, negative change from FY 2006-07 actual percentages of children served in the natural environment. There were 15 States with slippage. Five of the 15 States had a 1% decline but remained in the overall range of 95–100% of services provided in the natural environments. Six States reported slippage at, or greater, 2–4%. Of these States, three reported slippage greater than 7%. One State reported slippage at 21%.

Table 3: Six States Experiencing the Most Slippage in FY 2007-08

Baseline	06-07 Actual data	07-08 Actual data	Slippage
86	84	63	-21
62	53	46	-7
75	78	71	-7
90	96	89	-7
96	86	82	-4
76	88	84	-4

Six States reported the most slippage and all but one fell below their baselines. The State with the lowest percent of children served in natural environments for FY 2006-07 fell below that number (53%), and is also the lowest reporting State for 2007-08. Three States with the lowest percentages of children served in natural environments and experiencing the most slippage reported data coding and reporting problems in previous years. While their numbers were lower, they report that the FY 2007-08 data is more accurate. One of the three States reported systemic improvement activities aimed at enhancing the way services are provided. This State also reported using assistance from regional and national TA centers. The other two States experiencing the most slippage listed general training and technical assistance activities aimed at providers and data personnel as they had done in the previous years.

No Change

Eighteen States reported no change from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08. Fifteen of the 18 States remained at 97% to 100% of the children served in natural environments. All States in this category reported meeting their target for 2007-08.

IDENTIFIED ISSUES

Fourteen States identified one or more specific issue(s) in implementing services in natural environments. Personnel issues, including shortages among the therapy providers were the most frequently mentioned and were reported by 13 of the 14 States. Financial issues were mentioned by eight of the 14 States. Personnel shortages and financial concerns appear to be a national trend that crosses most indicators. Frequently mentioned issues are reported in Table 4.

Table 4: Issues Identified by Type 07-08

Issues Identified by Type in Order of Frequency Reported	Number of States Reporting
Personnel (therapy shortages, turnover,/difficulty in recruitment, contracts with private providers, unwillingness to work on teams)	13
Fiscal (increasing costs, price of gas, State fiscal problems, inadequate reimbursement rate)	8
Inadequate or incorrect data	6
Increasing numbers of children	3
Capacity/Inclusion Opportunities	3

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Improvement activities described for FY 2007-08 addressed many of the issues identified in the FY 2006-07 report. Many of the improvement activities listed crossed indicators C-1 (timely services) and C-7 (45-day timeline). Generally, States are engaged in collecting the “right” data for monitoring compliance and performance. States are providing training and TA to service coordinators and services providers. The activities focus on enhancing or redesigning their system of services to support best practices, improve performance, compliance and correction of identified non-compliance. Many of these broadly described activities are “on-going” in nature indicating that systemic change is a long-term process. The specific activities listed in Table 5 are activities completed or are on-going in 2007-08. Thirty States reported the same activities as in FY 2006-07. New this year were 10 States with activities related to reimbursement rate increases, increased Medicaid rate structures and financial incentives provided to contracted private therapy providers. Three States reported while the rate increases were approved, there were not sufficient State funds to implement the new higher rates.

No State was required to report on specific TA used and its impact on improving results for this performance indicator. Several States did include this information and one State reported on a “required OSEP response” from their determination letter. No State discussed activities aimed at the evaluation of on-going improvement activities.

Table 5: Improvement Activities

Improvement Activities by Type and Frequency Mentioned	Number of States
Provide TA/Training and Professional Development (D)	44
Improved Monitoring (B)	36
Improved Data Collection and Reporting (A)	25
Program Development (F) (fiscal incentives)	18
Improve Collaboration/Coordination(G)	17
Clarify or Develop Policies and Procedures(E)	11

MOST FREQUENT CATEGORIES OF IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

Training and Technical Assistance Activities (Improvement Activity Code D)

Forty-four States conducted 67 improvement activities related to training, technical assistance and professional development. Twenty-one States mentioned specific training materials they had developed and used in the State to enhance the provision of services in natural environments. These materials included position statements, brochures and orientation “modules” required for all service providers working in the system. Content included accurate reporting of the settings categories, appropriate IFSP justifications and writing functional outcomes. Other material content was more specific to the way services were to be provided. Topics included working with families, routine-based interviewing, providing services through routine-based interventions, working with team

members and philosophical and evidenced-based reasons for providing services in home and community settings. Two States provided intensive training and mentoring to community programs working with children with social and emotional problems and with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Target audiences for training and TA activities included service coordinators, families, service providers, early care and education workers, and program administrators.

In-State training and TA included conference presentations, workshops, web-based self-paced instruction modules, required training hours for newly hired service providers, site visits, and TA to targeted programs experiencing difficulties. Fifteen States listed developing or revising training materials regarding services in natural environments, IFSP functional goal writing, writing justification statements, or teaming practices.

Twelve States contracted with outside national consultants to provide training or to work State-wide on system improvements. Consultants have been working closely with States to develop or improve their service delivery system models. Eighteen States named a “model” or “method” promoted in their State. These models included: Team Based Service Delivery, Primary Service Provider, Primary Coach Model, and Transdisciplinary Teaming (with consultation or with coaching), Routine Based Interventions, Everyday Routines Activities and Places, and Everyday Routines, Relationship, Activities, Places and People.

Improved Monitoring, Data Collection and Reporting Activities (Improvement Activity Codes A and B)

Thirty-seven States engaged in activities to ensure collection of accurate data and made necessary revisions for the collection of revised 618 data categories.

Thirty-seven States noted that monitoring and data collection systems collect information on appropriate justification statements on the IFSP’s when services are not to be provided in natural environments. While States were not required to report monitoring activities under this indicator, 23 States discussed monitoring activities and the correction of non-compliance when found.

Specific examples of improvement activities included: revising data tables fields, creating web-based data systems, revising justification statements on IFSPs, instituting and conducting chart reviews, posting program profiles on State web sites, instituting corrective action plans, offering financial incentives to regions or programs that reached or exceeded State targets, discontinuing contracts with agencies that continue to fall below the State baseline, using data to rank counties/regions, and using data to target TA needs.

Improved Collaboration and Coordination (Improvement Activity code G)

Collaboration and coordination activities ranged from Part C staff participating in state-wide committees working to improve services for all children, to sharing and funding joint training opportunities for local child care providers to feel successful in working with young children with disabilities in their programs. State partners listed were Child

Welfare, State Councils on Developmental Disabilities, Offices of Early Learning (Department of Education), Offices of Child Care, Head Start, Early Head Start and local child care programs. States cited the “Expanding Opportunities” and “SpecialQuest” initiatives working in their States as important partners in bringing State teams together to focus on building more community options for young children with disabilities.

Program Development (Improvement Activity code F)

Fifteen States named multiple improvement activities in this category. Most frequently mentioned were rate increases and financial incentives offered to programs and contracted staff willing to serve children in natural environments. Higher rates were established to help with the rising cost of gasoline and increased time involved in participation on transdisciplinary teams. Two States were successful in increasing Medicaid rates and reimbursing co-visits by two professionals sharing a home visit. Other activities included grants or extra funds to programs willing to implement service delivery models such as a transdisciplinary teaming or primary provider model. Two States passed legislative rate increase. However, they could not implement the increased rates due to State budget shortfalls.

Examples of Other Specific Improvement Activities

Several States identified additional improvement activities specific to improving the provision of services in natural environments:

- Providing funding to local child care programs to increase staff child ratios and hire inclusion specialist.
- Providing tuition support to children to attend community care.
- Developing and distributing information packets to all State physicians regarding the importance of early intervention and the philosophy of services to be provided in natural environments.
- Withholding fiscal reimbursements to programs not compliant with State targets.
- Conducting pre-service contacts with IHE classes for therapy providers to introduce the concept of early intervention services in natural environments.
- Expanding parent training materials and activities to include writing IFSP’s with functional goals and outcomes and service provision by a primary provider.
- Providing mini-grants to support inclusive “Stay and Play” groups in three counties.
- Providing all parents with a community directory of resources and “natural” opportunities and strategies for families to participate in community activities.

USE OF OSEP TA CENTERS

OSEP funded TA and training centers and projects specifically mentioned included the Community of Practice-Family Centered Services in Natural Environments, SERRC, MSRRC, WRRRC, NECTAC and DAC. Most States were represented at the OSEP National Early Childhood Conference in December 2008. Eleven States specifically named NECTAC as providing assistance with this indicator. Five States have developed Expanding Opportunity Work Plans for improving inclusive opportunities for young children. NECTAC staff were involved in each of these plans and subsequent State TA. Two States have developed a NECTAC long-term system change plan specifically targeted to services in natural environments.

INDICATOR 3: INFANT & TODDLER OUTCOMES

Completed by ECO

INTRODUCTION

The text of Part C Indicator 3 reads: “Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved: a) Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships); b) Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication); and c) Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.”

This summary is based on information reported by 56 States and jurisdictions in their February 2009 revised State Performance Plans (SPPs) and/or Annual Performance Reports (APRs). Only information specifically reported in the SPPs/APRs was included in the analysis. Therefore, it is possible that a State or jurisdiction may be conducting an activity or using a data source or assessment that is not included in this summary. In some cases States did not repeat some of the details about their approach that they reported in last year’s SPP/APR. In those cases, we assumed the information from last year’s report was still accurate. States and jurisdictions will be called ‘States’ for the remainder of this report.

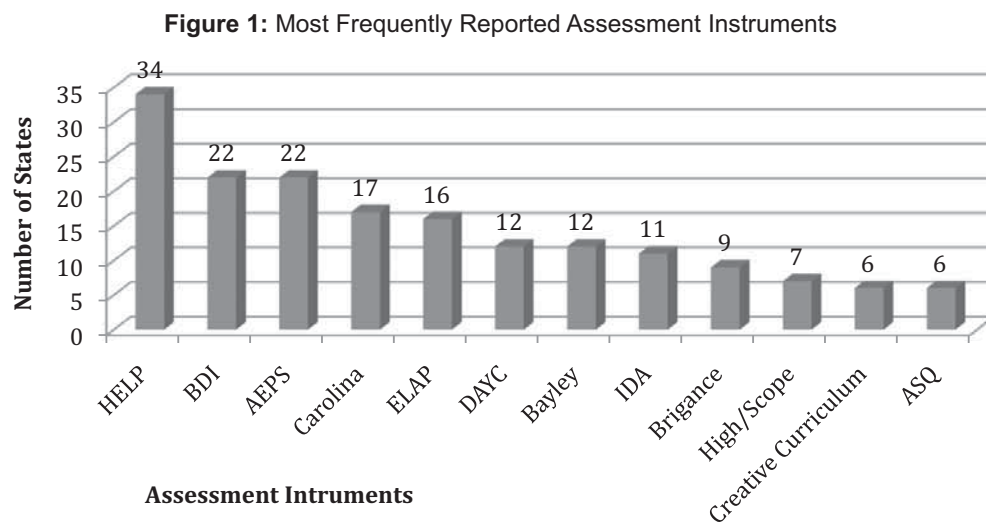
MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

States provided a description of the approach they are taking to gather data for measuring child outcomes. Of the 56 States reporting, 41 (73%) are using the ECO Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF). One of those States reported they are planning to switch to using the publishers’ online analysis in the future, when their system has been fully established. Seven States (13%) are using one assessment tool statewide. Three States (5%) are using publishers’ online analysis and reporting systems. One of those States reported they are planning to switch to the COSF. Finally, five States (9%) have developed other approaches to measuring child outcomes: a chart by chart physical extraction by the lead agency to compare the ratio of functional age to chronological age at entrance and exit; a State-developed platform that translates scores from four approved assessment tools to the State ELGs/ELs and OSEP categories; a State developed methodology calculating percent delay based on assessment scores entered into a database by providers; a State developed process for calculating developmental age compared to chronological age; and a State developed summary tool. One State that has been collecting data with a State developed process is exploring other approach options for the future.

Table 1: Types of Approaches to Measuring Child Outcomes (N=56)

Type of Approach	Current	Future
7-point COSF	41 (73%)	41 (73%)
One statewide tool	7 (13%)	7 (13%)
Publishers’ online analysis	3 (5%)	3 (5%)
Other	5 (9%)	5 (9%)

Most States listed formal assessment instruments that are used as part of their approach to measuring child outcomes. The most commonly reported assessment tools were: Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP), Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI) or Battelle Developmental Inventory, Second Edition (BDI-2), Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation System (AEPS), Carolina Curriculum, Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP), Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC), Infant-Toddler Developmental Assessment (IDA), Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development, Brigance Inventory of Early Development, High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR), Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum, and the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ). In comparison to last year, more States named the formal assessment tools that are part of their system. However, the most frequently reported tools remained the same. See the chart below for most frequently reported assessment instruments.



Two thirds of all States (66%), an increase from last year's 59%, reported they have a list of approved tools from which programs must select. By definition, States using one statewide tool provided only one formal assessment option. Those States reported using the BDI or BDI-2, AEPS, or their own State developed tool. States using the publishers' online system reported using one or more of these formal assessments: Ounce, High Scope, Creative Curriculum, or AEPS. Of the 41 States using the COSF, 25 States (61%) reported having a list of approved tools with the most commonly mentioned assessments being the HELP, BDI or BDI-2, Carolina Curriculum, ELAP, IDA and AEPS.

In addition to formal assessment instruments, many States reported other key data sources in the child outcomes measurement process, including parent/family input (54%), professional observation (52%), and clinical opinion (18%). For States using one statewide tool, publishers' online, or other formal assessments, it is important to note that some of the instruments include parent input, professional observation, and/or clinical opinion as part of the assessment.

POPULATION INCLUDED

Most States (47) are implementing their outcomes measurement systems statewide, compared to only 40 States at this time last year. Four States reported they are still completing their phase-in process and another five have opted to use a sampling plan.

At least seven States have set policies related to the minimum age a child must be before entry data is collected, delaying the entry data collection until the child reaches 4–6 months of age.

DEFINITIONS OF NEAR ENTRY AND NEAR EXIT

State definitions of ‘near entry’ and ‘near exit’ data collection were similar to those reported last year. Of the 56 States reporting, 48 (86%) provided a State definition of ‘near entry.’ Definitions remained stable from the previous year’s data and, as noted last year, varied in terms of timelines starting from different points: intake, referral, eligibility, assessment, initial IFSP, services, or enrollment (e.g. within 45 days of referral, within 30 days of eligibility, at initial assessment, as part of intake, prior to initial IFSP, within 45 days of initial IFSP, within 6 weeks of entry, or within 60 days of beginning services). The most common reference point was relative to the initial IFSP, though there was still much variation. The earliest point or the nearest to entry defined by a State was ‘as part of intake’ and ‘with eligibility determination.’ The latest point defined by a State was within 6 months of enrollment.

Of the 56 States reporting, 38 (68%) provided a State definition of ‘near exit.’ Definitions of ‘near exit’ varied as well, with some States’ definitions in reference to a particular event (e.g. at the exit conference, at evaluation closest to exit) while other States’ definitions were within a certain number of days or months from exit or the end of Part C services (e.g. within 60 days of exit or within 30 days of last service date).

CRITERIA FOR COMPARABLE TO SAME AGE PEERS

As noted last year, the criteria States set for functioning at the level of “same age peers” depended upon measurement approach. For States using the COSF process, a rating of 6–7 on the 7-point rating scale indicated that a child’s functioning met age expectations. Many States reported using the ECO COSF Calculator to translate data from the 7-point scale to the five reporting categories. States using one tool statewide or publishers’ online assessments applied developer or publisher-determined standard scores, developmental quotients, or age-based benchmarks and cut-off scores. States using multiple online systems were working with publishers to determine cut-off scores for age expectations, as well as for scores corresponding to each of the five progress categories.

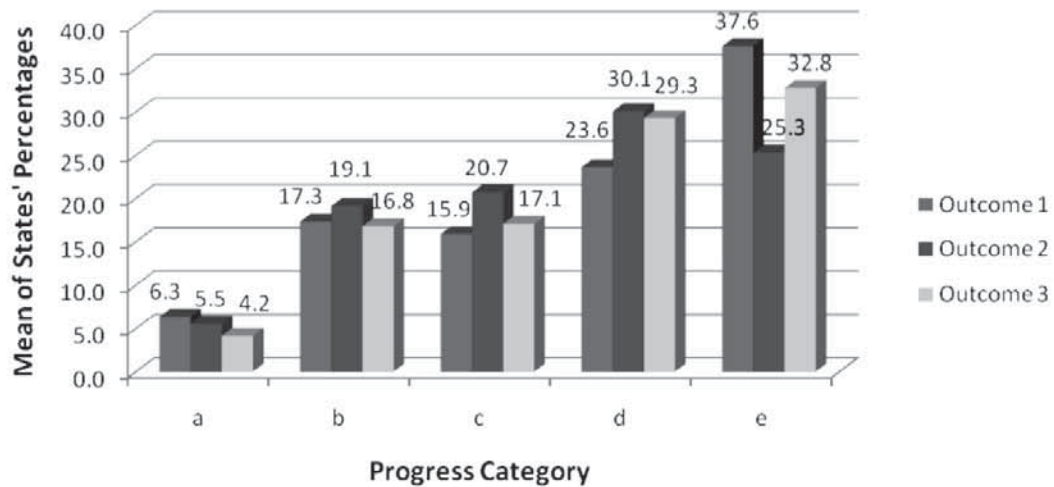
PROGRESS DATA FOR 2006-2007

All 56 States and jurisdictions provided progress data for children exiting in the reporting period. The number of children included in State data ranged from five to 6,452 children. Nearly half of States (45%) reported progress data for at least 100 but not more than 500 children. One third (32%) reported progress data for 500 or more children. Very few States (half as many as last year) still have less than 100 children in their data. Explanations about the small number of children related primarily to the phase-in process and/or the fact that many children for whom entry data were collected have not exited the program yet. The table below summarizes the numbers of children included in progress data reported across States:

Total Number of Children States Included in Progress Data
Range = 5–6452
<10 = 2
10–99 = 11
100–499 = 25
500–999 = 6
1000–1999 = 9
2000+ = 3
<i>Note: N's for all 3 outcomes did not always match</i>

Analysis of the progress data reported this year (presented in the chart below) is based on the percentages that States reported in each of the five progress categories for each of the three outcome areas. For all the progress categories, there was a wide range of percentages reported by States. At this time, data are not necessarily representative of the children served as States are still in the early stages of implementing their outcomes measurement systems. This year's analysis has been designed using the State as the unit of analysis to provide a general view of the data patterns and allow a State to compare itself to the national average. In the future, when State systems have representative data and reliability and validity assurances are in place, the child will be the unit of analysis for a national report on the progress of children in the Part C program.

Figure 2: Average Percentage of Children in Each Progress Category, by Outcome (N=56 states)



The overall patterns for this year’s data are very similar to last year’s patterns. By far the lowest percentages are in category “a” and percentages generally increase in categories “b” through “e.” Outcome 2 had a slightly different pattern where percentages in category “d” are higher than category “e.”

Progress Category “a”: Percentage of children who did not improve functioning

For progress category “a”, the average of State percentages was between 4.2% and 6.3%, with outcome 1 slightly higher than outcome 2 which in turn was just slightly higher than outcome 3. The percentage of children in category “a” varied widely across States. Compared to last year, there was a slight decrease in overall means for category “a” in all three outcome areas. A number of States reported their previously high percentages in category “a” were reduced after additional training to local programs.

Progress Category “b”: percentage of children who made progress but not sufficient to reach a level nearer to their same age peers

The average of State percentages of children in category “b” was about three times those in “a”, with a range of 16.8% to 19.1% across the three outcome areas. Similar to last year’s data, the average for outcome 2 was slightly higher than for outcomes 1 and 3.

Progress Category “c”: Percentage of children who made progress sufficient to reach a level nearer to their same age peers

The average of State percentages of children in category “c” was very similar to “b”, and ranged from 15.9% to 20.7% across the three outcome areas. Like last year, the average for Outcome 2 was higher than that for outcomes 1 and 3—on average, States reported more children ‘closing the gap’ for outcome 2 than outcomes 1 and 3.

Progress Category “d”: Percentage of children who made progress sufficient to reach a level comparable to their same age peers

The average of State percentages for category “d” was significantly higher than “c” (which was true last year as well) and ranged from 23.6% to 30.1% across the three outcome areas. The average for Outcome 2 was notably higher than that for outcomes 1 and 3—on average, States reported more children ‘closed the gap’ for outcomes 2 and 3 than for outcome 1.

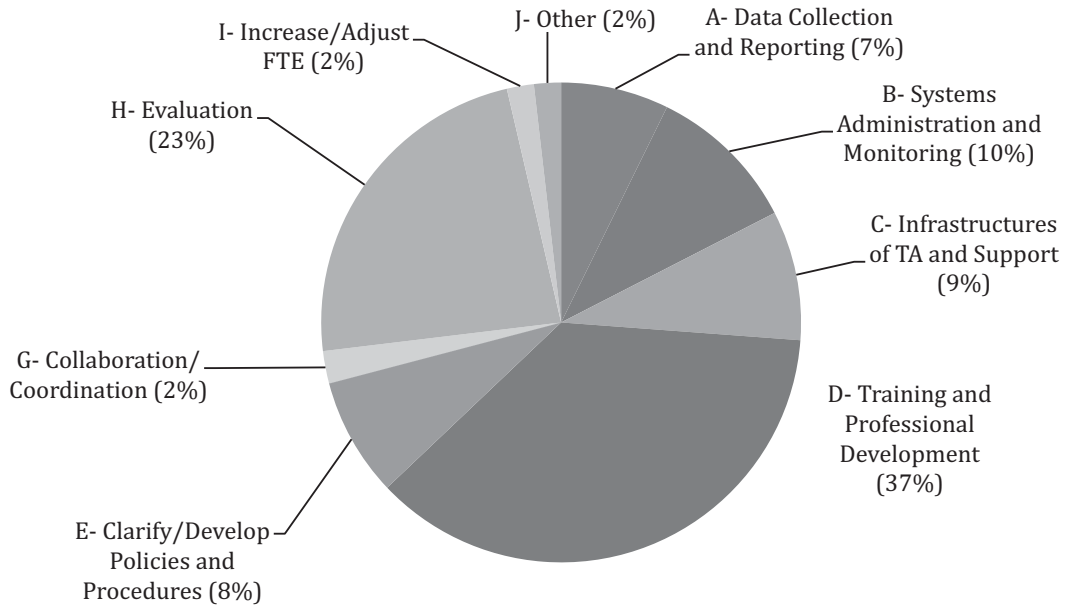
Progress Category “e”: Percentage of children who maintained a level comparable to their same age peers

The average of State percentages for category “e” varied widely, with the average percentage of outcome 2 being 25.3% while outcomes 1 and 3 were considerably higher at 37.6% and 32.8% respectively. This pattern was similar last year. Across the outcomes, States reported that a lower percentage of children maintained age appropriate functioning in outcome 2. A few States commented on their high percentages in category “e” and reported they are investigating possible explanations. Issues States reported included: concerns about the algorithm translating online assessment data to the OSEP categories, recognition that this year’s data disproportionately included children who entered at an older age, the fact that some children maintained in one or two outcome areas but not all three, and the idea that a large number of children receiving only speech services may perform at age expectations when they enter the program in one or more outcome areas.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The following analysis focuses on current and future improvement activities, rather than those that had already occurred for this indicator. In the 56 State APRs/ revised SPPs submitted February 2009, 53 States reported 275 different improvement activities for Indicator 3. A review of improvement activities showed that more than half of all improvement activities related to one of two categories: providing training and professional support (37% of all activities), and evaluation (23% of all activities). Other categories included: improving infrastructure of TA and support (9%), clarifying or developing policies and procedures (8%), improving data collection and reporting (7%), and improving systems administration and monitoring (10%). A few also reported activities related to collaboration/coordination (2%), increasing or adjusting FTE (2%), or other types of activities (2%). Similar to last year’s report, the most common improvement activities related to providing training and professional support and to conducting evaluation. This year, States reported an increased number of activities related to evaluation and monitoring the outcomes measurement systems.

Figure 3: Types of Improvement Activities Reported By States



Analysis of the same data by State (see chart below) showed that nearly all States reported improvement activities related to providing training and professional development (94%), and more than half reported activities related to evaluation (66%). Many States reported improvement activities related to improving infrastructure of TA and support (34%), clarifying and developing policies and procedures (42%), improving data collection and reporting (30%), and improving systems administration and monitoring (34%).

Improvement Activity Category	# IAs	# States
A. Improved data collection and reporting	20	16
B. Improved systems administration and monitoring	28	18
C. Improved infrastructure of TA and support	24	18
D. Provide training and professional development	101	50
E. Clarify/develop policies and procedures	22	22
F. Program development	0	1
G. Collaboration/coordination	6	6
H. Evaluation	64	35
I. Increase/adjust FTE	5	7
J. Other	5	5

Within the category of data collection and reporting, some of the key subcategories related to:

- Developing or revising a data system to house or analyze child outcomes data
- Training and support on data entry or otherwise on the use of the data system
- Developing a web-based data collection system for capturing child outcomes data

Within the categories of systems administration and monitoring, and some of the key subcategories related to:

- Developing and implementing plans to ensure the completeness and accuracy of child outcomes data
- Conducting data reviews (monthly, quarterly, annually, semi-annually, etc.) or supporting local programs in conducting data reviews
- Revising the existing monitoring processes to include the child outcome data
- Conducting verification of data reported

Within the category of infrastructure of TA and support, some of the key subcategories related to:

- Conducting needs assessment for understanding the training and professional development needs in the State
- Development of training plans to meet the needs of providers, families and administrators
- Development of new training modules, DVDs and other training materials
- Development of local TA consultants for providing TA on child outcomes
- Design or use of the train-the-trainer to support learning across the State
- Development or revision of competencies for personnel

Within the category of training and professional development, some of the key subcategories related to:

- Completing the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF)
- Conducting quality assessments
- Understanding child development and functional assessment
- Implementing the overall outcomes measurement system

Within the category of clarify/develop policies and procedures, some of the key subcategories related to:

- Establishment of or revisions to written policies and procedures related to child outcomes data collection
- Revisions to guidelines, FAQs, forms, and procedures for collection and reporting outcomes data
- Clarification of procedures (e.g. procedures for when children leave the program unexpectedly)

- Development of procedures for translating child data to the OSEP categories such as 'cut off' scores on assessments or the algorithm for publishers' online assessments
- Establishment or revisions to the recommended or required assessments for child outcomes measurement

Within the category of evaluation, some of the key subcategories related to:

- Reviewing the data submitted by local programs to identify missing data
- Analyzing statewide data by multiple variables to look for patterns in the data
- Reviewing data for completeness and accuracy (to ensure reliability and validity)
- Analyzing data for purposes of feedback to locals and identifying training needs
- Beginning to analyze data to look for trends and relationships of program variables with child outcomes

ECO TA SUPPORT

Of the States that reported future improvement activities for this indicator, 19 States named the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) as resources to be used in future improvement activities. The National Early Childhood TA Center (NECTAC) was reported as a resource for this indicator in 12 States.

During the reporting period, the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) provided TA to all States through a variety of strategies. All States received TA support from ECO by participating in one or more cross-State TA services including listserv discussions, national conference calls/webinars, and the ECO web site. Nearly all States (46) also attended the annual conference on *Measuring Child and Family Outcomes* held August 2008 in Baltimore, and/or the pre-conference workshop in December 2008. By request, States received individualized TA through telephone and email conversations to problem-solve specific questions or issues in their State. At least 7 States received intensive ongoing consultation that typically included onsite trainings and TA.

INDICATOR 4: FAMILY OUTCOMES

Prepared by ECO

INTRODUCTION

The text of Part C Indicator 4 reads “Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family: a) Know their rights; b) Effectively communicate their children's needs, and; c) Help their children develop and learn.”

The following data are based on information reported by 56 States and jurisdictions in their February 2009, Annual Performance Report (APRs). States and jurisdictions will be called “States” for the remainder of this report. In cases where methods data was not reported this year, existing data from last year’s report was used. It is also possible that a State may be conducting an activity or using a data source that was not reported this year or last year; this information is not included in this summary. Although information on survey tools is available for all States, not all States submitted data for all other variables. Analyses where sample sizes differ are noted.

Family Survey Tools

Of the 56 States, 26 (46%) used the NCSEAM Family Survey and 21 States (38%) used the ECO Family Survey items to collect data for this indicator. Six States (11%) used State-developed surveys, and three States (5%) used a combination of approaches (i.e. State survey with ECO items added; NCSEAM and ECO items together).

COMPARISON OF BASELINE, TARGET AND ACTUAL PERFORMANCE DATA

The analyses provided below include the baseline, target, and actual data for FY 2007.

2005-2006 Baseline Data

States’ baseline data, presented below, represents the percent of families in FY 2005 who reported that early intervention helped their families in each of the sub-indicator areas. Overall State reported baseline data are shown in the table below. These data are based on 53 States; three States did not have baseline data in FY 2005.

Sub-Indicator	a. Know their rights	b. Communicate children’s needs	c. Help children develop and learn
Mean	80% of families	78% of families	86% of families
Range	45%–99%	51%–99%	53%–98%

Targets for 2007

The targets for 2007 for each of the sub-indicators were analyzed and are reported in the table below. The mean percentage of families was based on 54 States reporting; two States did not report target data for FY 2007.

Sub-Indicator	a. Know their rights	b. Communicate children's needs	c. Help children develop and learn
Mean	81% of families	81% of families	86% of families
Range	47%–99%	53%–100%	55%–100%

Actual Target Data for 2007

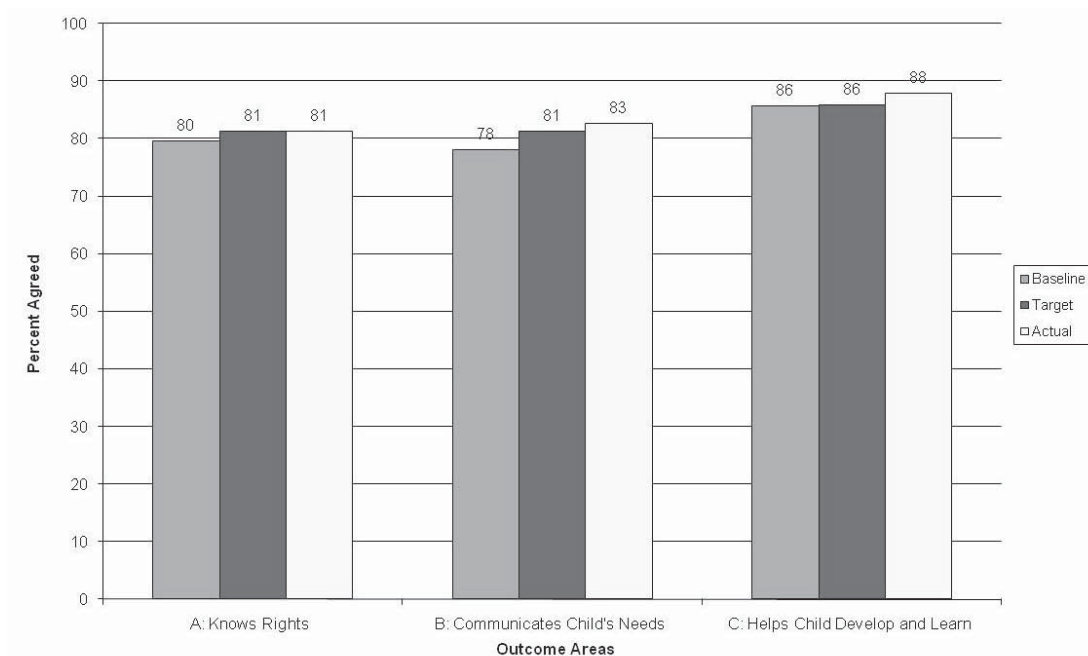
The data below represent the percent of families reporting that early intervention helped them know their rights, communicate their children's needs, and help their children develop and learn. The percentages reported below are based on the 55 States reporting actual target data.

Sub-Indicator	a. Know their rights	b. Communicate children's needs	c. Help children develop and learn
Mean	81% of families	83% of families	88% of families
Range	48%–100%	51%–100%	56%–100%

A comparison of the means of target and actual data shows that on average States either met or exceeded their targets for FY 2007 and improved performance from their FY 2005 baseline data. The mean percentages for all three sub-indicator area went up from last year: Indicator 4a (families know their rights) went from 80% to 81%; Indicator 4b (families communicate their children's needs) went from 81% to 83%; and Indicator 4c (families help their child develop and learn) went from 87% to 88%. A comparison of the average percent for baseline data, State targets, and actual performance for FY 2007 (percent of families reporting agreement for each of the sub-indicators) is depicted in Figure 1.

Note: There was only one State reporting 100% agreement on all three sub-indicator areas, and this State had a very small sample size.

Figure 1: Average Percent of Families Reporting Agreement for Each Outcome: Comparison of Baseline, Target and Actual Data



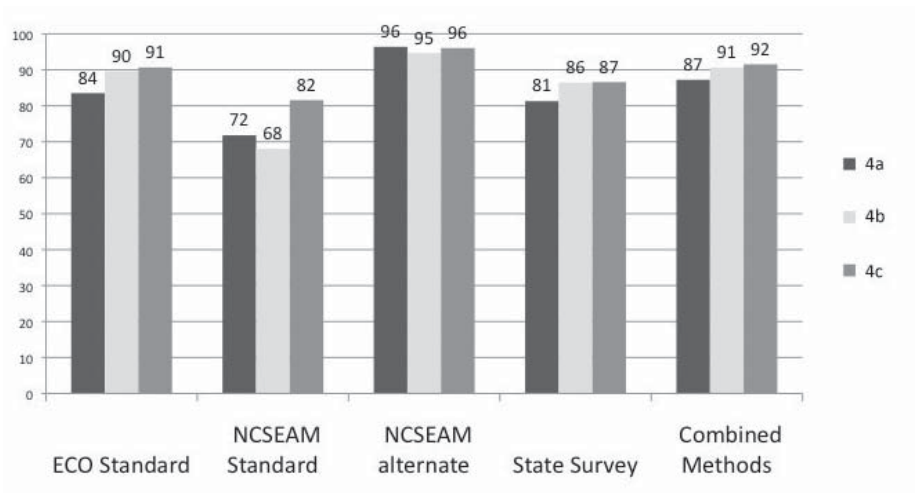
Criteria for Positive Response

Of the 21 States using the ECO Family Survey items, the vast majority (17 States, 81%) reported using the recommended scoring criteria of “5” (good) and above on the 7-point scale. One State coded positive responses from families who selected “has done good job” or “has done excellent job.” Three States indicated that they were using the ECO Survey, but did not state their criteria for a positive response.

For those States using the NCSEAM Survey, 19 States (73%) reported using the Rasch analysis developed by NCSEAM (NCSEAM standard) to analyze their family outcome data. Five States (19%) used an alternate method of analysis; these methods included family ratings based on level of agreement with items or percentage points awarded based on the level of agreement. Two States did not report their criteria for a positive response.

Of the six (6) States that used a State-developed survey, three rated the indicator as met if respondents “agreed, strongly agreed, or very strongly agreed” with the outcomes items, and one State used “strongly agree and very strongly agree.” Two States using State-developed surveys did not report their criteria for scoring. Figure 2 displays the actual data for the States using various tools and criteria for positive responses.

Figure 2: Actual Target Data by Survey Tool and Criteria for Positive Response



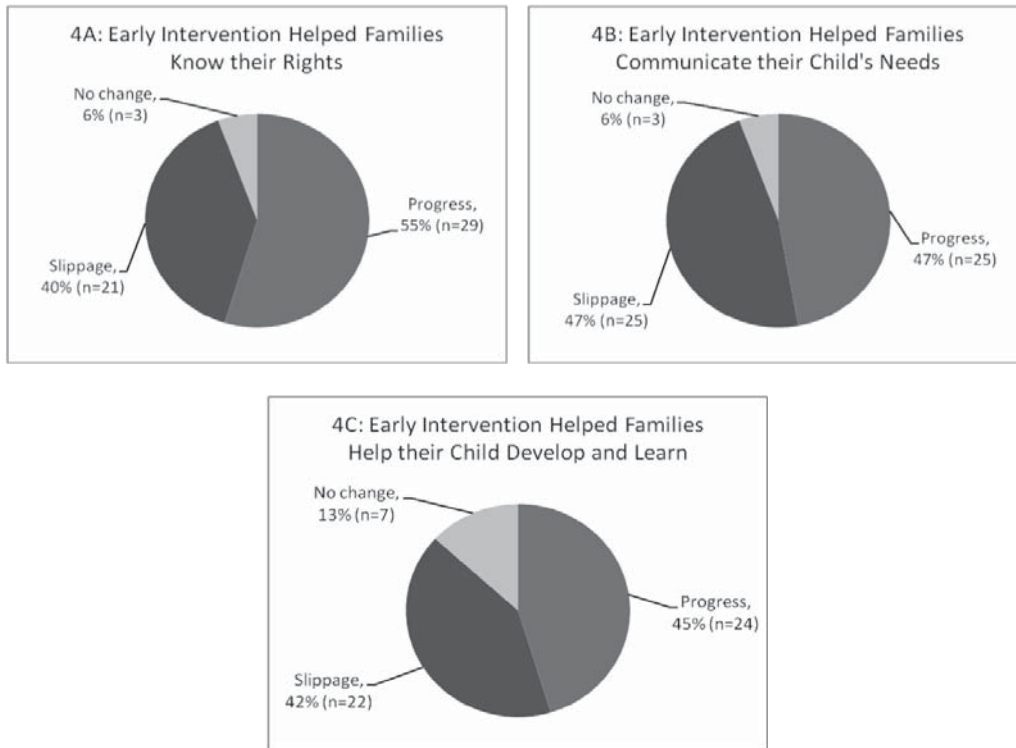
The figure shows fairly comparable performance data for States using the ECO Survey standard analysis (5 and higher), State-developed analysis criteria, and a combination of methods. The NCSEAM alternate scoring criteria resulted in somewhat higher outcome measures, and the NCSEAM standard scoring criteria showed somewhat lower means across all three outcomes. The data from the one State using alternate analysis criteria for the ECO survey is not included due to the sample size (n=1).

Note: While results were somewhat lower for some tools and methods than others, these results are not necessarily due to lower State performance but rather due to the analysis process itself.

Progress and Slippage

Figure 3 represents progress and slippage for the 53 States reporting actual performance data for FY 2007-08 compared to FY 2006-07 baseline data for the three sub-indicators. Three States did not have actual data for either FY 2007-08 or FY 2006-07, so progress and/or slippage were unable to be determined.

Figure 3: Progress and Slippage for the Three Family Outcomes



Approximately half of States showed progress from the last reporting period in each of the three family outcome measures. Three States (5%) reported no change for sub-indicator A (families know their rights) and B (families help their children develop and learn); seven States (13%) reported no change for the third sub-indicator (families communicate their children’s needs). The number of States experiencing Slippage ranged from 40–47% across the three outcome areas.

For all three sub-indicator areas, the percent of States making progress decreased, while the percentage that slipped increased compared to last year. However, in the majority of cases the slippage was less than three percentage points from the previous year’s data.

Explanation of Progress and Slippage

The majority of States (N=36) did not specify reasons for progress or slippage. States that did report on reasons for progress and/or slippage most frequently mentioned: issues related to policies, practices, and procedures (eight States), data collection (five States), comparability of the data (four States), and technical assistance and professional development (four States).

For those States that reported progress, explanations included improvements in data collection and sampling procedures; and professional development related to family-

centered services and functional routines. States reporting slippage reported issues related to data collection methods, service delivery and staffing issues, and changes in policies and procedures related to sharing information with families. A number of States reported that changes in both directions (i.e. progress and slippage) were due to random fluctuations in the data, and did not reflect real changes in the family outcome areas.

FURTHER DETAIL ABOUT APPROACHES AND METHODS

Additional information that describes the various approaches and methods States used in conducting family outcome measurement was analyzed from review of the FY 2007 APR for Indicator 4.

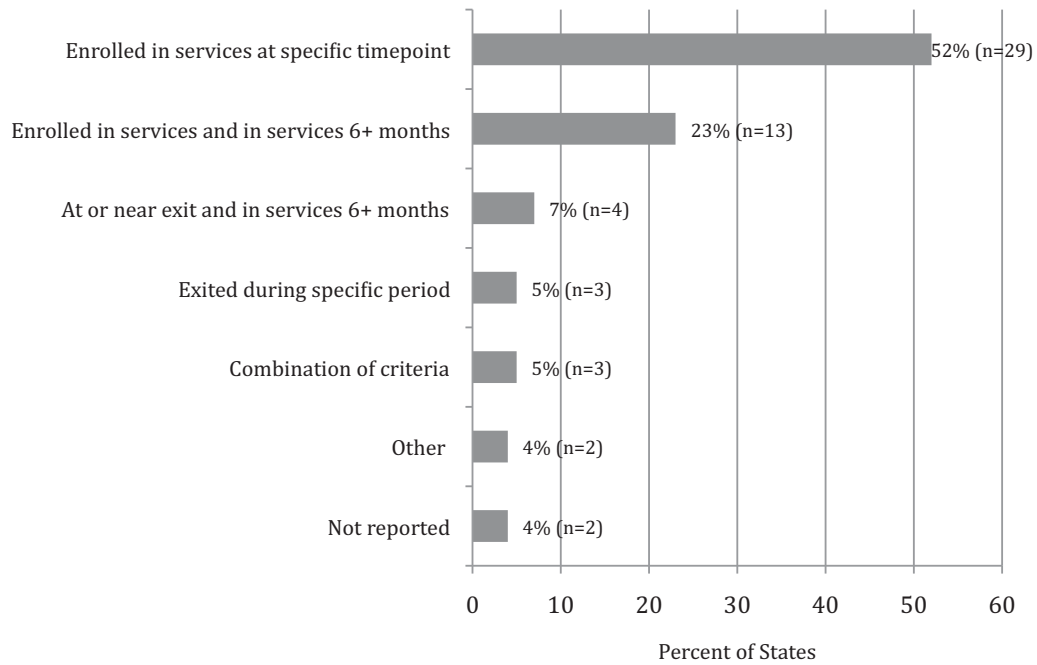
Population Included in Survey

Forty-one States (73%) reported distributing surveys to all families (census approach), and thirteen States (23%) reported including data from a sample of families. Two States (4%) did not report the population surveyed. The mean, median, and range of the number of responses by the two primary distribution methods are summarized in the table below.

Number of Responses	Overall	Sample	Census
Mean	694 surveys	394 surveys	800 surveys
Median	466	307	488
Range	17–3000	69–976	17–3000

There were several variations on the definition of the population included in the data collection for this indicator. Twenty nine States (52%) defined the population as those who were enrolled in the Part C program at the time of the survey or during a specific time period. Thirteen States (23%) included families of children enrolled in the Part C program and receiving services at least six months. Four States (7%) surveyed families who had exited the program and had participated in services for at least six months, and three States (5%) surveyed families exiting during a specific period. Three additional States (5%) used a combination of these criteria, one State reported surveying families who received services 9 or more months, and one reported surveying families who received services for 12 or more months. Two States (4%) did not report on criteria for the population. These data are depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Definition of Population Surveyed by Percent of States



Timeframes for Family Surveys

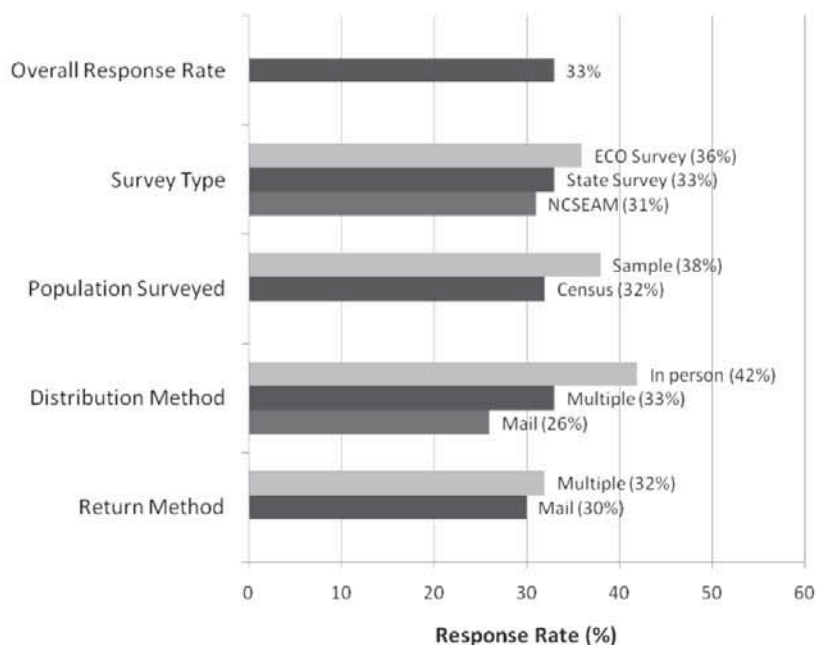
The most common data collection timeframes were (1) annually at a designated month or during a specific time period (N=28 States), or (2) collecting data according to a schedule based on an individual child’s participation in the Part C program (N=16 States). Specific timing related to a child’s participation included conducting the survey at or near exit/transition, at IFSP reviews, or some combination of the two. Other schedules related to child participation were at entry and exit (one State) and at IFSP reviews within a survey window of time (one State). In addition, two States based the timing of family surveys on monitoring calendars and two States listed their data collection as ongoing. State plans for the timing of data collection are summarized in the table below.

Timing of Family Surveys	# States	% States
Annually, at a certain time each year (e.g., a designated month or time period)	28	50%
In relation to individual participation:	16	29%
At or near exit/transition	7	13%
At 6 month or annual IFSP reviews	4	7%
At IFSP reviews and at exit	3	5%
Other—child participation schedule	2	4%
Based on monitoring schedule	2	4%
Ongoing/throughout year	2	4%
Not reported	8	14%

Response Rates

The response rates for the family surveys are summarized in Figure 5 by population, survey tool, distribution strategy, and return strategy.

Figure 5: Variables Related to Response Rates



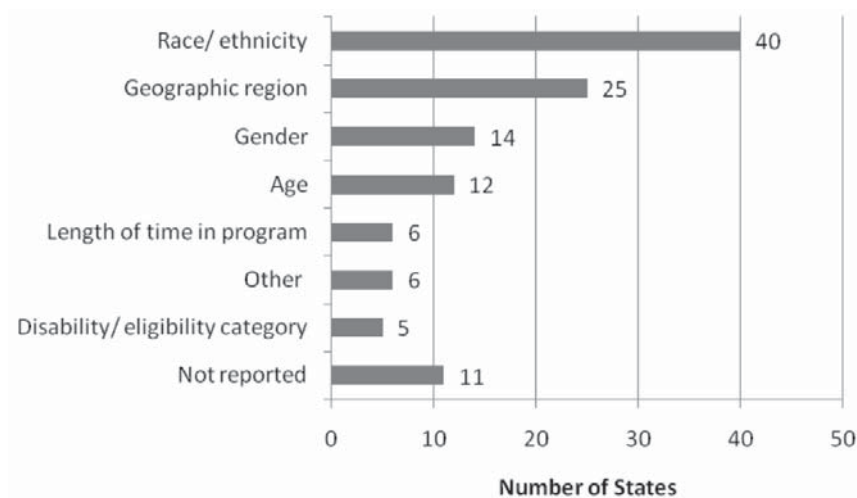
As seen in Figure 5, slightly higher response rates were seen for States using the ECO survey (36%) compared to State-developed surveys (33%) and the NCSEAM survey (31%). States reporting using sampling methods reported slightly higher response rates (mean=38%) than for States who used a census approach (mean=32%). Analysis of the method of survey distribution reveals that hand delivering surveys yielded a mean response rate of 42%, followed by using multiple methods (33%) and mailed survey distribution (26%). The method of return of the survey was similar between multiple methods and mailed return.

The majority of States (38 States, 68%) reported providing some form(s) of assistance to families in completing the surveys. States reported providing written translated surveys in a number of languages, providing interpreters (e.g. through PTIs), and providing alternate formats (e.g. Braille, audio). Options for Spanish-speaking families (e.g. survey translations, interpreters) were specifically mentioned by 30 States (54%). Note: Both the NCSEAM and the ECO Family Surveys have Spanish translations.

Representativeness

A total of 45 States reported using criteria to determine whether or not their family survey data was representative of the population they serve. Figure 6 shows the frequency the different criteria were reported by States. This is a duplicative count of categories used (e.g. States may have used more than one criterion to determine representativeness). Eleven States did not report criteria.

Figure 6: Criteria for Determining Representativeness



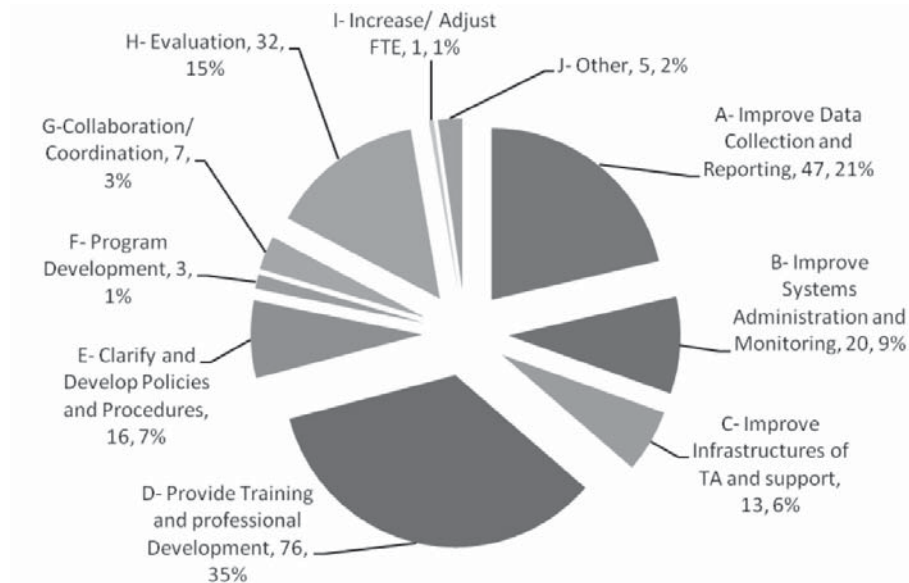
A majority of States (71%) used categories of race and ethnicity to determine representativeness. Other criteria used included geographic region (e.g. urban/ rural) (45%), gender of the child (25%), age of the child at referral, entry or exit (21%), length of time in program (11%), other criteria (e.g. Medicaid eligibility, program size) (11%), and type of disability or eligibility category (9%). In order to determine if their data were representative, States compared their family survey response data to Child Count data, program population, survey target population, or other State data.

States differed on their conclusions regarding the representativeness of the data. A total of 19 States (34%) reported their data were representative. Of these, 15 States provided specific data comparisons to illustrate that their data were representative. Four other States reported their data were representative but did not report detailed analyses. Nineteen States (34%) reported their data were not representative; most frequently data were not representative by race/ ethnicity (typically, survey respondents from racial/ ethnic minority groups were under-represented). Two States (4%) provided detailed comparison data but did not draw a final conclusion about whether the data were representative. The remaining 16 States (29%) did not report on the representativeness of their data.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The majority of States (N=51) reported completion of 220 improvement activities for Indicator 4. A review of improvement activities showed that more than a third of all improvement activities related to providing training and professional support (35% of all activities). Almost a quarter (21%) of all improvement activities were related to improving data collection and reporting, a significant increase from 14% last year. One category of improvement activities that reduced significantly related to clarifying and developing policies and procedures (7% this year from 23% last year). States also reported improvement activities related to conducting evaluation (15%), improving systems administration and monitoring (9%), improving infrastructure of TA and support (6%), and collaborating and coordinating with other entities/agencies (3%). A few States also reported conducting program development activities (1%), increasing or adjusting FTE (less than 1%), and other types of activities (2%).

Figure 7: Types of Improvement Activities



Analysis of the improvement activities by State (see table below) showed that more than half of the States reported completing improvement activities related to improving data collection and reporting (59%) and providing training and professional development (57%). Nearly half of the States (45%) reported completing evaluation activities. A number of States also reported completing activities related to improving systems administration and monitoring (25%), clarifying or developing policies and procedures (25%), and improving the infrastructure of TA and support (20%).

Improvement Activity Categories	# IAs	# States
A. Improved data collection and reporting	47	33
B. Improved systems administration and monitoring	20	14
C. Improved infrastructure of TA and support	13	11
D. Provide training and professional development	76	32
E. Clarify/develop policies and procedures	16	14
F. Program development	3	3
G. Collaboration/coordination	7	7
H. Evaluation	32	25
I. Increase/adjust FTE	1	1
J. Other	5	4

Several States mentioned TA agencies from which they received assistance in implementing Improvement Activities including ECO (12), NECTAC (8), RRCs (8), and WESTAT/DAC (10). The types of improvement activities in each of these categories are summarized below.

Data Collection and Reporting

By far the most common theme in this area was developing strategies for improving the family survey response rates of the data. These included increasing communication with families about the survey, translating survey materials in various languages, modifying the survey (e.g., length) to improve return rates, modifying methods for survey distribution and return, providing follow-up with families following dissemination of the survey, and providing incentives for survey completion. Other themes included improving data systems and data processing methods and analysis. A few States also reported on specific improvement activities related to improving representativeness of response data.

Systems Administration and Monitoring

The predominant theme was monitoring local programs on family survey results data, return rates, and local implementation of family survey procedures including information sharing with families, and the distribution and collection of family survey data. Several States discussed improvement activities related to monitoring program performance in the three outcomes areas through onsite visits, record reviews, and analysis of data. Some States described requiring local programs to develop local improvement plans and local corrective action plans to improve overall performance based on monitoring, while others discussed the review of plans related to improving family outcomes that were submitted with local applications/contracts each year.

Technical Assistance Infrastructure and Support

Improvement activities related to improving technical assistance infrastructure and support focused on the development of training curricula and technical assistance materials and resources for parents and providers. The development of training resources related primarily to content relevant to improving performance in the three family survey outcomes. Other activities included identifying promising practices on

implementing family outcome measurement procedures, developing websites, and incorporating funding and scholarships for parents to attend and co-present at workshops and conferences. Several States identified using results of the family survey to identify and develop needed training and technical assistance.

Training and Personnel Development

Training and personnel development improvement activities primarily focused on the provision of training and technical assistance to families, providers and service coordinators regarding content areas that would improve performance in the three family outcomes including: evidence-based family centered practices, family needs assessment, functional IFSP outcomes, contextually mediated practice and everyday learning opportunities, family rights and procedural safeguards, etc. Other training provided included understanding the procedures for implementing the measurement of family outcomes and understanding and using the family survey data for program improvement. Several States identified sharing successful strategies related to improving return rates. Others reported disseminating resources and guidance to parents, local administrators, providers and service coordinators. A few States described the provision of technical assistance to local programs on developing corrective action and/or improvement plans related to family outcomes. PTIs were noted as resources for providing and facilitating training for families and for providing collaborative training with the State.

Policies and Procedures

The most common themes in this area were the development or revision of procedures, forms and other materials related to family rights and family centered services (including IFSP forms and guidance materials), modifications to procedures related to the implementation of family surveys, and revisions to the family survey and materials accompanying the survey. Many modifications were a result of the family survey data, return rates, and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of family outcome measurement process. In fact, some States changed which survey they used in FY 2007 as a result of ongoing evaluation activities.

Program Development

Several States reported completing program development improvement activities including funding other agencies to provide service coordination and conducting pilots on new State developed family survey items and on different methods of disseminating the family survey to determine impact on return rates.

Collaboration and Coordination

States reported collaborating with PTIs, local family support networks/agencies, other family organizations, local/regional interagency coordinating councils, and other agencies and organizations to coordinate efforts for improving skills, supports, services for families, and overall performance on Indicator 4.

Evaluation

Numerous improvement activities in this area including evaluating the processes used to implement family outcome measurement (including distribution methods, follow-up, methods of analysis, etc.), surveys for readability and comprehension, response rates, and data for program improvement. Other activities included conducting family focus groups or random interviews with families to validate outcomes data.

Adjust FTE

Only one State mentioned improvement activities in this category. The State provided funding to support a full-time parent coordinator to provide support to parents.

Other Improvement Activities

Most of the activities in this area were related to developing and distributing a family newsletter and redesigning the State's finance system.

Examples of Specific Improvement Activities

A number of promising practices emerged related to Indicator 4.

- Conducting post-survey focus groups with families to validate family survey data and provide recommendations for improvement.
- Conducting additional analyses of family survey data to assess validity of survey and factors corresponding with families' ratings including differences by region, length of time in program and other variables.
- Convening a parent stakeholder group to assess barriers in completing the survey and to identify strategies for improving return rates.
- Increasing return rates and representativeness of data (focusing on Hispanic families) by contracting with a parent to call other parents about returning survey; providing an advance flyer to parents to remind them of upcoming survey; including a Spanish version of survey in mail out packets for parents who identified "Spanish as primary language"; and, requesting service coordinators and providers to remind families during home visits to complete and return the survey.
- Calculating and disseminating response rates of local programs and requiring submission of improvement activities if the response rate was less than 50%.
- Developing a framework for local improvement planning that was required to be included in the local application and grant process which included: steps to improve response rate and representativeness; steps to involve local stakeholders in understanding the purpose of survey and importance to families; steps to identify improvement activities based on results; and, a description of how ranked survey items will be used as a guide for providers and families.
- Developing and disseminating a DVD for parents explaining early intervention services and family rights.
- Developing and disseminating a visual representation of how families move through the early system, emphasizing rights and responsibilities of families at each step.

ECO TA SUPPORT

During the reporting period, the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) provided TA to all States through a variety of strategies. All States received TA support from ECO by participating in one or more cross-State TA services including listserv discussions and national conference calls. At least 42 States (75%) received targeted cross-State TA through attending the annual Measuring Child and Family Outcomes conference held August 2008 in Baltimore, MD. Many States also received individualized TA through telephone and email conversations to problem-solve specific questions or issues in their State. At least two States received intensive ongoing consultation around improving family outcomes measurement systems.

INDICATOR 5: CHILD FIND BIRTH TO ONE

Prepared by NECTAC

INTRODUCTION

The text of Part C Indicator 5 reads “Percent of infants and toddlers birth to one with IFSPs compared to: a) Other States with similar eligibility definitions; and b) National data.”

This summary of the analysis of Part C Indicator 5 is based on a review of Annual Performance Reports (APR) for FY 2007-08 of 56 States. For the purposes of this report, the term “State” is used for both States and jurisdictions.

Indicator 5 is intended to show a State’s performance in the identification of eligible infants during their first year of life. Together with Indicator 6, a State reports performance in finding eligible children early. Indicator 5 is considered a performance indicator. The measurement specifies that States must use data collected and reported under Section 618 (Annual Report of Children Served) regarding the number of infants, birth to age one, who were identified and served on December 1, 2007, and to calculate the percentage of the State’s birth to one population which that number represents. States were asked to measure their performance in comparison to the percent served by States with similar eligibility definitions, with the national percentage and in relation to the rigorous and measurable target for FY 2007-08 that was established in their State Performance Plan.

PERFORMANCE OF STATES IN RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL PERCENTAGE, ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY AND ACTUAL TARGET DATA

For Indicator 5, OSEP provided Table 8-4a, the percent of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services under IDEA, Part C, by age and State. The nationwide percentage of children birth to one receiving early intervention (reported as 2007 data in Table 8-4A) was 1.01%. This figure is lower than the 2006 percentage of 1.04%.

In order to help a State compare its performance with other States having similar eligibility definitions, OSEP provided States with information [Table 8-3a, infants and toddlers ages birth through two (including children at risk) receiving early intervention services under IDEA, 2007] that divided the States’ eligibility definitions into three categories—narrow, moderate, and broad. While this table only ranks States according to percentage of children from birth through age two, the table allowed States to compare themselves with States with similar eligibility for children from birth to one.

Actual Performance Data and National Percentage

For FY 2007-08, actual performance data for Indicator 5 (N=56 States) shows that 26 States reported data above the national percentage. The remaining 30 States reported that data were below the national percentage. In FY 2006-07, 24 States (N=54 States) were above the national percentage, while 30 were below.

Actual Performance Data and Type of Eligibility Category

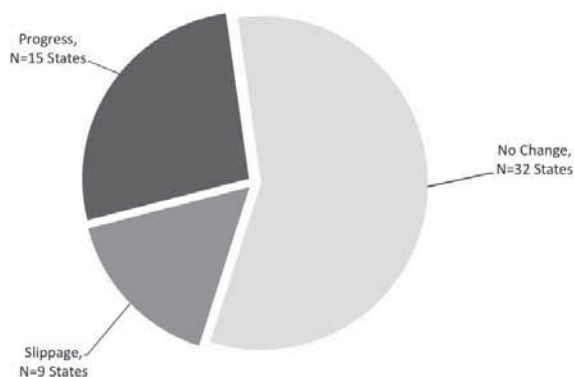
Of the 26 States that reported actual performance data above the national percentage, three States were in the narrow eligibility category, nine States were in the moderate eligibility category, and 14 States were in the broad eligibility category. Of the 30 States that reported actual performance data as below the national percentage, 13 States were in the narrow eligibility category, six States were in the moderate eligibility category, and 11 States were in the broad eligibility category. In their APRs, four States reported that they have changed their eligibility criteria over the last year, while three additional States discussed potential changes in eligibility.

Progress and Slippage from FY 2006-07 to 2007-08

The data comparing States' actual performance in FY 2007-08 on Indicator 5 to actual performance in 2006-07 were analyzed using plus or minus 0.1% as the definition of progress or slippage, respectively. The .01% change was chosen to show the slight variations in the percentage of children served within a State as year-to-year variations, rather than as true progress or slippage in relation to the State's yearly target.

The analysis depicted in Figure 1, revealed that 15 of the 56 States reported data that met or exceeded their FY 2006-07 performance (showed progress). Nine States reported that their FY 2007-08 data were below their FY 2006-08 performance (slippage), and 32 States reported no change in performance.

Figure 1: Progress/Slippage from FFY 06-07 to 07-08



Reported Success in Meeting Performance Targets

Table 1 reports the number of States that successfully met their targeted percent of infants birth to one with IFSPs in FY 2007-08 and 2006-07.

Table 1: Number of States Meeting Targets for FY 2007-08 and FY 2006-07

FY	N States that Met Target	N States that Did Not Meet Target	Total N States Reporting Each Year
2007-08	24	32	56
2006-07	26	28	54

Of the 32 States that did not meet their FY 2007-08 targets, four States' actual performance data were above their FY 2006-07 performance but did not meet their targets. The remaining 28 States reported actual performance data the same as or below the prior year's data.

Changes in Performance from Baseline to FY 2007-08 and 2006-07

Changes in State performance from baseline to actual performance data for FY 2007-08 and from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08 are shown by range in Table 2.

Table 2: Change from Baseline to Actual Performance Data for FY 2007-08

Change from Baseline to FY 2007-08 Actual Performance Data	Number of States	Change from 2006-2007 to FY 2007-08 Actual Performance Data	Number of States
> -0.8	2	> -.08	0
-0.5 to -0.8	2	-0.5 to -0.8	0
-0.2 to -0.4	5	-0.2 to -0.4	6
-0.09 to -0.19	4	-0.09 to -0.19	5
-0.05 to -0.08	2	-0.05 to -0.08	5
-0.01 to -0.04	5	-0.01 to -0.04	6
0 to +0.04	7	0 to +0.04	12
+0.05 to +0.14	9	+0.05 to +0.14	12
+0.15 to +0.24	6	+0.15 to +0.24	5
+0.25 to +0.51	11	+0.25 to +0.51	5
> +0.51	3	> +0.51	0
Total	56	Total	56

Four States showed a substantial drop from baseline to actual performance in the percentage of infants and toddlers birth to one with IFSPs, while another five States had moderate declines in performance on this Indicator. In FY 2006-07, eight States showed increases of more than 0.25 from baseline to actual performance data compared to 11 States in FY 2007-08. Two of 56 States had actual performance data that was the same as baseline performance.

In comparing the FY 2007-08 data to the data from FY 2006-07, six States' performance decreased by at least 0.2. In addition, five States showed increases greater than 0.25 from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08 actual performance.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate these data in graphs. Figure 2 illustrates the change made by individual States from baseline (FY 2004-05) to actual performance in FY 2007-08. Figure 3 illustrates the change from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08. The trajectories are quite similar, although there is some variation in a State's performance (progress vs. slippage) from year to year. What is clear in the analysis, and illustrated in Table 1 and in Figures 2 and 3, is that the amount of change from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08 is quite small for most States. However, approximately two-thirds of the States had performance in FY 2007-08 that was above their FY 2004-05 baseline. Percentages above baseline

are evident both in States that serve small percentages of infants (e.g., 0.53%) and in those that serve a greater percentage (e.g., 3.12%).

Figure 2: Change in States' Performance from Baseline to FY 2007-08

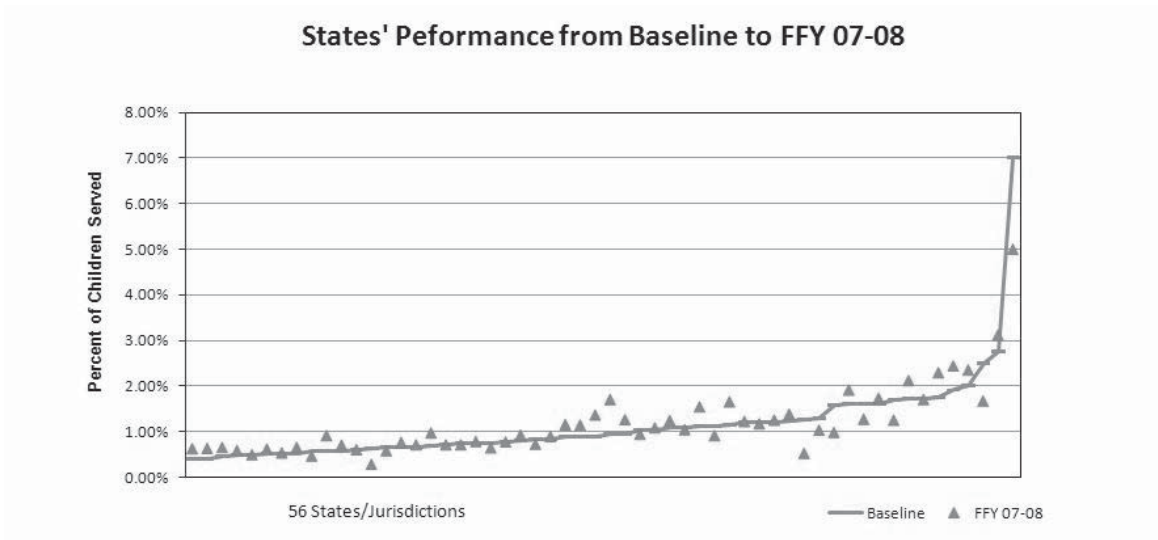
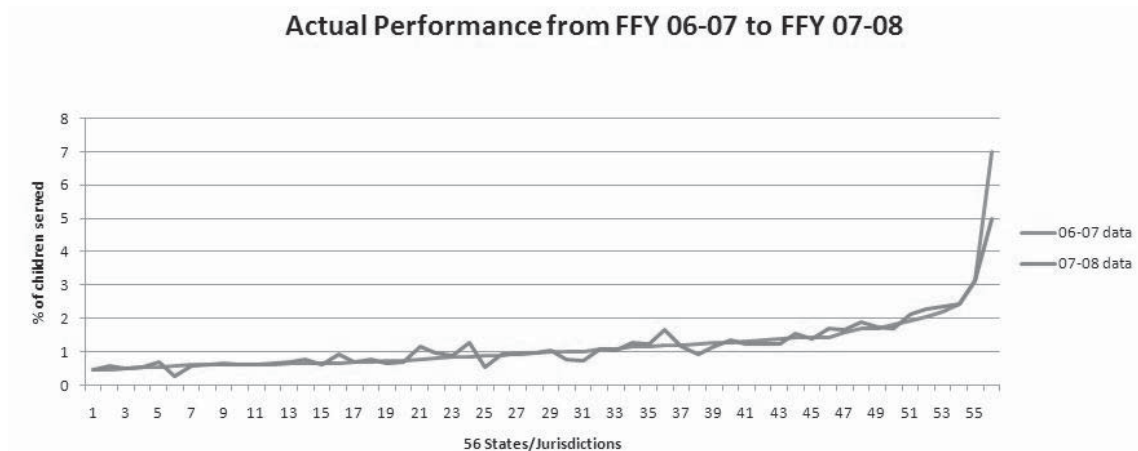


Figure 3: Change in States' Performance from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08



EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Several themes emerged as States explained their progress on Indicator 5. A number of States attributed their progress to an increased or continued aggressive focus on this Indicator at all levels of the program—State, regional, and local. States highlighted the coordination of their Child Find/Public Awareness activities, including partnering with other State agencies on efforts directly and indirectly related to child find. For example, they discussed ways in which they had strengthened collaborative relationships to increase the referrals of potentially eligible infants to the State's Part C program. Several States reported that previous changes in eligibility criteria had resulted in an increased numbers of infants identified and served by Part C. One State whose eligibility criteria had changed attributed its progress to educating its referral sources and providers so that they understood the changes.

States also attributed progress to changes in the State's data system. One State reported that a change in the system for processing vital events and records helped the State identify additional risk conditions. Others noted that their data systems now allowed them to capture information about referral sources, so that they could target individuals or programs with low referral rates. A few States drew linkages across APR Indicators. For example, one State noted that a change in its service delivery system led not only to more timely services but also freed personnel to provide initial eligibility evaluations.

Explanation of Slippage

Some States noted that slippage in one or two large local programs within the State had a negative effect upon the State's overall performance. While a few States attributed progress to a change in eligibility criteria, others noted that such a change had a negative impact upon their numbers. A few States reported that a change in the instrument(s) used to establish eligibility had led to a decrease in the numbers of infants identified as eligible. Another reported that as medical care improved in the State, medically fragile infants became healthy more quickly, so that they and their families had less need of immediate referral to Part C.

Some States whose data showed either slippage or no change reported that although their program served more infants than in the previous year, the rate of increase did not keep pace with the overall growth in the State's population. In contrast, another State reported a decrease in the State's birth rate. Several States expressed concern that the U.S. Census numbers used for this Indicator were not truly reflective of their State's population. One State noted that the economic climate was having a negative impact on its population, with families leaving to seek employment elsewhere. Others noted that their State's budget crisis was affecting the Part C program's ability to identify and serve infants and toddlers. Concerns were expressed that this will also be reflected in future APRs. For example, one State reported that the position of Child Find Coordinator was vacant for much of the year, which led to problems maintaining partnerships with referral sources and providing training to grantees.

More than in past years, States that made progress and those that experienced slippage focused on evaluating their system of child find at the State and regional/local levels, identifying programs and activities that were successful as well as those that were not. Local programs that met or exceeded the State's target for this Indicator were encouraged to share their successful strategies with other programs. Those that did not meet the target were encouraged or required to develop local plans for reaching additional infants. Improvement activities that were successful in one area of the State were shared with other programs; those that were not were discontinued or revised.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

States reported the following improvement activities for Indicator 5 in FY 2007-08. Table 3 indicates the types of activities reported by the States. Although States often reported more than one improvement activity within a given category for this Indicator (e.g., collaborating with the State's EHDI program AND collaborating with NICUs; maintaining a toll-free line for resource and referral information AND posting a Child Find brochure on its website), each type of activity was counted only one time per State in this analysis. The examples provided in the descriptive paragraphs following the table are illustrative of States' work but are not an exhaustive list of all States' improvement activities.

Table 3: Types of Improvement Activities Reported by States

Types of Improvement Activities	Number of States
Improve Collaboration/Coordination	47
Other	44
Develop/Revise Policies and Procedures	37
Provide Technical Assistance/ Training/ Professional Development	36
Improve Data Collection and Reporting	35
Evaluation	30
Improve Systems Administration and Monitoring	20
Program Development	8
Increase/Adjust FTE	6
Build Systems/Infrastructures of TA and Support	5

Overall, the types of improvement activities for Indicators 5 and 6 have changed little from year to year. Of note, however, is the evidence in the FY 2007-08 APRs that States are building upon prior years' efforts to identify and serve infants. States demonstrated that they see the relationships among improvement activities and results, and among Indicators. For instance, States evaluated the effectiveness of completed and on-going improvement activities, and worked with local programs to identify challenges and provide technical assistance as needed.

The following two examples of activities to improve collaboration/coordination illustrate States' building upon previous years' efforts. For example, since the passage of the CAPTA legislation, State Part C and Child Protective Service programs have worked to

establish a system for referring infants and toddlers involved with substantiated cases of abuse/neglect or pre-natal exposure to substance use to Part C. Several States reported that the system is now in place and the partners are collaborating on refining protocols, updating plans, etc. Additionally, several States that have had Assuring Better Child Health Development (ABCD) grants for several years, reported on their efforts to make the results of the grants sustainable. A number of States also mentioned their collaboration with State Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) programs and with hospitals, particularly their NICUs.

Most of the activities included in the “other” category reflected States’ overall Child Find and Public Awareness (CF/PA) endeavors. While many of these have been consistent across APRs, there was an emphasis in FY 2007-08 on coordinated State and local plans, rather than individual CF/PA activities.

Because several States have changed their eligibility criteria in the past few years, they reported the need to clarify/examine/develop policies and procedures to reflect these changes. In some States where eligibility criteria have remained the same, they reported developing guidelines to promote statewide consistency in eligibility determinations. Others have clarified the use of informed clinical judgment, also with the goal of establishing consistency among evaluators. Several States have developed or adopted a universal referral form or added the referral source to the IFSP. A number of States reported on establishing or clarifying protocol for referring infants identified by the EHDI program to Part C.

When eligibility criteria were changed, or policies and procedures updated, primary referral sources (e.g., physicians, NICU staff, and CPS workers) and providers were provided training and technical assistance. Across the States, reported training included annual conferences and workshops, as well as smaller, more focused events, such as hospital grand rounds or State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) retreats. Training and technical assistance focused not only on system-level changes but also on infants’ and toddlers’ social/emotional behavior, early signs of autism and related disorders, and on the use of specific evaluation instruments.

To improve data collection, and reporting, States have changed or updated the State data system to obtain all data needed for the APR, including, in some States, referral sources and/or a mechanism to track non-compliance and its timely correction. Of particular relevance to Indicators 5 and 6, one State reported that it had contracted to develop a statistical model to forecast the number of Part C-eligible children. States also noted that they regularly report data to their SICC and regional programs/providers and post it on their websites.

This year, a larger number of States (30, an increase from 12 in FY 2006-07) reported evaluation improvement activities. States analyzed data trends, included referral sources, progress in implementation of their APR Improvement Activities, county/program performance on numbers of infants/toddlers identified and served, gaps in their identification and/or treatment of children with specified conditions, and outcome

data on specific populations. States are using the results of these analyses to improve their Child Find efforts, both locally and statewide.

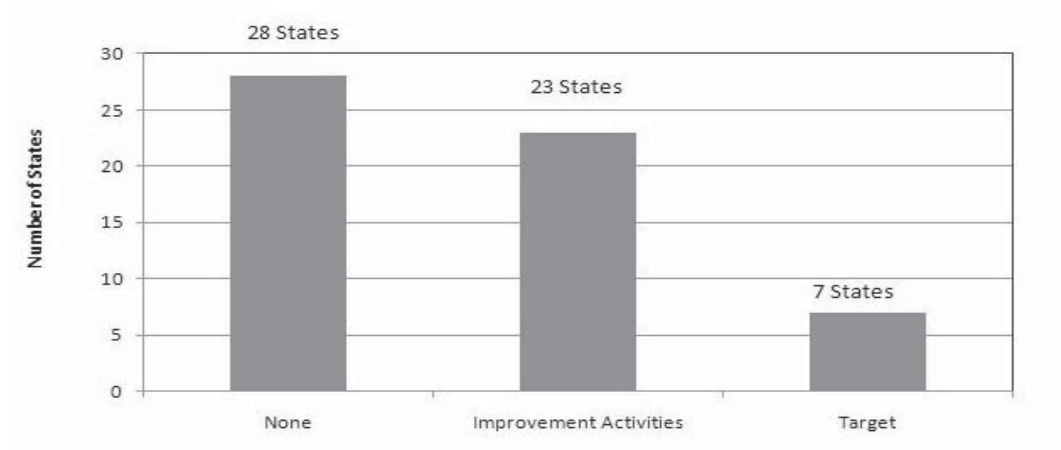
Several States conducted focused monitoring activities with local programs to improve systems administration and monitoring. States reported that their staff worked with local programs to develop corrective action plans, based upon the programs' self-assessment, annual monitoring data, and quarterly reports. In most States, these plans were aimed at local programs that are not meeting the State's target for this Indicator. States also report that they review data monthly or quarterly to ensure accuracy and reliability.

A small number of States reported on program development, increasing/adjusting FTEs, and building an infrastructure for TA and support. Specific examples include implementing pilot screening programs, adding a Birth-Five Consultant, and utilizing or expanding the technical assistance offered by the ABCD project.

STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN REVISIONS

Figure 4 depicts the types of revisions States made to their SPPs.

Figure 4: Types of SPP Revisions



As Figure 4 illustrates, 28 of the 56 States did not revise their SPPs. Of the remaining 28 States, 23 revised their improvement activities, seven revised their targets; and no States revised their baseline (N > 56 because States could make revisions in multiple areas).

USE OF OSEP TA CENTERS

NECTAC provided various forms of TA to States in support of child find for children birth to 1. All States received information related to child find. All of the States attended national conferences, such as the OSEP National Early Childhood Conference, and/or participated in small group technical assistance, such as one of the OSEP Communities of Practice. Because Indicators 5 and 6 are performance Indicators, States that were determined to be in “Needs Assistance” for the second year (NA2 States), did not report on technical assistance related to these Indicators. As mentioned previously, several States described their requirements for local programs not meeting the State’s target. Another State reported that NECTAC staff provided the State with TA related to evaluation and assessment, while a small number of States reported using TA or resources developed by TRACE.

INDICATOR 6: CHILD FIND BIRTH TO THREE

Completed by NECTAC

INTRODUCTION

The text of Part C Indicator 6 reads, “Percent of infants and toddlers birth to 3 with IFSPs compared to: a) other States with similar eligibility definitions; and b) national data.”

This summary of the analysis of Part C Indicator 6 is based on a review of Annual Performance Reports (APR) for 56 States. For the purposes of this report, the term “State” is used for both States and jurisdictions.

Indicator 6 is intended to show a State’s performance regarding the identification of eligible infants and toddlers, birth through age two. Together with Indicator 5, a State’s performance regarding finding eligible children early is reported. Indicator 6 is considered a performance indicator. The measurement specifies that States must use data collected and reported under Section 618 (Annual Report of Children Served) regarding the number of children birth through age 2 who were identified and served on December 1, 2007, and to calculate the percentage of the State’s birth through age 2 population which that number represents. States were asked to measure their performance against the percent of children served by States with similar eligibility definitions, against the national percentage, and in relation to the rigorous and measurable target for FY 2007-08 that were established in their State Performance Plan.

PERFORMANCE OF STATES IN RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL PERCENTAGE, ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY AND ACTUAL TARGET DATA

For Indicator 6, OSEP provided Table 9C: Percent of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services under IDEA, Part C, by age and State. This table displays the number of infants and toddlers reported in the December 1, 2007, child count and what percentage of the State’s birth through two population that number represents. Table 9C shows that the national percentage of infants and toddlers with IFSPs on December 1, 2007 was 2.48%, which is higher than the previous year’s 2.43%.

In order to help a State compare its performance with other States having similar eligibility definitions, OSEP provided States with information (Table 8-3a) that divided the States into three categories of eligibility definition: narrow, moderate, and broad.

Actual Performance Data and National Percentage

Actual target data for Indicator 6 (N = 56 States) shows that 26 States reported their actual performance data were above the national percentage, while 30 States reported that their actual performance data were below the national percentage. In FY 2006-07, 26 States (of 54 States reporting) were above the national percentage, and 28 were below.

Actual Performance Data and Type of Eligibility Category

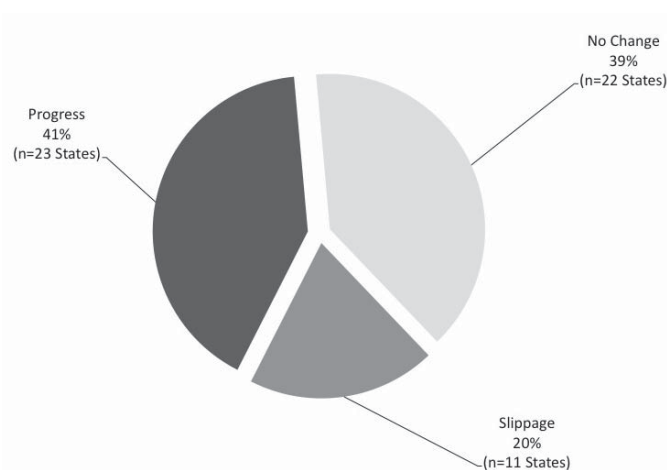
Of the 26 States reporting actual performance data above the national percentage, three are in the narrow eligibility category, eight are in the moderate eligibility category, and 15 States are in the broad eligibility category. Of the 30 States below the national percentage, 13 are in the narrow eligibility category, seven are in the moderate eligibility category, and 10 States are in the broad eligibility category. In their APRs, four States reported that they have changed their eligibility criteria from the previous year, while three additional States discussed potential changes in eligibility.

Progress and Slippage from FY 2006-07 to 07-08

The data comparing States' actual performance in FY 2007-08 on Indicator 6 to actual performance in 2006-07 were analyzed using plus or minus 0.1% as the definition of progress or slippage, respectively. The .01% change was chosen to show the slight variations in the percentage of children served within a State as year-to-year variations, rather than as true progress or slippage in relation to the State's yearly target.

The analysis, depicted in Figure 1, revealed that 23 of the 56 States reported data that met or exceeded their FY 2006-07 performance (progress). Eleven States reported that their FY 2007-08 data were below their FY 2006-07 performance (slippage), and 22 States reported no change in their performance.

Figure 1: Progress/Slippage from FFY 06-07 to 07-08



Reported Success in Meeting Performance Targets

States listed targets for serving a designated percent of infants and toddlers, aged birth to three, and reported the percent of children actually served as performance data for FY 2007-08. Table 1 reports the number of States that successfully met their targeted percent of infants birth to one with IFSPs in FY 2007-08 and 2006-07.

Table 1: Number of States Meeting C-6 Targets for FY 2007-08 and FY 2006-07

FY	N States that Met Target	N States that Did Not Meet Target	Total N States Reporting Each Year
07-08	28	28	56
06-07	29	25	54

Of the 28 States that did not meet their FY 2007-08 targets, six States' actual performance data showed progress from FY 2006-07 performance. The remaining 22 States reported actual performance data the same as or below the prior year's data.

Changes in Performance from Baseline to FY 2007-08 and 06-07

Changes in States' performances from baseline to actual performance data for FY 2007-08 and from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08 are shown by range in Table 2. No States showed a substantial drop from baseline to actual performance in the percentage of young children birth to 3 with IFSPs, while another 5 States had moderate declines in their performance on this Indicator. In FY 2006-07 20 States showed increases greater than 0.25% from baseline to actual performance data, in FY 2007-08, year 22 States showed increases in the same range; 12 of the 22 States reported an increase greater than 0.51 from baseline. This was an increase from 9 States in FY 2006-07.

Table 2: Percent Change from Baseline to Actual Performance Data for FY 2006-07

Change from Baseline to 2007-2008 Actual Performance Data	Number of States	Change from 2006-2007 to 2007-2008 Actual Performance Data	Number of States
-0.9 to -1.2	0	-0.9 to -1.2	0
-0.5 to -0.8	5	-0.5 to -0.8	1
-0.2 to -0.4	5	-0.2 to -0.4	6
-0.09 to -0.19	4	-0.09 to -0.19	4
-0.05 to -0.08	2	-0.05 to -0.08	5
-0.01 to -0.04	5	-0.01 to -0.04	3
0 to +0.04	2	0 to +0.04	8
+0.05 to +0.14	8	+0.05 to +0.14	11
+0.15 to +0.24	6	+0.15 to +0.24	6
+0.25 to +0.51	10	+0.25 to +0.51	10
> +0.51	12	> +0.51	2
Total	56	Total	56

Figure 2 and Figure 3 depict these data in graphs. Each line in Figure 2 illustrates the change made by an individual State from baseline (FY 2004-05), depicted by a bar, to actual performance in FY 2007-08, depicted by the triangle.

Figure 2: States' Performance from Baseline to FFY 07-08

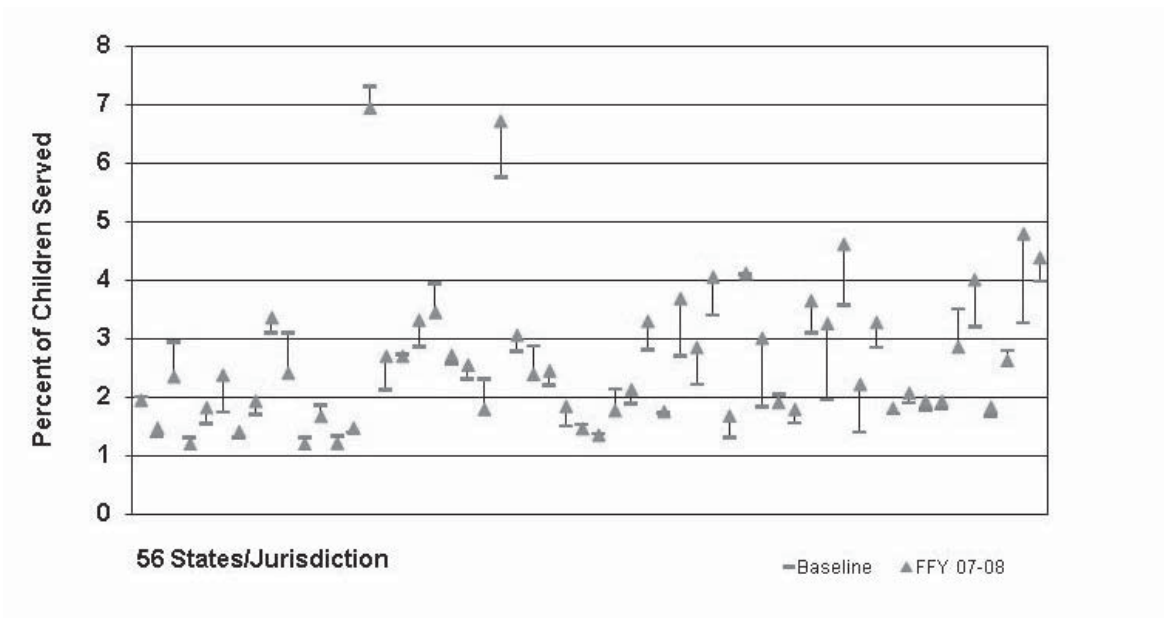


Figure 3: Actual Performance from FFY 06-07 to FFY 07-08

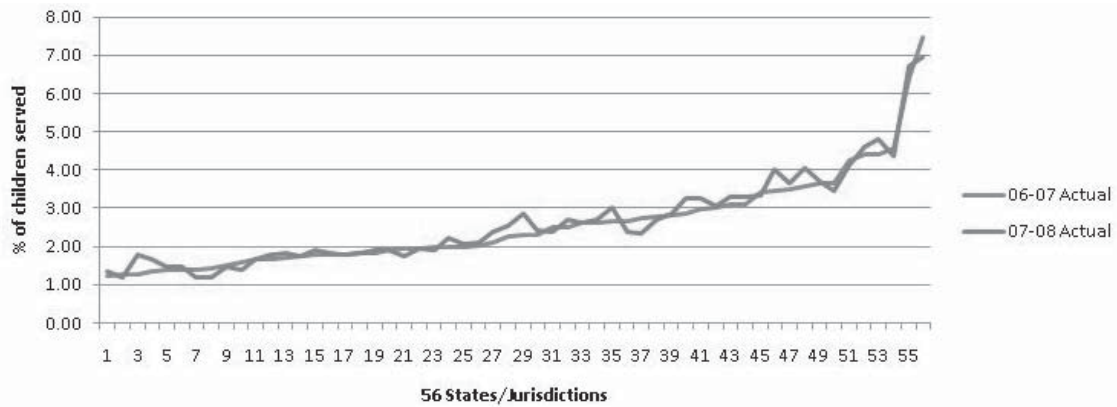


Figure 3 depicts the change in data from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08. Figure 3 shows that few States had notable change in their performance from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08. Table 2 and Figure 2 illustrate that while several States have made gains in their performance on Indicator 6 since their baselines, other States' performances in FY 2007-08 were below their baseline in FY 2004-05. Percentages above baseline are evident both in States that serve small percentages (e.g., 1.83%) of infants and toddlers (0-3) and those that serve a greater percentage (e.g., 6.72%).

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS

A number of States did not explain progress (or slippage) on Indicator 6 in their FY 2007-08 APRs beyond the explanation provided in their discussion of Indicator 5. Most of the themes that emerged in States that explained their progress were similar to those for Indicator 5. A number of States attributed their progress to an increased or continued focus on this Indicator at all levels of the program—State, regional, and local. States highlighted the coordination of their Child Find/Public Awareness activities, including partnering with other State agencies on efforts related to child find. For example, they discussed ways in which they had strengthened collaborative relationships to increase their referrals of potentially eligible infants and toddlers to the State's Part C program. Several States reported that previous changes in eligibility criteria had resulted in an increased numbers of infants identified and served by Part C. One State whose eligibility criteria had changed attributed its progress to educating its referral sources and providers so that they understood the changes.

States also attributed progress to increased emphasis on monitoring and/or changes in the State's data systems. For example, a State noted that by disaggregating data by regions, it is able to focus its efforts to improve its performance on Indicator 6 on particular challenges within each region. Others noted that their data systems now allowed them to capture information about referral sources, so that they could target individuals or programs with low referral rates.

A few States drew linkages across APR Indicators—for example, one State noted that a change in its service delivery system led to more timely services and also freed personnel to provide initial eligibility evaluations. Another cited its efforts to improve processes from referral through the development of the initial IFSP.

EXPLANATION OF SLIPPAGE

Some States noted that slippage in one or two large local programs within the State had a negative effect upon the State's overall performance. While a few States attributed progress to a change in eligibility criteria, other States noted that such a change had a negative impact on their numbers. A few States reported that a change in the instrument(s) used to establish eligibility had led to a decrease in the numbers of infants and toddlers identified as eligible. Another reported that physicians in the State are referring potentially eligible infants and toddlers to private providers, rather than to the Part C program.

Some States whose data showed either slippage or no change reported that although their program served more infants and toddlers than in the previous year, the rate of increase did not keep pace with the overall growth in the State's population. In contrast, another State attributed its slippage to a decrease in the State's overall population. Several States expressed concern that the U.S. Census numbers used for this Indicator were not truly reflective of their State's population. One State noted that the economic climate was having a negative impact on its population as families were leaving the State to seek employment elsewhere; another reported a high number of transient families

who move without leaving new contact information. Others noted that their State's budget crisis was affecting the Part C program's ability to identify and serve infants and toddlers. They expressed concerns that this would also be reflected in future APRs. For example, several States noted that budget issues were affecting personnel numbers, with vacant positions frozen or otherwise unfilled.

In FY 2007-08 more States made progress. Those States that experienced slippage focused on evaluating their system of child find at the State and regional/local levels, identifying programs and activities that were successful as well as those that were not successful. Local programs that met or exceeded the State's target for this Indicator were encouraged to share their successful strategies with other programs. Local programs that did not meet the State target were encouraged or required to develop local plans for reaching additional infants and toddlers. Improvement activities that were successful in one area of the State were shared with other programs. Improvement strategies that were not successful were discontinued or revised.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

States reported improvement activities for Indicator 6 in FY 2007-08. Table 3 shows the types of activities reported by States. Although States often reported more than one improvement activity within a given category for this Indicator (e.g., analyzing referral sources AND numbers of personnel needed to provide services; providing TA to local programs as follow-up to focused monitoring visits AND SICC members attending regional trainings to educate providers about the role of the SICC as a partner), each type of activity was counted only one time per State in this analysis. The examples provided in the descriptive paragraphs following the table are illustrative of States' work but are not an exhaustive list of all States' improvement activities.

Table 3: Types of Improvement Activities Reported by States

Types of Improvement Activities	Number of States
Other	40
Clarify/Examine/Develop Policies and Procedures	39
Improve Collaboration/Coordination	37
Provide Technical Assistance/Training/ Professional Development	36
Evaluation	33
Improve Data Collection and Reporting	20
Improve Systems Administration and Monitoring	26
Increase/Adjust FTE	7
Build Systems/Infrastructures of TA and Support	3

Overall, the types of improvement activities for Indicators 5 and 6 have changed little from year to year. Of note is the evidence in the FY 2007-08 APRs that States are building upon prior years' efforts to identify and serve infants and toddlers. They are demonstrating that they see the relationships among improvement activities and results,

and among Indicators. For instance, some States evaluated the effectiveness of completed and on-going improvement activities. Others worked with local programs to identify challenges and provide technical assistance as needed.

Most of the activities included in the category “other” reflected States’ overall Child Find and Public Awareness (CF/PA) endeavors. While many of these have been consistent across APRs, there was an emphasis in FY 2007-08 on coordinated State and local plans, rather than individual CF/PA activities.

Because several States have changed their eligibility criteria in the past few years, they have needed to clarify/examine/develop policies and procedures to reflect the changes. In some States where eligibility criteria have remained the same, they reported developing guidelines to promote statewide consistency in eligibility determinations. Others have clarified the use of informed clinical opinion with the goal of establishing consistency among evaluators. A number of States reported revising their policies/protocols for referrals. Several States have developed or adopted a universal referral form or added the referral source to the IFSP. One State reported that it had developed a Referral Status Update form, to address physicians’ concerns about the status of children referred, thereby strengthening the link between referral sources and the local Part C programs.

Two examples of activities to improve collaboration/coordination illustrate States’ building upon previous years’ efforts. Since the passage of the CAPTA legislation, State Part C and Child Protective Service programs have worked to establish a system for referring infants and toddlers involved with substantiated cases of abuse/neglect or pre-natal exposure to substance use to Part C. Several States reported in FY 2007-08 that a system is now in place and partners are collaborating on refining protocols, updating plans, etc. Several States that have had Assuring Better Child Health Development (ABCD) grants for several years reported on efforts to make the results of the grants sustainable. A number of States also mentioned collaboration with State Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) programs and with hospitals, particularly NICUs.

When eligibility criteria are changed, or policies and procedures updated, the primary referral sources (e.g., physicians, child care staff, and CPS workers) and service providers need training and technical assistance. Across States, training included annual conferences and workshops, as well focused events such as hospital grand rounds or SICC retreats. Training and technical assistance focused on system-level changes and on infants’ and toddlers’ social/emotional behavior, early signs of autism and related disorders, and on the use of specific evaluation instruments.

This year, a larger number of States (33 compared to 11 in FY 2006-07) reported evaluation improvement activities. States analyzed data trends, including referral sources, progress in implementation of APR Improvement Activities, county/program performance on numbers of infants/toddlers identified and served, demographic factors, gaps in identification and/or treatment of children with specified conditions, and outcome data on specific populations. States are using the results of these analyses to improve their Child Find efforts, both locally and statewide.

To improve data collection, and reporting, States have changed or updated State data systems to obtain all data needed for reporting in the APR, including referral sources and/or a mechanism to track non-compliance and timely correction of non-compliance. Of particular relevance to Indicators 5 and 6, one State reported that they had contracted with an outside consultant to develop a statistical model for forecasting the number of Part C eligible children. States also noted that they regularly report data to their SICC and regional programs/providers and post the data on their websites.

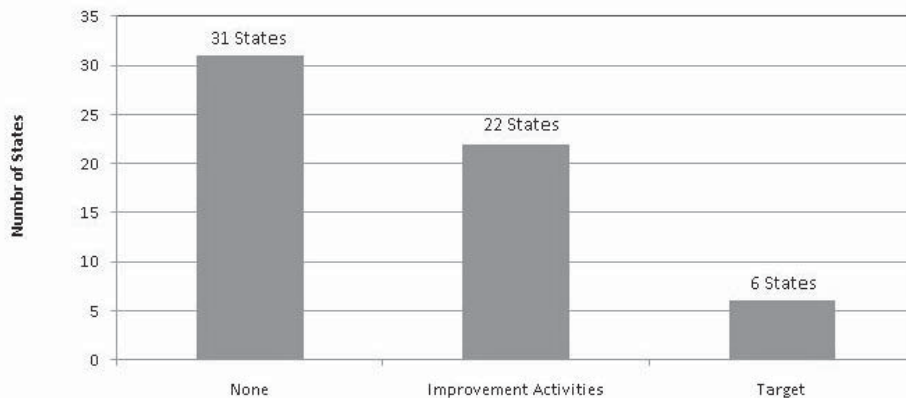
Several States conducted focused monitoring activities with local programs to improve systems administration and monitoring. States reported that staff worked with local programs to develop corrective action plans, based upon the programs' self-assessment, annual monitoring data, and quarterly reports. In most States, the plans are aimed at local programs that are not meeting the State's target for Indicators 5 and 6. States also report that they review data monthly or quarterly to ensure that it is both accurate and reliable.

A small number of States reported on increasing/adjusting FTEs and building an infrastructure for TA and support. Specific examples included adding a Birth-Five Consultant, increasing the number of teams available for initial evaluations, and utilizing or expanding the technical assistance offered by the ABCD project. No State described improvement activities related to program development for Indicator C6.

STATE PERFORMANCE PLANS REVISIONS

Figure 4 depicts the types of revisions States made to their SPPs.

Figure 4: Types of SPP Revisions



Of the 56 States that reported, 31 States made no revisions to their SPP. Of the remaining 25 States, 22 States made revisions to their improvement activities, six States made revisions to their targets and no State made revisions to its baseline (n > 56 because States could make revisions in multiple areas.)

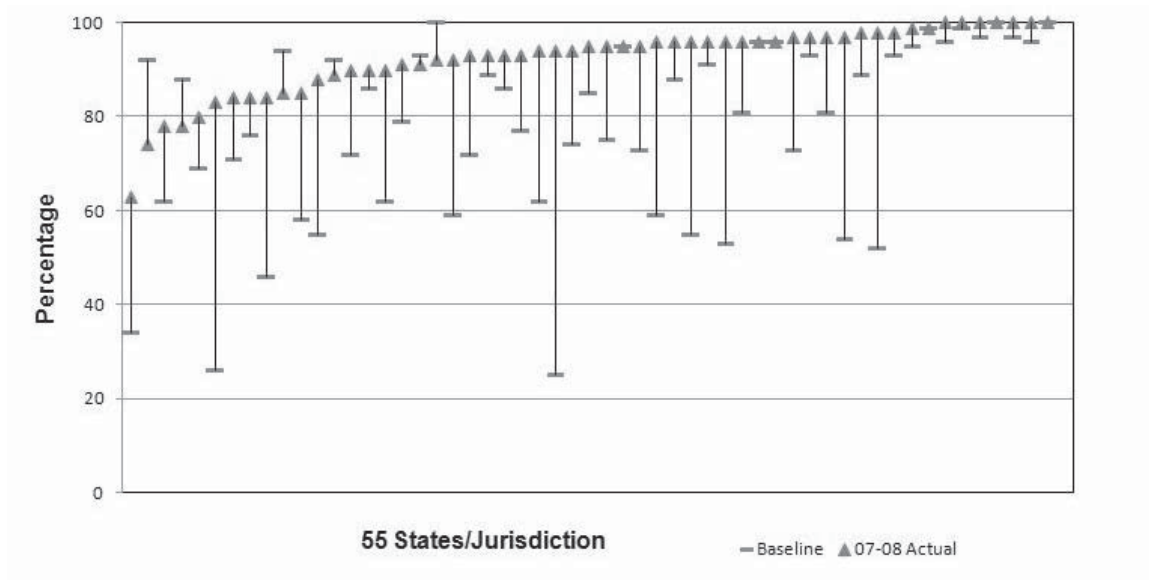
USE OF OSEP TA CENTERS

NECTAC provided various forms of TA to States in support of child find for children birth to 3. All States received information related to child find. All of the States attended national conferences, such as the OSEP National Early Childhood Conference, and/or participated in small group technical assistance activities, such as one of the OSEP Communities of Practice. Because Indicators 5 and 6 are performance Indicators, States that were determined to be "Needs Assistance" for the second year (NA2 States), generally did not report on technical assistance related to these Indicators. One NA2 State reported that they consulted with a State whose population and eligibility are similar but whose performance was in meets requirements. Another State consulted with NECTAC, their RRC, and States with similar eligibility definitions. One State reported that they worked with their RRC to develop additional improvement strategies for FY 2008-09. As mentioned previously, several States described their requirements for local programs not meeting the State's target.

INDIVIDUAL STATES' TRAJECTORY FROM BASELINE TO FY 2007-08

Figure 2 illustrates States' (N=55 States that reported baseline and actual FY 2007-08 data) trajectories from baseline performance in FY 2005-06 to performance in the most current reporting period, FY 2007-08. Each line represents one State's percent compliance from baseline (bar) to FY 2007-08 (triangle).

Figure 2: Trajectory from Baseline to Actual Performance in FFY 07-08



Of particular interest are the following observations:

- Most States (N=50) showed improvement or maintenance of good performance from baseline. Ten States seen on the top right of the chart, represent States that have been strong performers over time, with high baselines and high performance in FY 2007-08.
- Of the five States below baseline, performance ranged from negative 18 percentage points to negative 2 percentage points. All but one State showed current performance at or above 80%.
- The long lines represent States that have shown the greatest progress from baseline. Fourteen States gained 20 or more percentage points from baseline to FY 2007-08. Among the States reporting the greatest improvements were those reporting the poorest performance at baseline. Of those States, four achieved substantial compliance (at or above 96%) in FY 2007-08. The reported gains were 43 points (2 States), 41, 37 and 24 points respectively.
- The State that reported the lowest baseline performance is the State that demonstrated the greatest improvement trajectory by FY 2007-08 (from 25% to 94% or 69 points)
- Although individual State's trajectory has varied, the overall data supports the national trend toward improvement on this indicator previously noted.

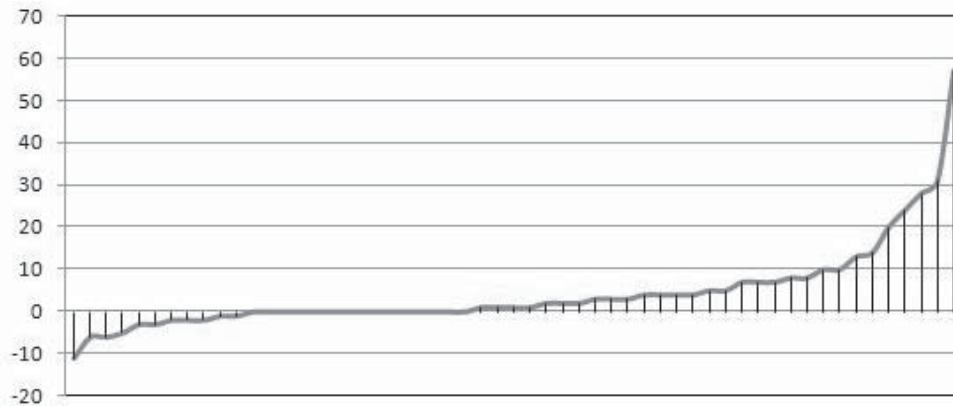
PROGRESS OR SLIPPAGE FY 2006-07 TO FY 2007-08

Figure 3 portrays data on relative progress and slippage in percentage points for each of 56 States from FY 2006-07 to FY 2007-08. For this analysis, progress and slippage was defined as having increased or decreased one or more percentage points. States with less than one percent difference were described as “no change”.

Of particular interest were the following observations:

- Thirty States reported from 1 to 56 percentage points of progress. Of those 30 States, 14 reported performance at or above 95%.
- The 13 States that reported “no change” were high performers, all above 90 percent, 11 at or above 95%.
- Thirteen States also reported from minus 1 to minus 12 percent slippage. However, four of the States were high performers (at or above 95%) and for those States, slippage was minimal.

Figure 3: Slippage/Progress FFY 06-07 to FFY 07-08



EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS

Most States attributed progress to successful improvement strategies which cumulatively addressed the causes of non-compliance. Examples of promising improvement activities reported by States are discussed below. A frequent theme in States' explanation of progress was the State's communications with local programs, emphasizing the importance of 100% compliance with timely services indicators (C-1 and C-7) and continual monitoring of and reporting on local program performance.

EXPLANATION OF SLIPPAGE

The most frequently mentioned reasons for not meeting compliance targets were personnel issues and inefficiencies in the IFSP process and/or service delivery models (22 States and 23 States respectively). These challenge areas are related, and narrative remarks are not easily categorized. For example, one State may mention difficulties scheduling evaluations (which could be an efficiency issue) and another might mention evaluators not being available (which may be more of a personnel shortage issue). States also mentioned increased numbers of children referred (N=10) and interagency issues (N=7), such as: high referral rates from CAPTA, difficulty in getting medical records or consents for children in foster care. The numbers of States reflect only those volunteering descriptions of various challenges. More meaningful is a qualitative discussion of related issues and causes described by States.

Personnel Issues

- Shortages of therapists, especially Speech Language Pathologists, were frequently mentioned. Some States noted a discrepancy in pay scales between the early intervention programs and hospitals and clinics that pay higher salaries as contributing factors.
- Shortages of developmental specialists or service coordinators were also mentioned, especially by States that rely on these personnel to coordinate the process and/or act as primary service providers.
- Difficulty in finding Interpreters caused delays, especially in rural areas or urban areas with high immigration rates and multiple languages.
- Having too few evaluators and /or difficulty scheduling evaluators was often described, especially in systems that used private providers or vendors to conduct evaluations.
- Shortages often resulted in high caseloads, which contributed to scheduling problems.
- States described a loss in private providers due to decreased Medicaid reimbursement rates or slowdowns in billing and reimbursement.
- Staff turnover and State hiring freezes were mentioned by several States.
- Reduced staff time was mentioned by two States that experienced furloughs or reduced hours because of severe budget cuts.
- One State described delays in credentialing private providers to work in the early intervention system.

Inefficient Process or Procedures

- Scheduling delays were frequently described, including difficulties contacting families and difficulties scheduling evaluation/assessments, and IFSP meetings. Often the lack of adequate numbers of available evaluators and providers was reported as contributing to scheduling difficulties, as was inadequate funding to pay for the number of evaluations needed.

- Communication challenges, such as: sharing of information in a timely manner, delays from point of entry, insufficient referral information, and delays in receiving evaluation reports.
- Delays in coordination with other agencies were reported, such as: difficulties in getting information and/or parental consent for increasing numbers of children referred from Child Protective Services (CPS) and under the Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act (CAPTA). Slower intake of children in foster care related to difficulties in quickly assigning a surrogate parent was also mentioned. Delays in receiving medical records or physician “prescriptions” and inadequate resources for vision and/or hearing screening were listed. Finally, requirements for prior authorizations for services were described as slowing evaluation/assessments as well as timely services, if efficient procedures were not in place.
- Having an inefficient service model was also described. Key issues were having multidisciplinary providers scheduling evaluation/assessments and writing reports separately. A related concern was having private providers (a vendor system) and inadequate or no funding for “team-time” or the IFSP meeting which contributed to scheduling and communication difficulties.

Increasing Numbers of Referrals

- Many States reported increasing enrollment as stretching program resources, and creating large caseloads. The difficulties meeting timelines for these children were exacerbated by personnel vacancies (e.g. hiring freezes and lack of available highly qualified personnel) and funding cuts.

Other Causes

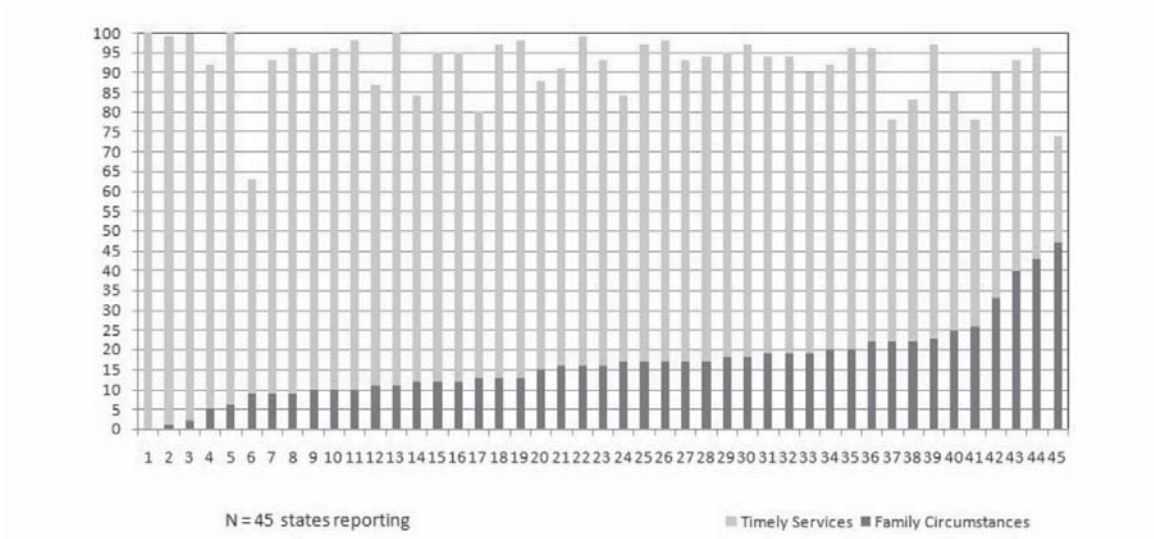
- Other challenges mentioned were inaccurate or insufficient data and misunderstandings about definitions and policies. Interestingly, data issues and misunderstanding of policies were mentioned much less in FY 2007-08 than in FY 2006-07.
- Severe weather was mentioned by a few States with large rural remote areas.

DELAYS ATTRIBUTABLE TO EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

Although States were not required to report the number or percent of children with delays attributable to family circumstances, 45 States reported a range from less than one percent to 47% with a mean of 17%. Family reasons for delay include illness, family holidays, missed appointments and other conflicts.

Figure 4 shows the percent of all children with delays due to exceptional family circumstances from least (.1%) to highest (47%) in the dark (bottom) portion of each State’s bar. The light (top) portion of the bar shows each State’s percent of children with no delays in meeting the 45 day timeline. Both sections together illustrate each State’s percent of compliance with the 100% target.

Figure 4: Compliance with 45-Day Timeline by State Showing Percent of Timely Services and Percent Delayed Due to Family Circumstances



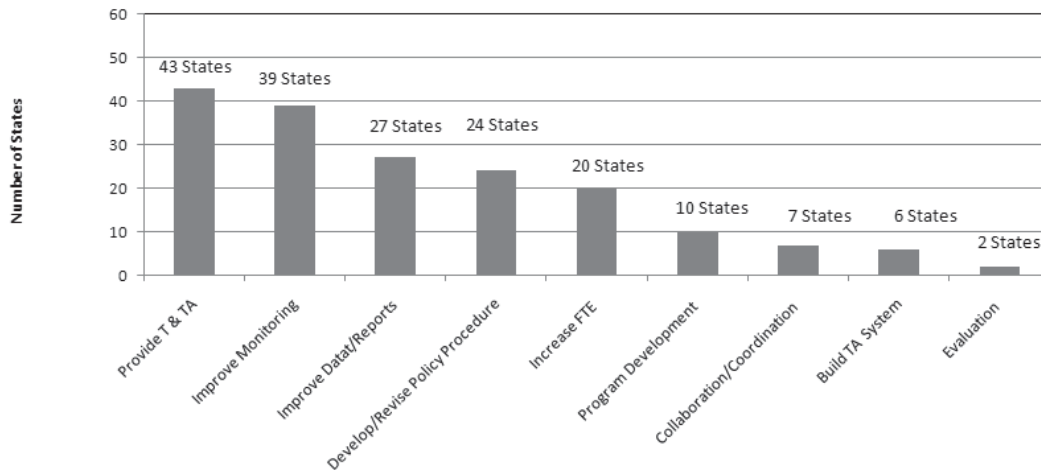
A large majority of States (35 of 45) report 20% or less due to family circumstances. Only 4 States were above 30%, two were territories with small numbers of children overall and one was an island territory, with a large a large proportion of children from an Intensive Care Unit where infant health issues were family reasons for delays.

Two States had interesting procedures to validate and reduce delays coded as due to family circumstances. One State investigated what seemed a high percent of delays coded as family reasons. The State sampled case notes for 25% of delays. The State found 25% were either not acceptable as “family reasons” or had no justification. The overall data was then adjusted by the 25% estimated inaccuracy. The State reporting the lowest percent of delays due to family reasons (.1%) has a three year history of substantial compliance (99%) on this indicator. The State does not allow local programs to include instance of delay due to “family reasons” in the total number meeting timelines, although the numbers are still reported for State use. The State found this practice substantially reduced delays due to family reasons.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

In FY 2007-08, States reported an array of improvement activities. Figure 5 provides data on numbers of States reporting implementation of various types of improvement activities. Most States mentioned providing technical assistance and training, improving administration and monitoring, improving data systems, clarifying policies and procedures, and increasing personnel.

Figure 5: Types of Improvement Activities



States' narrative descriptions of improvement activities were frequently linked to the reported causes of non-compliance and efforts to improve both efficiency and effectiveness of practice.

Training and TA (T & TA) Activities

T & TA activities were the most frequently reported activities during FY 2007-08. This replaced monitoring which was the most frequently reported activity in FY 2006-07, but second this year. It is interesting that most State reported targeted TA activities related to the root causes of noncompliance discovered from data reports and monitoring activities. For example:

- Targeted TA addressed concerns in Corrective Action Plans (CAP). In some high performing States, each finding of noncompliance triggered a CAP and/or TA to problem-solve and correct concerns.
- Regional administrative structures worked closely with local programs, teams, and/or providers to continually review performance and to plan and implement improvement strategies. Strategies included targeting TA to concerns revealed by data, peer mentoring programs for program directors, and sharing successful improvement strategies across regions.
- Local/regional administrative units also were involved in regular reviews of team and/or provider progress and targeted TA to improve performance.

States also reported statewide TA to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of provider practice or the service delivery approach. Frequently reported training initiatives were reported as follows:

- T & TA on evidence-based evaluation assessment procedures, including functional assessment of the whole child to replace discipline specific assessments and separate reports
- Use of Routines-based Interviews to develop functional outcomes and interventions
- Joint training on authentic assessments for C & 619
- Instituting a more efficient IFSP process, including pilots of a one day process to conduct assessments and the initial IFSP meeting
- Training on new IFSP forms and guidance with efficient procedures and data elements that were easier to track and document
- Training and TA in order to change service delivery model – a primary service provider or transdisciplinary team model, to increase efficiency and extend the reach of available personnel.

Although not as frequently as targeted TA, States also reported ongoing training activities, primarily on-going orientation, which emphasized the importance of timelines and on-going competency-based training to qualify new staff as EI providers.

Continuous Monitoring and Review of Data

A common activity in States reporting improvement was on-going monitoring and reporting on regional and/or local performance (e.g., keeping all stakeholders focused on achieving timelines for every child). Activities included the following:

- Review of local performance through focused monitoring, review of data on timelines, use of a web-based data system and training locals to generate reports on their performance, and use of self- assessment systems or requiring documentation of each instance of non-compliance.
- States used “tickler” systems, timeline “alerts,” a flowchart with timelines for the IFSP process, and notices to providers to keep local awareness of this indicator high.
- In States with State data systems, performance reports were made regularly (quarterly, monthly or even weekly to areas with CAPs) to regional administrative units (Single Points of Entry) program managers, supervisors and service coordinators and even service providers.
- Other States required local performance reports quarterly, monthly, weekly or in some cases on all instances of noncompliance.
- Some States made on-going public reports. For example, local performance was reported to Local Interagency Councils (LICCs), the ICC, and/or posted on the State website.

- Some States tied fiscal rewards and sanctions to performance on timelines. For example, one State has higher evaluation reimbursement rates for teams completing evaluation and assessments within 14 days.
- Verification and requiring corrective action plans tied to specific causes of noncompliance were reported. For example, in one State, managers monitored to see if any delay is specific to individual staff, referral agencies or geographic area to ensure corrections are targeted to causes. Another State required a corrective action plan and written documentation of every instance of non-compliance.
- States also reported using monitoring information to target technical assistance (TA) and training to specific programs to help them correct specific causes of delay.

Clarify and Revise Policy and Procedure

States most often reported revision of policies and procedures to improve efficiency, streamline procedures and improve oversight and quality assurance. Less frequently reported were activities to clarify policy and procedure. Those types of activities were more apparent in reports of previous years. Example activities included:

- Changes in intake and streamlining evaluation/ assessment procedures to better meet timelines and improve quality
- Revise IFSP forms and guidance to improve data collection, tracking, timelines and statewide consistency
- Streamlining prior authorization process and service coordinator enrollment
- Two States reported reducing or setting case load maximums for service coordinators to 35 and 40.

Increase Personnel and Increase Efficient Use of Personnel

Many States reported comprehensive activities to increase the numbers of qualified personnel and fill vacancies more efficiently. Several States mentioned creating ICC taskforces, studying recruitment and retention needs statewide, and planning multiple improvement activities to bring more providers into the system and deploy them efficiently to meet timelines. Specific activities reported included the following:

- Many States reported increasing the number of evaluators through additional contracts with private providers, configuring evaluation teams and backup teams, reducing the number of evaluators who see each child, and creating a competency-based EI Certificate to allow more providers to perform evaluations. For example, one State reported training new disciplines (e.g., nurses, social workers and child development specialists) in evaluation and providing a hands-on training and mentoring program to increase numbers of staff available to conduct multidisciplinary assessments.
- Collaborations with Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) created student practicums and recruitment plans, programs for paraprofessional therapists, and links with 4 year and graduate programs to create career paths. States also worked with IHEs to create an EI Specialist or Developmental Specialist degree

program and State certification. Some States offered tuition awards or reimbursements in return for promise of service.

- Strategies to increase therapy services included: use of SLP, OT and PT assistants, extensive recruitment efforts including direct mailings to all licensed therapists, and changing to a primary provider model to extend the numbers of families each therapist can see. One State reported use of a specialized therapeutic service code to waive standard rates and offer competitive salaries for therapists.
- Several States reported increasing provider rates.
- One State described a pilot in a rural area allowing contracts with special instructors and hospital staff.
- Revising policies and procedures to expedite the process for hiring staff or building staff minimums and enrollment procedures into program contracts were also mentioned by several States.
- Several States mentioned evaluating how staff are deployed from intake through initiation of services to increase efficiency (e.g., revising caseloads based on travel routes, developing a workgroup to monitor and improve scheduling and service delivery, and using electronic scheduling to efficiently fill appointments and cancellations)

Other Improvement Strategies

States reported a variety of other activities, such as improved interagency collaborations for screening, referral and information exchanges, restructuring service delivery structures to improve efficiency, building TA infrastructure, and piloting distance service delivery options. Some interesting examples included the following:

- Increased collaboration or MOUs with social services and CAPTA to support local implementation of a "multiple pathways" model for screening and referral to appropriate agencies, use of a universal referral form, and creation of a record review database for universal reporting
- Collaboration with newborn hearing screening and detection programs
- A collaboration with a medical school to train physicians and other community health providers about screening, diagnosis, role of medical professional in DD.
- Reducing regional administrative units
- One State reported outreach to the Department of Corrections for a joint workgroup on early childhood risk factors, reaching incarcerated parents, parent education on child development, and surveying incoming inmates on ages and locations of children.
- Enhancements to TA infrastructure included creation of a pool of interagency trainers to implement service coordination module-based competency, development of a system for tracking, reporting and analyzing T & TA, development of welcome materials for families, and other training materials and guidance for uniform practices in referral to IFSP processes.

- Several States mentioned garnering legislative support for new positions; or blocking or reducing program cuts. One State developed a funding formula for sustainability of the EI program, which the ICC will use to advocate for more funding.
- One large rural State conducted a feasibility study on the use of telemedicine technology to allow remote sites to conduct IFSP meetings at a distance. Procedures were successful and will be incorporated.
- A State piloted the removal of some conditions from automatically eligible status, tracking the children, and referring when delays appeared. The pilot was considered successful and procedural and eligibility changes are in progress.

CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Ten States reported on correction of findings of noncompliance for the last 2 or 3 federal fiscal reporting periods (2004, 2005 & 2006). Four of those States reported that findings were either timely or subsequently corrected, while six States had one or more findings still not corrected. Twenty-seven States reported on findings for FY 2006-07. Twelve States reported timely corrections, nine reported subsequent corrections and eight reported one or more findings still not corrected. Six States had no findings of non-compliance in FY 2006. Twelve States did not report on prior findings.

USE OF OSEP TA CENTERS

NECTAC provided information to all States. All States sent representatives to national conferences, such as the OSEP National Early Childhood Conference, the Annual Inclusion Institute and the ECO Conference. Additionally, NECTAC staff co-planned and co-presented at RRC regional meetings. NECTAC provided on-going consultation impacting this indicator for eight States.

STATES WITH NEEDS ASSISTANCE DETERMINATION AND ACTIONS TAKEN

IDEA identifies specific technical assistance or enforcement actions for States that are not determined to meet requirements. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education must take one or more actions against States that are determined to be in the category of “needs assistance” for two consecutive years (NA2). One of the actions the Secretary may take is to advise States of available sources of technical assistance that may help the State address the area of need. Seven States received a “needs assistance” determination for a second year based on their performance on Indicator 7. Five States reported on technical assistance accessed and how they used the assistance to improve. Two States did not mention use of TA. Table 1 describes TA States accessed and impacts of TA.

Table 1: TA Accessed and Impact

Types of TA Accessed	Impacts of TA / Improvements
Reviewed Part C APR/SPP FY 2007 Analysis Reports reviewed to see other State activity. SERRC TA.	Revised the SPOE monthly reporting form. Considering 1 visit for evaluation to IFSP
Conference calls w/ DAC & SERRC	Improved validity/reliability of data
Resources from OSEP sponsored Conferences. TA from NERRC, NECTAC & OSEP	Used information in ongoing discussions with early intervention programs; monthly calls, data reviews and onsite visits.
TA from RRC & NECTAC websites; TA from WRRC & NECTAC	Enhanced data collection, monitoring and analysis. Clarified policy clarification and guidance for locals. Conducted targeted TA and developed plans to enhance targeted T&TA
Used Investigative questions for 7 and local Corrective Action Plans (from FRRC Calendar). Used NECTAC's CAP template and strategies. Attended sessions at the OSEP National EC Conference and Leadership Conferences.	Explored with county programs to understand root causes

INDICATOR 8: EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITION

Completed by NECTAC

INTRODUCTION

The text of Part C Indicator 8 reads, “Percent of all children exiting Part C who received timely transition planning to support the child’s transition to preschool and other appropriate community services by their third birthday including: (A) IFSPs with transition steps and services (B) Notification to LEA, if child potentially eligible for Part B; and (C) Transition conference, if child potentially eligible for Part B.”

Indicator 8 is a compliance indicator with a performance target of 100%. Each of the three sub-indicators of Indicator 8 relate to specific Part C regulations.

- Sub-indicator (A) *IFSPs with transition steps and services*—Part C regulations specify that “The IFSP must include the steps to be taken to support the transition of the child, in accordance with 303.148” [303.344(h)].
- Sub-indicator (B) *Notification to LEA, if child potentially eligible for Part B*—Part C regulations specify that the Lead Agency will “Notify the local education agency for the area in which the child resides that the child will shortly reach the age of eligibility for preschool services under Part B” [303.148(b)(1)].
- Sub-indicator (C) *Transition conference, if child potentially eligible for Part B*—Part C regulations specify that “In the case of child who may be eligible for preschool services under Part B of the Act, with the approval of the family of the child, [the lead agency will] convene a conference among the lead agency, the family, and the local educational agency” [303.148(b) (2)(i)].

This analysis of Part C Indicator 8 is based on a review of FY 2007-08 Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for 56 States and jurisdictions. For the purpose of this report, all States and territories are referred to collectively as States. All 56 States reported data for all three sub-indicators demonstrating improvement in data reporting capacity compared to previous reporting periods. In previous reporting years some States were unable to report performance.

DATA COLLECTION

Although some States used electronic data systems, most States continued to rely on monitoring mechanisms for reporting purposes, with variation in processes, practices, and category descriptions. Most States used cyclical program monitoring, file reviews, or desk audits for data verification though some States described a process of self-assessment as part of the monitoring process. Information on the number of States using various data collection methods is presented in Table 1. Some States did not report data sources, or the method used for data gathering was not clear.

The number of files used to determine State performance varied considerably. Some States monitored or reviewed a percentage of files or data sets of either State or locally gathered data, while other States provided documentation for all children in a particular

category of transition, evidenced by States' use of electronic transfer of data. Some States reported efforts to add fields to State data systems to capture required data elements while others reported issues related to the efficacy of current data systems affecting reliability and validity of data.

Table 1: Types of Data Sources Reported for Actual Performance

Data Sources	8A		8B		8C	
	06-07	07-08	06-07	07-08	06-07	07-08
Monitoring/File Review	33	29	22	18	23	24
Monitoring/Self-Assessment		10		5		5
Monitoring and Data System	14	5	9	3	16	6
Data System	4	4	20	19	15	10
Other		4	1	3		4
Not given, unclear	3	4	2	8		7
Total States	54	56	54	56	54	56

COMPARISON OF BASELINE, TARGET AND ACTUAL PERFORMANCE

Actual Performance

Many States are performing well or making progress on all sub-indicators of early childhood transition. Ten States reported 100% compliance on all three sub-indicators, while an additional fourteen States demonstrated substantial compliance (at or above 95%) across all sub-indicators.

Table 2 shows the number of States reporting performance at various levels of compliance. Figures 1, 2 and 3 display the distribution for FY 2007-08 State performance for the three sub-indicators, illustrating the percentage of States at varying levels of compliance.

Table 2: Distribution of FY 2007-08 Actual Performance (N=56)

Actual Performance	Number of States		
	8A Transition Steps	8B Notification to LEA	8C Transition Conference
100%	19	32	13
95–99%	20	13	18
90–94%	6	5	7
80–89%	8	3	9
70–79%	1	3	3
60–69%	0		4
50–59%	2		2

8A—IFSPs with Transition Steps and Services

Thirty-nine States (70%) reported transition steps on the IFSP at full or substantial compliance levels, with only three States (5%) reporting performance below 80%. Fourteen States (25%) demonstrated performance ranging from 80 to 95% compliance.

8B—Notification to LEA

Of the three sub-indicators, more States (N=32) were in full compliance for sub-indicator 8B (Notification to the LEA) than for either of the other two sub-indicators. Full or substantial compliance were reported by 45 States (80%), while five of the remaining 11 States demonstrated compliance of over 90%. All but three States reported compliance on this sub-indicator of 80% or above. Six States reported the use of an OSEP approved opt-out policy and an additional six States referenced the development of an opt-out policy.

8C—Transition Conference

Thirteen States (23%) reported 100% compliance for holding timely transition planning conferences, while another 18 States (32%) reported substantial compliance. State performance for sub-indicator 8C was lower than the other two sub-indicators which is consistent with prior reporting periods. Nine States (16%) reported compliance below 80%, with two States reporting performance below 60 percent.

Figure 1: Percentage of States' Compliance—
IFSPs with Transition Steps (8A)

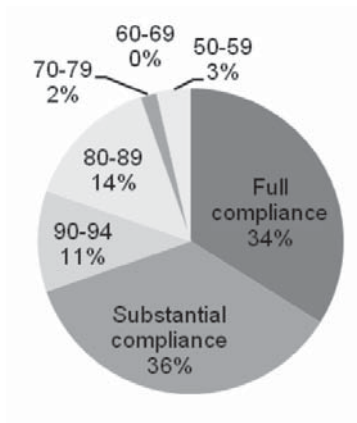


Figure 2: Percentage of States' Compliance—
Notification to LEA (8B)

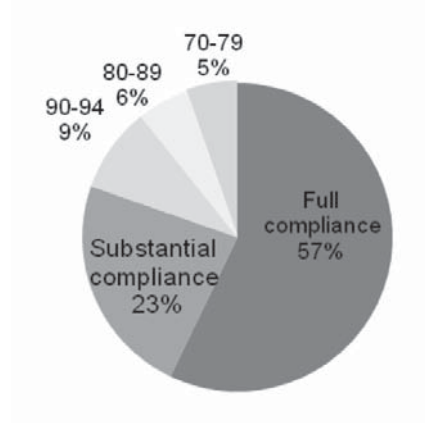
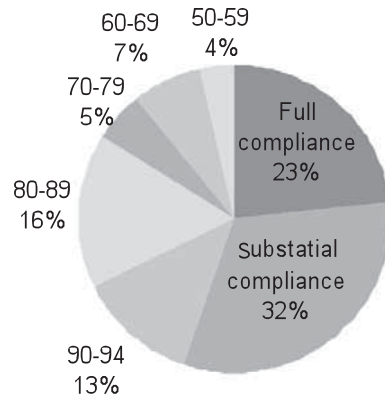


Figure 3: Percentage of States Compliance—Transition Planning Conference (8C)



When comparing the three figures, States showed higher rates of compliance in notifying LEAs of potentially eligible children (80%) and documenting transition steps within the IFSP (70%) than for holding timely transition planning conferences (55%). This pattern is similar to prior reporting periods.

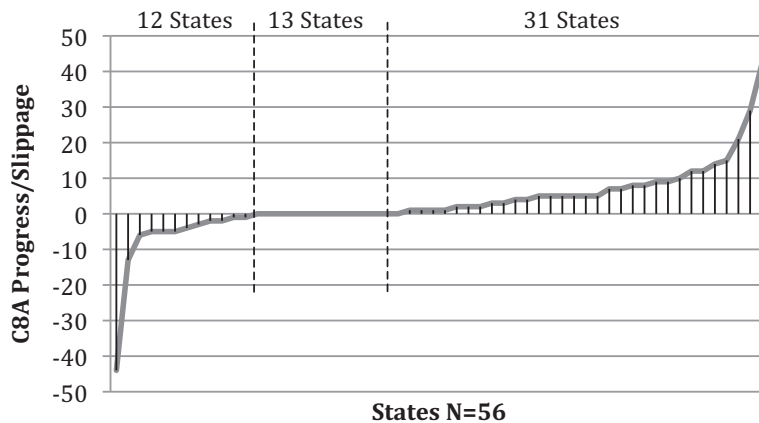
COMPARISON OF PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Figures 4 through 6 illustrate progress and slippage of actual performance for FY 2007-08 in relation to FY 2006-07. Overall, States made significant progress on each of the three sub-indicators.

8A—IFSPs with Transition Steps and Services

For this sub-indicator, 31 States demonstrated progress while 12 States demonstrated slippage. As compared to FY 06-07, ten States remained at 100% performance and another three States maintained their performance level.

Figure 4: 8A Progress/Slippages—IFSPs with Transition Steps

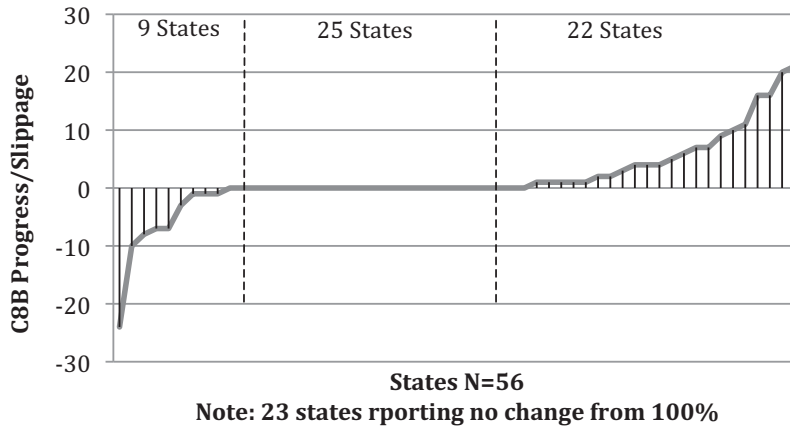


Note: Ten states reporting no change from 100%

8B—Notification to LEA

For sub-indicator 8B, 22 States made progress. Nine States reported slippage, though it should be noted that four of the 12 States reporting slippage demonstrated substantial compliance. Five States reported slippage of five percentage points or more. Of the 25 States reporting no change, 23 States maintained a performance rate of 100% from the previous year.

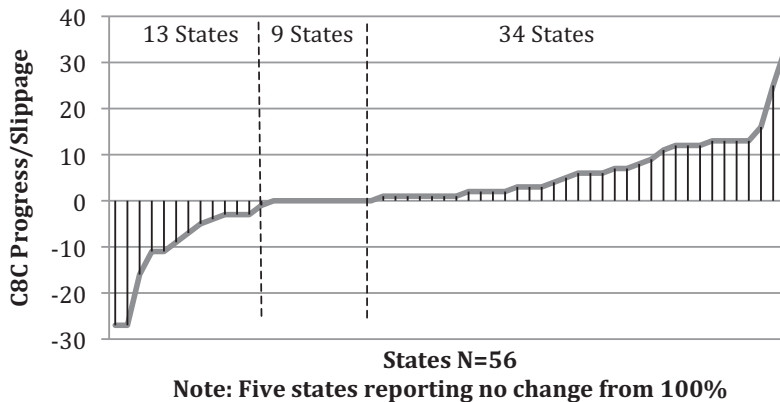
Figure 5: 8B Progress/Slippage—Notification to LEA



8C—Transition Conference

Of the 34 States reporting progress, 12 States improved performance to full or substantial compliance of 95% to 100%. Thirteen States demonstrated slippage, though three of those States continued to demonstrate substantial compliance. For this sub-indicator, nine States reported no change with five States maintaining 100% compliance from the previous year.

Figure 6: 8C Progress/Slippage—Transition Planning Conference



Most slippage occurred in single sub-indicators within States although several States reported slippage in two of the three sub-indicators. One State demonstrated considerable slippage across all three sub-indicators.

Explanation of Progress and Slippage

Slippage or progress was addressed globally by some States, in general terms across all sub-indicators. States often provided multiple reasons for either progress or slippage within the explanation.

States sustaining or demonstrating progress across sub-indicators reported a variety of activities for which progress was attributed. Training was mentioned most often as a contributing factor. Other factors, listed in by the frequency in which they were detailed, included a focus on transition by the State or lead agency, monitoring (including monitoring activities and corrective processes), and clarification of regulations and policies. For indicator 8A, changes made to IFSP forms to include transition-steps contributed to improved performance.

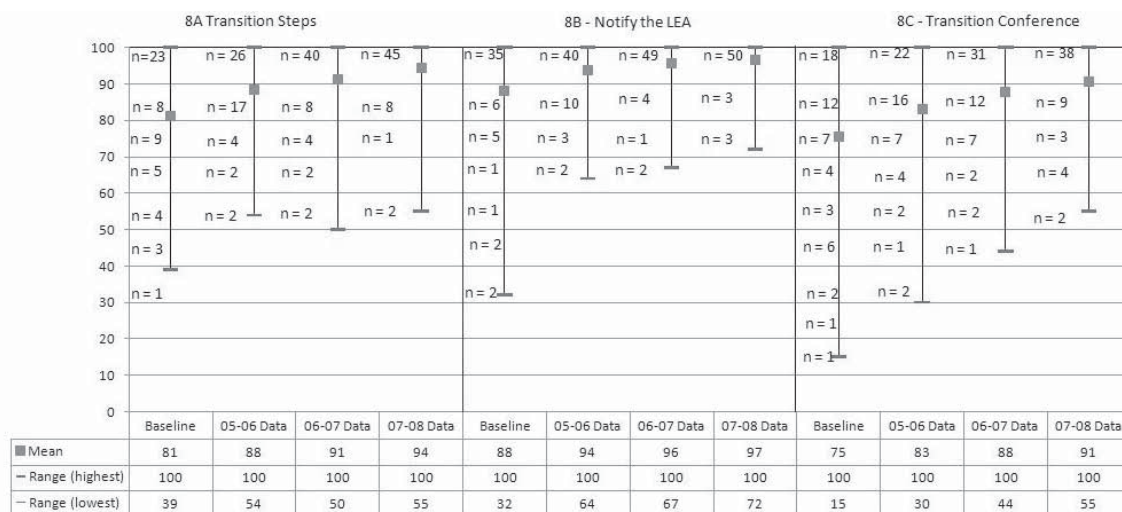
Of the States demonstrating slippage, a variety of reasons were reported. A lack of understanding and/or documentation was cited, as was the collective impact of staff turnover, shortage of personnel, higher caseloads, and increased numbers of children. Several States mentioned the impact of a single program's performance (or a few programs) reflected on the entire State.

It should be noted that even though slippage was reported, some States reported minor slippage of no more than one percentage point while others States reported slippage but still demonstrated substantial compliance.

Trajectory from Baseline to Actual Performance

Figure 7 illustrates the change from baseline to FY 2007-08 performance for the three sub-indicators demonstrating progress over the past four years.

Figure 7: Comparison of Baseline, Actual 05-06, Actual 06-07, and Actual 07-08



Performance on sub-indicator 8A (Transition Steps on the IFSP) has increased from a mean of 81% at baseline to 88% in FY 2005-06, 91% in FY 2006-07, and 94% in FY 2007-08, for a total four year increase of 13%. The range in percentages reported for this sub-indicator remained relatively the same for the past three years, ranging from 50% to 100%. In FY 2007-08 only three States reported performance below 80%

The increase in State compliance of notification to LEAs, as measured in sub-indicator 8B, changed from a mean of 88% at baseline to 94% in FY 2005-06, 96% in FY 2006-07 and 97% in FY 2007-08 representing a 9% increase over four years. The range in percentages for this sub-indicator dramatically decreased from a wide spread of 68 percentage points at baseline to a range of 28 percentage points in FY 2007-08. Only three States reported percentages under 80%.

The data for sub-indicator 8C, transition conference, has shown improvement over time, reflecting the work of States to improve performance in this area. The mean baseline data of 75% increased to 83% (FY 2005-06), 88% in FY 2006-07 and was reported at 91% in FY 2007-08. This change has shown a significant increase of 16% over the four reporting years. The range in this sub-indicator has decreased steadily over all 4 years of data from 85, 70 and 56 and 45 percentage points, respectively, indicating steady improvement in national performance.

Figures 8, 9 and 10 illustrate change from baseline to FY 2007-08 performance for each State on the three sub-indicators. State performance progressed from left to right depicting performance as “below”, “same as”, or “above” baseline. States demonstrated performance improvement on all three sub-indicators.

Figure 8: 8A—IFSPs with Transition Steps, Change in State Performance from Baseline to FY 2007-08

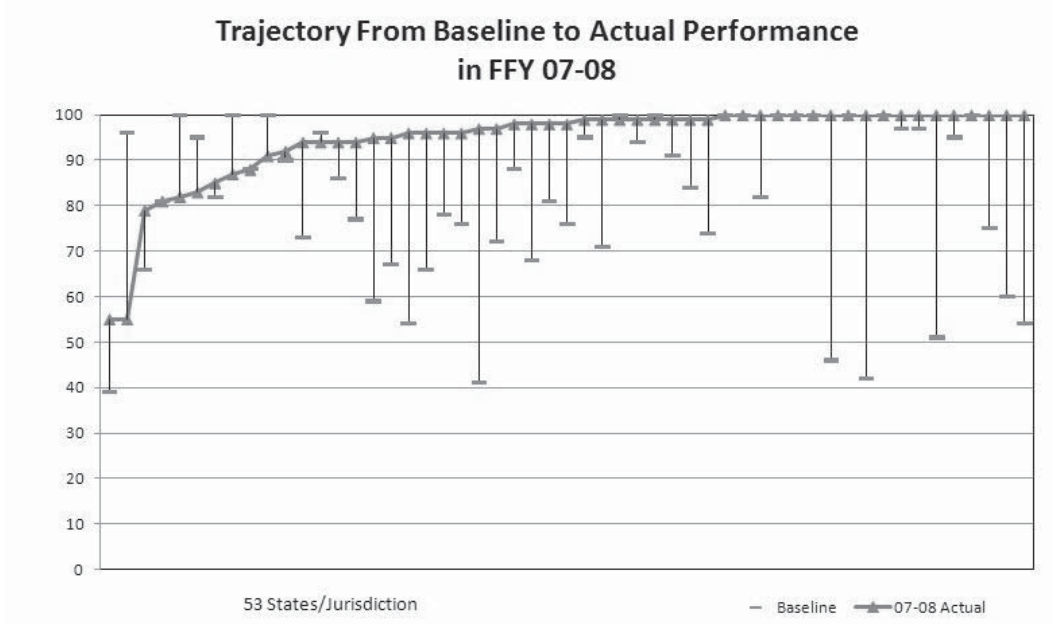


Figure 9: 8B—Notification to LEA, Change in State Performance from Baseline to FY 2007-08

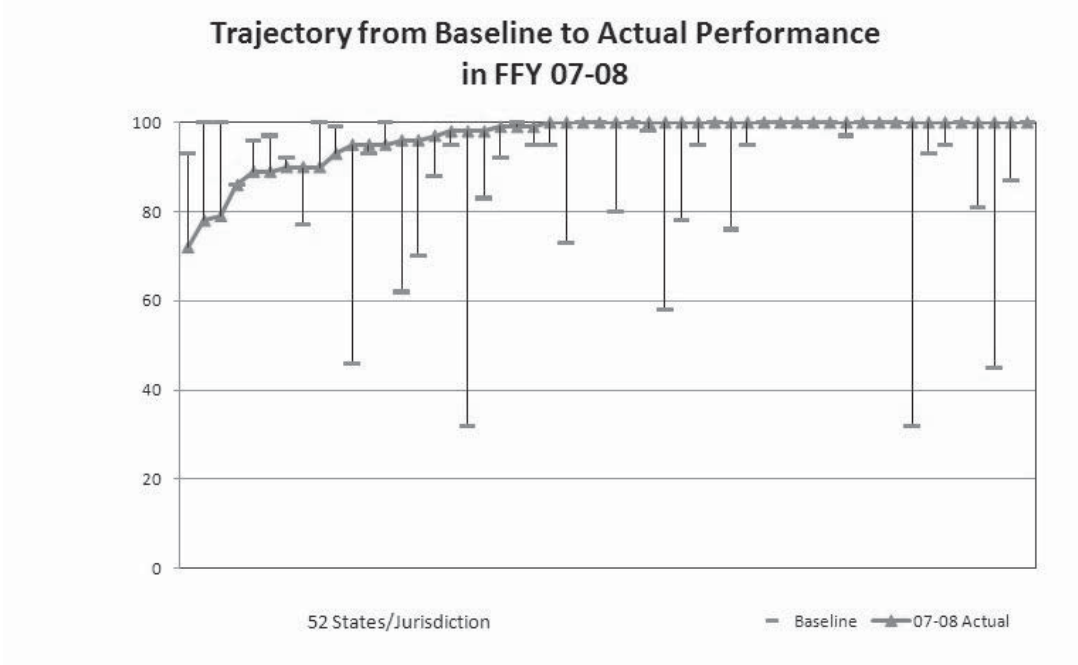
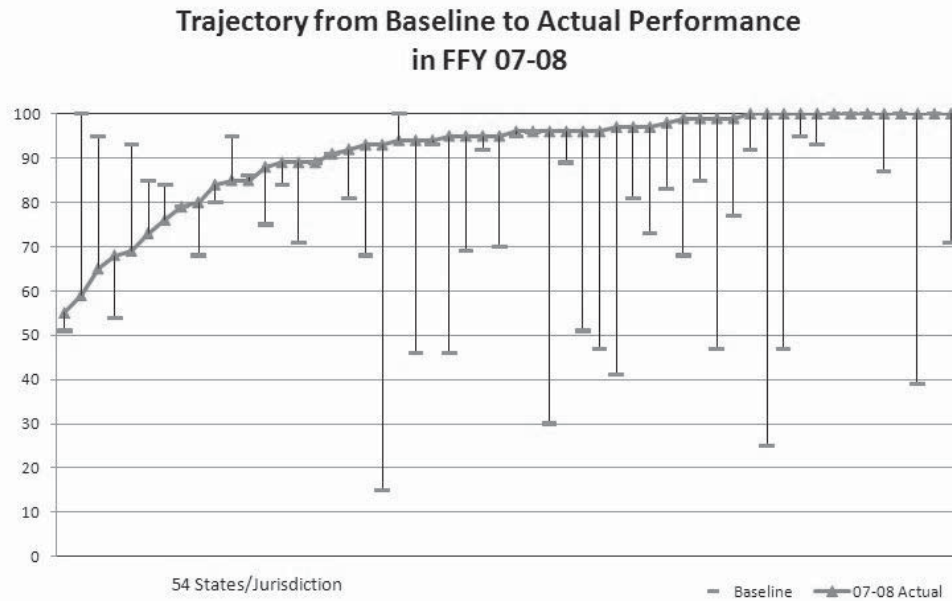


Figure 10: 8C—Transition Conference, Change in State Performance from Baseline to FY 2007-08



IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Training and technical assistance, monitoring, collaboration, data collection, and clarification of policies and procedures are the improvement activities States most often engaged in during FY 2006-07, and were generally used across all sub-indicators. These types of improvement activities were similar to the activities conducted in FY 2005-06 that States credited for their progress. Table 3 shows the frequency of the different types of improvement activities reported by States in the three sub-indicators.

Table 3: Types of Improvement Activities Reported by States

Types of Improvement Activities	Number of States by Sub-indicator FY 2007-08		
	8A	8B	8C
Technical Assistance/Training/Professional Development	37	42	42
Systems Administration and Monitoring	37	37	47
Collaboration/Coordination	25	29	29
Data Collection and Reporting	23	28	26
Policies and Procedures	23	27	26
Evaluation	6	7	7
Systems and Infrastructures of Technical Assistance and Support	6	6	7
Increase/Adjust FTE	3	4	4
Program Development	2	2	2

Technical Assistance, Training and Professional Development

Training and technical assistance, often occurring collaboratively with Part B and other stakeholders was the improvement activity most often mentioned by States.

These activities, used consistently across sub-indicators, were provided at statewide meetings and conferences, as part of the monitoring process, at regularly scheduled or required trainings, in conjunction with new policies, procedures or materials, or at the request of local administration. A few States updated or created training modules or DVDs, and one State completed the development of an online transition course collaboratively with Part B.

Systems Administration and Monitoring

Many States described the monitoring process and subsequent development and implementation of corrective practices to address issues of noncompliance. As a result of monitoring procedures, many local systems adopted processes of self-monitoring most often in the form of regularly scheduled review of data.

Collaboration and Coordination

Collaborative activities and coordination across programs were often mentioned improvement activities. States reported a variety of collaborative activities with Part B, families, and other community stakeholders including the formulation of policies, the clarification and understanding of processes, the development or revision of guidance documents. Such documents included updated interagency agreements and the development and dissemination of family information in the form of packets, booklets and brochures. Many States described the implementation of local on-going collaborative partnerships to facilitate coordinated transitions, support families, and to identify and address any transition issues. Several States mentioned the creation of informational DVDs.

Data Collection and Reporting

Many States reported a variety of activities to develop, refine or maintain data collection and reporting capacity, including the electronic transfer of notification information (sub-indicator 8B), the addition of "tickler" or reminders of upcoming date-sensitive, child-specific requirements for transition, and the development of additional elements for capturing transition information within existing data platforms. Elements most often mentioned were unique identifiers, required dates, transition requirements activities in electronic IFSPs, and reasons for delay in transition conferences.

Policies and Procedures

Many States reported the completion of improvement activities related to clarification, revision or development of policies and procedures or the creation of materials to communicate policy and procedure to both families and providers. Some States reported on opt-out policy clarification and approval status. States also reported revisions, updates and creation of new policy, handbooks, toolkits, IFSP format, and training modules to reflect IDEA 2004 and APR reporting requirements and general transition processes.

CORRECTION OF NON-COMPLIANCE

In their APRs, States reported correction of non-compliance from the previous reporting period. Some States reported on outstanding non-compliance from FY 2005-06 as well. According to OSEP's review, as noted in Table 4 below, many States were successful in correcting non-compliance in a timely manner: 26 out of 36 States on 8A, 17 of 25 States on 8B and 23 of 40 States on 8C.

Table 4: State Distribution of Correction of Noncompliance

	Transition Steps 8A	Notification 8B	Transition Conference 8C
Timely Correction	26	17	23
Uncompleted Correction	10	8	17
Total State Non-compliance	36	25	40

The number of States describing actions taken to identify and correct non-compliance increased as compared to FY 2006-07, reflecting improvements to State systems of data collection, verification, and general supervision, although the amount of detail provided by States in their APRs varied considerably.

USE OF OSEP TA CENTERS

All States received a standard set of basic technical assistance on early childhood transition such as Part C and Section 619 Coordinator listserv postings and dissemination of updates to the NECTAC, NECTC, and Transition Initiative websites. States also received information on resources posted to the SPP/APR web site specifically for Indicators 8 and B12. Upon request, 19 States received less extensive technical assistance resources via telephone, email and face-to-face meetings on the topics of evaluation, child find, interagency collaboration and transition.

Concurrent and post conference sessions on transition and networking opportunities with colleagues were provided during the December 2007 OSEP National Early Childhood Conference. NECTAC staff collaborated with the Regional Resource Center Program during the winter and spring of 2008 by providing TA on early childhood transition in five regional meetings for Part C and Part B State level personnel. NECTAC and the RRCP provided two conference calls on evidenced-base practice and data sharing mechanisms. Onsite presentations and training were conducted with two States and five States received more intensive, sustained ongoing consultation by NECTAC and their respective RRCs.

STATES WITH NEEDS ASSISTANCE DETERMINATION FOR TWO YEARS (NA2) AND ACTIONS TAKEN

IDEA identifies States specific technical assistance or enforcement actions for States that have not met requirements. States with a determination of needs assistance for two consecutive years (NA2) must complete one or more actions as directed by the Secretary, one of which is the receipt of technical assistance.

States may have received an NA2 determination because of performance on other indicators in addition to Indicator 8. This analysis only describes technical assistance accessed and actions taken related to the early childhood transition indicator. Performance on Indicator 8 was one of the considerations for 12 States in the category of NA2 in one or more of the sub-indicators: one State in all three sub-indicators, five States in two sub-indicators and six States in a single sub-indicator. Table 5 shows the distribution of NA2 determinations across sub-indicators.

Table 5: Distribution of NA2 Determinations

	Number of States	Transition Steps 8A	Notification 8B	Transition Conference 8C
	1	x	x	x
	2		x	x
	2		x	
	3	x		x
	4			x
Total	12	4	5	10

As displayed in Table 6, the NA2 States reported progress across all sub-indicators. All of the States demonstrated progress for 8A, 90% of States reported progress for 8C, and 80% for 8B. Slippage was reported by one State for sub-indicators 8B and 8C. Progress was reported to a level of full (100%) or substantial (95% or higher) compliance by three of four States in documenting transition steps, four of five States for notification, and five of 10 for holding timely transition conferences.

Table 6: NA2 State Progress

	Transition Steps 8A	Notification 8B	Transition Conference 8C
NA2 State Determination Areas	4	5	10
Percentage Reporting Progress	100%	80%	90%

Table 7 depicts the type of technical assistance accessed by States. A variety of TA activities and resources were utilized by NA2 States regarding early childhood transition practices. Almost all States reported receiving some form of individualized TA from OSEP or an OSEP-funded TA Center. Individualized TA included assistance via telephone or email, resource review, consultation, in-person meeting, or the development and implementation of a systems change plan.

Table 7: Types of Technical Assistance Accessed by Number of States

Types of Technical Assistance	Number of States		
	8A	8B	8C
A. Individualized TA	3	3	6
B. National Meetings and Conferences	1	4	3
C. National Conference Calls/Webinars	1	3	4
D. RRCP Regional Meeting	1	5	4
E. Accessing Written and Online Resources		2	1

The degree of specificity varied from State to State in their performance reports regarding TA received and actions taken. All States had representation at the 2007 OSEP National Early Childhood Conference and other national meetings and conferences. States reported using web-based resources, most notably the SPP-APR Calendar (TA Documents for Indicator 8) and Transition Initiative resources. Three States accessed the NECTAC, NECTC and NCRRC web sites and some States reported participation in OSEP, ECO, NECTAC and RRCP conference calls.

INDICATOR 9: TIMELY CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Prepared by DAC

INTRODUCTION

Indicator 9 is used to determine whether the State's "general supervision system (including monitoring, complaints, hearings, etc.) identifies and corrects noncompliance as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification." This indicator is measured as the "Percent of noncompliance corrected within one year of identification." The required target for this indicator is 100%.

The measurement of this indicator requires of the State that "For any noncompliance not corrected within one year of identification, describe what actions, including technical assistance and/or enforcement that the state has taken." The APR instructions direct that "Lead Agencies must describe the process for selecting EIS programs for monitoring." Additionally, States are to describe the results of the calculations as compared to the target, reflect monitoring data collected through the components of the general supervision system, and group areas of noncompliance by priority areas and other topical areas.

Overall, 56 APRs were reviewed for this summary. These included the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and other jurisdictions eligible for and participating in the Part C program. In this summary, the term "State" will be used for any of these 56 entities. In some instances, there will be fewer than 56 responses, and this will be noted in the narrative.

ACTUAL (2007-08) TARGET DATA AS COMPARED 100% TARGET

Of the 56 States reviewed, one State provided no data, and one State did not provide "valid and reliable" data for this indicator. Of the remaining 54 States:

- 22 States (41%) met the 100% target for 2007-08
- 5 States (9%) reported performance between 95% to 99%
- 9 States (17%) reported performance between 85% and 94%
- 14 States (26%) reported performance between 50% and 84%
- 4 (7%) States reported performance was less than 50%

PROGRESS OR SLIPPAGE

It is important to note that this analysis reports on each State's discussion of progress or slippage. There was a great deal of variability in how States reported under this required category, and in fact, many States did not use the terms "progress" or "slippage" at all. However, most States did provide narrative under this category that could be described as discussion of progress or slippage, so analysis was completed on these descriptions. Of the 56 States analyzed:

- 41 States (73%) did provide some discussion of progress or slippage;
- 15 States (37%) did not address progress or slippage. Of these:
 - 9 States' performance was 100%; and
 - 6 States' performance was less than the target of 100%.

In general, the descriptions of progress or slippage related to:

- Issues or challenges that contributed to States' current performance on this indicator such as provider shortages
- Progress that has occurred in the State on this indicator and strategies used to facilitate this progress, including revision of general supervision system, revisions to the State's data system, enhanced enforcement mechanisms, new tracking systems for correction, and additional technical assistance (TA)
- Factors that contributed to slippage (or any performance below 100%) at the State and/or local level included fiscal/monetary issues, state definitions, and scheduling constraints
- Steps the State has taken both at the State level and with individual local programs or providers to correct noncompliance

METHODS OF COLLECTING MONITORING DATA

DAC reviewed all 56 State APRs to determine what activities States used to collect 616 monitoring data. It should be noted that, in general, States describe their monitoring and general supervision systems in their State Performance Plans (SPP) and may not provide this information in each annual APR.

Of the 56 APRs reviewed, only one State did not provide any description of what activities were used for the collection of monitoring data. Almost all States reported more than one activity to collect monitoring data, and some states seemed to be describing their monitoring system in total.

In the 56 APRs reviewed, States reported using the following methods to collect monitoring data. The reader should note that some states reported using both a cyclical onsite approach and focused criteria to select additional local programs or agencies to visit based on specific criteria such as longstanding noncompliance or as a result of a determination such as needs intervention. The results are as follows:

- 27 States (48%) reported using self-assessment
- 38 States (68%) reported using the State's database
- 45 States (80%) reported using onsite monitoring:
 - 23 States reported using cyclical onsite monitoring
 - 22 States reported using focused onsite monitoring
 - 9 additional States reported using onsite monitoring but did not specify the method of selection
- 1 State (2%) did not specify methods for collection at all

About half the states noted "other" methods for collecting monitoring data. Most of these States mentioned dispute resolution. Other sources of monitoring data mentioned included the use of family survey data, IFSP quality reviews, annual applications, child outcomes, and fiscal reviews. It should be noted in reviewing these "other" activities that some of them are required parts of the state's general supervision system even if a state did not mention it in the discussion under this indicator.

VERIFYING CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Due to the increased importance of ensuring that correction of noncompliance is verified, DAC reviewed all 56 APRs to see if States reported on the process used to verify correction. From FY 2006 to FY 2007, there was a significant increase in the number of States reporting how correction was verified. In FY 2007, 38 States (68%) reported one or more methods for verifying correction as compared to FY 2006, in which only 24 States (43%) reported verification of noncompliance methods.

Since the APR instructions do not require States to specify how correction is verified, no conclusion can be reached about the fact that 18 States did not describe this process in the FY 2007 APR. The 38 States that did specify methods (sometimes more than one) to verify correction reported as follows:

- 28 States (74%) used onsite monitoring visits
- 23 States (61%) used the State's database
- 13 States (34%) reviewed correction data submitted by local programs (e.g., child record, revised procedures)
- 11 States (29%) reviewed conclusion of correction submitted by local programs (e.g., local report)
- 1 State (2%) used verification of billing records

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

DAC reviewed the improvement activities reported by all 56 States for this indicator; all but two States reported improvement activities. States did not always characterize actions or steps as improvement activities, but any State descriptions that seemed to reference actions or steps toward improvement were included in this analysis.

There was great variation in the number and the depth of description of the improvement activities. More than half of the States reported using three types of improvement activities—"providing technical assistance/training/professional development," "improving systems administration and monitoring," and "improving data collection and reporting." More than half the States also reported using "ongoing improvement activities that do not reflect change or improvement." Table 1 summarizes the improvement activities reported by States. These activities are ordered from most frequently reported to least frequently reported.

Table 1: Summary of Improvement Activities Reported (54 States Reporting)

Improvement Activity Category	Percent of States
Provide training/TA/professional development	76
Improve systems administration and monitoring	72
Improve data collection and reporting	63
Ongoing activities not reflecting change or improvement	64
Clarify/examine/develop policies and procedures	28
Collaboration/coordination	28
Increase/Adjust FTE	22
Development of materials	11
Evaluation	7
Build systems for TA and support	2
Issue mini-grants for improvement/correction	2
Change personnel standards	2
Program development	2

DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR STATES WITH DETERMINATIONS FOR FY 2006 OF NEEDS ASSISTANCE FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE YEARS

States with a determination of Needs Assistance for the second consecutive year from the FY 2006 APR were required to discuss in the FY 2007 APR what TA was accessed and the results of this TA. OSEP permitted these states to discuss this either in a specific indicator related to the determination status or in the overview section of the APR. Therefore, it is not assumed that these states would provide this information in Indicator 9 either because the information was included in another place in the APR or because Indicator 9 was not an issue in the determination.

Seventeen States received a determination of Needs Assistance for the second consecutive year in June 2008 (for the FY 2006 APR). Fifteen of these States had Indicator 9 as one of the factors in the determination. Of these 15, 11 discussed in Indicator 9 the TA the State received.

DAC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO STATES

FY 2007 was the first year of the newly funded DAC project. During this time, DAC developed a needs assessment process and worked with the RRCs and OSEP to determine which States would receive customized TA from DAC. DAC records were reviewed to determine the number of states receiving specific levels of TA from DAC in FY 2007. The levels of TA listed below are defined by DAC and are not precisely aligned to those in the OSEP draft Conceptual Model. The percentages of States that received TA from DAC are reflected using the following three codes:

- A. National/Regional TA—100%
- B. Individual State TA—5%
- C. Customized TA—2%

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, 56 APRs were reviewed for this summary. This included the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and other jurisdictions eligible for and participating in the Part C Program. In 2007-08, progress continued to be made by States in timely correction of noncompliance. Table 2 below provides a comparison.

Table 2: Comparison of Performance

Performance range	Number of States	
	FY 2007	FY 2006
100%	22	16
99%–85%	14	18
84%–50%	14	11
Less than 50%	4	8

There remains tremendous variability in how States address progress or slippage in the APRs. While 41 States did provide some level of description in this year's FY 2007 APR, the format varied greatly. Some States reported changes in performance; some States reported challenges or issues affecting performance; and some States reported strategies for change. Some States did all of the above. Some States reported progress or slippage in relation to the local level, others reported progress or slippage related to the State level, and other States included descriptions related to both the State and local levels.

In this APR cycle, States continued to report on the use of monitoring methods other than the traditional onsite cyclical process. This included self-assessment, State data system, and focused onsite monitoring visits. In addition, more States reported methods for verification of noncompliance this year. Thirty-eight States described activities that were designed to ensure or verify the correction of identified noncompliance as compared to only 24 States in FY 2006. These included onsite visits, using the state data system, reviewing correction data submitted by a local agency (e.g., child record, revised procedures) or reviewing the conclusion of correction submitted by a local agency (e.g., local report).

There continues to be great variability in how States describe improvement activities. But not surprisingly, given this indicator, more than half of the States reported using three types of improvement activities—"providing technical assistance/training/ professional development," "improving systems administration and monitoring," and "improving data collection and reporting." More than half the States also included activities that appeared to be regularly scheduled instead of designed to respond to current performance and the need for improvement or change.

INDICATORS 10, 11, 12, 13: DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Completed by CADRE

INTRODUCTION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) requires that States, in order to be eligible for a grant under Part C, provide three dispute resolution options to assist parents and schools to resolve disputes: written State complaints, mediation, and due process complaints (hearings). IDEA expanded the use of mediation to allow parties to resolve disputes involving any matter under IDEA. In addition, IDEA added a new “resolution process” whenever a due process complaint is filed, to afford parents and schools a more informal setting in which to reach a settlement and avoid the cost and stress of a fully adjudicated hearing. These additions to the statute reflect the Congressional preference expressed at 20 U.S.C. 1401(c)(8) for the early identification and resolution of disputes: “Parents and schools should be given expanded opportunities to resolve their disagreements in positive and constructive approaches.” In addition to these required procedures, many States offer informal “early dispute resolution” processes intended to diffuse and resolve disagreements before they reach a level requiring a formal process.

States are also required to report annually to the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education, on their compliance with and performance in key areas of the Law. This document is a summary and analysis of the FY 2007 State Annual Performance Reports for the dispute resolution indicators under Part C. These include:

- Indicator 10: Percent of signed written complaints with reports issued that were resolved within 60-day timeline or a timeline extended for exceptional circumstances with respect to a particular complaint.
- Indicator 11: Percent of fully adjudicated due process hearing requests that were fully adjudicated within the applicable timeline.
- Indicator 12: Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements (applicable if Part B due process procedures are adopted).
- Indicator 13: Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

This summary addresses State performance on the required dispute resolution processes, as well as any information provided by the States on early resolution options. CADRE’S approach to technical assistance and improvement is systemic—focusing on all dispute resolution areas and emphasizing early resolution and conflict management processes. That orientation is reflected in this combined report on the four indicators.

DATA SOURCES FOR THIS REPORT

The main document sources for this report are the FY 2007 (2007-08) Annual Performance Reports submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on February 1, 2009, and clarifications submitted by 56 States/entities as of April 1, 2009. For comparison purposes, this report also draws on past APRs, specifically on indicator performance and other State data from prior years.

Beginning with 2002-03, States have reported dispute resolution activity to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), first as "Attachment 1" to their Annual Performance Reports and later as "Table 4" in these reports. CADRE has maintained, since the beginning of this data collection, a National Longitudinal Dispute Resolution Database. IDEA required, as of FY 2006, that this data collection be managed under the "Section 618" data collection provisions of the statute. For the past two years, then, the required data have been reported to the Westat/Data Accountability Center (DAC). As a result, CADRE receives dispute resolution data from the DAC after it has been verified for publication in OSEP's Annual Report to Congress. Complete Table 4 data are no longer included in the APRs, so available information in the current APR documents, except for the Indicators, cannot be used to display current analyses of change over time. Some CADRE longitudinal data are referred to in portions of this report in order to demonstrate change over time in State compliance and performance on these indicators. Otherwise, the data used in this report are drawn from: State APRs, OSEP summaries of the indicators related to The U.S. Department of Education Determination Letters on State Implementation of IDEA (June 2009), and CADRE records of technical assistance provided to States during FY 2007.

SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE AND PERFORMANCE IN DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Part C Dispute Resolution Activity: 2003-04 to the Present

Fifty-six (56) States and entities submitted Part C Annual Performance Reports and/or clarifications in 2009. Most Part C programs report little or no dispute resolution activity. The number of States reporting some activity for 2007-08 was highest for Written State Complaints (26), then Mediation (11), and Due Process Complaints/Hearings (6). Table 1 displays the number of States with baseline data (2004-05) and actual data for 2007-08. Indicator 12 applies only to those States that adopt Part B due process complaint timelines. No baseline and no current data are available for Indicator 12.

Table 1: States Reporting Data by Indicator for 2007-08

	States with Baseline [2004-05 Data]	States Reporting [2007-08 Data]
Indicator 10	27	26
Indicator 11	4	6
Indicator 12	NA	NA
Indicator 13	4	11

In order to calculate an indicator value, a State must complete a complaint report, hold a fully adjudicated hearing, conduct a resolution meeting, or hold a hearing. Since State written complaint filings, due process complaints, and mediation requests do not necessarily result in a complaint report, hearing, or mediation held, the indicator activity reported above does not quite match data from prior years on the number of States with activity reported in data submitted with prior APRs (Attachment 1 or Table 4 submitted with the APR). Table 2 below shows the number of States reporting any activity for four years prior to this APR submission.

Table 2: Number of States Reporting Any Activity in Prior Years—Part C

	Complaints Filed	Reports Issued	Mediations Held	Mediation Agreements	Hearing Requests	Hearings Held
2003-04	23	22	13	9	9	3
2004-05	33	22	12	12	13	5
2005-06	29	25	10	10	10	6
2006-07	29	25	10	10	12	6
2007-08*	NA	28	NA	14	NA	6

* Calculated based on State reporting an indicator value for 2007-08
 NA: part of Section 618 data; not available to public until November 2009

Across all four years, about three fourths of Part C programs have had at least one complaint filing, with other activity present in far fewer States. While 11 States have experienced at least one fully adjudicated hearing, five of these States held only one hearing over this four year period. Four States account for 92% of all Part C hearing requests and 88% of all Part C hearings held over these four years. With the exception of complaints filed, in any given year, most States have no dispute resolution activity. For 2007-08, complaints filed, mediations held, and hearings requested cannot be consistently determined. Comparing Table 1 and Table 2, however, it appears that State Part C dispute resolution activities remain relatively rare events. Table 3 summarizes the numbers of reported dispute resolution events under Part C for the years 2003-04 through 2005-06.

Table 3: Summary of All Reported Dispute Resolution Activity—Part C

	Complaints Filed	Reports Issued	Mediations Held	Mediation Agreements	Hearing Requests	Hearings Held
2003-04	180	138	51	32	186	13
2004-05	173	108	57	37	200	24
2005-06	176	123	70	69	135	17
2006-07	169	120	78	76	112	15
Total	698	489	256	214	633	69

In the 2007-08 summary of indicator reports completed by OSEP for Indicator 12: 13 States operate under Part B procedures, 42 States indicated Part C 30 day procedures, and one State's procedures could not be determined. In the summary of 2006-07 Section 618 data submitted to the DAC, 12 States indicated they had adopted Part B procedures. Ten States

indicated for both years that they had adopted Part B procedures. While some States may be adjusting policy in this area from year to year, CADRE suspects that reporting by States on whether they have adopted Part B procedures may not yet be consistent.

Two of the thirteen States indicating that they used Part B procedures in 2007-08 reported at least one hearing request, but none held a fully adjudicated hearing. One State reported one resolution meeting that did not result in an agreement.

Compliance Indicators Change Over Time

Very few States have more than 10 of any dispute resolution events in any year. The indicators, however, can be used to gauge how States are doing with respect to compliance overall. Table 4 below displays how many States achieved 95% or more (“substantial compliance”) on these indicators for the baseline year (2004-05) and subsequent three years.

Table 4: Number of States Reporting Indicator 10 or 11 Data That Are Substantially Compliant

	Baseline	05-06 Data	06-07 Data	07-08 Data
C10: > or = 95%	24	26	28	24
C10: <95%	3	3	2	2
C11: > or = 95%	4	2	5	5
C11: <95%	0	2	0	1

Most States seem to have achieved “substantial compliance” when they have activity. The relative numbers of those State achieving and those failing to achieve hasn’t changed much over these four years for either indicator. The States not achieving substantial compliance tend to be the larger States and among those with the most overall dispute resolution activity. A small State, in any given year, that goes from having no activity to having several complaints filed, may have a difficult time putting in place a structure that meets timelines. It is hard to maintain a formal “dispute resolution system” of required processes for events that happen only once every few years.

Describing Improvement Strategies Used by States

In reviewing the Part C APRs and preparing this chapter, CADRE adopted the nine improvement strategies and definitions provided by OSEP and added three additional strategies: Public Awareness/Outreach, Upstream or Early Resolution Processes, and Stakeholder Involvement. Activity in all of these areas of program function seems necessary to the operation of a capable State dispute resolution system. States, however, are asked to describe in their APRs the “improvement strategies” they undertake to maintain or improve their performance in the various indicator areas. Many, if not most States, have nothing to report under these four indicators and a typical report can consist of the briefest notes that no activity has occurred and no improvement activities are planned. Many Part C States do operate informal dispute resolution systems, although these are underreported in the APRs. As a result, most APRs provide only a partial view of what dispute resolution activities (formal or informal) occur. “What’s working well” for many States may go unreported.

A summary count of the number of States reporting on the use of these twelve improvement strategies is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: Number of States Reporting Activity by Type of Improvement Strategy for Dispute Resolution Indicators C10–C13

Improvement Strategies Reported	Indicator C10	Indicator C11	Indicator C12	Indicator C13
A: Data Collection & Reporting	<u>22</u>	13	5	13
B: Administration & Monitoring	<u>20</u>	<u>16</u>	2	10
C: TA and Support Systems	5	4	1	4
D: TA, Training & Prof. Dev.	<u>20</u>	<u>18</u>	3	10
E: Policies & Procedures	<u>19</u>	<u>16</u>	1	7
F: Program Development	3			
G: Collaboration & Coordination	<u>16</u>	11	2	11
H: Evaluation	8	5		2
I: Increase or Adjust FTE	5	3		3
J: Public Awareness & Outreach	<u>20</u>	<u>14</u>	3	11
K: Upstream/Early DR Processes	8	4	1	5
L: Stakeholder Group	9	6	2	4

[Bold, italic, underline (***NN***) entries indicate one fourth or more of States (>13) reporting.]

Indicators 10 and 11 are the only ones for which one fourth or more of the States actually report improvement activities. Most States tend to focus compliance related improvement efforts (indicators 10 and 11) on four main strategies: Administration and Monitoring; TA, Training & Professional Development; Policy & Procedure Development; and Public Awareness and Outreach. Data Collection and Reporting is the most frequently used strategy overall, particularly in relation to Indicator 10, written complaints. At least 26 States reported some use of public awareness across one or more of the four indicators. For compliance indicators, these activities often focus primarily on procedural safeguard requirements. While Upstream/Early Dispute Resolution Processes tend to be underreported, those States indicating the use of such approaches mention monitoring and quick response to parent/family concerns (informally gathered through parent hotlines or other means) and promoting mediation as the first formal process to pursue in formally resolving differences. Other strategies to prevent conflict from reaching formal procedure levels include such things as: co-populated communications and conflict resolution skills training, IFSP facilitation, parent help lines, and parent-to-parent support programs. Ten States that indicate the presence of early resolution processes to avoid disputes from escalating account for 29% of the child count in Part C, but only 14% of the total dispute resolution activity over the four year period from 2003-04 through 2006-07. Among these are five of the ten largest population States.

SUMMARY OF TA PROVIDED TO PART C PROGRAMS

Three States noted in their APRs having received technical assistance from CADRE, or having used CADRE products or services—one within each of the three indicators. CADRE reviewers did not find mention of external TA to Part C programs, except with respect to OSEP site visits for any dispute resolution activity. In other areas, NECTAC and the RRCs are the most frequently mentioned sources of TA, but not with respect to dispute resolution.

CADRE also tracks technical assistance we provide to States and these records suggest slightly more State involvement than is noted in the APRs.

“Universal TA” was available to all States/entities during 2007-08 through:

- CADRE web site (includes individual State and national summaries of Part C dispute resolution activity, as well as other Part C relevant materials)
- *CADRE Caucus* (an electronic newsletter reaching over 3,000 subscribers, including Part C coordinators who elect to receive it)

All States had access to universal TA through these two mechanisms.

“Targeted TA” is provided through:

- Wide dissemination of print materials to States/entities and their PTIs (over 100,000 documents were downloaded in 2008, but CADRE is unable to track whether the receiving party is interested in Part C or Part B issues or generic materials).
- CADRE Part C Dispute Resolution Listserv (data on Listserv participation indicates that it has rarely been used—CADRE’s sense is that Part C coordinators have a private listserv that they use to share on all topics).
- CADRE’s Information Request/Contact System: 5 State requested and received specific Part C technical assistance by email and phone information requests. These requests typically require from an hour to several hours to compile and provide the requested assistance.

“Intensive TA” involves CADRE providing on-site training and/or technical assistance and follow-up. It is unlikely that CADRE would be asked to provide intensive TA to any but the half dozen Part C States that have a significant level of dispute resolution activity. CADRE did not provide intensive TA to any State/entity on Part C dispute resolution during 2007-08. One State has requested Part B and Part C focused intensive TA from CADRE in the coming year.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The nature of the Part C program is that the guarantee is for an IFSP and what is assured is that what is in the IFSP will be provided. Unlike the FAPE guarantee under Part B, the guarantee under Part C is less stringent. In addition, families and providers often have a closer relationship, reinforced through family-based in-home services. Finally, families are in the Part C program for a maximum of three years and in most cases for between one to two years. These conditions, as long as families do not suffer the frustrations of waiting lists, etc., are unlikely to lead to levels of concern sufficient to stimulate a formal dispute resolution procedure.

CADRE suggests that States that are reaching compliance and reporting favorable outcomes in dispute resolution share some common features:

- Compliance with complaints and hearings timelines requires capable systems that track multiple steps in the process, reviewing those data on a regular basis, and taking action to correct problems with individual complaints as they arise.
- Compliance with hearings timelines can represent a challenge for States that do not directly manage their hearing systems. In some of those States, clear guidance to the managing agency (e.g., an office of administrative hearings) on the particulars of the Part C hearing regulations is critical. Such guidance may include: hearing officer handbooks, tool kits, or other guidance resources; interagency agreements that ensure process tracking; appropriate criteria for extensions; and training or more direct intervention with hearing officers who do not meet timelines
- Mediation and other forms of dispute resolution that seek agreement before conflict is formalized continue to be supported by States. Challenges in operating an effective mediation program include: how to address practitioner standards and training, school and parent trust of the independence of mediators, guidance to mediators on effective agreement preparation, and follow-up on implementation of agreements.
- Active pursuit of any parent expressed concern through informal dispute resolution methods, often with a response time of a couple days at most. This sort of quick attention to parent issues helps the programs respond to parent/family needs without giving them time to escalate. States that report having active early resolution processes that respond quickly to parent concerns have fewer formal dispute resolution activities.

INDICATOR 14: TIMELY AND ACCURATE DATA

Completed by DAC

INTRODUCTION

Indicator 14 measures the timeliness and accuracy of State-reported data (618 and SPP and APR). The data source for this indicator is State-selected, including data from the State data system, as well as technical assistance and monitoring systems.

Measurement of this indicator is defined in the SPP/APR requirements as: State-reported data, including 618 data, State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Reports, are: (a) Submitted on or before due dates (February 1 for child count, including race and ethnicity, settings and November 1 for exiting and dispute resolution, and February 1 for the APR); and (b) Accurate (describe mechanisms for ensuring error free, consistent, valid and reliable data and evidence that these standards are met).

OSEP has developed a rubric to measure the timeliness and accuracy of 618 and 618 data submitted by States. Use of this rubric was voluntary for FY 2007 APR submissions.

The Data Accountability Center (DAC) reviewed a total of 56 FY 2007 APRs. These included the 50 States, District of Columbia, and other jurisdictions eligible for and participating in the Part C program. (For purposes of this discussion, we will refer to all as States, unless otherwise noted.) Analysis of the actual target data as reported by States indicates:

- 48 States (86%) reported that their data were 100% accurate;
- 6 States (10%) reported accuracy between 90 and 99%;
- 1 State (2%) reported accuracy between 80 and 89%; and
- 1 State (2%) did not submit a percentage.

The majority of States (43 or 77%) used the rubric to calculate their data accuracy.

The remainder of our analysis focused on five other elements: (1) States' descriptions of progress and/or slippage, (2) comparisons of State-reported 618 data to DAC's data submission records, (3) descriptions of how States ensured timely and accurate data, (4) technical assistance needs and actions taken by States determined to need assistance for 2 consecutive years, and (5) States' improvement activities.

PROGRESS AND/OR SLIPPAGE

The majority of States (32 or 57%) reported that they had maintained compliance. Nine States (16%) did not report whether they had progress or slippage, eight States (14%) reported progress, and seven States (13%) reported slippage.

States attributed progress to a variety of factors, including (listed from highest to lowest frequency):

- Increasing knowledge of the OSEP requirements
- Updating existing or establishing new data verification procedures
- Updating existing or establishing new data systems
- Increased monitoring policies
- Providing technical assistance to local districts

States attributed slippage to:

- Mistakes in the 618 data
- Updating existing or establishing new data systems
- Lack of funding

COMPARISONS OF STATE-REPORTED 618 DATA TO DAC'S DATA SUBMISSION RECORDS

This was the second and last year that States had an option of using the rubric created by OSEP to determine data accuracy. Forty-three of the 56 States (77%) used the rubric. The other States used their own calculations to determine timeliness and accuracy.

- The majority, 50 States, (89%) reported the same data that DAC had in its records. These included States that provided a description of their calculation methods, if the rubric was not used.
- None of the States had differences from DAC's data submission records on the timeliness of data.
- Four States (7%) had differences from DAC's data submission records when reporting about passing edit checks. In all cases, the States reported having passed the edit checks, while records indicated that the States did not pass initial edit checks.
- One State's submission record (2%) was different from DAC's data submission records when reporting about complete data. The State reported having complete data, while records indicated that the State did not report complete data.
- Two States (4%) had differences from DAC's data submission records when reporting if the State submitted data notes. In both cases, the States reported submitting the data notes, while records indicated that the States did not submit data notes.
- One State did not provide enough information to make comparisons.

DESCRIPTION OF METHODS OF ENSURING TIMELY AND ACCURATE DATA

The majority of States, 41 (73%), provided some description of how they ensured that their data were timely and accurate. Many States relied on their data systems to provide timely and accurate data. Twenty-four of these States (43%) had built-in edit checks and validations to ensure that the data were valid. Some States also used onsite monitoring, manual comparisons of data, and internal and external workgroups. States also provided

various forms of technical assistance to local agencies and the state employees to ensure that their personnel knew the correct guidelines for the reported data.

STATES DETERMINED TO NEED ASSISTANCE FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE YEARS

Seventeen (17) States were determined to need assistance for two consecutive years in 2008. Only two States provided an explanation of the technical assistance that was sought and the results of the technical assistance. This may have occurred because States were not determined to be in need of assistance for the second year as a result of Indicator 14.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

One of the requirements of this indicator is the implementation of improvement activities that will increase compliance for this indicator. The activities described in the APR were analyzed using the codes developed by OSEP. The “Other” category was used. The notation “J1” was used for the development of materials, for example, if a State reported that it had created a manual to be used by its personnel. The notation “J2” was used for ongoing activities that did not reflect change or improvement. An example is a State that continued to conduct onsite monitoring or continues to conduct local program self-assessment.

Among the 56 States and territories, three States (5%) did not report improvement activities in their FY 2007 APR. Updating or establishing new data systems was the most widely reported activity, while program development and conducting external/internal evaluations were the least reported. The improvement activities reported in the 53 APRs are in Table 1. Activities are listed from most to least frequent.

Table 1: Summary of Improvement Activities

Improvement Activity Category	Number of States Reporting at Least One Activity from the Category	Percentage of States Reporting at Least One Activity from the Category
A. Improve data collection and reporting	51	91%
D. Provide TA/training/professional development	30	54%
B. Improve systems administration and monitoring	22	39%
E. Clarify/examine/develop policies and procedures	13	23%
G. Collaboration/coordination	10	18%
I. Increase/Adjust FTE	6	11%
C. Build systems and infrastructures of TA and support	4	7%
J2. Ongoing activities	4	7%
J1. Created technical assistance materials	3	5%
F. Program development	1	2%
H. Evaluation	1	2%

Among the States reporting improvement activities, the number of activities reported per State for this indicator ranged from 1 to 11. The average number of activities reported per State was five.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO STATES

DAC records were reviewed to determine the number of States receiving specific levels of technical assistance from DAC in FY 2007. The levels of technical assistance listed below are defined by DAC and are not precisely aligned to those in the OSEP draft Conceptual Model. The percentages of States that received technical assistance from DAC related to this indicator are reflected using the following three codes:

- A. National/Regional TA—100%
- B. Individual State TA—29%
- C. Customized TA—1%

National/Regional TA was in the form of technical assistance documents posted on www.IDEAdata.org, assistance with the reporting of 618 data, annual data meeting, and year-to-year change reports to help with data notes.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is important to note some of the difficulties that came up while trying to analyze these data. Some States that did not use the rubric, which meant their calculations had to be compared to the ones used in the rubric. Some States also did not attribute their progress or slippages to a cause or provide much description about how their programs ensure timely and accurate data. A few States did not specify which activities they considered improvement activities in this SPP/APR. In addition, many States did not specify whether their activities for ensuring quality data were used for 618 and/or 616 data.

It is important to note that there was improvement from FY 2006 in almost all of the five elements discussed. For example in FY 2006, 29 of the States (52%) did not report or explain their progress or slippage whereas, in FY 2007, 32 States (57%) explained their target status and maintained compliance of 100%. Another example is the increase in the number of improvement activities and a decrease in the number of discrepancies between the States data and DAC's records. Even though it seems that States are starting to grasp the concept of collecting valid and reliable data, there continue to be States that are not describing the ways that they ensure valid and reliable data. The percentage of States that did describe ways of ensuring accurate data increased from 20% to 27% between FY 2006 and FY 2007.