

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

Unit 2. Ongoing Professional Development: COSF Refresher

A COSF refresher is useful for reviewing COSF basics with veteran COSF users. The quality of the child outcomes data is dependent upon staff using the COSF as it was intended and with consistency across programs. The implementation of any new policy, however, is vulnerable to “drift” away from the original procedural guidelines. Periodic staff development opportunities to practice and then discuss the use of the COSF will help control “drift” and will increase the consistency of implementation.

This unit includes two parts: A) The COSF Refresher and B) the State of the Nation. The first set, the COSF Refresher, focuses on reviewing the 7-point rating scale and the child outcome areas. Several activities are outlined that may be used to accompany the slides. The second set of slides, State of the Nation, reminds staff of the purposes of outcomes measurement and reporting and introduces them to the progress data as reported by states.

A. COSF Refresher: Slides and Activities

There are two versions of the COSF refresher slides: a regular PowerPoint version (http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/ppt/COSF_refresher_slides.ppt) and an online, voiceover PowerPoint version (<http://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/eco-cosf-refresher>). Both cover the same material- reviewing the essential knowledge for using the COSF and the 7-point rating scale. These slides, along with the related activities, are meant to help staff:

- Review the skills and behaviors associated with each of the three child outcomes,
- Review the definitions of each point on the rating scale
- Recall the role of the team in using the COSF, and
- Reflect on COSF implementation issues, including challenges, strategies, and potential benefits.

The regular slides may be used as part of a face-to-face training activity in groups. The accompanying handouts (linked in the presentation) may be printed for participants and used in the training session. Hearing participant responses will help the trainer assess what the participants know (note that jeopardy slides need to be in ‘slide show’ mode to work properly). All the slides have notes to help the trainer explain concepts, including answers to the jeopardy questions presented in the slides.

The second version is a voiceover PowerPoint designed for an individual to use independently online. Text/ transcripts are found in the ‘notes’ tab in the presentation, including answers to the jeopardy quiz questions.



Time check: In a group, viewing and discussing the slides should take staff about 20-25 minutes. The voiceover version is about 15 minutes long.



Activity: Talking through a COSF rating with a child example: Team discussion activity

This activity simulates a COSF rating team discussion. Talking through the child example helps ensure that staff are thinking similarly about levels of functioning and the 7 points on the rating scale. The trainer guides a participant or group of participants in a discussion about a child's skills and behaviors related to each of the three outcome areas and determines an appropriate rating using the Child Outcome Summary Form 7-point scale. Guidance to help the trainer organize and run this discussion can be found at this link:

http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/pdfs/Guidance_for_COSF_Demonstration.pdf

Participant materials:

- [COSF discussion prompts \[PDF\]](#)
- [Decision Tree \[PDF\]](#)
- [Sample script for team discussion \[PDF\]](#)



Time check: Talking through a COSF rating with a rich discussion should take 40-50 minutes.

Activity: COSF Implementation Issues

This interactive presentation and activity allows small group discussion of issues programs are facing as they implement the COSF process. This slides review essential knowledge for an effective COSF process, and allow staff to discuss, voice concerns and needs for assistance, and brainstorm strategies for more effectively implementing the COSF process. Trainers may use the information generated during the discussion to plan further training and technical assistance. The following PowerPoint slides with notes are designed to be used as a guide to facilitate the discussion:

[Implementation issues PowerPoint slides \[PPT\]](#)

Participant materials:

- [COSF implementation issues worksheet \[PDF\]](#) (or link from PPT)

Instructions:

- Ask participants to break into small groups of 3-5.
- Give groups about 10 minutes to discuss the issues and challenges they have experienced implementing the COSF using the discussion work sheet questions as a guide.
- Debrief as a large group. Ask each group share at least one key issue they discussed. Invite the whole group to share successful strategies to that might address the issue(s). Identify where more guidance or follow-up is needed.





Time check: Generating implementation issues and discussing strategies for addressing them should take staff about 20-30 minutes (more time may be needed for a large training).

Activity: ‘Pop quiz’

Using the pop quiz will help identify areas of child outcomes measurement in which staff need additional information. The pop quiz can be used before or after a training event to gauge staff knowledge related to outcomes measurement in general and use of the COSF specifically. Be sure to look over the questions and delete any that are not relevant to the COSF process you are using. You are also welcome to add questions! Two links are provided for this activity, below.

- Pop quiz: http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/docs/Pop_quiz.doc
- Especially for trainers! Pop quiz answers and explanations: http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/docs/Pop_quiz_with_answers.doc



Time check: Pop quiz activity with review and discussion of answers, should take a group about 10 minutes.

B. State of the Nation Slide Set

These slides-- http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/assets/ppt/State-of-the-nation_slides2011.pptx -- provide a brief history and overview to where we are, nationally, with measuring child outcomes. They are meant to help staff:

- Remember the purposes of the data collection (to meet the federal requirement, but also to inform state and local programs about the effects of their services on children),
- Compare state approaches to child outcomes measurement,
- Become familiar with some recent progress data based on SPPs submitted Feb 2011, and
- Gain new information about the national picture regarding measuring child outcomes

The trainer may wish to add slides or handouts with your CDSA’s progress data which can then be compared with state and national bar charts. While slides in Unit 4 will cover data analysis and use in-depth, this set just gives enough information to pique participant curiosity about and interest in looking at data!



Time check: Viewing and discussing these slides should take about 20 minutes.

