

Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Rating Fidelity Tool: Instructions for State Use

<https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/cosform-monitoring.asp>

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About the COS Rating Fidelity Tool

[The Child Outcomes Summary \(COS\) Rating Fidelity Tool](#) provides state, regional, or local staff a systematic way to review COS forms and evidence about the child's functioning to assess the quality, timeliness, and accuracy of the COS ratings. Reviewers can share feedback with teams and identify their areas of strength and need. This tool is customizable to work with your COS form or documentation even if it is different from the ECTA and DaSy COS Form.

Before Using the Tool

Read the [COS Form](#) and its [instructions](#). To ensure consistent interpretation of COS Rating Fidelity Tool items, reviewers should have a solid understanding of the [COS process](#). The instructions for reviewer completion of the tool are embedded in the COS Rating Fidelity Tool itself.

State, regional, or local staff should train reviewers in using the tool. Training should include reviewing the same entry and exit records and then comparing results and discussing any discrepancies. Using authentic child records for training ensures reviewers gain experience and discover nuances of the state or program.

Defining Supporting Evidence

State, regional, or local leadership must define what supporting evidence reviewers should examine to complete the COS Rating Fidelity Tool. The definition of supporting evidence includes documentation on the COS form, but can include further information, for example, evaluation reports, assessments, IFSP/IEP, or progress notes. It also can refer to all information that teams use when determining the COS ratings. When supporting evidence is referenced in the tool, refer to the established definition.

Notetaking for Feedback When Using the Tool

Reviewers should take notes as they complete the tool to provide clear examples and the reason for the responses, especially when a response is “No.” Use the notes and tool results to provide teams feedback about best practices and opportunities for improvement.

Questions That the Tool Can Help You Answer

The following fidelity questions align with items on the COS Rating Fidelity Tool. Looking across the items, you can learn how well supporting evidence reflects fidelity to the COS process and rating accuracy. Information gathered with the COS Rating Fidelity Tool can help the state, regional, or local staff celebrate successes, identify opportunities for professional development, and review different fidelity items across programs and over time.

Fidelity Questions	Tool Item
1. Was the COS ratings process completed per the state/program timeline?	1
2. Did at least two team members contribute information in the COS process?	2
3. Was at least one family member included as a person contributing information to the COS process?	3
4. Did a team take part in the rating decision process?	4
5. Was a family member part of the COS rating decisions?	5
6. Were a variety of types of information gathered about the child’s functioning?	6
7. Did the family provide information that was used to understand the child’s functioning as part of the COS process?	7
8. Were all parts of the COS form completed?	8
Was state guidance followed regarding the use of approved tool(s)?	<i>State specific</i>
9. Is the supporting evidence about the child’s abilities functional?	9
10. Does the supporting evidence about the child’s functioning cover the breadth of the outcome?	10
11. Are the descriptions of the child’s functioning associated with each outcome aligned with the respective outcome?	11
12. Is the information about the child’s functioning accurately age-anchored?	12
13. Did the supporting evidence align with rating criteria for the ratings selected?	13
14. Is the response to the progress question supported by evidence?	14

Tool Modifications and Technical Assistance (TA)

If your state documents evidence differently from the [COS form](#), then the COS Rating Fidelity Tool may require edits. For states that require use of one or more particular assessment tool(s), the COS Rating Fidelity Tool includes an unnumbered item to complete between items 8 and 9.

You are encouraged to seek TA to guide you in implementing use of the tool, developing training, and determining if any modifications are needed. TA also can support staff with deciding when to complete the tool, who should be involved, and how results and feedback are used.

Interpreting Data From the Tool

Items 13 and 14 on COS rating accuracy and the progress question are vital to ensure data quality for program improvement. If teams provide inaccurate ratings, they are likely struggling with one or more aspects of the COS process in items 1–12. This tool can help identify areas where teams need focused support.

Resources Associated with the Tool

These resources provide more detailed information and examples related to item content on the COS Rating Fidelity Tool.

Tool Item	Resources
9	Understanding Functional Skills: Background for the COS Process
10	Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes
11	Aligning a Child’s Functional Skills with the Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes
12	Age Anchoring Guidance for Determining Child Outcomes Summary Ratings
13	COS Rating Scale: Definitions and Decision Tree
14	Interim or Exit COS Ratings

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