



Transforming State Systems  
to Improve Outcomes for  
Children with Disabilities

# Moving the Needle from a Focus on Discipline- Specific Therapies to an Integrated Approach

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# Results-Driven Accountability and State Systemic Improvement Requirements

- Provide the impetus to re-examine and improve service delivery methods and practices
- Require a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to systems change
- Impact all aspects of the System Framework

# Objectives:

- Learn how three states have addressed policy changes, funding, and professional development issues as they work to shift their service delivery systems to focus on child and family results
- Explore the types of infrastructure and practice strategies that may be used during Phase III of the SSIP to ensure progress in child and family outcomes

# Meet the panel:

- Ardith Ferguson, Senior Program Associate, WestEd/NCSI
- Christy Cronheim, Part C Coordinator, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
- Pam Thomas, Part C Coordinator, Missouri Department of Education
- Patti Fougere, Assistant Director, Massachusetts Early Intervention, Massachusetts Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition
- Noah Feldman, Director, Program Planning & Professional Development, Massachusetts Early Intervention, Massachusetts Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition

# Why changes have occurred in Idaho to make this shift

- Better understanding of and focus on child outcomes
- Increase family involvement in child outcomes
- Sustainable primary service provider (PSP) approach and mentoring infrastructure

# Idaho strategies

- Embed child outcomes into IFSP
- Create better child outcome tools and information for families and staff
- Create standardized evidence-based practice (EBP) professional development system
- Develop PSP and mentor infrastructure with goal of embedding social/emotional EBPs

# Why changes have occurred in Missouri to make this shift

- Accountability and need for improved oversight activities (2006, 2013)
- Service delivery shift to transdisciplinary teams for provider efficiency, family engagement (2009)
- SSIP SIMR to improve social/emotional outcomes (2014)

# Missouri strategies

- Finance — not necessarily just more money, also consistent revenue, accountability for funds and budgets
- Infrastructure — contracts, guidance, accountability for services and monitoring compliance
- Quality — balance of implementing compliance activities with quality practices



# Why changes have occurred in Massachusetts to make this shift

- Creation of a statewide universal understanding of early intervention (EI) among families, providers and referral sources
- History of the Massachusetts EI service model paid for by multiple funding sources

# Massachusetts strategies

- Developed Massachusetts EI mission statement and key principles
- Professional development initiatives — *Embedding the key principles into the IFSP process and Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI)*

# Massachusetts strategies, cont'd...

- Data Quality — Battelle Developmental Inventory-2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (BDI-2) fidelity
- Collaboration

# Lessons learned from facing barriers and challenges in Missouri

- Continuous improvement to products — be planful about changes that may impact families
- Authentic engagement — allow time to discuss the evaluation plans and fidelity measures

# Lingering challenges in Missouri

- Providers using role-release in the visits and services delivered by teams
- Delivering low-incidence services (e.g., social work, dietician) to rural areas in the state
- Identifying agreed-upon EBPs
- Creating and implementing a plan to evaluate practices consistently and across a reasonable sample of providers and service coordinators

# Lessons learned from facing barriers and challenges in Idaho

- Balance — gold standard and reality
- Personnel — staff vs. contracted providers
- Service model — more than discipline specific
- Professional development — standardize training and requirements

# Lessons learned from facing barriers and challenges in Idaho, cont'd...

- Infrastructure changes — long-term commitment
- Engaging stakeholders — transparency

# Lessons learned from facing barriers and challenges in Massachusetts

- Data analysis — use of data has helped with stakeholder buy-in
- Funding — change is expensive, need for funding for effective professional development
- Ongoing support — need to establish an ongoing framework for technical assistance to support local program implementation



# Lessons learned from facing barriers and challenges in Missouri

- Authentic engagement = Framework
  - The state provides the guidelines and needs input from key stakeholders to fill in the blanks
  - Allow time for folks to discuss plans and measurements

# Lessons learned from facing barriers and challenges in Missouri, cont'd...

- Continuous improvement = Dominos
  - Change is an ongoing process
  - Even after change is implemented, you will be planning for the next change for program improvement

# QUESTIONS?



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