Functional Outcomes Around the World: Different Contexts, Similar Issues

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A Tale of Three Functional Child Outcomes

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In the beginning, there was….

...except for an overarching question

What outcomes should Part C and Section 619 programs be held accountable for?
Outcomes had been measured by assessments which meant..

Outcomes = Domains

..but did they have to be?

Meanwhile, practitioners were being given a very strong message to write functional goals and outcomes on IFSPs and IEPs.
We put some givens on the table

- Whatever we came up with will not be perfect.
- Not coming up with outcomes was not an option.
- Consciously choose the shortcomings that we could live with.

We started with principles...

- Same outcomes for all disabilities.
- Same outcomes for children birth to five.
- Reflect the most important behaviors desired for children as a result of participating in early intervention and preschool special education services.
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- Same outcomes for all disabilities.
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*Could have the potential to influence practice in a positive way, or at a minimum, will not drive practice backwards or lead to bad practices.*

To drive the field forward...

.. the outcomes must be functional, not based on domains.
August 2004
- Children build and maintain ongoing relationships with adults and other children.
- Children are active participants in learning, acquiring new knowledge and skills in a variety of settings.
- Children actively explore and manipulate their physical environment.
- Children tend to their basic care needs.

September 2004
- Children have positive social relationships.
- Children acquire knowledge and skills as active participants in their home, school, and community.
- Children move around and actively explore and manipulate their environment.
- Children tend to their basic care needs.

October 2004
- Children have positive social relationships.
- Children acquire and use knowledge and skills as participating members of their families, schools, and communities.
- Children take action to meet their needs.

November 2004
- Children have positive social relationships.
- Children acquire and use knowledge and skills.
- Children take action to meet their needs.

ECO Recommendation (February 2005)
Children have positive social relationships.
Children acquire and use knowledge and skills.
Children take appropriate action to meet their needs.

OSEP Child Outcomes
Positive social emotional skills (including positive social relationships)
Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication [Part C] and early literacy [Part B preschool])
Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

The Final Step
## Alternative Ways of Thinking about Child Outcomes

**Overarching Goal:**

Children will be active and successful participants now and in the future in a variety of settings

**ECO/OSEP Outcomes:**

- Children have positive social relationships
- Children acquire and use knowledge and skills
- Children take appropriate action to meet their needs

**Domains:**

- Communication
- Cognition
- Social-Emotional
- Self Help
- Motor
- Approaches to Learning

**Content Areas:**

- Language Arts
- Math
- Music
- Science
- Social Studies
- Art

**Processes:**

- Memory
- Self-regulation
- Recognizing and interpreting sensory input
- Listening
- Attending
- Etc.

**Body Functions:**

- Hearing
- Seeing
- Movement
  - Flexibility
  - Strength
  - Postural response
- Speech production
- Etc.

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### And what happened...

- Stakeholders knew that choosing functional outcomes over domain-framed outcomes would create measurement challenges.
  
  - Remember: Consciously choose the shortcomings that we could live with.
- The hope was that the three functional outcomes would spur new and better assessment tools.
- We are still addressing the measurement challenges but hopefully driving practice forward by holding programs accountable for improving functioning.
Functionality

- On the same page
- Lessons learned
- Differences observed

On the Same Page

What makes a skill functional?
3 key features of functional skills

✓ Context
✓ Whole Picture
✓ Necessary for Participation
Working with providers to promote a functional outcome focus...

Lessons learned

“...Going from specific behaviors to learning activities seems to limit children’s learning opportunities. Going from learning opportunities to behaviors seems to open up more different possibilities for learning” (p. 36). Dunst & Bruder 1999
“A functional outcome, must by definition, come from a functional assessment. One cannot take a non-functional goal and turn it into a functional one by writing it differently.”

McWilliam (2010)

Authentic Assessment is Key

“Authentic refers to opportunities created for children that reflect typical experiences, rather than discrete isolated tasks that are irrelevant to the child’s daily life.”

Macy, Salaway, & Bagnato, 2014
Differences Observed

Themes
- Authentic assessment
- Family engagement
- Family partnerships
- Routines-based intervention
- Focus on building family capacity

Barriers
Thank you!

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A Journey of learning: Early childhood child outcome measurement in Taiwan

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Geographical location of Taiwan
Early intervention in Taiwan

- The current population in Taiwan is about 23,700,00, high identification rate for children with special needs before age of three.
- Early intervention was addressed in the law as early as 1993.
- Early intervention system in Taiwan: Screening, evaluation, diagnostic, model for EI services provide.

Early intervention in Taiwan cont.

- Long history of medical model over Family-centered practices model.
- Intervention=treatment=cure the diseases, child > family, Medical professionals> educational professionals> family.
- Lack of conversation between EI professionals across disciplines.
Early intervention in Taiwan cont.

- Family-centered practices (individualism vs. collectivism, views on disabilities, and view on professionals especially MD and therapist).
- Missing EI core values leads to developmental inappropriate practices (class after class, focus on training child’s specific skills but not looking into the function in their daily life, lack of evidence-based practices, low quality of family life.

Early Intervention Child outcome measure

- Government funding vs. Private funding.
- What’s the required from the government funding about the child outcome report?
- 2014 WJY funding research on program evaluation found....
- WJY research result suggested adopted the three child outcome indicators to measure the EI Child outcome across all WJY founded EI programs.
We discovered...

- Lack of the knowledge on child development.
- Outcomes=Domains=Domains skills=Domains-based objective = parent satisfaction.
- The word “functional” seeming no where to be exist....
- Objectives are not related to child and family’s life, professional driven, and hard to measure.
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment never seems align together.
- Almost all programs are having 100% great outcome.... Wow!!!

Outcome study in Taiwan
2016
1. Outcome study started
2. Focus group intervention across nation for a total of 24 times to develop the core value for the WJY founded EI program across the nation.

2017
1. Valid the three child outcome indicators across different EI discipline as well as expert groups, and parents with child with special needs.

2018
1. Provided the intro workshop to the EI professionals and get the feedbacks from the field.
2. Developed(translated) tools for outcome data collections (guide book, decision making tree, cross-walk, and etc.).
3. Established national online data collection system. The system is free to use.

Future plan
1. Continue to develop on the tools that can best assist the services provider to collect the data.
2. On-line training modules.
3. Work group around the continue provide consultation and support.
4. Provide continuing education for services provider on best practices.
5. Working with the government funded EI programs.

http://www1.wjy.org.tw/administrator/index.php
The three child outcome indicators...

- Push professionals in Taiwiwan to think what we teach and how we teach to meet the child outcomes.
- The word “functionality” finally is in the place of developing the IFSP, in various EI programs.
- Help professionals to look closer on child in the family and community but not with the family and community.

Future challenges

- Pre/in-services training across all EI related disciplines...
- Transformation on the view of EI outcome.
- Changes on parent’s roll in EI service
- Continuing technical support on data collection, quality and analysis of the data.
- On-line data system...what to do with the data? How to we use data to shape the structure or policy of the EI in Taiwan.
Thank you!

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