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INDICATOR 1: TIMELY RECEIPT OF SERVICES

Prepared by NECTAC

Indicator 1: Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who receive the early intervention services on their IFSPs in a timely manner.

INTRODUCTION

Indicator 1, Timely Receipt of Services, is a compliance indicator with a target of 100% with each state determining (defining) what constitutes timely services. The indicator refers to the percentage of children whose services are timely, not the percentage of services received in a timely manner. For example, if the IFSP specifies that a child will receive three different services, all must be delivered within the defined timelines in order for this to be considered timely. If one or more of the services for a child are not delivered within the defined timeline, then the child is not counted in the percentages of those receiving 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 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 FFY 2010 Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for 54 states and territories that were determined to have valid and reliable data for the indicator. In this report, the term “state” is used for both states and territories.

States were required to provide the criteria used to determine which infants and toddlers did/did not receive IFSP services in a timely manner. States were also asked to account for the untimely receipt of services for infants and toddlers (i.e., the causes for delay). States were allowed to count as timely those delays due to family circumstances. However, not all states collect and report delays attributable to family circumstances.

DATA SOURCES

In FFY 2010, 36 states reported using data collected from their state data system, 19 states reported using local monitoring data alone, and one state did not report the data source used to report on Indicator 1. Among the 36 states using a state data system, some states used information on all children within a specified period, while others selected a percentage of files to review. Eighteen of the 36 states reported verifying their state data through some type of local monitoring, such through file reviews, onsite visits, parent surveys, or reviews of self-assessment information.

Defining Timely Services

Information on how states defined timely services is available for all 56 states and jurisdictions. Of the 56 states and jurisdictions, most states (n=40) are defining timeliness of services as “within 30 days” from parent consent (as shown in Table 1). The “timely services” definitions ranged from a low of “within ten days” to a maximum of “within 45 days” from parent consent for services. States with variable timeframes allow a specified number of days from consent or a date specified on the IFSP.

For the five states whose requirements were shorter than 30 days, three showed meaningful progress (from one to six percentage points) and two maintained performance from FFY 2009. All five states provided services to 91% to 98% of children in a timely manner.

Table 1

Number of States and Definition of Timeliness				
Definition of “Timely Services”	Number of States			
	FFY 2007	FFY 2008	FFY 2009	FFY 2010
Less than 30 days	5	4	5	5
30 days	33	40	41	40
45 days*	3	3	4	5
Date specified on IFSP	8	7	5	6
Variable	7	2	0	0

*In years prior to FFY 2009, numbers in this row were reported as “more than 30 days”. All state definitions of timely services that were listed as more than 30 days in APR reports as of FFY 2009 were defined as 45 days.

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

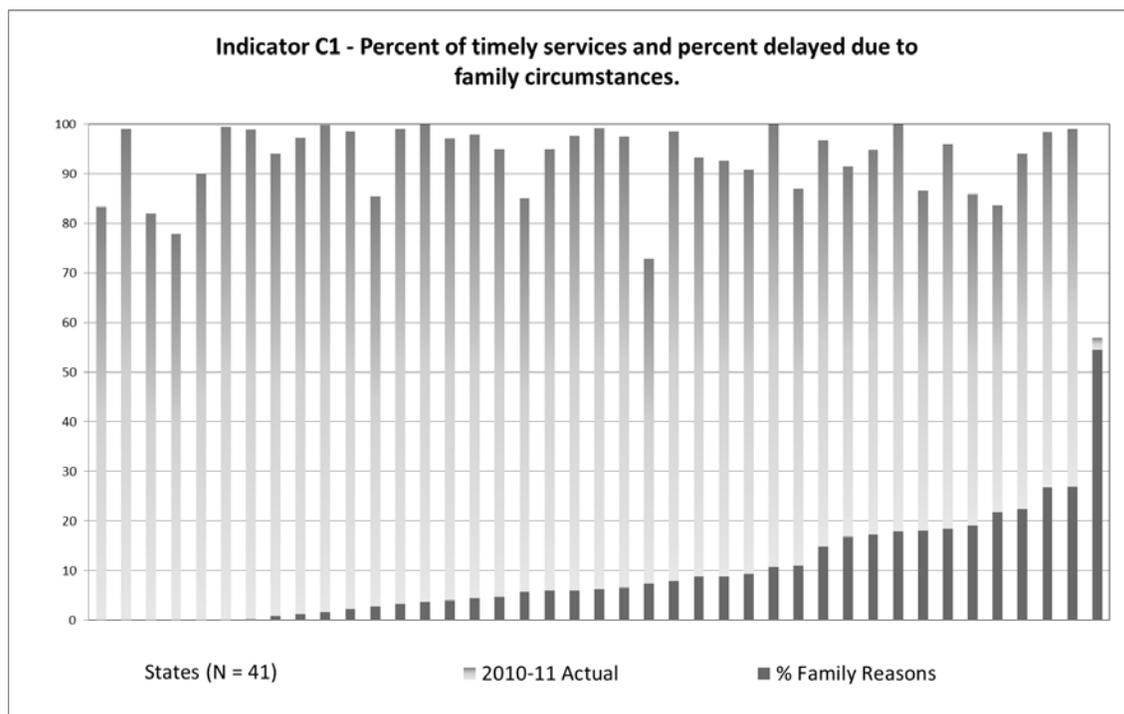
As reported in their FFY 2010 APR reports, seven of the 54 states met their target of providing timely services to 100% of infants and toddlers with IFSPs. On average, 94% of the children in the nation received the services listed on their IFSPs in a timely manner. Forty-three of 54 states (80%) provided services to at least 90% of the children in a timely manner in accordance with their states’ definition. This data is unchanged from data reported in the FFY 2009 APR reports.

Delays Attributable to Exceptional Family Circumstances

Although states were not required to report the number or percent of services with delays attributable to family circumstances, 42 states reported a range from <1% to 55%, with an average of 10%. Family reasons for delay included illness, family holidays, missed appointments, other scheduling conflicts, and extreme weather conditions or natural disaster where the length of delay was directly proportional to the duration and severity of the disruption.

Figure 1 illustrates the percent of all children with delays due to exceptional family circumstances from the lowest (0.04%) to the highest (55%) in the lower portion of each state's bar. The top portion of the bar shows each state's percent of children with no delays in meeting the states' definition of timely services. Both sections together total the percentage of timely services in the state.

Figure 1



Additional analyses were conducted to look at patterns of timeliness related to child count, percent served, or Regional Resource Center/Regional Parent Technical Assistance Center (RRC/RPTAC) region. When analyzing across RRC regions, by child count or by percent served, there was little variation in the number of states providing services in a timely manner.

PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

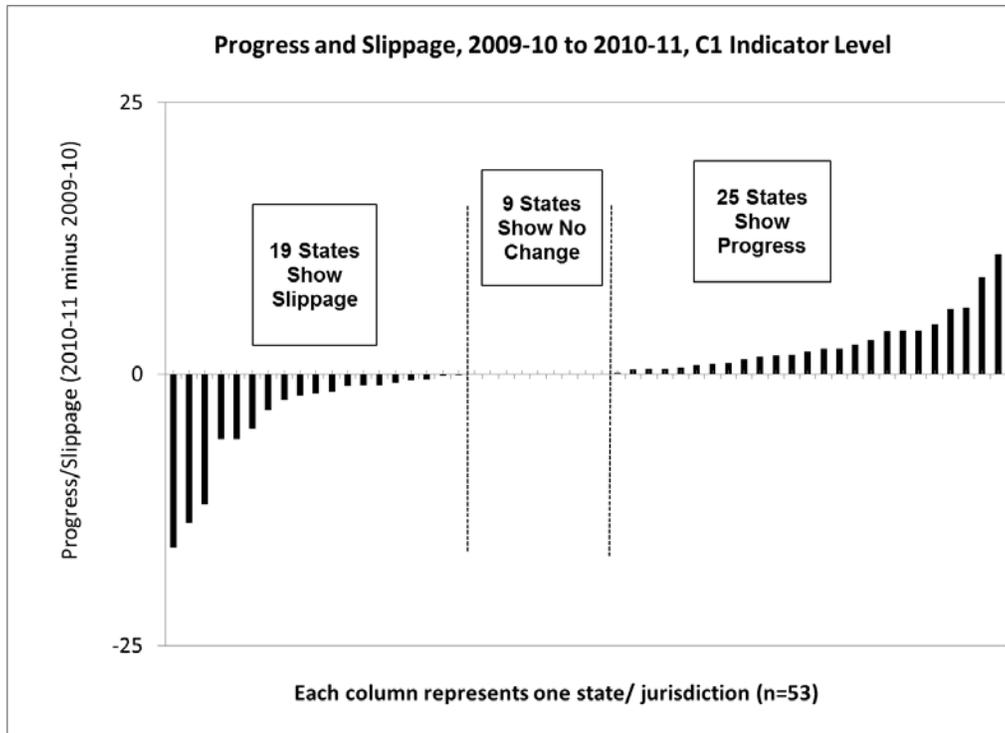
Figure 2 shows progress and slippage for Timely Services. For the purposes of analysis of progress and slippage, data for 53 states are included. Two states did not have valid and reliable data for FFY 2010, and one state did not submit data for FFY 2009.

In FFY 2010, 25 of the 53 states with data made progress towards providing services in a timely manner, compared to 30 states in FFY 2009. Of those states, 18 states made meaningful progress (>1%) in providing services in a timely manner. Nine states showed no change, but were between 94% and 100% in compliance with the indicator.

Nineteen states showed slippage this year, as compared to seventeen states in FFY 2009 and nine states in FFY 2008. The mean slippage was 3.95% with a range of 0.1

to 16%. Of the 19 states showing slippage this year, 14 states demonstrated meaningful slippage (>1%). However, five of those states were at or above 95% and three more were between 90% and 95%.

Figure 2



Explanation of Progress

An increasing number of states attributed progress in timely services to improvements in data collection and monitoring systems. In FFY 2010, many states engaged in significant data system improvements, including developing completely new data systems; making modifications to existing systems to provide prompts and reminders that deadlines are approaching; adding new fields to more accurately capture data for Indicator 1, especially the reasons for delay; and adding “flags” for identification of noncompliance. In addition, many states reported using “real time” reports generated from the data systems at a local, regional, and state level to monitor and correct data on a regular basis.

Improvements in reporting can also be attributable to states increasing the amount of training and technical assistance provided to local and regional staff on the definition and documentation of timely services. Several states reported engaging in overall improvements to their General Supervision systems, which also resulted in an increase in training and technical assistance to providers, particularly service coordinators, on timely services.

States also engaged in program improvement activities that resulted in progress. System level changes included changing or updating the definition of timely services

and changing the structures of supervision and oversight at point of entry to streamline service delivery procedures. Many states clarified policies and procedures for timely services and then conducted training to providers, particularly those that were under contract with Part C to provide services. Local program changes occurred with state support through focused technical assistance and monitoring to correct persistent issues with noncompliance.

Explanation of Slippage

States with slippage in the percentage of children served in a timely manner from last year to this year were asked to account for the increase in untimely receipt of services to infants and toddlers. All but one state experiencing slippage provided information about why services to children were not provided in a timely manner.

The most frequently cited reason for slippage in providing services in a timely manner continued to be personnel shortages. Staff turnover and a lack of qualified professionals, particularly in rural areas, were cited as major issues in all areas of the country. A few states also reported having an insufficient number of staff to serve the growing number of children being referred and made eligible for early intervention services and inability to add to their staff due to hiring freezes or the state fiscal climate.

The next most cited reason for slippage in FFY 2010 was the identification of one or more programs within a state experiencing significant issues with compliance on this indicator. In some instances, one to three programs were identified as having ongoing issues with noncompliance, and therefore contributing to the state's inability to meet the indicator target. In a few states, these programs are very large and serve a large proportion of the overall children served in the state, so low compliance within a single program impacted the state's percentage of children receiving services in a timely manner.

Additional reasons for lack of progress were procedural or funding issues, including delays in billing and insurance authorization as well as budget cuts. Some states reported changes in data collection strategy (i.e., change from monitoring to state data system, or reporting all areas of the state rather than a particular region as in previous years) as the reason for the slippage in compliance in providing timely services.

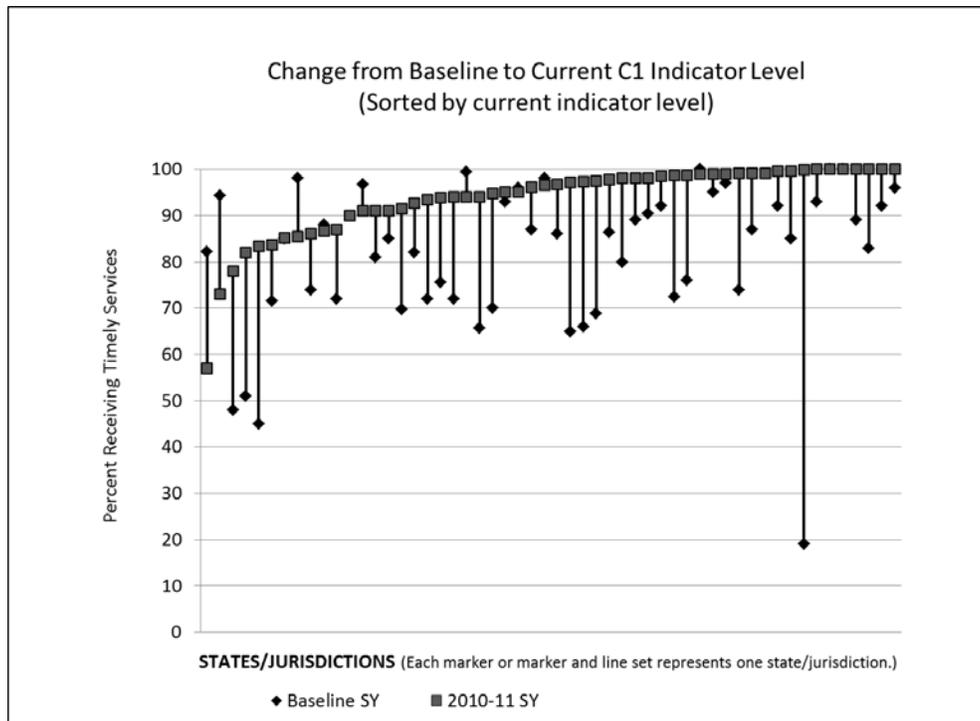
Finally, states reported issues with inadequate data and documentation of delay of services. While state's updates and refinements to data systems make them better able to capture the causes for delay, some states reported that issues specific to a local program, such as lack of documentation and inefficient local procedures, impacted overall state performance.

Comparison of Performance over Time

In FFY 2010, the national average for percentage of children who receive services on their IFSPs in a timely manner remains at 94%, as was reported in FFY 2009, and as compared to 92% reported in FFY 2008 and 82% in FFY 2004. Although many states did not reach the required 100% compliance target, the trajectory of performance from

baseline to FFY 2010 (see Figure 3) shows overall sustained progress in meeting the target for timely services.

Figure 3

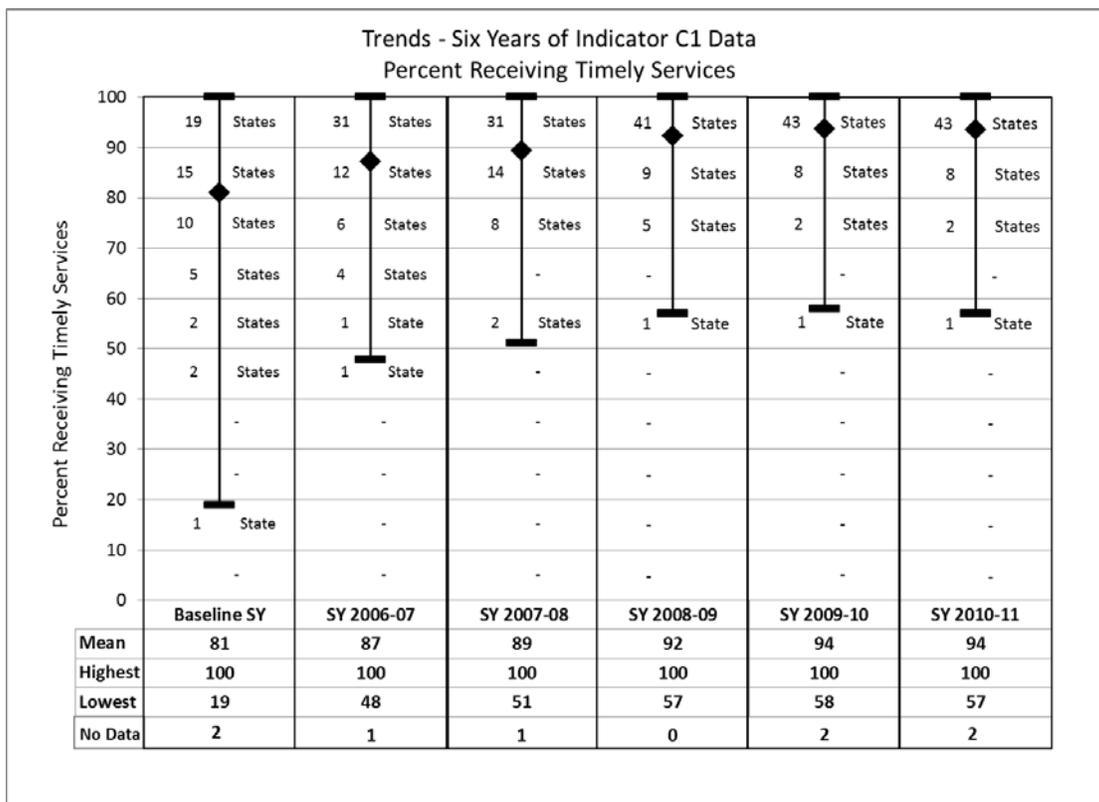


Of particular interest are the following observations:

- Forty-one states have improved their performance from baseline to FFY 2010 and two states have maintained their target performance of 100%.
- Fourteen states have shown continuous strong performance at 90% or above, with high baselines and high performance in FFY 2010.
- Fifteen states have improved their performance by more than 20 percentage points since baseline. Of these, 12 performed at 90% or higher in FFY 2010.
- For the seven states whose current performance is below baseline, the range of slippage was from <1- 12 percentage points. Four of the 7 states reported slippage of 2.4% or less. One state maintained performance from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010. Four states whose current performance is below baseline are performing above 90%.
- The state with the lowest baseline performance demonstrated the greatest improvement by FFY 2010, from 19% to 99.8%, an increase of 80.8 percentage points.
- Although the states' trajectories varied, the overall data supports a national trend toward improvement over time.

Figure 4 illustrates trend data for Timely Services. As displayed in Figure 4, 43 of 54 states reported that they are able to serve at least 90% of their children in a timely manner, which represents a consistent trend with data from FFY 2009 and an increase of seven percentage points from FFY 2008, when 41 of 56 states reported 90% or above. Only one state reported serving less than 60% of children in a timely manner in FFY 2010.

Figure 4



While the number of states above 90% remained the same from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010 at 43, the same 43 states are not included in the count in both years. Two states improved their performance to be included in the 90% or above category, while two states experienced enough slippage to move them into the 80-90% category. Similarly, two states made progress moving them from the category of 70-80% of children to 80-90% of children served in a timely manner, and two other states experienced slippage moving them from the 80-90% group to the 70-80% performance group.

FEATURED IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Many of the improvement activities listed in the FFY 2010 APR reports were similar to those listed in previous years, as they are long-term efforts that will take time to have an effect on the states' progress towards compliance. There continues to be a trend to shift the focus of improvement activities away from work with individual provider agencies to fix compliance issues towards state activities (such as improving accuracy

and reliability of data, improving data systems and the use of data, and additional statewide training) during this FFY.

Data Collection and Reporting

Improved data collection and reporting was the focus of the majority of the states' improvement activities. States modified data systems, tools, and procedures to better identify local compliance and to assist programs in collecting and tracking data. Activities addressed documentation of reasons for delays and capturing the start dates of all services. Plans to improve data collection included:

- Developing and expanding comprehensive data systems to capture, analyze, and report performance data.
- Adding and using reporting functions to data systems by including real time data and information to be used by local and regional staff to correct data entry issues and to monitor compliance on a continual and frequent basis (i.e. weekly, monthly, quarterly).
- Making modifications to existing data systems by adding new fields to capture reasons for delays, creating new administrative reports, and generating and tracking reminders.
- Investigating and/or changing data collection methods, primarily from monitoring or simple data collection (i.e. Access or Excel databases) to web-based data collection.

Increasing Personnel Recruitment

Strategies for increasing personnel recruitment and use of personnel were major activities for many states. Personnel shortages were cited frequently as a reason for delay in providing services in a timely manner. There were a number of efforts to recruit and retain providers. Some states were able to secure funds to hire additional providers (especially therapists) and contract with new vendors. Other strategies included:

- Developing provider databases to track availability and identify areas where gaps in available providers exist, and to examine reasons providers opt out of providing Part C services.
- Increasing the amount and availability of training related to the indicator, both at a local and statewide level.
- Developing competencies for early intervention providers and early intervention paraprofessionals to increase the number of available providers.
- Implementing Medicaid reimbursement for early intervention services to increase the number of therapists willing to provide services for Part C.
- Using telehealth to offer services in rural areas.
- Creating teams or agencies responsible for the recruitment and ongoing supervision of providers to ensure specific regions of states are have available services.

Systems Administration and Monitoring

States continued to expend energies towards rigorous monitoring including requiring corrective action plans or improvement plans for programs that were out of 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. For continued noncompliance, sanctions were applied. Some notable improvement strategies included:

- Focused TA and periodic consultation – required activities for programs demonstrating consistently poor performance in the indicator including regular meetings and phone calls, training, and monitoring of compliance with the indicator.
- Updated training and technical assistance materials, including an increase in the development and use of online training materials paired with face to face training on timely services.
- Updates to policies and procedures, including procedures on accurate data entry for the indicator.
- Community collaboration and communication– increasing the scope of cooperation between community programs and agencies to strengthen understanding of the requirement for timely service provision, including developing memoranda of understanding, participating in team meetings across agencies, and participating in joint training.

Service Delivery Models

Reviewing or redesigning models of service delivery was mentioned as an activity aimed at addressing continued personnel shortages, especially in rural areas. States are taking steps to shift away from discipline-specific to a more integrated approach to providing services in a timely manner, and are engaging national experts to provide training about services in natural environments. States most often listed the primary service provider, primary coach, transdisciplinary or another team-based approach as the evidence-based service delivery approach they are investigating or actively promoting.

Use of ARRA Funds

Several states reported using ARRA funds for improvement activities to address compliance with the indicator. The most common uses of ARRA funds included:

- Implementing or improving data systems and tracking.
- Hiring or contracting with additional providers, specifically therapists (OT, PT and speech) and those able to serve underserved areas.
- Systems improvement activities.

CONCLUSION

States continue to make gains and positive progress towards meeting the requirements of providing services to children in a timely manner. While this FFY does not show significant change in the numbers of states making progress or meeting the target for the indicator, there are a variety of long term efforts that are successfully addressing barriers to providing timely services that appear to be working. In particular, many of the issues states continue to face in meeting this indicator are adequate documentation and data collection for accurate reporting of this indicator. Many states are changing and improving their data collection mechanisms for this indicator over the course of several years, so it is likely that there will be continued progress towards 100% compliance as data collection improves and real-time reporting is used by local providers.

INDICATOR 2: SETTINGS

Prepared by NECTAC

Indicator 2: Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSP's who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or community-based settings.

INTRODUCTION

This summary of Indicator 2 is based on a review of FFY 2010 APRs for 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."

DATA SOURCES

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. The 618 data tables used for this collection period were revised in 2006. 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 use the "other" category to code settings that are "non-natural environments", such as provider locations, hospitals, residential schools, and programs for children with delays or developmental disabilities. The instructions for the APR have been revised to match the settings descriptions in the data tables.

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

The average performance reported across states for FFY 2010 was 94.8% of children served in home or community settings. This represents a 0.3% increase from last year. There were 40 states that reported between 95% and 100% performance, with 25 states (45%) at or above 99% and an additional 15 states (27%) between 95-99%. There is one state that continues to report very low numbers served in the natural environment which affects the overall national percentage.

Data were analyzed to examine patterns in the percent of children receiving early intervention services in home or community-based settings based on the number of children served, percent served, and RRC/RPTAC region. When looking at FFY 2010 data by percent served, analysis showed a slight tendency for states serving a higher percentage of children to have higher percentages of children in natural environments (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

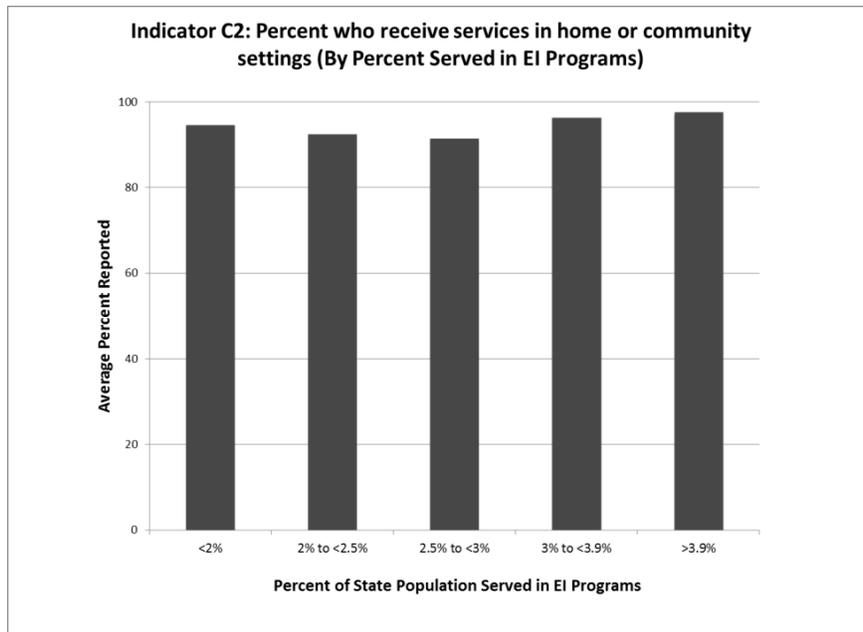
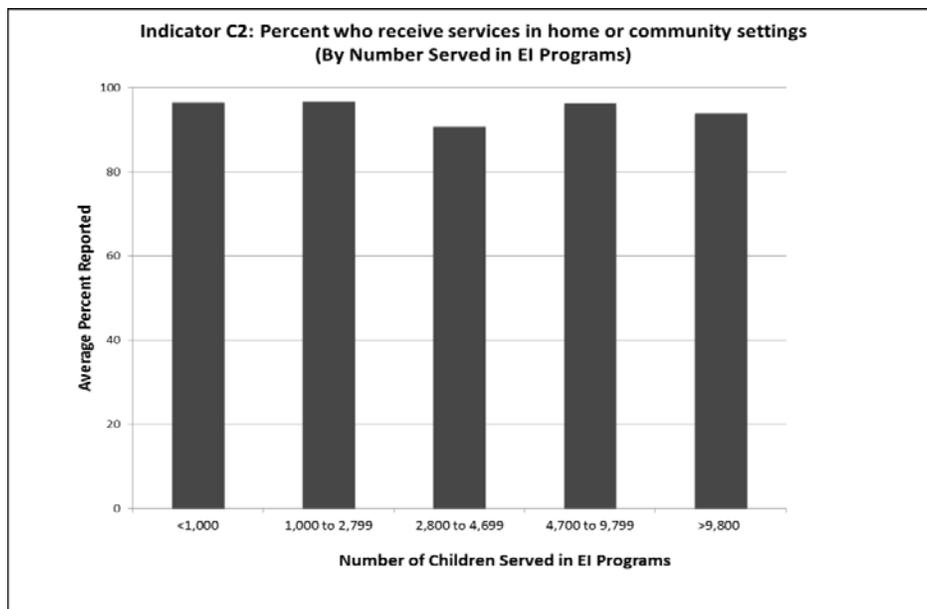


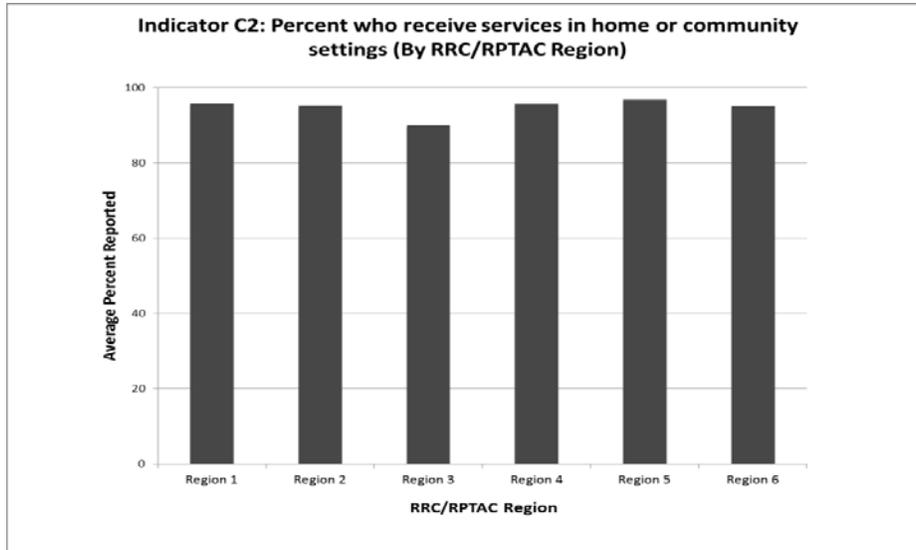
Figure 2 shows the percentage served in the natural environment by numbers of children served. Three of the five groupings are above 96%, with the other two at 90.8% and 93.8%. The lowest category, states with 2,800-4,699 children, contains the lowest performing state (at 13%), drawing down the mean. Similarly, the second lowest performing state (at 79%) is in the “>9,800” grouping of states. Omitting these two outliers, all groupings by number served are comparable, ranging from 95.2% to 96.6%.

Figure 2



As seen in Figure 3, there is also slight variation among RRC/RPTAC regions for this indicator. The state with lowest national percentage served in the natural environment is in Region 3.

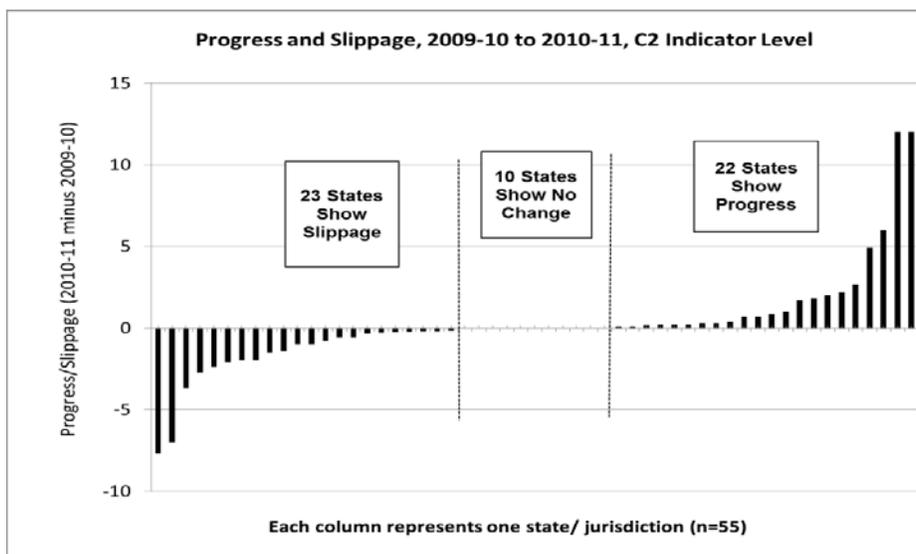
Figure 3



PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Progress and slippage for all states is shown in Figure 4. Twenty-two states made progress, 23 states demonstrated slippage, and ten states showed no change. One state did not submit data for FFY 2009, so progress/slippage was not calculated.

Figure 4



All ten of the states reporting no change from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010 are high performers, at or above 95%.

Of the 22 states reporting progress, 12 states made progress between 0.1 and 1 percentage point. Four states made progress between one and two percentage points, and two states made progress between 2.2 and 2.6 percentage points. Four states made progress of 4.9 percentage points or more, with the two highest states improving 12 points over FFY 2009.

The two states making the most progress gave specific explanations for progress including: modifications to their contract language that increased accountability for implementation of the team-based primary service provider approach, the use of ARRA dollars to support training activities, the use of the service coordination apprenticeship training, and changes made to the data collection, review, and reporting. These two states report some specific improvement activities aimed at addressing issues and increasing their percentages.

Other states reporting progress in FFY 2010 attributed their progress to on-going, long-term activities such as monitoring, training, and targeted TA to improve performance and improved data collection. New activities reported by states making progress included developing training modules on natural environments and making shifts in their service delivery systems as they explore the team-based primary service provider approach.

There were 23 states with slippage. Of these, 15 were above 95% for both reporting years. Three of the 13 states reported slippage of less than one percentage point, and eight states reported slippage from one to 3.7 percentage points. The two states experiencing the most slippage reported decreases of 7.0 and 7.7 percentage points.

The two states experiencing the most slippage have also fallen below their baselines. Specific reasons given by one of these states were that a large percentage of children continue to be enrolled in treatment centers and staff work in these center-based locations. There were no improvement activities listed to remediate this situation, although this state has engaged in extensive TA with NECTAC, DAC, their RRC, and contracted consultants over the last two years to work on this systemic issue. The other state experiencing the most slippage is a state that has shown steady increases each year from FFY 2005 to FFY 2009. This year they did not give any reason for their slippage but reported that they have made changes to their Medicaid state plan that should help with fiscal reimbursement for services provided in the home and community for next reporting period.

Among the other states experiencing slippage, specific reasons given for slippage included an ongoing need to hire providers and train them in providing services in natural environments, shortage of personnel in a variety of disciplines, local programs providing services at their centers as a cost-saving measure in spite of the state saying this is not appropriate practice, limited access to homes on the military bases, and a reluctance of providers to travel to homes and community-based settings.

Services in Natural Environments: Trends over Time

Figure 5, comparing baseline to FFY 2010 actual data, shows that 48 of 55 states have increased the percentages of children in home or community settings since setting their baselines in FFY 2004. One state did not report baseline data. Seven states report lower percentages in FFY 2010 than their baselines. However, six of these seven states had high baselines to begin with, and have remained above 95%.

Figure 5

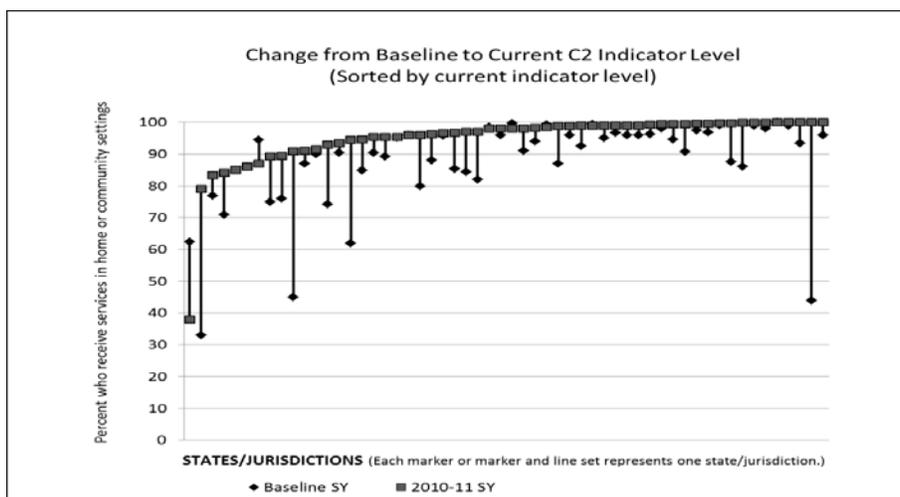
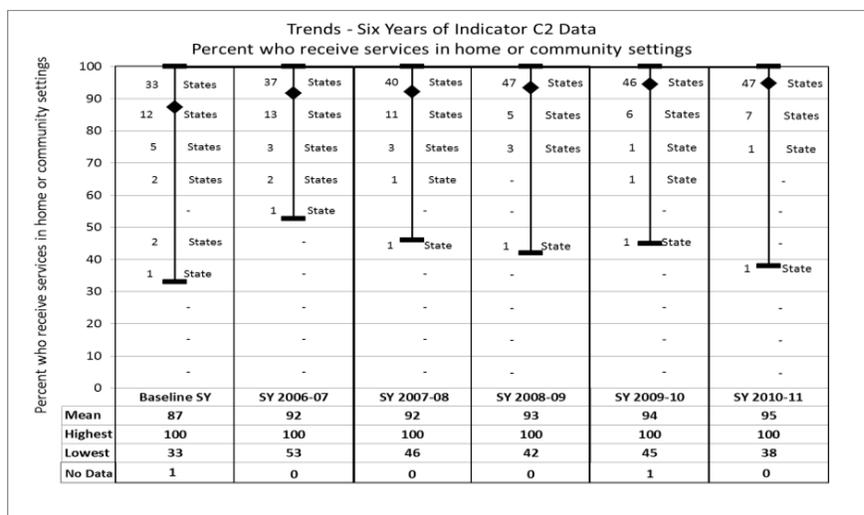


Figure 6 presents data over time, including baseline and the five most recent years of data (FFY 2006- FFY 2010). The mean of actual performance over time shows a small but steady increase each year, from 91.7% in FFY 2006 to 94.8% in FFY 2010. Thirty-three states started with baselines above 90% and remain within the 90-100% range. There has been an upward trend of states previously reporting within the 80%- 90% range moving into the 90-100% range for the past two years. Only two states now report below 80%, with actual data at 79.0%, and 38%. One of these states experienced slippage of seven points and the other made a 12-point gain from last year.

Figure 6



There has been some variation over the years in terms of which states fall into the bottom range. One state originally reported in mid-range for baseline (60%- 70%) has now fallen to 38% and has remained the lowest performing state since FFY 2006. All states except this one are above 79%. In FFY 2010, ten additional states now report above 90% compared to FFY 2006.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Twelve states reported on their use of ARRA funds to support improvement activities. Examples of specific activities supported with ARRA funds for services in natural environments include:

- Developing guidelines and training materials to serve children with autism.
- Expanding pre-service and in-service training around topics related to best practices of service delivery by providing funding to three universities to develop training materials.
- Contracting with national experts to do statewide training and follow-up support related to increasing teaming and the use of the primary service provider approach.
- Supporting eight TA positions across the state to do training and ongoing support for the Routine Based Interview (RBI) and Embedded Interventions.
- Developing three pilots to use the Primary Service Provider Coaching model.
- Funding a full time position in each Local Education Agency to focus on provider recruitment.
- Allocating ARRA funds to local programs to help increase capacity for services and retain providers.
- Purchasing a web-based data and centralized billing system.

Many state improvement activities for this indicator are now on-going. They also overlap with addressing Indicators 1 (timely services) and 7 (45-day timeline). States are providing training and TA to service coordinators and services providers. Eight states reported on creating on-line training materials in service coordination and service delivery that also address natural environments. Four states have developed new IFSP forms and guidance materials for better documentation of justification. There are activities focusing on enhancing or re-designing systems of services to support best practices as well as activities related to compliance and correction of identified non-compliance.

Some states have focused on increasing inclusive opportunities in child care and in other community activities. There are also improvement activities related to reimbursement rate increases, changes in Medicaid rate structures, and financial incentives for contracted private therapy providers who serve children in natural environments rather than private clinics. One state has worked for six years and received approval in this fiscal year to bill Medicaid for co-visits and to cover special instruction as developmental therapy. They are continuing to work on reimbursement for developmental evaluation and service coordination.

Below are examples of featured improvement activities that states described to address a particular issue for this indicator:

- Strengthened contract language to include the emphasis on routine-based interventions in natural environments and the role of the provider in using coaching practices.
- Restricted subcontracting at the local level to providers who will serve children in home and communities.
- Ensured that the new public awareness campaign focuses on services in natural environments.
- Investigated how local providers can get passes to work with families in their homes on secure military bases.
- Created a collaborative of faculty members representing various disciplines and universities dedicated to the training and professional development of EI personnel to support a Primary Service Provider model.
- Developed a certificate in Early Childhood Exceptionalities through the technical college system so that child care providers will be able to work with young children with disabilities.
- Developed a personal safety curriculum to help providers feel comfortable during their work in home and community settings.
- Began use of the IFSP Wizard-online tool to help providers through the process of establishing functional outcomes and age-appropriate expectations for children.
- Implemented new Medicaid Service program which includes an increased rate for EI therapy providers and additional reimbursement for special instruction and provider participation in assessments, service planning, and IFSP team meetings.

CONCLUSIONS

While there are currently a large number of states (n=47) reporting over 90% of services provided in the natural environment, with 40 of those states over 95%, there is not an expectation that 100% of all services must be provided in the natural environment. States report they individualize services to meet the specific needs of each child. There may be variation each year that reflects the needs of eligible children in each state. Five states reported in FFY 2010 that all children received 100% of services in home or community settings.

Many states began with high baselines for this indicator, and continue to engage in a variety of comprehensive activities that help them to remain high-performing and able to offer quality services in home and community settings. A number of states with mid-range performance have made steady increases in their percentages served. This group of states has engaged in both specific and general improvement activities, such as: better data collection, monitoring, providing more training and TA about services in natural environments, and finding incentives for staff and programs to prioritize serving children in home or community settings.

States continue to identify the same issues as in years past in implementing services in natural environments. These included personnel shortages of therapy providers, personnel not willing to drive long distances or work in family homes, poor quality of services, treatment centers delivering the only available services in some rural areas, financial /budget challenges to reimburse providers in natural environments, increasing numbers of medically fragile children who need more specialized services, and increasing numbers of children with autism and children with complex needs. Two states mentioned this year that the state agency in which Part C is located has been questioning why services need to be provided in home and community locations, thinking this is a more expensive option. They have wanted Part C to explore how to go back to serving children at the program center location, or expand services to children with similar disabilities in other group settings.

INDICATOR 3: INFANT & TODDLER OUTCOMES

Prepared by ECO

Indicator 3: 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.

INTRODUCTION

This summary is based on information reported by 56 states and territories in their FFY 2010 APRs. In this report, the term “state” is used for both states and territories. This year was the second year that states compared actual data to targets using the APR format for this indicator. Only information specifically reported in the APRs was included in the analysis. Therefore, it is possible that a state may be conducting an activity or using a data source or assessment that is not included in this summary.

DATA SOURCES

Child Outcomes Measurement Approach

States are using various approaches to measure child outcomes, as presented in Table 1. When details of those approaches were not included in APRs, we used the information described in the most current SPP, so 56 states are represented in Table 1.

Table 1

Child Outcomes Measurement Approaches (N=56 States)	
Type of Approach	Number of States (%)
7-point COS process	43 (77%)
One statewide tool	7 (13%)
Publishers' online analysis	1 (2%)
Other	5 (9%)

Of the 56 states, 43 (77%) are using the ECO Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process. Seven states (13%) are using one assessment tool statewide. Of those, four are using the Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI)/Battelle Developmental Inventory, Second Edition (BDI-2), two are using the Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation System (AEPS), and one is using the Oregon. One state (2%) is using publishers' online analysis and reporting systems where local programs choose from three assessments: High Scope, Creative Curriculum, or AEPSi (although they are moving toward just one assessment system, GOLD). Finally, five states (9%) developed other approaches to measuring child outcomes: a combination of publishers' online analysis and COS process; 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

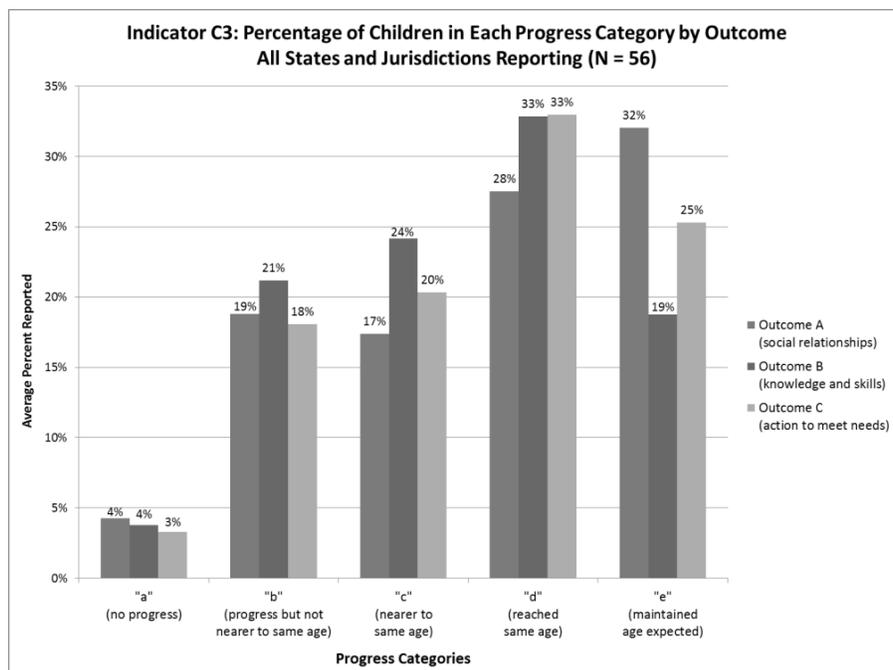
platform that translates scores from four approved assessment tools to the Learning Guidelines/Early Learning Standards and OSEP categories; a state developed process for calculating developmental age compared to chronological age; and a state-developed summary tool. Two states reported upcoming changes in approaches for FFY 2011: one state reported they will move from their own state developed approach to the BDI; and another reported they will be switching from one tool statewide (the Oregon) to a new approach still to be determined.

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

All 56 states submitted progress data for children exiting in this reporting period. Analyses of the progress categories and summary statement data reported in FFY 2010 are presented in Figures 1 and 2. This analysis has been designed using the state as the unit of analysis (averages across states) where each state is weighted equally to provide a general view of the data patterns. The number of children states included in their reporting ranged from 17 to 16,639 children.

Figure 1 shows the percentages states reported in each of the five progress categories for each of the three outcome areas. The progress categories are: (a) the percentage of children who did not improve functioning, (b) percentage of children who made progress but not sufficient to reach a level nearer to their same age peers, (c) percentage of children who made progress sufficient to reach a level nearer to their same age peers, (d) percentage of children who made progress sufficient to reach a level comparable to their same age peers, and (e) percentage of children who maintained a level comparable to their same age peers.

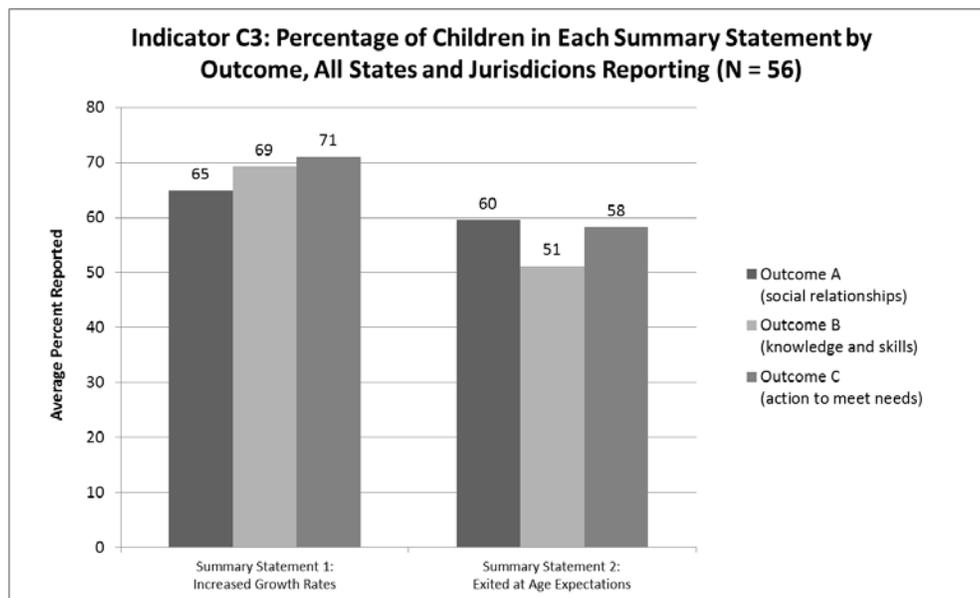
Figure 1



For all the progress categories, there was a wide range of percentages reported by states. Looking at national averages, by far the lowest percentages were reported in progress category 'a' (ranging from 3% to 4%) with generally increasing percentages in category 'b' (18% to 21%), category 'c' (17% to 24%), and category 'd' (28% to 33%). For progress category 'e,' the percentage is higher for Outcome A (social relationships) but lower for Outcomes B (knowledge and skills) and C (action to meet needs), ranging from 19% to 32%. The numbers and patterns were consistent with last year's national averages.

Figure 2 shows the FFY 2010 Summary Statement data. Summary Statement 1 is the percentage of children who entered the program below age expectations in each outcome who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program $[(c+d/a+b+c+d)]$ times 100. Summary Statement 2 is the percent of children who were functioning within age expectations in each outcome by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program $[(d+e/a+b+c+d+e)]$ times 100.

Figure 2

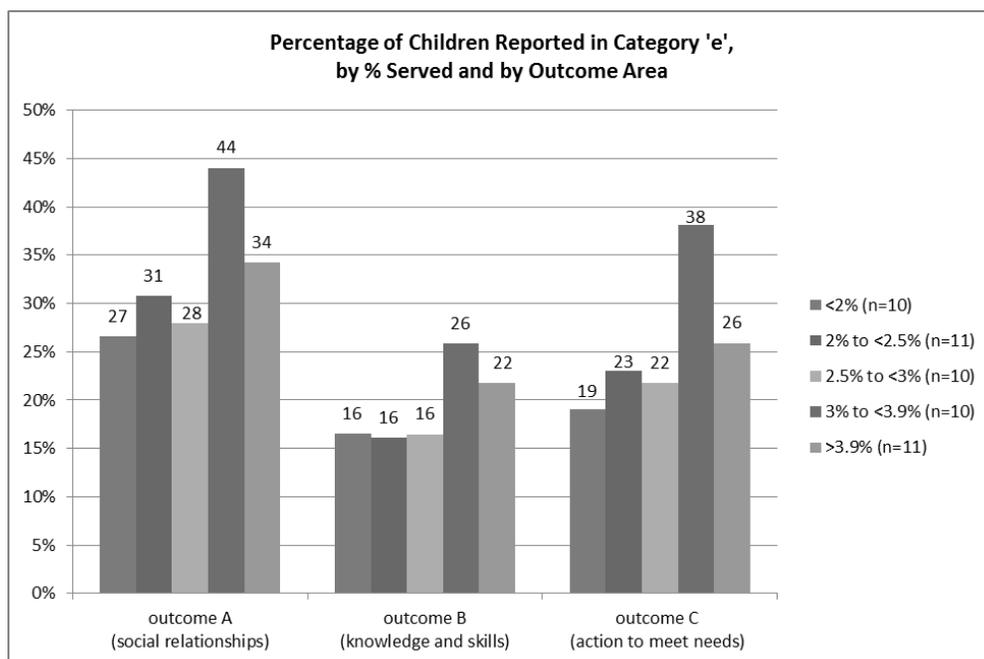


The average percentage of children reported in Summary Statement 1, children who showed greater than expected growth, ranged from 65% for Outcome A (social relationships) to 71% for Outcome C (action to meet needs). The lowest percentage of children who showed greater than expected growth was in Outcome A (social relationships, 65%) while the lowest percentage of children exiting within age expectations was in Outcome B (knowledge and skills, 51%). The highest percentage of children who showed greater than expected growth was in Outcome C (action to meet needs, 71%) while the highest percentage of children exiting within age expectations was in Outcome A (social relationships, 60%). The numbers and patterns were consistent with last year's national averages.

Analysis by Percentage of Children Served

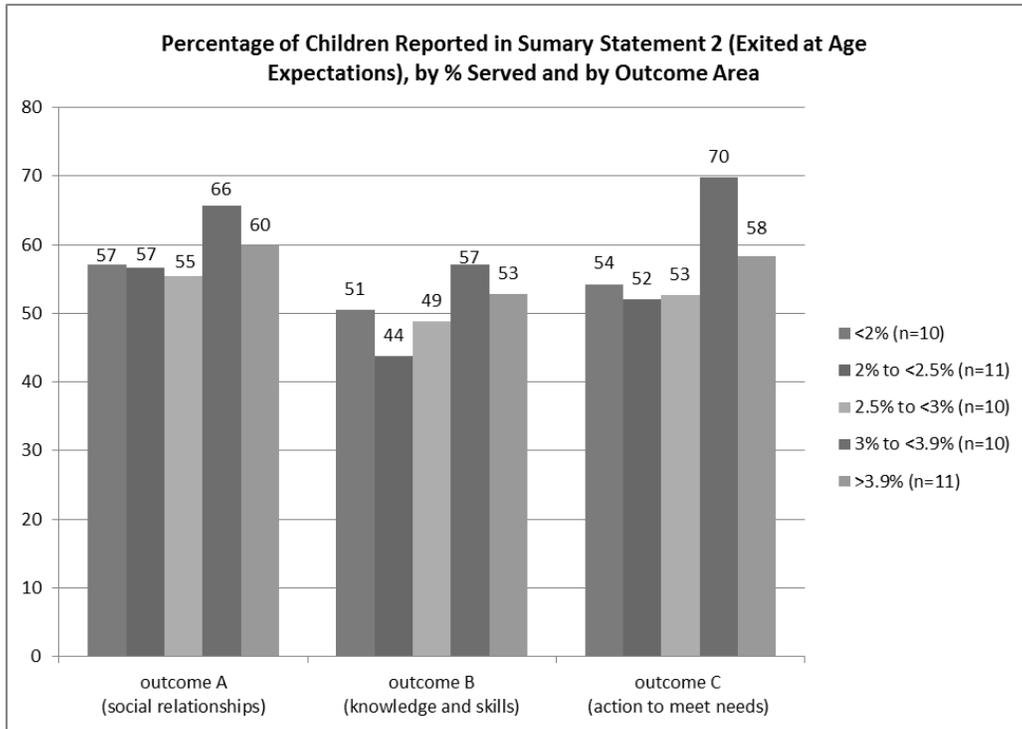
Analyses were done to examine whether there were differences among the progress categories according to states' percentage of children served. A comparison of progress data in category 'e' (maintained age expected skills) by percentage of children served, presented in Figure 3, shows the percentage of children in category 'e' generally increases as the percentage of children served increases (with the exception of a slightly lower percentage in Outcome 3 for states serving >3.9%). The percentage of children in category 'e' is consistently lower for programs that serve less than 3% of children (the first three bars in Figure 3) as compared to programs that serve more than 3% of children under three years of age (the last two bars in Figure 3).

Figure 3



Similar analyses were conducted to look at patterns by percentage of children served. Figure 4 shows a relationship between the percentage of children exiting at age expectations and the percentage of children served in a state. The analysis shows lower percentages of children exiting at age expectations in programs that serve less than 3% of children, compared to higher percentages in programs that serve more than 3% of children under age three.

Figure 4



Analysis by Region

Analyses were also conducted to examine differences among the six RRC/RPTAC regions. Figures 5 and 6 show comparisons across regions for Summary Statement 1 and Summary Statement 2. Although there is variation by outcome area and no clear pattern, mean ratings are generally higher in Regions 1 and 2 and lower in Regions 4 and 5 for Summary Statement 1. For Summary Statement 2, means are generally higher for Regions 1 and 5 and lower in Regions 2 and 3.

Figure 5

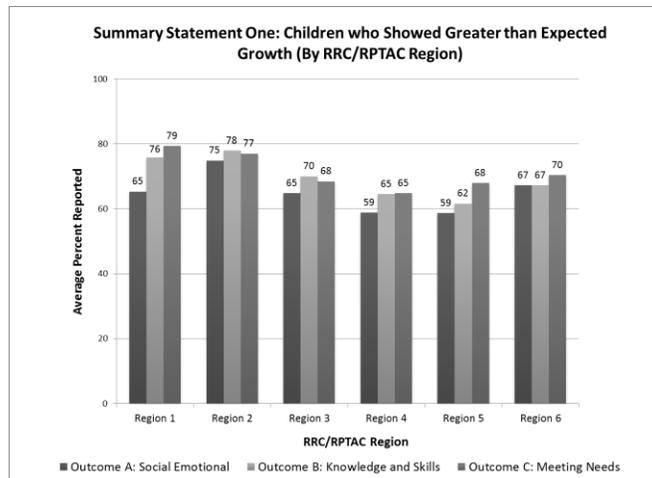
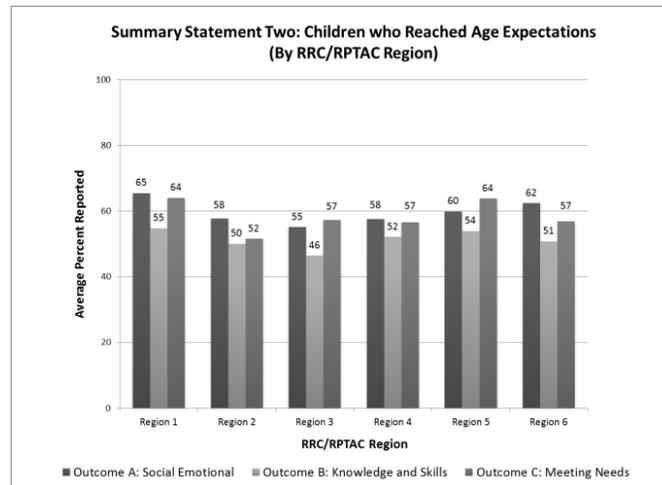


Figure 6



PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

When comparing actual performance data from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010, overall there was a mix of progress and slippage across the two summary statements and three outcomes. Figures 7, 8, and 9 show the number of states reporting progress and slippage for each outcome area. Each column represents one state. Across all three outcome areas and both summary statements, at least one third of states made progress and most states did not have slippage of more than five percentage points.

For Outcome A (Figure 7), 21 states made progress for Summary Statement 1 (children who showed greater than expected growth) and 17 states made progress for Summary Statement 2 (children who exited within age expectations). More states had slippage than made progress for both of the summary statements in this outcome area. However, the majority of these were smaller changes. For Summary Statement 1, 23 of the 31 states that slipped decreased by five percentage points or less. Similarly, for Summary Statement 2, 27 of the 37 states that slipped decreased by five percentage points or less.

For Outcome B (Figure 8), 22 states made progress for Summary Statement 1 and 20 states made progress for Summary Statement 2. Again, more states had slippage (29 and 31 respectively) than made progress. Again the majority of decreases were changes of five percentage points or less. For Summary Statement 1, 22 of the 29 states that slipped decreased by five percentage points or less, and for Summary Statement 2, 23 of the 31 states that slipped decreased by five percentage points or less.

For Outcome C (Figure 9), 23 states made progress for Summary Statement 1 and 24 states made progress for Summary Statement 2. Consistent with Outcomes A and B, more states had slippage than made progress (29 states for both Summary Statements). For Summary Statement 1, 20 of the 29 states slipped five or more

percentage points; for Summary Statement 2, 21 states slipped five or more percentage points.

Figure 7

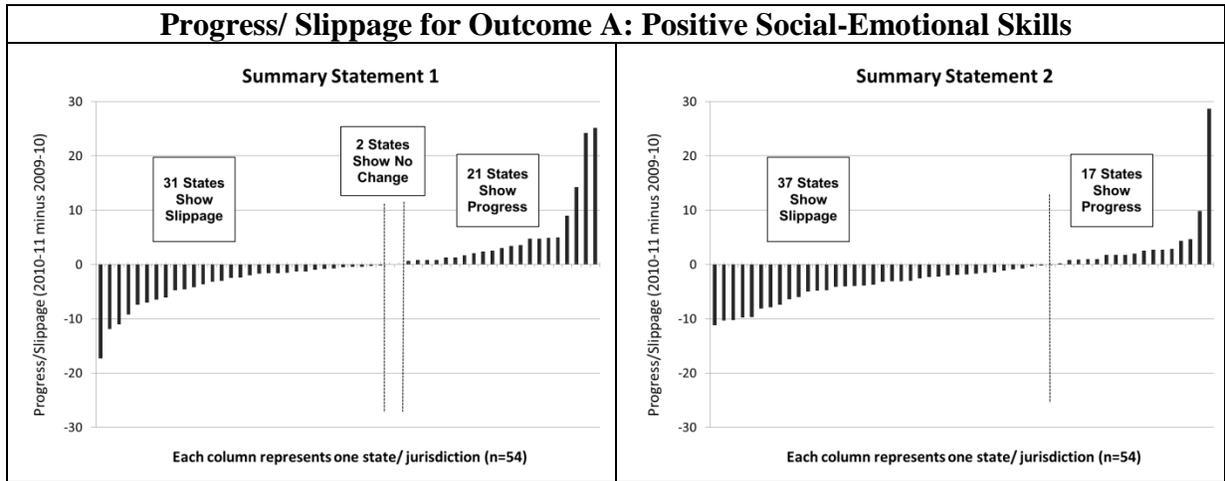


Figure 8

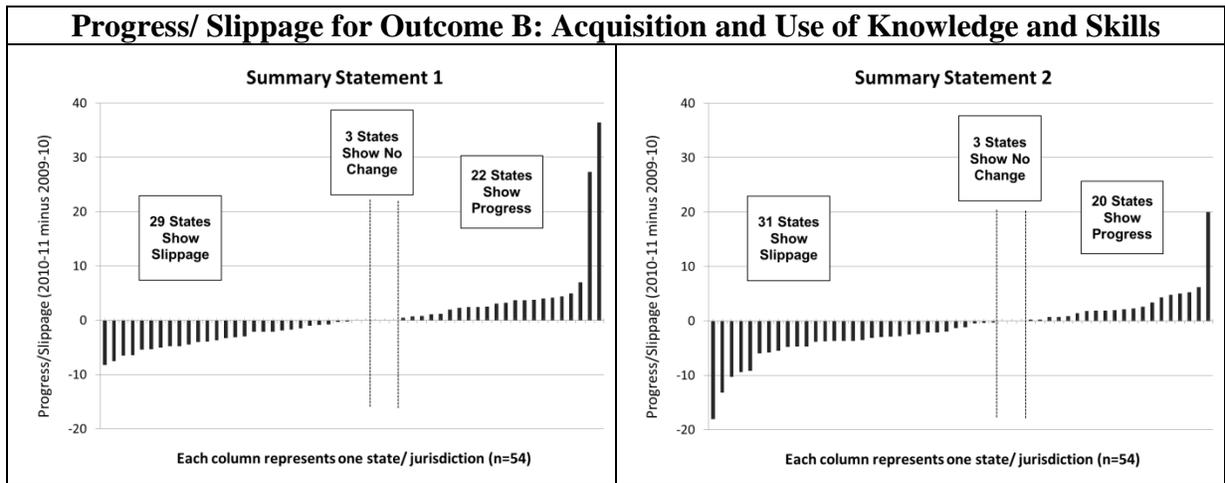
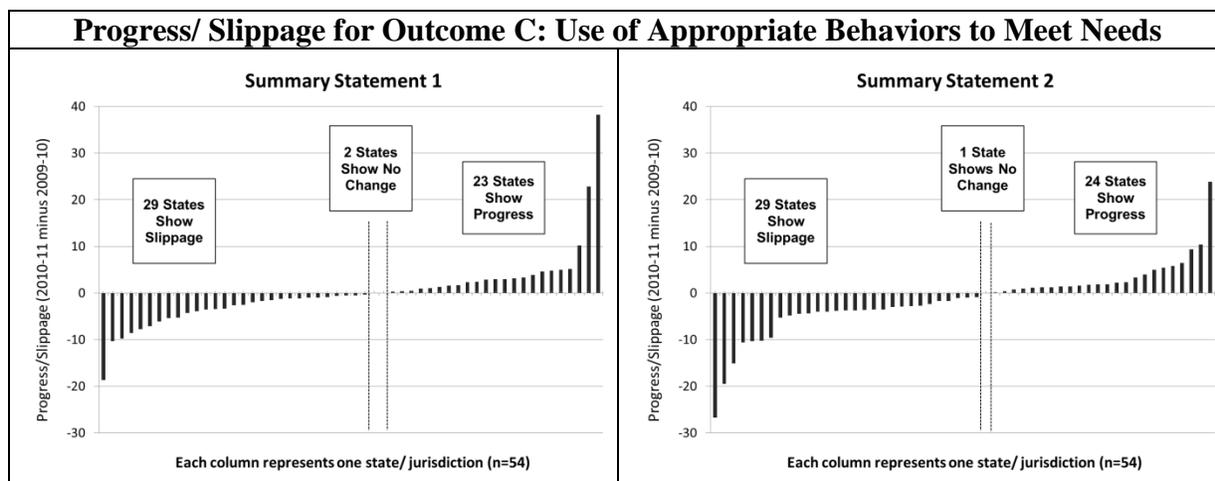


Figure 9



Explanation of Progress and Slippage

States provided a variety of explanations for the progress and/or slippage in their data. The overwhelming majority of states identified improved data quality that is more representative of the population of children served as a key explanation of their change in data. Better quality data was most commonly accomplished through monitoring and TA efforts where issues of data quality were identified and addressed, improving the knowledge and skills of those collecting the data. In some cases, data analysis or pattern checking were instrumental strategies in identifying data quality issues. In some states, improved data collection procedures were listed as explanations for improved data quality. Several states reported that their data were more representative of the population they serve because more children were included in the data set and/or because they have a 'full cohort' of children in the data. Overall, it was clear that data quality was addressed in many states, and data quality is still a key focus for states.

In addition, a number of states discussed system challenges that may explain slippage in their data. For example, changes in eligibility criteria was mentioned by some states. Staff turnover, lack of staff, and time to provide training and TA were also reported. Finally, a new Family Cost Participation and Immigration Law were two larger systems issues that one state felt was negatively impacting their outcomes data.

Trends over Time

A comparison of overall Summary Statement data from FFY 2008 to FFY 2010 is shown in Figures 10, 11, and 12 for each of the three outcome areas. The data have remained fairly stable across the three years for all three outcome areas. The national average for Summary Statement 1 (children who showed greater than expected growth) has stayed within one percentage point and the national average for Summary Statement 2 (children who exited at age expectations) has stayed within four percentage points. While the national averages have remained fairly consistent, the figures also show that

state percentages have varied widely with some states reporting as high as 100% and some as low as 7%. Some of that variation can be attributed to states with very small numbers of children, however it is more important to note that variation may also be attributed to the fact that states are still refining the quality of their data collection and reporting systems.

Figure 10

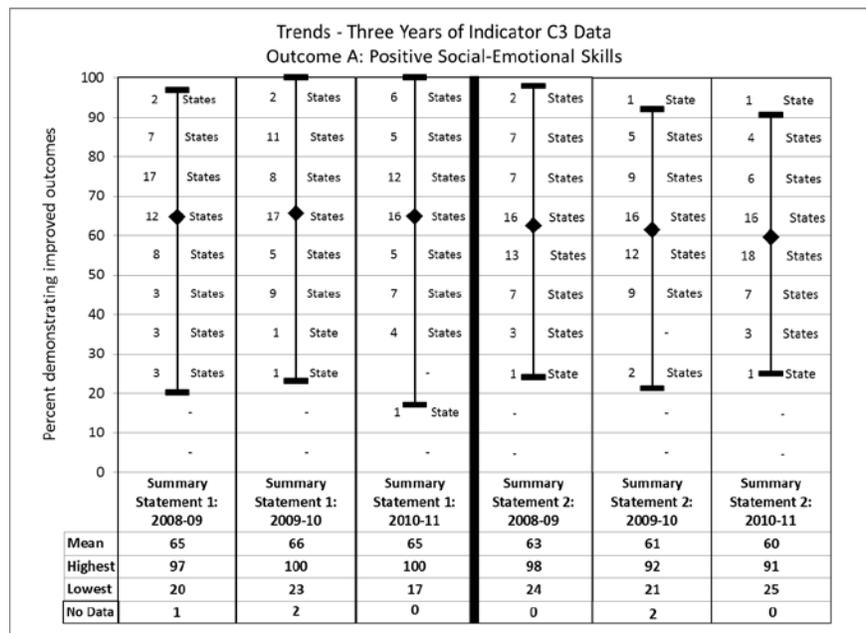


Figure 11

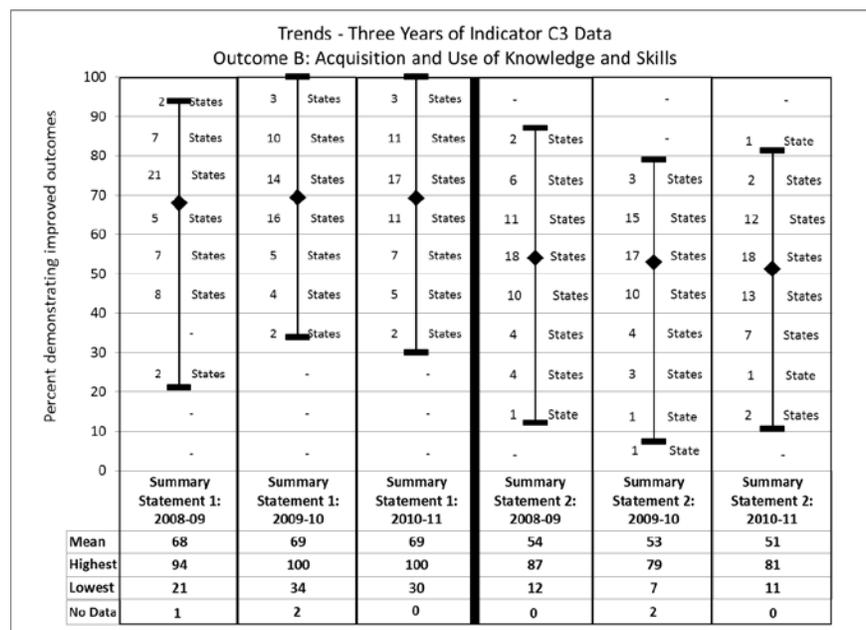
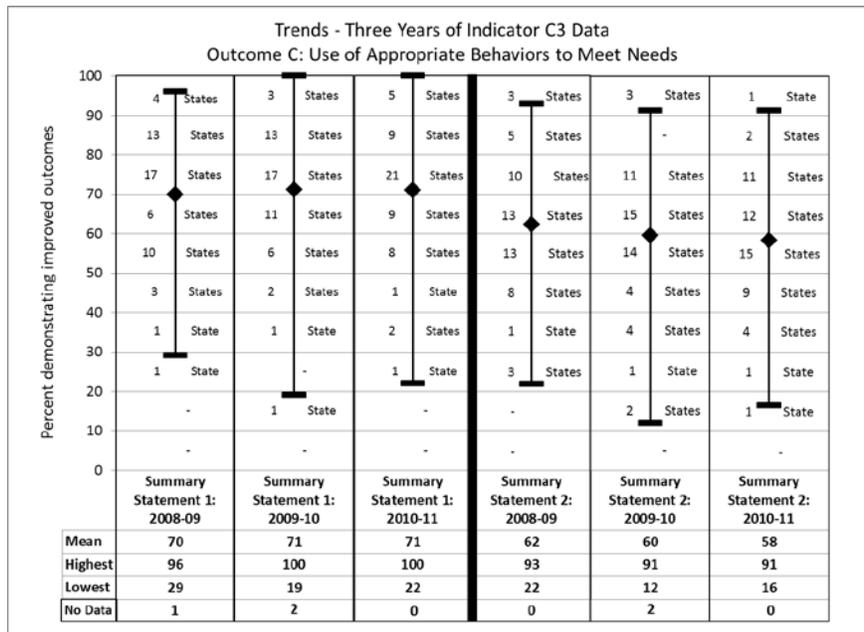


Figure 12



Another trend has been a steady increase in the number of children reported in the data over the last three years. Table 2 shows the number of children included in the FFY 2010 data ranged from 17 to 16,639 children. More than 60% of states (n=35) now have at least 1,000 children in their progress data. This year, more than one third of states (39%; n=22) reported progress data for at least 2,000 children, slightly more states than last year and twice as many as FFY 2008. Another 24% of states (n=13) have progress data for 1,000-1,999 children. Four of the states with less than 100 children in their progress data are jurisdictions serving smaller populations overall.

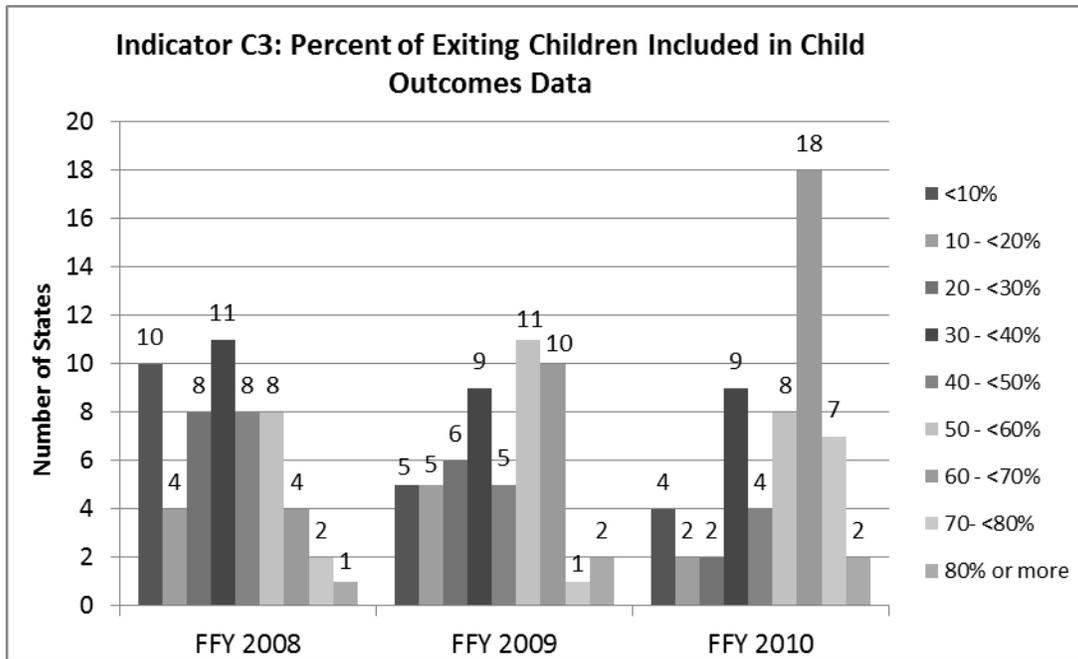
Table 2

Total Number of Children States Included in Progress Data				
Number of children reported	Number of States and Jurisdictions			
	FFY 2007 (N=56)	FFY 2008 (N=56)	FFY 2009 (N=54)	FFY 2010 (N=54)
99 or less	13	6	5	4
100-499	25	16	9	10
500-999	6	13	10	7
1,000-1,999	9	11	10	13
2,000+	3	10	20	22

Because states vary tremendously in size, additional analysis was conducted to show the number of children states included in their progress data as a portion of the total number of children exiting the program (see Figure 13). The total number of exiting children for each state was based on child count data. Two states did not have data for FFY 2009, so the number of states included in the figure is 54; for the other years (FFY 2008 and FFY 2010) 56 states are included. Figure 13 shows a steady increase in the

percentage of children included in the progress data from FFY 2008 to FFY 2010, as the bars on the left begin to decrease in size and the bars on the right begin to increase. This year, 35 states (63%) are reporting progress data on half or more of their exiting children, compared to 24 states (44%) last year, and 15 states (27%) in FFY 2008. There has been a parallel decrease in the number of states that are including data on small percentages of their children. In FFY 2010, only eight states reported outcomes data on 30% or less of their children, while in FFY 2008, this was 22 states.

Figure 13



Trends in Nationally Representative Data

Collecting data on outcomes for young children with disabilities is a complex undertaking and a new activity for states. States are at various stages in implementing procedures for measuring child outcomes data, and not all states were able to report high quality data for FFY 2010. Therefore, the ECO Center conducted more sophisticated analyses to calculate averages that better represent the national picture by weighting the data by child count (so that bigger states are weighted more heavily than smaller states).

The following analyses compare data from 'all states' with data from states who met criteria for 'best quality' data. This approach was undertaken under the assumption that the states with poor quality data introduce error into the national estimate. In the following additional analyses, the 'all states' data does not include U.S. territories.

Criteria used for including states in the ‘best quality’ data included: a sufficient percentage of children included in the state’s data (eliminating states with less than 28% of children in the data); patterns in the ‘a’ or ‘e’ categories (states with >10% reported in category “a” or >65% in category “e” were eliminated); and data collection methods (unclear methodologies were eliminated). Using these criteria, 39 states were included in FFY 2010, 29 states for FFY 2009, and 19 states for FFY 2008 data analysis. For all three years, the states were weighted to be nationally representative.

Remarkably, the data show the same basic trends as reported last year. Figure 14 compares Summary Statements 1 (SS1) and 2 (SS2) for Outcome A (social relationships) using weighted data from all states and using weighted data from states that met the criteria for quality data. The data show: (1) the differences between national numbers based on all states and those based on states with the best data are small; (2) the data are relatively stable from FFY 2008 to FFY 2009 and to FFY 2010 under both methods, and most importantly, (3) the evidence is strong that a high percentage of children who received early intervention changed growth trajectories and a high percentage exited the program at age expectations.

Figure 14

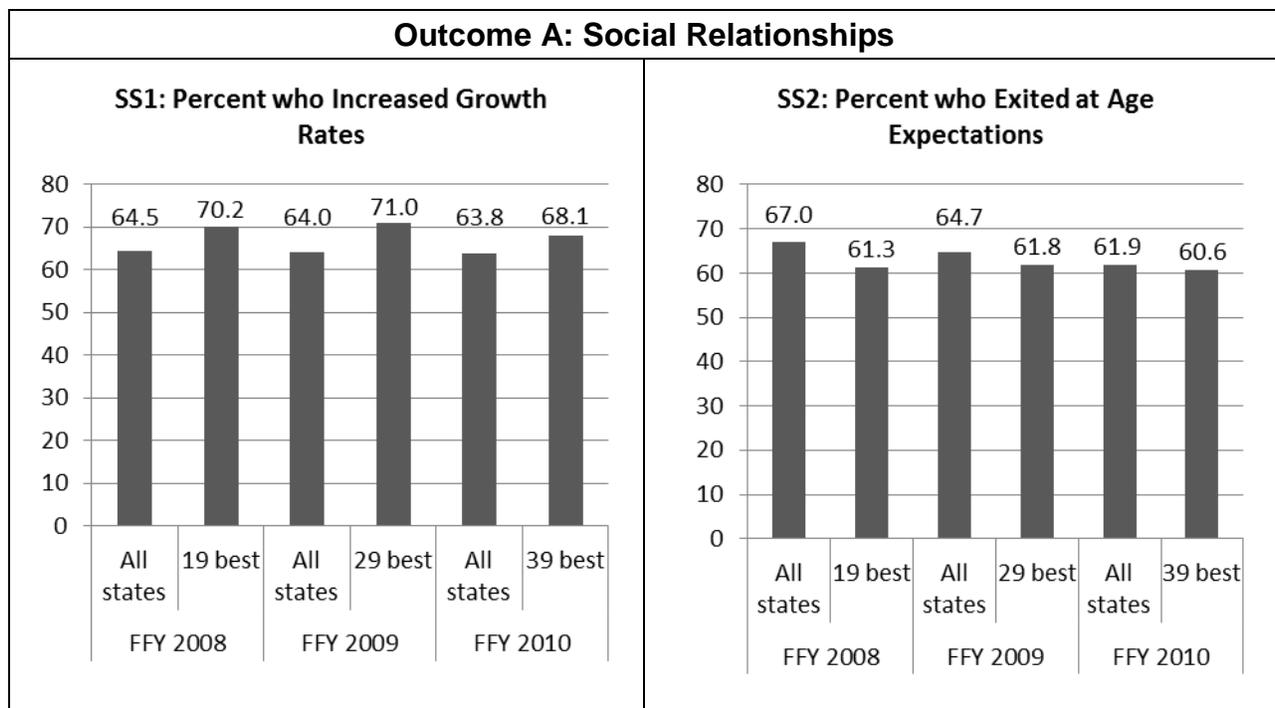


Figure 15 shows the national data for Outcome B, Knowledge and Skills. Outcome B has the same pattern as seen with Outcome A: for Summary Statement 1, the ‘best quality’ data show slightly higher means than the ‘all states’ category; and for Summary Statement 2 the pattern is reversed, with the ‘best quality’ means slightly lower than the ‘all states’ data (with one exception, Outcome B, Summary Statement 2, FFY 2010).

Figure 15

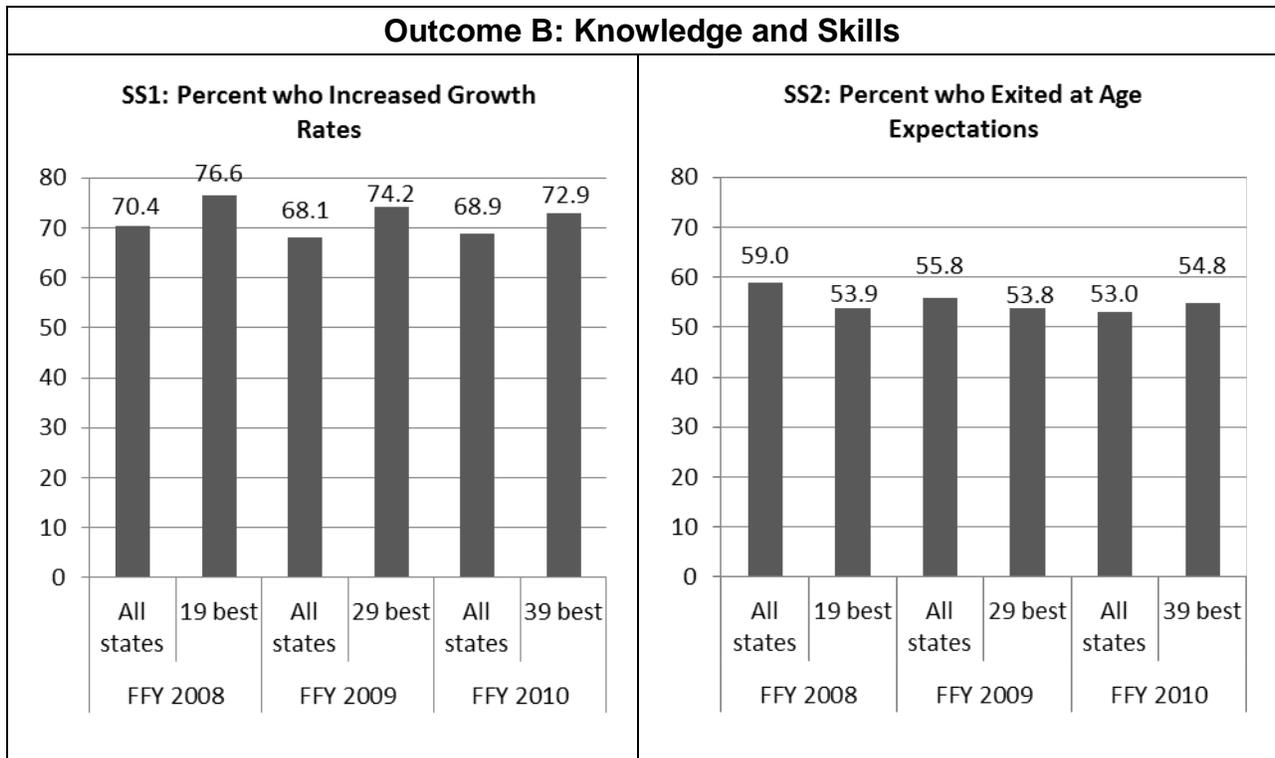


Figure 16

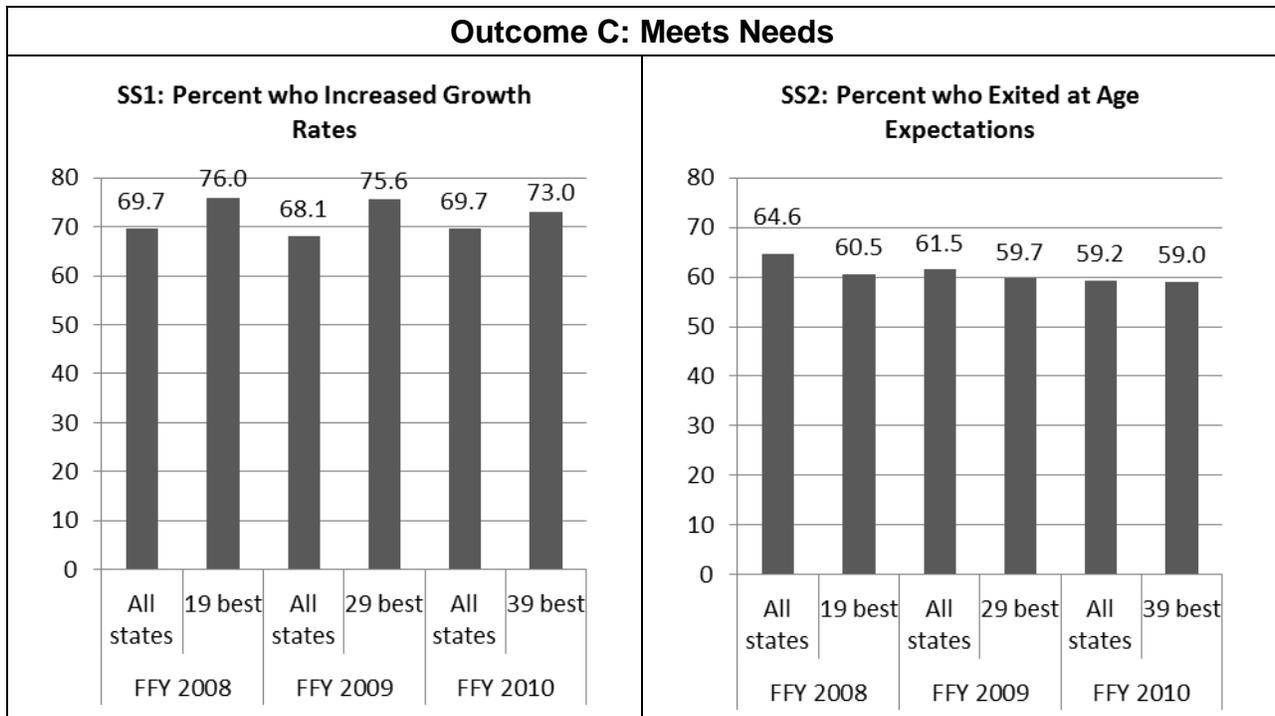


Figure 16 shows the national data for Outcome C, Meets Needs. Outcome C has the same pattern as seen with Outcomes A and B. The data based on all states is similar to data based on states with the highest quality data: the data are relatively stable from FFY 2008 to FFY 2009 and to FFY 2010, a high percentage of children changed growth trajectories, and a high percentage of children exited the program at age expectations.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Looking across improvement activities for all 56 states and jurisdictions, most activities were similar to reported activities last year and related to one of four areas:

- 1) conducting professional development activities;
- 2) implementing monitoring procedures to increase the quality of the data;
- 3) improving data analysis, pattern checking, and data collection procedures to ensure the quality of the data and begin using the data for program improvement; and
- 4) beginning to go beyond improving the data collection and reporting systems towards focusing on implementing quality practices to improve outcomes for children.

Professional Development

The most common type of improvement activity described in state APRs relates to conducting professional development activities to ensure administrators and providers have the competencies for implementing their outcomes measurement systems. Increasingly, states are providing TA to local programs on data analysis and use of the outcomes data. Frequently, TA to local programs is a result of identifying issues through monitoring and/or identification of outliers through data analysis.

States continue to use technology to enhance professional development through developing online training modules, videos to illustrate skills, and webinars. Additionally, some states are integrating the orientation and training on outcomes data collection into the overall orientation and training for Part C for new staff. Frequent topics of TA include the overall data collection and reporting process (e.g. COS process), conducting quality assessments, child development, and understanding functional skills. Some featured improvement activities related to professional development for improving the data collection system are:

- Developed and disseminated online training module on the child outcomes measurement system.
- Conducted training on COS data collection procedures and integrating the COS process into existing IFSP/IEP process.
- Embedded training on outcomes process into Part C orientation.
- Regional agencies have orientation and initial training program that includes training on child outcomes data collection and reporting.
- Provided ongoing TA including quarterly calls to problem-solve specific issues.
- Conducted training on specific assessment tools and procedures.
- Conducted training in the area of typical child development.
- Discussed and provided training to regions with atypical data patterns or identified errors.

- Developed and distributed guidance tools for using the outcomes web system to analyze outcomes data.
- Training of locals on data analysis and use of data.
- Participated in ECO TA including webinars, conferences, and learning communities.

Monitoring to Increase Data Quality

A second, very common, type of improvement activity described in state APRs relates to monitoring to increase data quality. Many states are increasing their focus on data quality, and implementing strategies such as reviewing individual assessment or COS data for quality, supporting local programs in conducting data reviews, and building the child outcomes data into overall monitoring procedures. Some featured improvement activities related to monitoring include:

- Monitored programs with outcomes significantly below target.
- Developing a new EI monitoring manual that will include outcomes measurement.
- Local programs conducted self-assessments that included outcomes measurement.
- Outcome system included in state's overall monitoring process. Data were analyzed and the state contacted programs with unexpected results to determine the reason and appropriate corrective action. Onsite record reviews conducted by state TA staff to assure consistency and accuracy of data and provide feedback to local providers.
- Monitored all regions through data verification reports, file reviews, TA, support and monitoring of improvement plans.
- Reviewed COS forms for accuracy and completeness as part of ongoing monitoring.
- Reviewed COS forms for errors to identify recurring trends leading to insufficient data to support ratings. Child outcomes taskforce met quarterly to review decisions, discuss modifications, and review random sample of COS forms from each region.
- Supported county administrators in reviewing random samples of COS forms for quality and completeness.

Data Analysis to Increase Data Quality

A third common type of improvement activity described in state APRs relates to increasing data quality through analyzing data, pattern checking, and improving data collection. Many states are increasing their focus on data quality, and conducting extensive data analysis and pattern checking to help identify missing data, unusual patterns that are 'red flags' in the data, and outlier local programs. States also report ongoing improvements to data collection activities.

Some featured improvement activities related to identifying missing data include:

- State looked at child outcomes data (monthly, quarterly, and/or annually) to ensure all children entering and exiting the program with at least six months of service had entry and exit outcome data.
- Data programmers match the data about children entering and exiting the program to the child outcomes data to identify missing data.
- Quarterly and annual reports sent to regions identifying missing data and regions are expected to provide the data or provide an explanation.
- Posted 'participation rates' for local programs to the web to identify programs with low participation rates (i.e. high missing data) and requiring programs with low rates to provide a plan to improve data collection.
- Created a policy and procedure to ensure data are collected for children who leave unexpectedly.

Featured improvement activities related to data analysis and pattern checking include:

- Analyzed data variables including race, ethnicity, eligibility status, length of time in services, family income level, geographic area, diagnosis and degree of delay, Medicaid enrollment, age at referral, and family outcomes.
- Analyzed data patterns and anomalies in each region; discussed potential reasons for differences in patterns; conducted root cause analysis and discussed strategies to improve data quality and services in each region.
- Analyzed data to identify local programs significantly below target, to determine TA priorities, and to identify trends.
- Conducted 'drill down' analyses on individual child profiles to assess for potential systemic challenges.
- Participated in the national ENHANCE study with extensive data analysis.
- Worked to investigate local processes, examine statewide data, explore patterns, and promote data quality. Follow-up with local programs identified as outliers.
- Web-based system allows regions to view reports and correct data errors on a regular basis.
- Data verification webpage allows providers to view summaries of data, determine whether their program is an outlier, and adjust local procedures as needed.
- Child outcomes workgroup meets regularly to analyze state and program data, separating by age at time of referral, disability/eligibility category, time in EI, demographics and Part B eligibility in order to target TA for improved data validity and program improvement.
- A comprehensive spreadsheet of statewide data by program was developed and is updated quarterly. It is available for easy download to all providers for review and analysis.

States also reported improvement activities related to improving data collection, including:

- Revised IFSP form and process to ensure integration of the COS process.
- State revised policy to require using the Decision Tree for COS ratings.
- Revised data collection procedures to require at least three data sources be used when determining outcomes ratings.

- Working on a standard for age expectations to ensure consistency across the state.
- Develop and implement a procedure for sharing data across Part C and Section 619.

Quality Practices to Improve Outcomes

As mentioned above, a growing number of states have begun to report improvement activities for this indicator that go beyond improving the data collection and reporting system and directly relate to improving outcomes for children. Examples of improvement activities related to implementing quality early intervention practices to improve child outcomes include:

- Review and revise IFSP format to enhance family centered practices.
- Training and TA regarding Family Cost Participation.
- Assist programs to provide services based on a family's functional, participation-based outcomes.
- Provide an online toolkit to assist community partners in providing information to caregivers.
- Regional trainings to support program improvement.
- Developed "Every Child Reads" training to enhance providers' understanding of early literacy interventions.
- Parent training specific to social emotional, early literacy, and typical child development.
- Presentations on evidence based approaches to service delivery.
- EI providers and caregivers received in-depth training and coaching on evidence-based practices to promote social emotional development from TACSEI.
- Training and TA provided on team-based model, service coordination, and participation based practices.
- Statewide meeting for service coordinators on services in natural environments including overcoming barriers to providing services in natural environments and family-centered intervention.
- Collaboration with CSEFEL to expand statewide efforts to implement program-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports.
- Competency-based training program on family-centered service coordination provided for new service coordinators.
- Training on routines-based intervention team leaders to improve quality of service and ultimately child outcomes.
- Trainings conducted on environmental interventions, play sequences, and behavioral interventions for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Local systems received multimedia library of training materials on SpecialQuest, enhancing and sustaining inclusive services, family leadership skills and integrated, collaborative service delivery.

CONCLUSION

Although collecting and reporting child outcomes data for young children with disabilities is a complex undertaking, states are increasingly able to report high quality data for this indicator. The numbers are very stable across the last three years, suggesting that the national estimates based on states with the highest quality data are credible estimates. Most states are implementing a series of improvement activities that focus on ensuring high quality data including professional development activities and different types of data analysis and monitoring activities. Some states are also beginning to use their data to make decisions about program improvement, thus beginning to implement improvement activities focused on implementing evidence-based practices.

INDICATOR 4: FAMILY OUTCOMES

Prepared by ECO

INTRODUCTION

Indicator 4 of Part C measures the 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.

DATA SOURCES AND MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

The data used for this report are based on information reported by 56 states and territories in their FFY 2010 APRs. States and territories are referred to as “states” for the remainder of this report. In cases where data on a state’s approach were not reported this year, data from last year’s APR report were used.

Family Survey Tools

States reported using three main survey approaches to collect data for this indicator. Of the 56 states, 25 used the NCSEAM Family Survey (45%), 17 used the original (2006) ECO Family Outcomes Survey (32%), six states (11%) used the revised ECO Family Outcomes survey (2011), seven (12%) used a state-developed survey, and one state (2%) used both the original and revised ECO surveys, due to switching during the reporting year. In some cases, a state tailored the NCSEAM or ECO surveys by removing questions not required for APR reporting, adding survey questions specific to their state, and/or making wording and formatting changes.

Family Populations Included in Surveys

Forty-six states (82%) reported using a census approach, and ten states (18%) reported using a sampling approach when surveying families. Across both census and sample approaches, a majority of states (n=35, 63%) surveyed families regardless of the length of time their child was in services. Twenty one states (38%) surveyed families who had a minimum amount of time in services. Of these, 19 states used criteria of six months of services or more; one used 9 months or more, and one 12 months or more.

With regard to timing, the majority of states surveyed families at a designated point in time or during a specific time period (n=37, 66%). Another approach was timing the survey administration to child participation in the program (n=15 states). This includes administering the survey at exit or transition (nine states), at IFSP meetings (four states), or some combination of those (two states). Of the remaining four states, three surveyed families throughout the year, and one had survey timing that varied by region/district.

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

Fifty-six states reported actual data for FFY 2010. Table 1 presents the percent of families reporting that early intervention helped them (4A) know their rights, (4B) communicate their children's needs, and (4C) help their children develop and learn.

Table 1

Means and Ranges for Actual Data: FFY 2010			
	4A: Know their rights	4B: Communicate children's needs	4C: Help children develop and learn
Mean	86.5% of families	87.0% of families	90.1% of families
Range	55.4% - 99.5%	53.5.0% - 99.5%	61.7% - 100%

Actual Performance by Survey Type

Figures 1 and 2 show FFY 2010 data according to two different survey variables. The first (Figure 1) shows comparisons by survey tool overall, and the second (Figure 2) shows comparisons by the cutoff criteria for the most common approaches.

Across all surveys used, states used a variety of standards to determine whether families had achieved each of the three family outcomes reported in this indicator. Among the 25 states using the NCSEAM survey, 14 states reported using the standard scoring methodology of Rasch analysis to indicate a positive response, and six states reported using different methods of analysis or cut points. The alternate scoring methods generally had a less restrictive cut-point than the Rasch scoring. They included ratings based on level of agreement with items or percentage points awarded based on the level of agreement, with cut points at four on the six point scale. Two states using the NCSEAM survey did not report their criteria for a positive response, and one used a frequency scale rather than an agreement scale.

Of the 17 states using the original ECO Family Outcomes Survey for this indicator, 13 states reported using the scoring standard recommended by ECO, requiring families to score a five or higher on a seven point scale of the helpfulness of EI. Two states did not report their cut-point criteria, and two states used an alternate answer set.

Figure 1

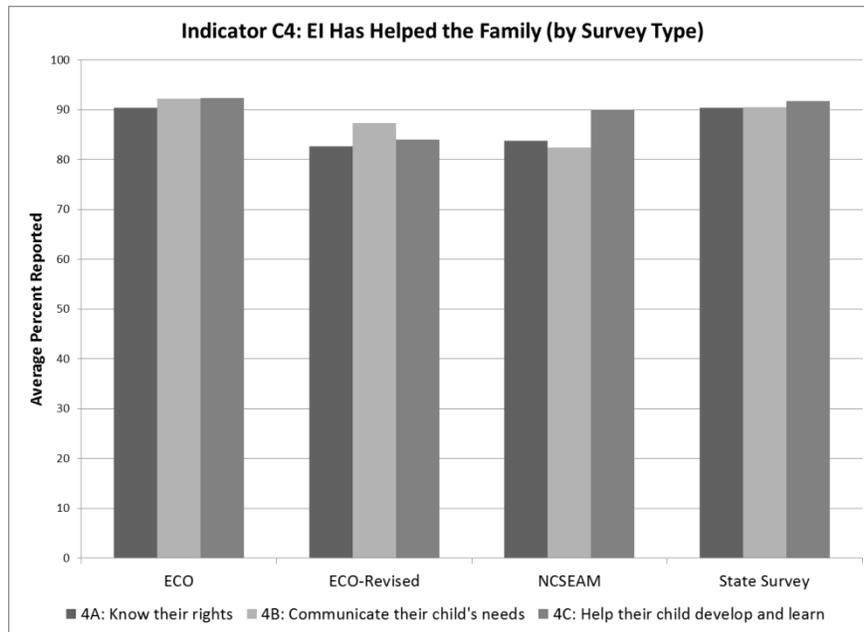
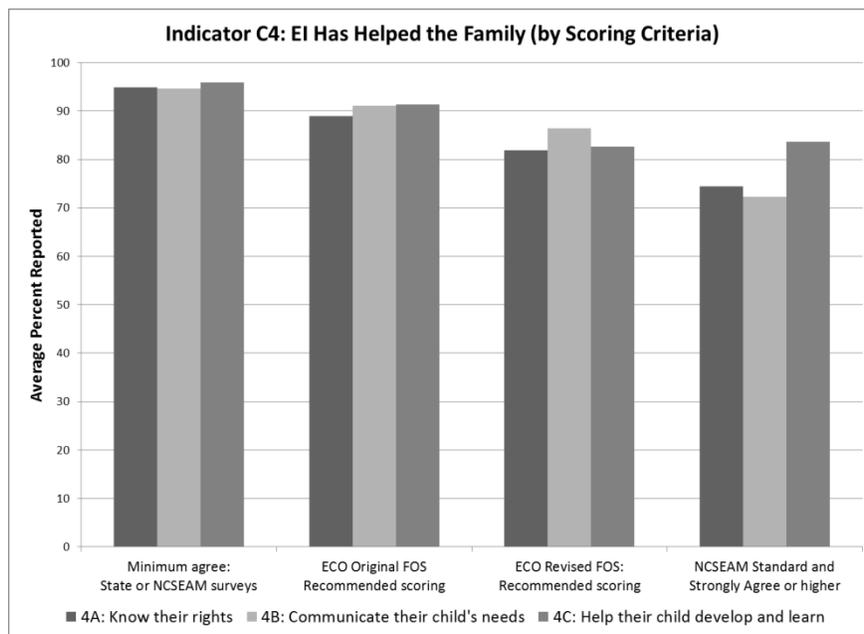


Figure 2



Of the seven states using the revised ECO survey, six used the recommended scoring criteria, involving computing and using a mean score across multiple questions for each sub-indicator area for each family. Among the seven states that used a state-developed survey, five used criteria of “agree” or higher for questions addressing the three sub-indicator area, one used “strongly” or “very strongly” agree as their minimum standard.

Figure 2 shows the FFY 2010 data according to these various criteria for positive response. States that did not report their criteria, or who had criteria unique to their state are not included in this figure (ten states are not included). The differences seen between Figures 1 and 2 are most likely due to differences in the measurement processes (survey cutoffs) rather than to differential state performance.

Actual Performance by Region, State Size, and Percent Served

Figures 3, 4, and 5 show the average performance for all three sub-indicators by RRC/RPTAC region, number of children served, and percent of the state population served by Part C.

When comparing actual performance results by region, Region 5 appears somewhat higher across the three sub-indicators, while Regions 1 and 2 show lower means for 4A (parents know their rights) and 4B (parents communicate their child’s needs).

When looking at families’ perceptions by the size of the state (Figure 4), results were fairly consistent across most groupings except the largest states (states serving more than 9,800 children). Among this group, the means were lower for all three sub-indicators, particularly Indicators 4A (early intervention has helped parents know their rights) and 4B (early intervention helped families communicate their child’s needs). The difference was smaller for Indicator 4C (early intervention helping their children develop and learn).

Figure 3

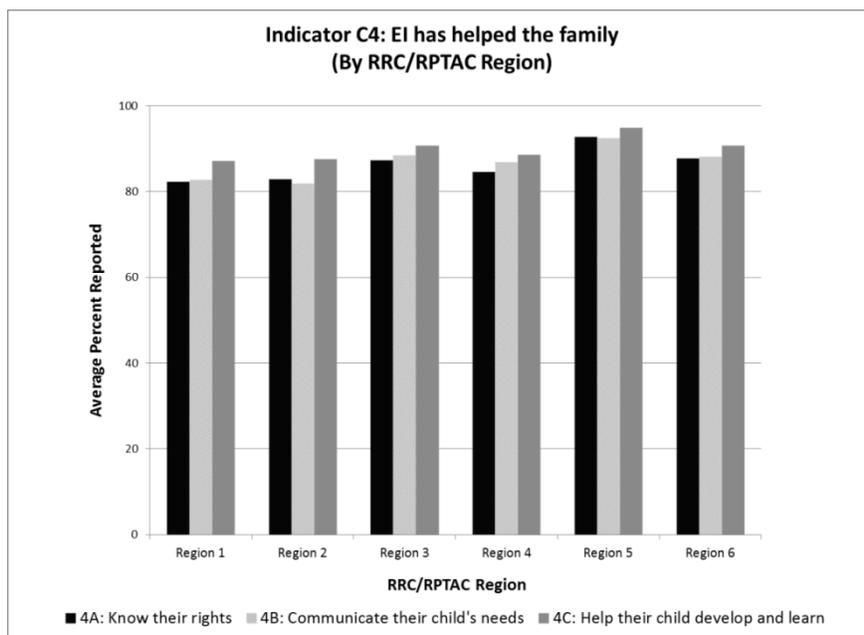
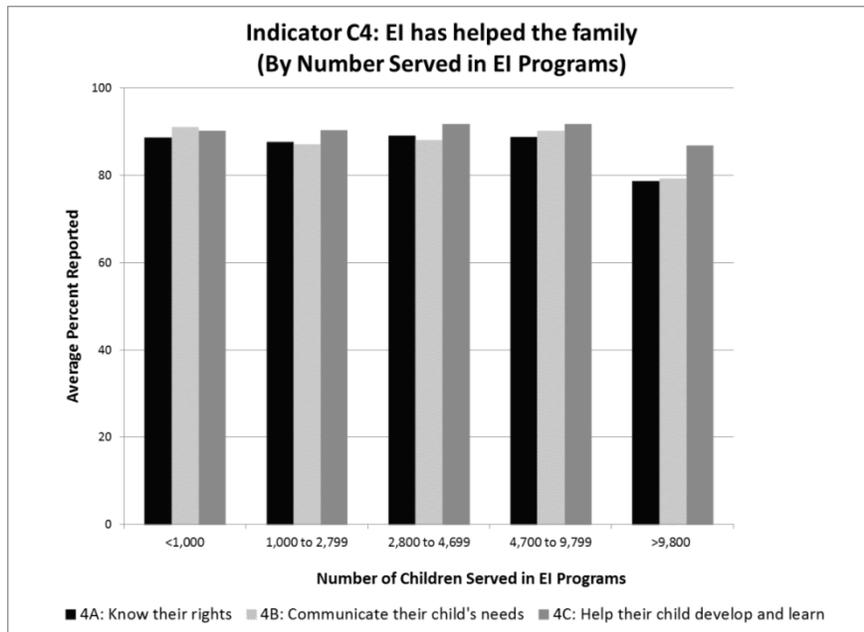
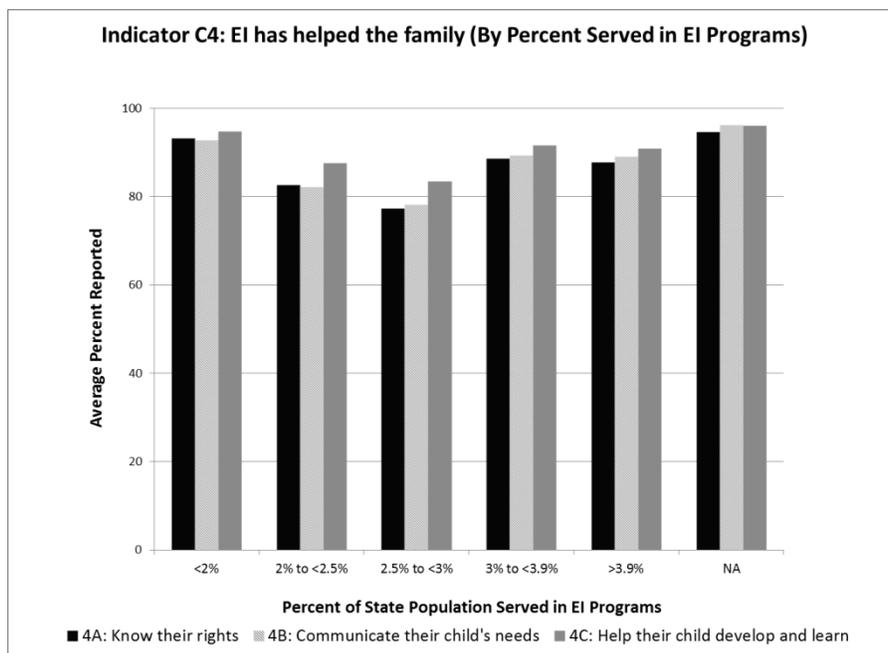


Figure 4



Differences are also seen when comparing actual results by percent of the population served by Part C (Figure 5). There is variability in the means across the categories, with the grouping of states serving 2 to <2.5% and 2.5% to <3% having lower means across all three sub-indicators. The percent-served groupings were generally balanced with respect to states' survey type: all groupings had one or more states using the ECO survey, the NCSEAM survey, and state-developed survey(s).

Figure 5



Response Rates

The average of states' response rates was 36.9%, based on 51 states (five states did not report their response rate). Response rates ranged from 9.4% to 100%. There was some variation among response rates based on survey type. Response rates were highest for states using the original ECO survey (42.5%), and state-developed surveys (40.7%). States using the revised ECO survey had a mean response rate of 34.1%, and those using the NCSEAM survey averaged 31.8%. Mean response rates were slightly higher for census (37%) versus sampling (32%) approaches.

States used a variety of combinations of methods for both distribution and return of the family surveys. Response rates for the most common combinations can be seen in table 2. The highest response rates are seen in states that use hand-delivered distribution methods, with an overall mean return rate of 48% among those states. Return rates are particularly high for those that both distribute and collect the completed surveys by hand (62.3%), or who distribute by hand with varied methods for families to return the survey (48.9%). States using multiple methods to distribute the surveys had the next highest mean (41.1%). States reporting using only mailed distributions had an average return rate of 25.8%, which was slightly higher in states offering multiple return methods for families (29.6%).

Table 2

Return Rates by Distribution and Return Methodologies		
	Mean Return rate	States (n)
In-person Distribution Method	48.0%	16
<i>With in-person return</i>	<i>62.3%</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>With multiple return methods</i>	<i>48.9%</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>With mail return</i>	<i>33.0%</i>	<i>6</i>
Multiple Distribution Methods	41.1%	11
<i>With mail return</i>	<i>43.4%</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>With multiple return methods</i>	<i>40.5%</i>	<i>9</i>
Mailed Distribution Method	25.8%	23
<i>With mail return</i>	<i>23.8%</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>With multiple return methods</i>	<i>29.6%</i>	<i>8</i>

Representative Data

A total of 47 states (84%) reported on the criteria they used to determine whether or not their family survey data were representative of the population they serve. Table 3 shows the frequency with which the different criteria were reported by states. This is a duplicative count of categories (i.e. some states used more than one criterion to determine representativeness). Nine states did not report criteria used.

Table 3

Criteria Used to Evaluate Representativeness Across States (n=56)		
Criteria	States (n)	States (%)
Race/ ethnicity	41	73%
Geography (district, county, region)	19	34%
Gender	15	27%
Child's age (at survey, at referral)	13	23%
Disability type or eligibility category	9	16%
Length of time in services	6	11%
Income (i.e. receipt of Medicaid)	6	11%
Language of family	4	7%

A majority of states (n=41) reported using race and/or ethnicity categories to evaluate representativeness. Geographic characteristics were used by about a third of the states. These included factors like region, service district, urban/rural, county, or program size. States also looked at characteristics of the child such as age of the child (at time of survey, at entry or referral), gender, type of disability or eligibility category, receipt of Medicaid, and length of time the child had been in services. A few states also assessed representativeness based on the primary language of the family.

In determining whether data were representative, the main data sources used for comparison with their returned surveys were 618 data tables (22 states, 39%) and program population data (14 states, 27%). Two states compared returns to both 618 and program data, and used state vital records. The remaining seventeen states (30%) did not report what type of data they used, if any, as comparison data.

States differed on how they concluded whether their data were representative of the population they serve. The majority of states (n=49, 88%) drew some conclusions about the representativeness of their data, while the remaining seven did not. Of the states that did make conclusions, thirty-four states reported that their data were overall representative of their state. Eleven states reported varied results regarding representativeness, i.e. data were representative on some criteria but not others, or for some subgroups but not others, and the remaining four states concluded that their data were not representative of the state.

PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

When comparing actual performance data from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010, two of the three sub-indicator areas showed progress, and one showed slight slippage. The mean percentage for Indicator 4A (families know their rights) increased from 85.5% to 86.5%, Indicator 4B (families communicate their children's needs) increased from 86% to 87%, and Indicator 4C (families help their child develop and learn) decreased slightly from 90.2% to 90.1%.

Figures 6, 7, and 8 show the numbers of states reporting progress or slippage among the three sub-indicators from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010. Each column represents one state. One state lacked data from FFY 2009, so that state is not included in the following three charts. Across all three sub-indicators, the majority of states made progress, ranging from 31 states (sub-indicator 4C) to 35 states (sub-indicator 4A).

Figure 6

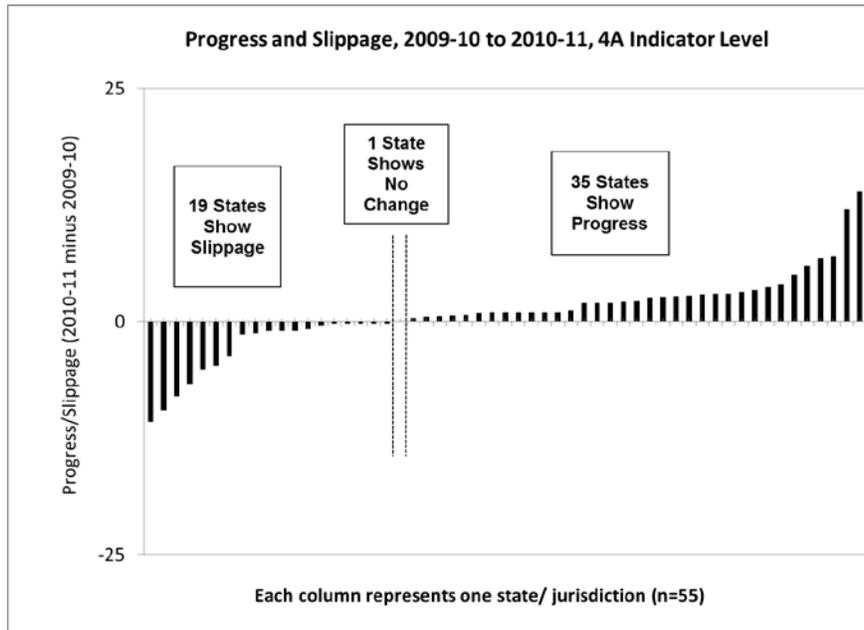


Figure 7

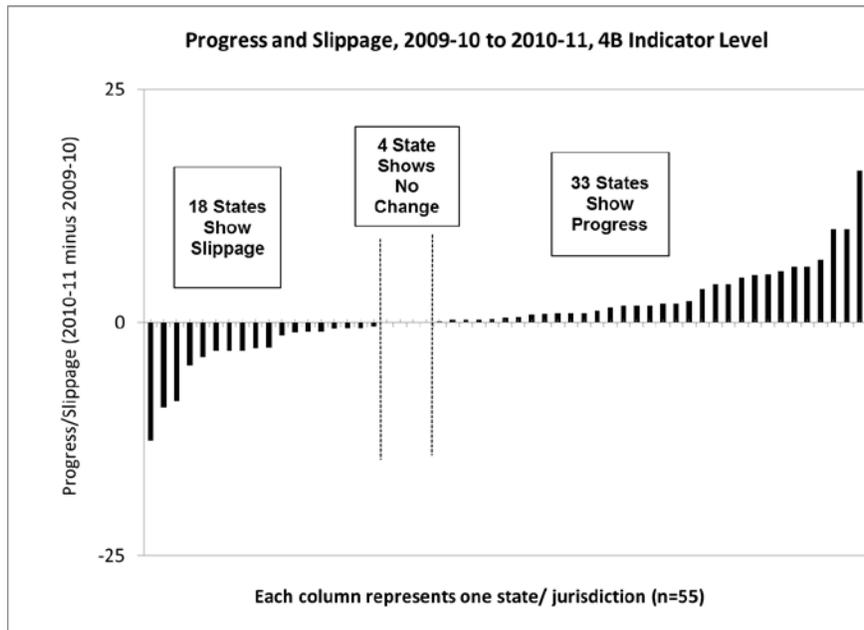
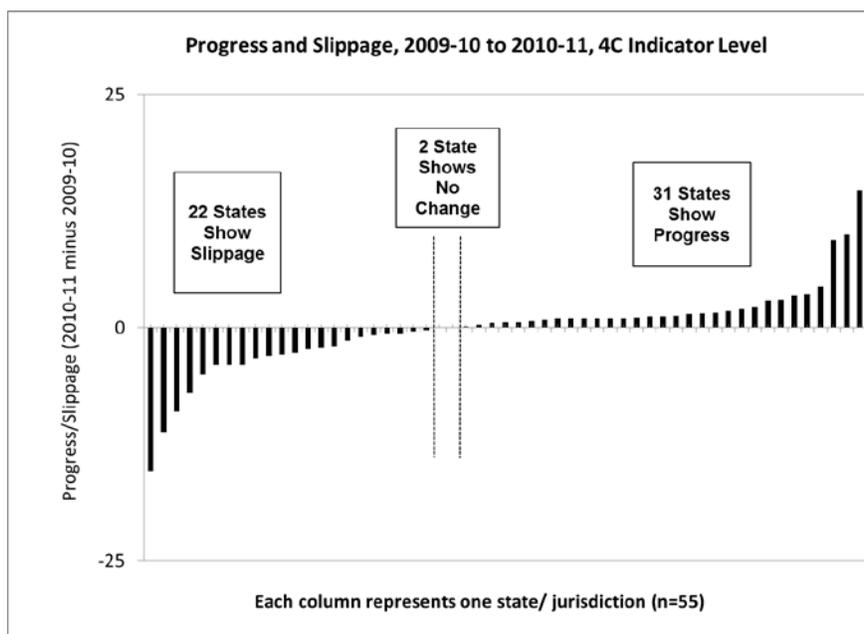


Figure 8



Due to some states making very small changes between years, additional analysis was done to regroup states that changed by more than one percentage point in either direction. For sub-indicator 4A (families knowing their rights), 14 states made no substantial change, with differences of less than one percentage point in either direction. Twenty nine states made progress of one percentage point or greater, and the remaining twelve slipped one percentage point or more. For sub-indicator 4B (families effectively communicate their child's needs), 17 states changed less than one percentage point in either direction, 24 states made progress of one percentage point or greater, and 14 states reported slipping one percentage point or more. For sub-indicator 4C (families helping their child develop and learn), 14 states made little to no change (differed less than one percentage point in either direction), 24 states made progress of one percentage point or more, and 17 states slipped one percentage point or more.

Explanation of Progress and Slippage

Half of states (n=28, 50%) specified reasons for progress or slippage between FFY 2009 and FFY 2010. The remaining states did not provide an explanation, or reported that differences were non-significant or related to normal variations in the data. Of the states that did provide an explanation, the following reasons for progress were reported among the sub-indicators:

- Improved interventions with families (nine states). These included sharing strategies for enhancing child development during IFSP meetings and intervention sessions, interactive parent activities, changing to a primary service provider or coaching model, and improved communication with families.

- Training or technical assistance to providers (seven states). Specifically, training and TA was reported related to family-centered services, evidence-based practice, explanation of parents' rights, and family empowerment.
- Ongoing program practices (seven states). These practices included ongoing family-centered services, providing an extended IFSP option to parents, providing family rights information to parents, family involvement practices, and verification reviews related to knowing rights.
- Revisions to survey materials and process (four states). These included changing the survey, formatting changes, improved response rates, and improved efforts to inform parents about the survey.
- Other explanations for progress included positive impacts from a public awareness campaign, development of local improvement plans for family outcomes, and learning from other states' family outcomes data and improvement activities.

States less frequently reported explanations specifically addressing slippage. Those that did included:

- Changes or revisions to the survey instrument.
- High staff turnover.
- Families reported lower outcomes due to other findings/ issues among the programs surveyed this year.
- Short survey response timeframe and a lower response rate.
- Increases in family cost of participation leading to decreased services.

Comparison of Baseline to Actual Performance

Figures 9, 10, and 11 display changes from baseline to current performance for the three sub-indicators. Each bar represents an individual state's trajectory from baseline to current. In most cases the baseline data are from FFY 2005, although a few states submitted baseline data or revised baseline data after FFY 2005. For Indicator 4A and 4C, there are 54 states with both baseline and current data; for Indicator 4B, 53 states have data for both time points.

Among all three sub-indicators, the majority of states have had a positive trajectory from baseline to FFY 2010. Figure 9 shows the trajectories for Indicator 4A (families know rights). Among the 54 states with both baseline and current data, 43 states (79%) increased from baseline to current, ten states decreased (19%), and one (2%) is the same. Among the 43 states that increased over baseline, 14 made gains of ten percentage points or more, and the remaining 29 states made gains between ~1% and 9%. Of the ten states that decreased, three states had decreased from nine to 19 percentage points, and the remaining seven states decreased by four or fewer points.

Figure 9

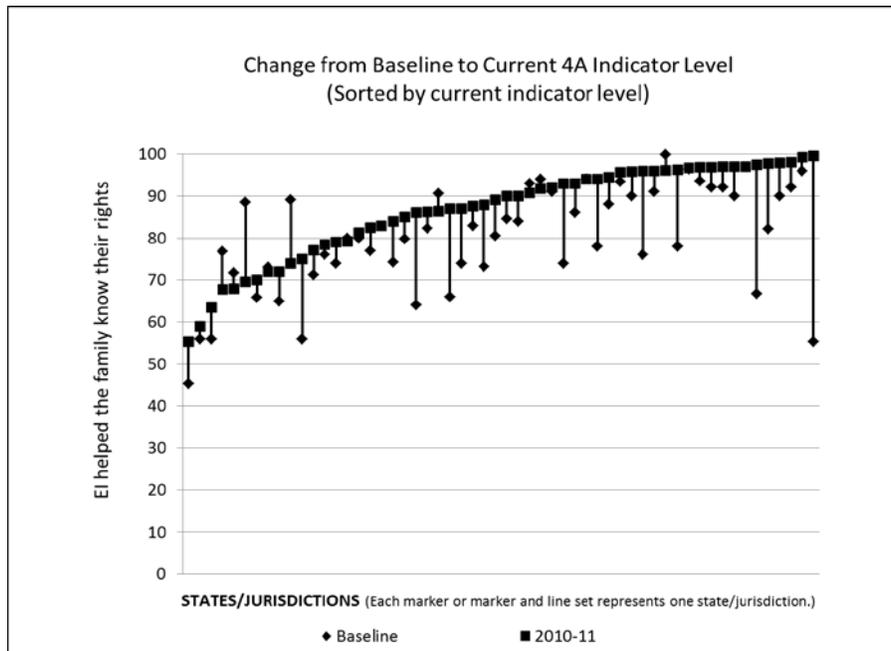
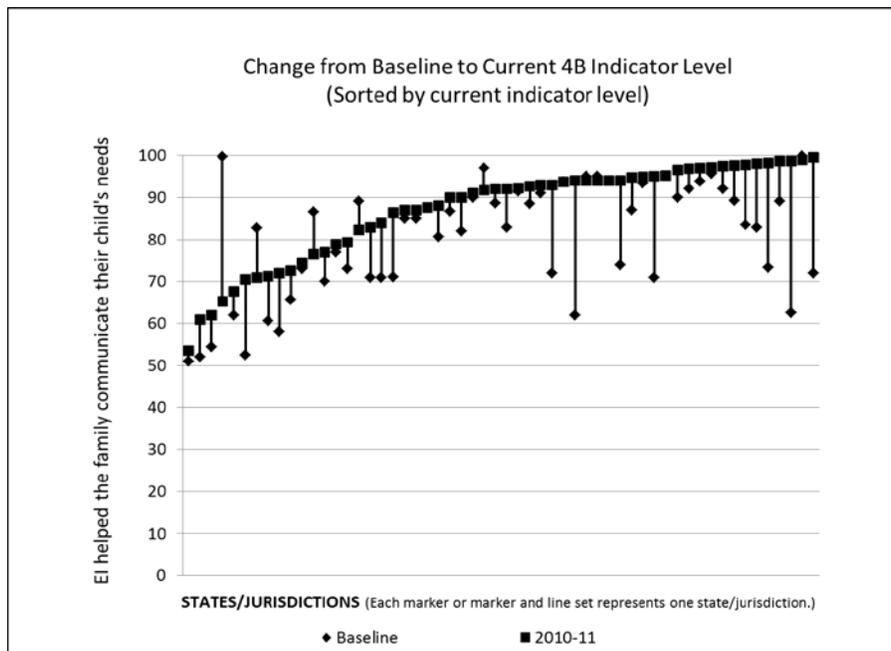


Figure 10

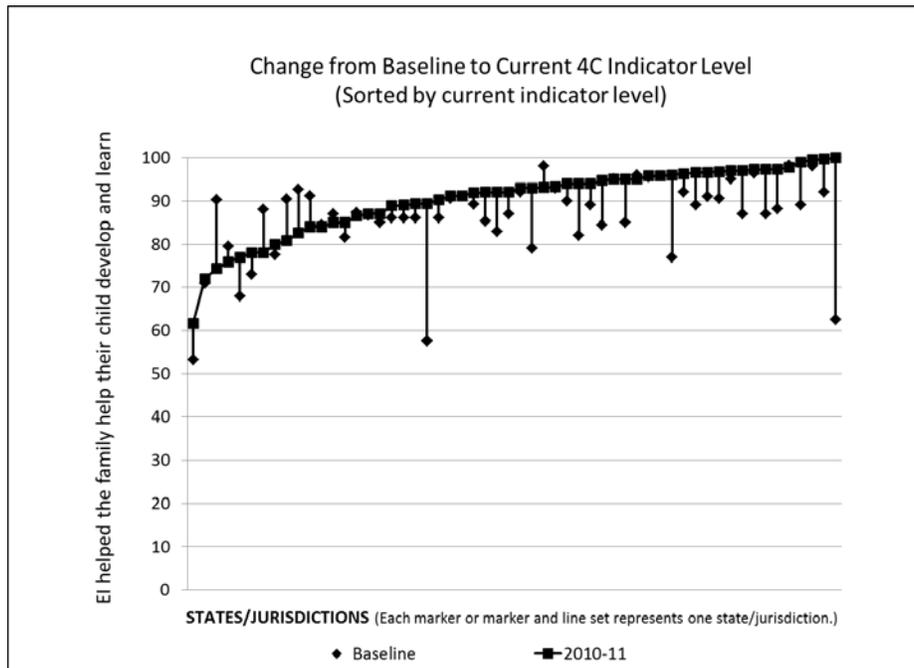


Indicator 4B had 53 states with baseline and current data (see Figure 10). Of these, 44 states (83%) increased from baseline to current, eight states decreased (15%), and one (2%) was the same at baseline as 2010-11. Among the 44 states that increased over baseline, 16 made gains of ten percentage points or more, and the remaining 28 states made gains between ~1% and 9%. Of the eight states that decreased, three had

decreases of ten percentage points or more, and the remaining five changed from one to seven percentage points.

Figure 11 shows trajectory data for Indicator 4C, early intervention has helped the family help their child develop and learn. Among the 54 states with both baseline and current data for Indicator 4C, 41 states (76%) increased from baseline to current, 12 states decreased (22%), and one state stayed the same (2%). Among the 41 states that increased over baseline, ten made gains of ten percentage points or more, and the remaining 31 states changed fewer than ten percentage points. Of the 12 states that decreased, four decreased 10 percentage points or more.

Figure 11



Trends over Time

Figures 12, 13, and 14 show trends in Indicator 4 data since baseline. Across all three sub-indicators, there has been an overall upward trend across the years, with both increasing means and higher proportions of states falling into the 90-100% performance range compared to baseline.

Figure 12

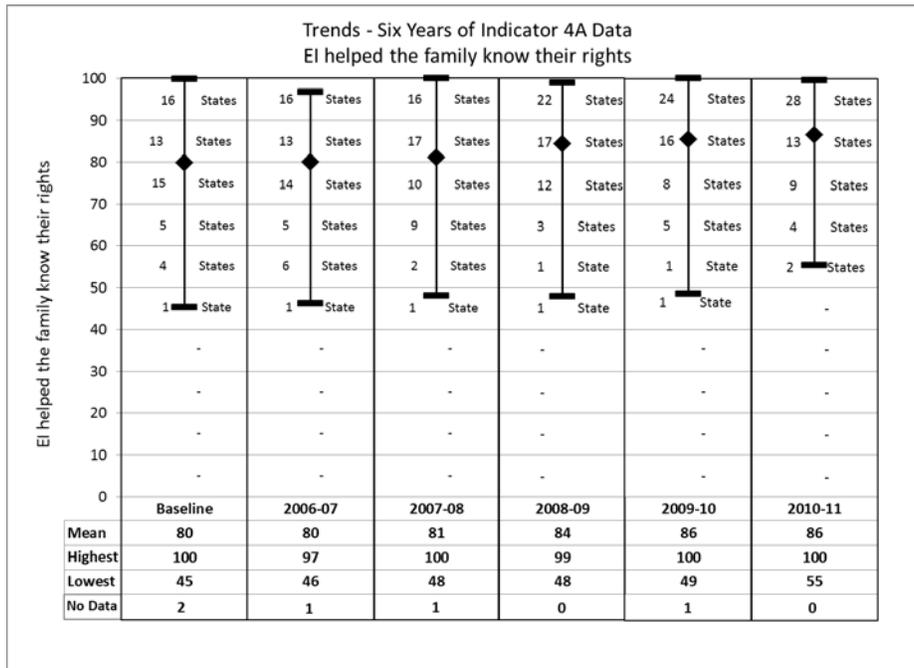


Figure 13

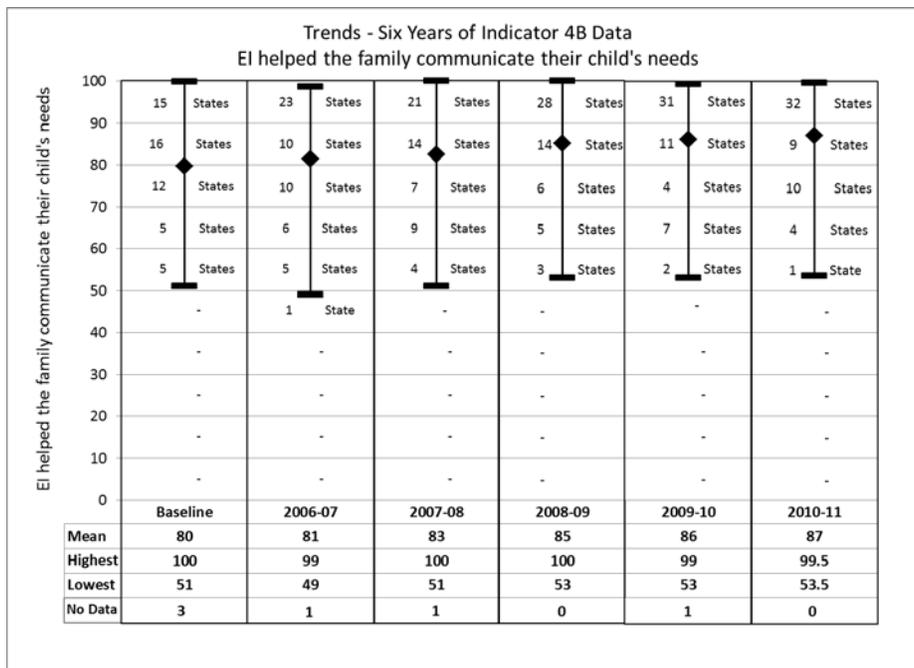
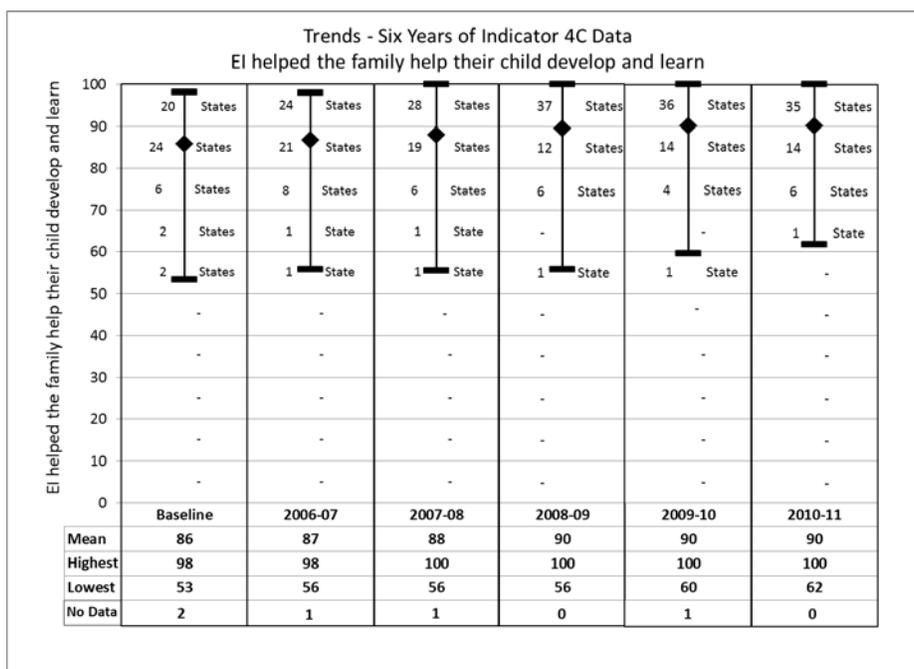


Figure 14



IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

In FFY 2010, states completed many activities aimed at improving performance on Indicator 4, and improving outcomes for families more broadly. This reporting year, there was an increase in targeting programs needing improvement in one of the three sub-indicator areas, or those needing improvement in aspects of data quality, especially response rates. States also mentioned numerous professional development activities, including developing materials for providers to share with families related to knowing their rights, and various other aspects of the early intervention system. Highlights of activities in these areas reported in FFY 2010 are summarized here.

This year states reported both new and ongoing efforts to improve data collection. Several states are evaluating changes to their survey tool, including both minor revisions and changing the survey used. States' activities in this area show an ongoing effort to improve response rates and the representativeness of the survey data, so that they can make valid interpretations of their results. Highlights of data collection activities include the following:

- Several states periodically monitored the number of surveys returned by region, district, or program, providing feedback or targeted TA to programs. Some states required local programs to develop action plans if response rates were low (e.g. below 50% returned).

- Developed materials for families related to the family survey, including personalized cover letters, flyers to give to families at IFSP meetings, mailed advance notice of the survey, and follow up postcards.
- Collaborated with local representatives and family support agencies to inform families about the purpose and importance of the survey and to make personal contacts to remind families to complete the survey.
- Targeted strategies for improving response rates for Hispanic and Native American families; added translated Chinese version of the survey to improve responses from Chinese families.
- Changed to hand-delivered surveys to increase response rates.
- Changed survey timelines to improve response rate, shortening window of when exiting families receive survey to within 30 days of exit.
- Continued providing incentives for families to respond to surveys, including raffles of gas cards.

Several states mentioned activities related to improving their capacity to analyze state and local family survey data, as well as improvements in their ability to link this data with other types of program or state data. Examples related to data systems and local data analyses are provided.

State Data Systems

- Implemented a web-based data system for access to real-time data.
- Made improvements in the ability to link family and child demographics with survey data through using a unique ID number.
- Comprehensive Data System to help with correcting family addresses.
- Utilize database to analyze root causes of progress and slippage.
- Collaboration with a state college for data analysis.
- Family outcomes resource groups and workgroups formed that worked on reviewing statewide and local data, strategies, and developing targeted improvement strategies, activities, and resources to improve family outcomes.

Local data analysis

- Data available to local programs through online data systems.
- State staff analyzed select local data and shared patterns and trends to support locals in analyzing local data. Provided system managers with talking points and sample agenda to assist local providers in looking at family data.
- Regions receive individual profiles of data results, including raw data and comparisons to state data, one state developed a rating system to help regions identify challenging trends in the data.

Several states mentioned using data for targeted program improvement activities in one or more of the sub-indicator areas. Some examples include:

- Local improvement plans developed based on performance in the sub-indicator areas, using a defined cutpoint (e.g. <90% of state target, or greater than two

standard deviations below the mean). Local improvement strategies developed include: developing a script for family rights, utilizing role play and video, developing local community resource guides for families, and monthly family events.

- Linking local funds with program improvement. For local programs not meeting target over a two- year period, program funds are required to be directed at improving family outcomes. The state reports that this has improved outcomes for these areas and programs.
- Focusing the results visit process on family outcomes.

States reported many trainings and technical assistance activities aimed at improving family outcomes and improving services generally for families in early intervention. States mentioned holding training sessions and developing materials for families and professionals on a variety of early intervention topics.

- Expanded professional development system to support family-centered and evidenced-based service delivery through webinars, web-based training modules, and specific disability resources.
- Developed a plan for creation of Family Mentor Program.
- Online training modules and videos for families and staff aimed at providing information for families on understanding rights and effectively communicating needs, included developing a module about the family outcomes survey, transition, and cultural competency aimed at improving family outcomes for African American and Hispanic families.
- States trained new mediation participants, family IFSP/IEP partners, and provided IEP partner matches.
- Family indicators were embedded in online and face-to-face training to highlight importance of family data.
- Completed "Orientation to the system" training module for parents.
- Regional site trainings, presentations, coaching log review, and lunch and learn sessions all emphasizing working with families and family-centered practice.
- Targeted trainings for American Indian parents on family rights and safeguards, intended to empower families.
- Training and implementation cadre led by PACER on family-guided routines-based intervention to improve child outcomes by supporting the family to help the child develop and learn.

States also reported other activities aimed at improving family outcomes beyond the three sub-indicator areas in Indicator 4. These include using data from other survey questions, qualitative data from the surveys, and parent input via other methods and sources.

CONCLUSION

The family outcomes data have continued to show improvements at the national level. States are continuing to address improving response rates to increase the representation of families that are providing input about the program. States are increasingly working to develop activities aimed at improving outcomes for families in

the three outcome areas, as well as across other aspects of a quality early childhood experience for children and families. States are also increasingly reporting using data to develop targeted activities aimed at specific programs, districts or regions. As states have expanded their use of family survey data, and linked it with other indicators and program data, states have increasingly been able to refine and target improvement activities based on their results.

INDICATOR 5: CHILD FIND BIRTH TO ONE

Prepared by NECTAC

Indicator 5: Percent of infants and toddlers birth to one with IFSPs compared to national data.

INTRODUCTION

The summary of the analysis of Indicator 5 is based on a review of APRs for FFY 2010 from 56 states. For the purposes of this report, the term “state” is used for both states and territories. Indicator 5 is intended to show a state’s performance in the identification of eligible infants during their first year of life.

DATA SOURCES

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 a state-determined date (generally December 1), and to calculate the percentage of the state’s birth to one population which that number represents. For Indicator 5, OSEP provided states with Table 8-16 (IDEAdata.org), “Number and percentage of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services under IDEA, Part C, by age and state: 2010”.

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

Based on the FFY 2010 APR analysis of 56 states and territories, the unweighted mean percentage of infants served in early intervention is 1.15%. According to Table 8-16, the average national percentage (based on 50 states, DC and PR) of children birth to one receiving early intervention was 1.03%. For FFY 2010, actual performance data for Indicator 5 (n = 56 states) shows that 27 states reported data at or above the national average percentage of 1.03%. The remaining 29 states reported that their percentage of children served is below the national percentage.

Figure 1 shows the percent of infants and toddlers birth to one served by the number of children served in early intervention programs in the state, (a proxy for state size). The most significant difference was in states serving from 2,800 to 4,699, who as a group serve less than one percent of the population.

Figure 1

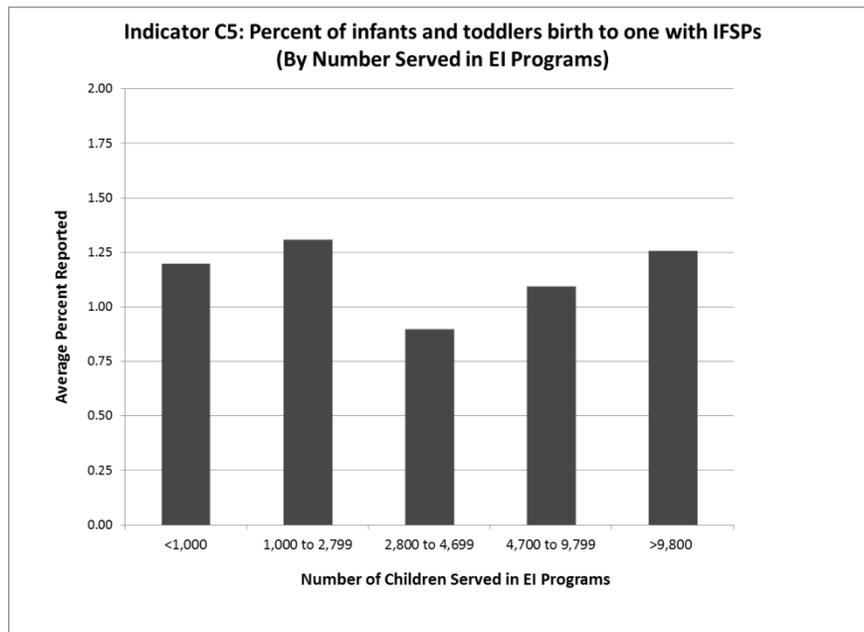
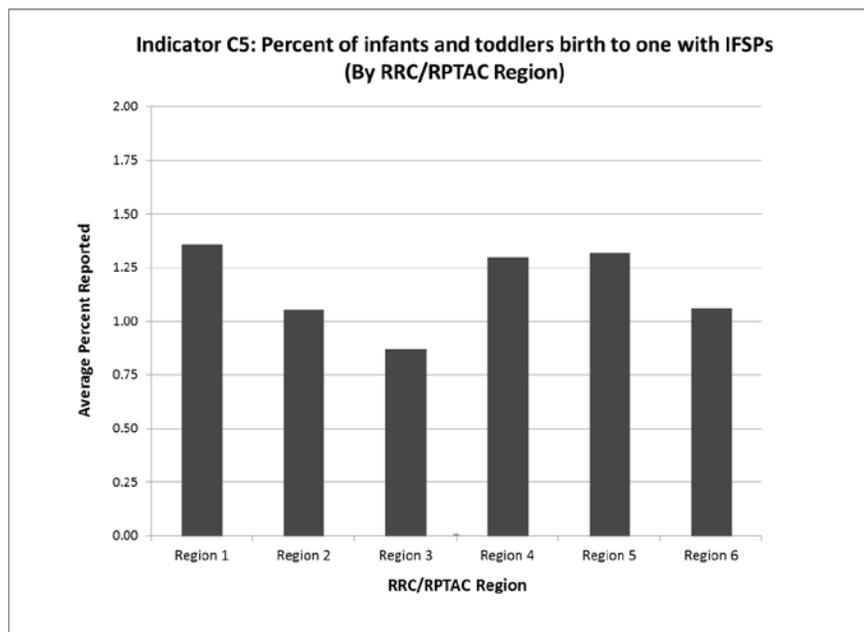


Figure 2 shows patterns of percent of birth to one year olds served by RRC/RPTAC regions. The pattern is similar to last year, with Region 3 the lowest, and Regions 1, 4, and 5 the highest.

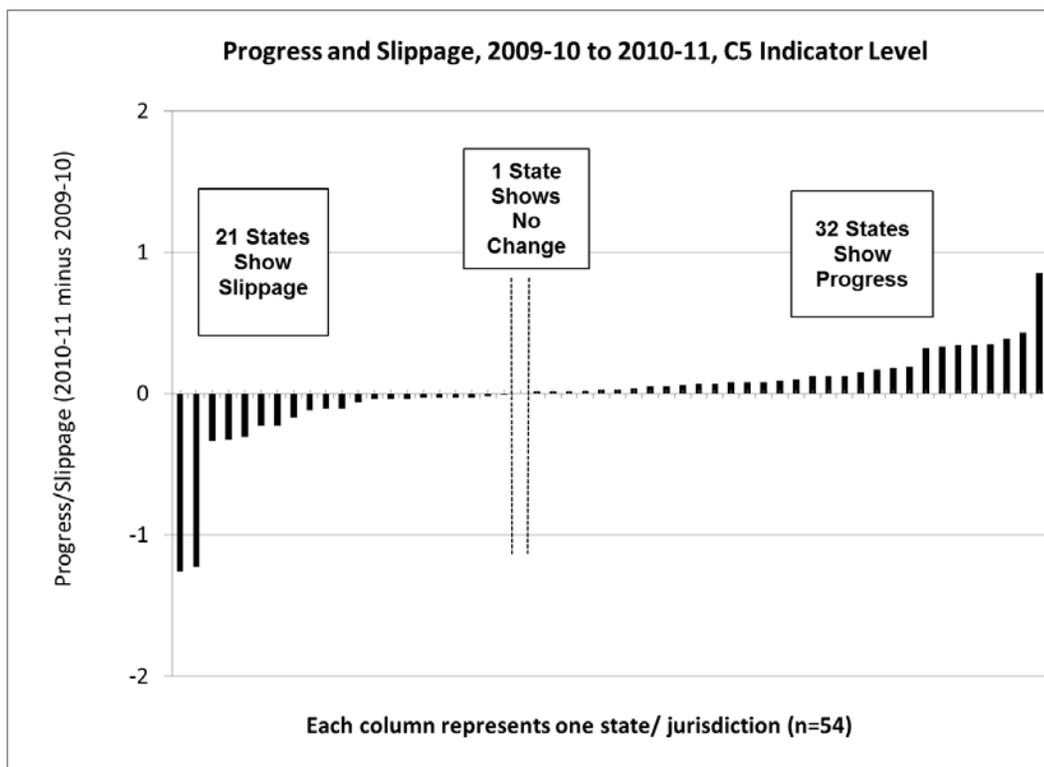
Figure 2



PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

The data comparing states' actual performance in FFY 2010 on Indicator 5 to actual performance in FFY 2009 were analyzed for 54 states. Data were not available for two states for FY 2009, so the comparison could not be made.

Figure 3



The analysis depicted in Figure 3 reveals that 32 states showed progress, 21 states reported slippage, and one state reported no change in performance. Additional analyses looked at the numbers of states showing meaningful progress and slippage, changing more than 0.10 percentage points. This analysis showed that 11 states showed meaningful slippage (greater than 0.10 percentage point decrease), 16 states showed meaningful progress (greater than 0.10 percentage point increase), and the remaining 27 states showed essentially no change (stayed within 0.10 points).

Explanation of Progress

Frequently mentioned explanations for progress included: implementing or intensifying successful child find and public awareness activities; continued collaboration with partner agencies to increase the number of appropriate referrals of potentially eligible infants and toddlers; and concerted efforts to target specific geographic areas of need after analyzing referral sources.

Explanation of Slippage

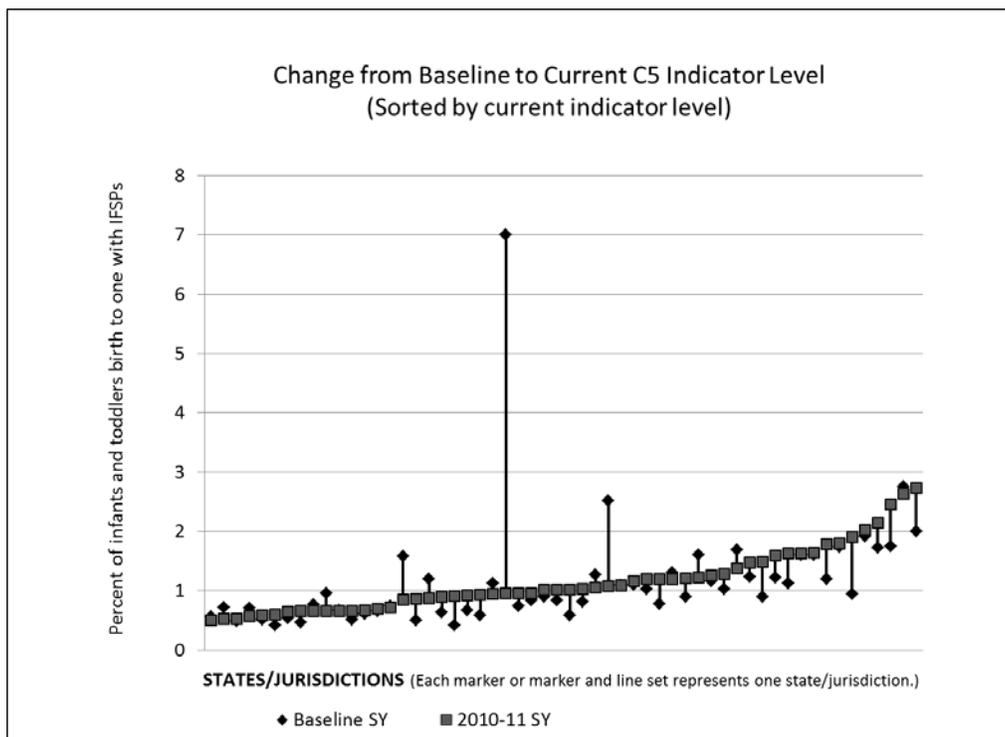
States attributed the slippage in their child find data to: economic downturn and reduced fiscal resources that impeded their ability to hire new project staff; shifting family priorities during economic hardship; and narrow eligibility criteria that eliminated “at risk” as a qualifying condition for services.

Two states with the highest slippage rates (1.26 and 1.23 percentage point change) attributed the slippage to a decrease in the states’ birth rate due to population migration and economic downturn, and shortages of pediatricians and program staff.

Trends over Time

As Figure 4 illustrates, of the 56 states reporting data for FFY 2010, 38 showed an increase from baseline to actual FFY 2010 performance in the percentage of infants and toddlers birth to one with IFSPs, and 17 showed a decrease from baseline to actual FFY 2010 data. One state’s data indicated no change from baseline to FFY 2010.

Figure 4

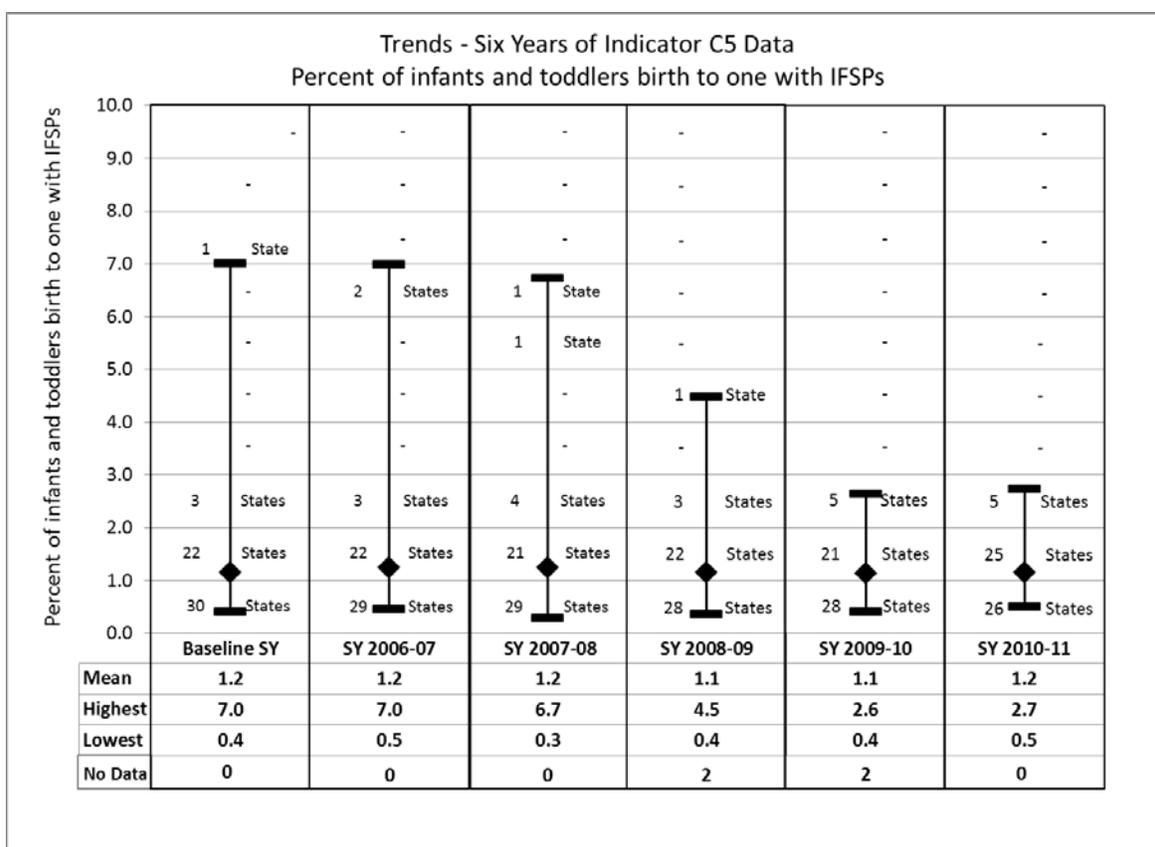


Of the 17 states showing a decrease from baseline to actual FFY 2010 data, three states experienced substantial drops, decreasing from baseline by 6.04, 1.44, and 0.73. Four states decreased by 0.10 or less, and the remaining ten states showed decreases ranging from 0.11 to 0.38.

Of the 38 states showing increases from baseline to FFY 2010, nine states showed increases of 0.10 or less, and twenty-six had increases ranging from 0.11 to 0.58. The three states with the highest increases showed gains of 0.96, 0.73, and 0.70 over their baseline data.

Figure 5 shows trends in Indicator 5 performance, using baseline data and the five most recent reporting years (FFY 2006 to FFY 2010). Data for calculating the mean in Figure 5 are based on data from both states and territories and, therefore, are different from the national average that states compared themselves against, which is a mean calculated from 50 states, DC and PR. The figure shows that there has been little change in the national mean over the six years.

Figure 5



In FFY 2010, ten states cited some impacts of fiscal constraints on their Indicator 5 performance. The states indicated that the capacity of the Part C program to identify and provide services to infants and toddlers was affected due to shortages in program staff, statewide hiring freezes, and employee travel restrictions. Additionally, states reported that continuing economic stresses caused families to reconsider participation in EI services. As in FFY 2009, a few states reported that they used ARRA funds to address some of their fiscal challenges.

FEATURED IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Most states continued to report on improvement activities that were multi-year or ongoing efforts to improve the percentages of young children they identify and serve. Some states have shown creativity in their effort to raise public awareness and reach a wider public. For example, several states prepared and disseminated materials in multiple languages including Korean, Russian, French, Somali, Arabic, Bosnian, Farsi, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

Many states reported analyzing their referral sources and targeting specific improvement activities to specific sources, such as pediatricians. Several states mentioned adapting new systems to help track referral sources and data analysis. More than half of the states mentioned at least a limited effort to review their current improvement activities. For some states, the analysis helped to identify more specific areas of concerns and develop more targeted actions. However, for other states, it is unclear if the evaluation efforts have resulted in any change to their plans.

Collaborative Efforts

As in past APRs, states continued to emphasize collaborative efforts – including developing and implementing joint training, interagency agreements, common referral forms for multiple agencies, and methods for data sharing – particularly related to their state’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) programs and to screening initiatives. A few states highlighted involvement of their local, regional, or state Interagency Coordinating Council (ICCs) in child find efforts, including setting future targets, suggesting improved technical assistance, participating in data analysis, and implementing outreach efforts.

Use of Technology

States continue using technology related to their child find and public awareness activities. States use and update their websites to communicate with families, referral sources, and providers. Some states are converting their online directories to searchable databases. Others report that they have begun to receive referrals via e-mail and fax. In addition, a few states have begun to use social networking (e.g., Twitter accounts, blogs, and Facebook pages) to increase awareness of their early intervention programs among particular population groups and to facilitate information sharing among stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Data analysis reveals that the percentage of infants and toddlers identified and served nationally by Part C programs has remained stable since the implementation of the State Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports. The states that are successfully identifying more infants and toddlers are reviewing their child find approaches, referral mechanisms, and public awareness activities and developing multiple strategies to find children who may be in need of EI as early as possible.

INDICATOR 6: CHILD FIND BIRTH TO THREE

Prepared by NECTAC

Indicator 6: Percent of infants and toddlers birth to three with IFSPs compared to national data.

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of Indicator 6 is based on a review of APRs for FFY 2010 of 56 states. For the purposes of this report, the term “state” is used for both states and territories. Indicator 6 is intended to show a state’s performance in the identification of eligible infants and toddlers birth through age two.

DATA SOURCES

The measurement specifies that states must use data collected and reported under Section 618 (Annual Report of Children Served) regarding the number of infants and toddlers, birth to age three, who were identified and served on a state-determined date (generally December 1), and to calculate the percentage of the state’s birth to three population which that number represents. For Indicator 6, OSEP provided states with Section 618, Table 8-16 “Number and percentage of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services under IDEA, Part C, by age and state: 2010”.

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

Based on the FFY 2010 APR analysis using 56 states and territories, the mean percentage of infants and toddlers served in early intervention is 2.91%. According to Table 8-16, the national percentage (based on 50 states, DC and PR) of children birth through age two receiving early intervention was 2.82%. For FFY 2010, actual performance data for Indicator 6 (n = 56 states) shows that 24 states reported data above the national percentage of 2.82%. The remaining 32 states reported that their percentage of children served is below the national percentage.

The percentages served birth to age three were analyzed by number of children served (a proxy for state population) and RRC/RPTAC Region. Figure 1 shows percent served birth to three by number of children served. The percentages are variable, with a slightly larger percentage of children served in states serving over 9,800 children and slightly lower percentages in states serving fewer than 1000 children.

Figure 1

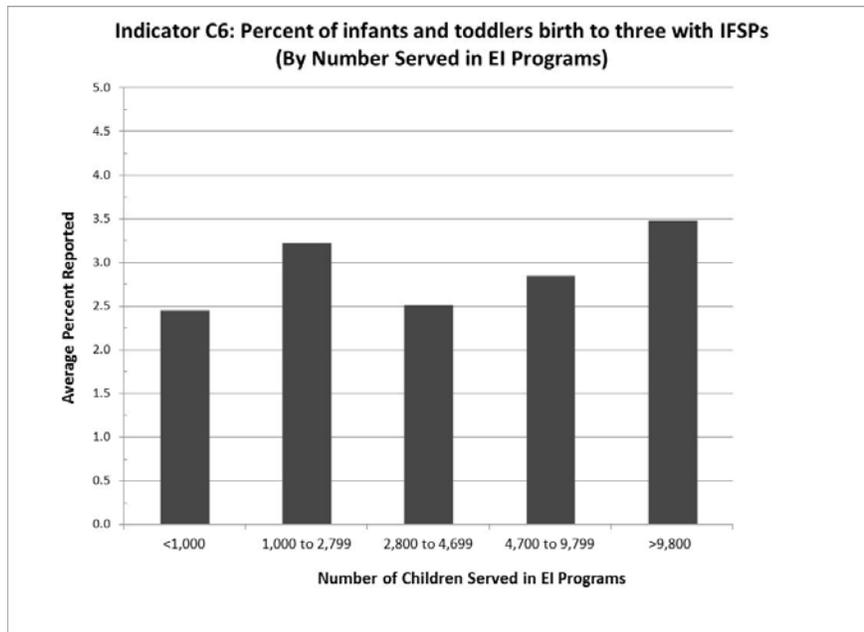
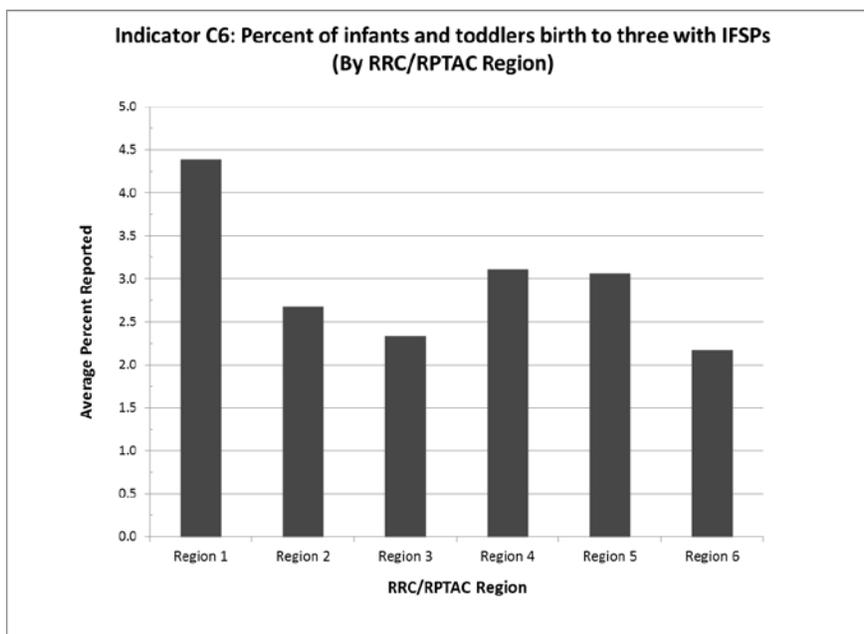


Figure 2 shows patterns of percent of birth to three year olds served by RRC/RPTAC regions. Region 1 serves the highest average percentage of children birth to age three, with Regions 3 and 6 serving the lowest average percentages.

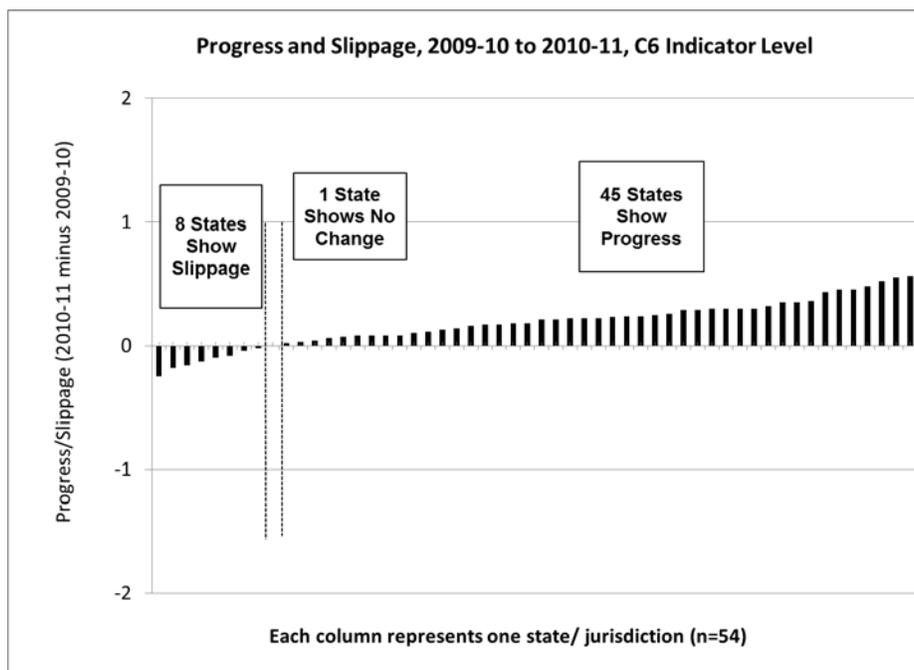
Figure 2



PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Figure 3 shows data comparing states' actual performance in FFY 2010 on Indicator 6 to actual performance in FFY 2009. Progress and slippage are shown for 54 states because data were not available for two states for FFY 2009.

Figure 3



The analysis revealed that 45 states showed progress, eight states reported slippage, and one state reported no change in performance. Of the 45 states making progress, nine states improved only slightly, by less than 0.1 percentage point; the remaining 36 states showed a change of 0.1 percentage point or greater, ranging from 0.1 to 0.56 percentage point increase. Of the eight states reporting slippage, three had decreases of fewer than 0.1 percentage point, and the remaining five had larger decreases, ranging from 0.1 to 0.25 percentage point.

Explanation of Progress and Slippage

Frequently mentioned explanations for progress included: implementing or intensifying successful child find and public awareness activities; continued collaboration with partner agencies to increase the number of appropriate referrals of potentially eligible infants and toddlers; and concerted efforts to target specific geographic areas of need after analyzing referral sources.

States attributed the slippage in their data to their state's economic downturn and reduced fiscal resources issues that impeded their ability to identify and serve infants and toddlers who might qualify for early intervention services. Some states that had recently narrowed their eligibility criteria reported slippage in their data. Additional reasons for slippage included: families' are shifting priorities because of the economy; a

decrease in the state's birth rate; and clarifying policies for exiting when the child's and family's goals are achieved. Several states noted that they required local or regional programs to submit a public awareness, action, or improvement plan when they were unable to achieve the state target for this indicator.

For FFY 2010, four states reported that they changed their developmental delay criteria to narrow or change eligibility for Part C services. Two states reported that they have pending, proposed, or planned changes in their eligibility for developmental delay. As in past years, some, but not all, states established new baselines and/or targets when they changed their eligibility criteria.

In FFY 2007, only one state indicated that budget shortfalls had an impact on their Part C program's ability to identify and serve infants and toddlers. In FFY 2010, at least 11 states mentioned budget issues in relationship to Indicator 6 performance. Several states reported that they had to reduce or eliminate child find and/or public awareness activities during FFY 2010 due to limited budgets. As in FFY 2009, a few states reported that they used ARRA funds to address some of their fiscal challenges.

Trends over Time

Figure 4 shows changes in Indicator 6 data from baseline to FFY 2010. Of the 56 states, 46 increased from baseline to actual FFY 2010 performance and ten states decreased. Of the 46 states that increased, nine states improved by more than one percentage point, with increases ranging from 1.03 to 2.09 change from baseline. Thirty-five more states increased from 0.17 to 0.89; the remaining two states increased less than 0.1. Of the ten states whose FFY 2010 data was below baseline, one state reported FFY 2010 data 3.67 percentage points below their baseline. Another seven states' data decreased between 0.19 and 0.61, and the remaining two states had decreases of less than 0.10.

Figure 4

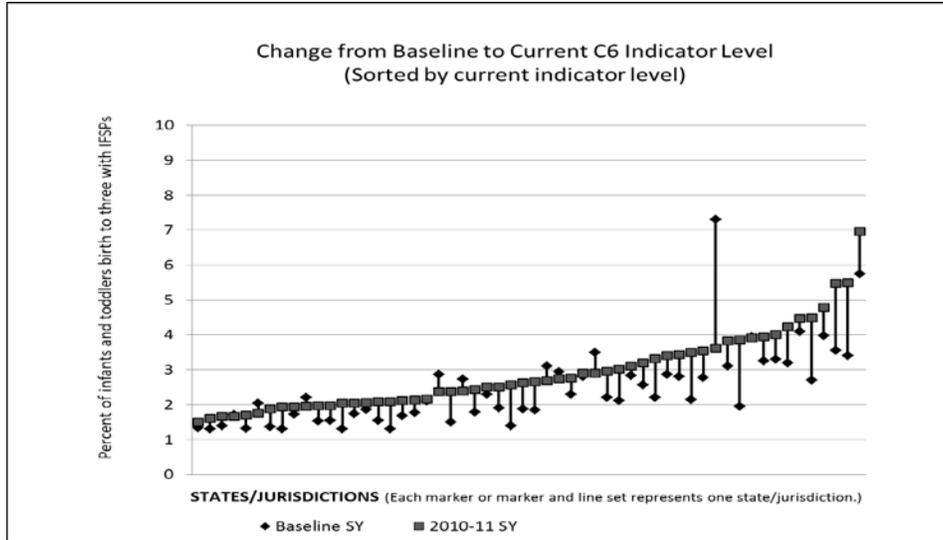
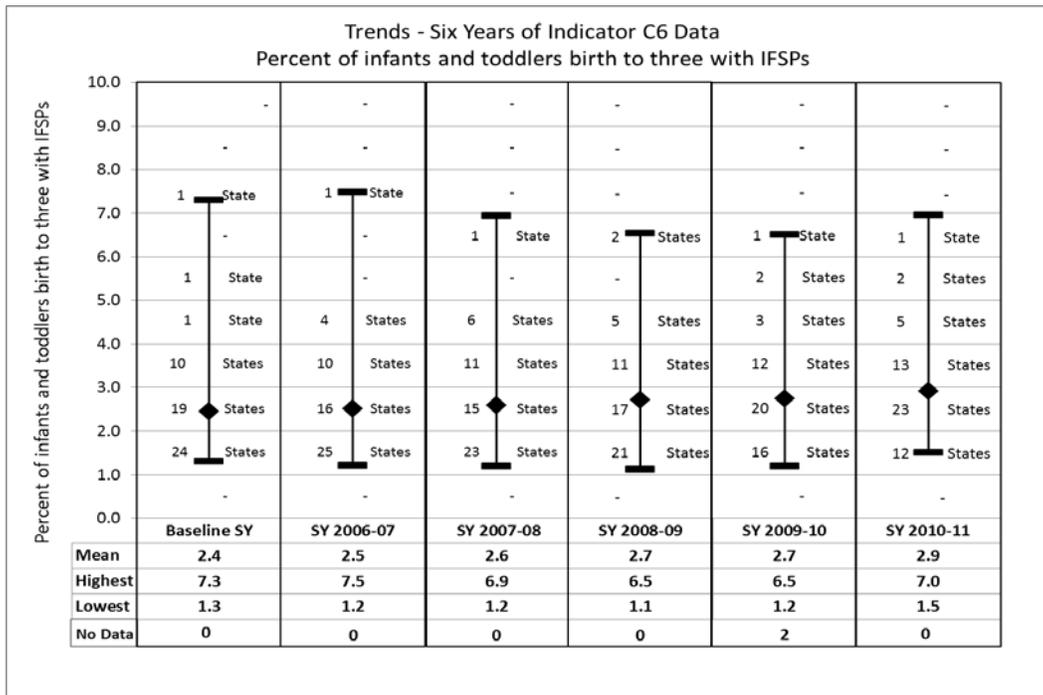


Figure 5 shows the trajectories of Indicator 6 data over time, including baseline and the five most recent reporting years (FFY 2005 to FFY 2010). Data for calculating the mean in Figure 5 is based on data from all states and territories, and are different from the national average that states compared themselves against, which is calculated for 50 states, DC and PR. When looking at the six-year trend, the mean percentage of infants and toddlers birth to three identified and served by states has steadily increased, from 2.4% at baseline to 2.9% in FFY 2010. Figure 5 also shows that the range in percentages of children birth to three served by states has varied little over time.

Figure 5



FEATURED IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Most states continued to report on improvement activities that were multi-year or ongoing efforts to improve the percentages of young children they identify and serve. Some states have shown creativity in their effort to raise public awareness and reach wider public. For example, several states prepared and disseminated materials in multiple languages including Korean, Russian, French, Somali, Arabic, Bosnian, Farsi, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

Many states reported analyzing their referral sources and targeting specific improvement activities to specific sources, such as pediatricians. Several states mentioned adapting new systems to help tracking of referral sources and data analysis. More than half of the states mentioned at least a limited effort to review their current improvement activities. For some states, the analysis helped to identify more specific areas of concern and develop more targeted actions.

Collaborative Efforts

As in past APRs, states continued to emphasize collaborative efforts – including developing and implementing joint training, interagency agreements, common referral forms for multiple agencies, and methods for data sharing – particularly related to their state’s screening initiatives and NICU, CAPTA and EHDI programs. A few states highlighted involvement of their local, regional, or state ICCs in child find efforts, including setting future targets, suggesting improved technical assistance, participating in data analysis, and implementing outreach efforts.

Use of Technology

States continue using technology related to their child find and public awareness activities. States use and update their websites to communicate with families, referral sources, and providers. Some states are converting their online directories to searchable databases. Others report that they have begun to receive referrals via e-mail and fax. In addition, a few states have begun to use social networking (e.g., Twitter accounts, blogs, and Facebook pages) to increase awareness of their early intervention programs among particular population groups and to facilitate information sharing among stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Data analysis reveals that the percentage of infants and toddlers identified and served nationally by Part C programs has shown incremental but steady improvement since the implementation of the State Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports. States that successfully identify more and more infants and toddlers are reviewing child find approaches, referral mechanisms, and public awareness activities and developing multiple strategies to find children who may be in need of EI as early as possible.

INDICATOR 7: 45-DAY TIMELINE

Prepared by NECTAC

Indicator 7: Percentage of eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs for whom an evaluation and assessment and an initial IFSP meeting were conducted within Part C's 45-day timeline.

INTRODUCTION

Indicator 7 is a compliance indicator with a performance target of 100%. The Part C regulations specify that the initial evaluation and the initial assessments of the child and family, as well as the initial IFSP meeting must be completed within 45-days from the date the lead agency or EIS provider receives the referral of the child. When reporting on this indicator, states have the option to identify and count as timely those delays that are the result of exceptional family circumstances.

This summary is based on a review of Annual Performance Reports (APRs) submitted by 54 states and territories for the FFY 2010 reporting period (July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011). Two additional states that submitted reports did not have valid and reliable data for this indicator. For the remainder of the summary, the term "state" will be used to refer to both states and territories.

DATA SOURCES

In FFY 2010, 46 states reviewed data gathered from their state data system to report on their performance for Indicator 7. This typically included information on all children found to be eligible within a specified period of time. Of these states, 11 also used data gathered from local monitoring practices, such as sampling files for review, onsite verification visits, and reviews of self-assessment results. Eight states reported using local monitoring data alone.

Of the seven states that reported reaching their 100% target in FFY 2010, three used a combination of state and local monitoring data, three used only local monitoring data, and one used only data from their state data system.

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

In FFY 2010, the national mean for states' performance on the Part C 45-day timeline requirement was 95%. Seven states met their target of conducting an evaluation and assessment for 100% of eligible infants and toddlers within the Part C 45-day timeline. Forty-nine states reported a performance of 90% or greater, three states reported a performance of between 80-90%, and one state reported meeting the timeline for between 70-80% of eligible infants and toddlers. One outlier state reported a performance of 13% on this indicator. If this outlier state were to be excluded from the analysis, the national mean for states' performance in FFY 2010 would be 97%, an increase of more than 2 percentage points over the mean reported in FFY 2009.

Analysis of states' FFY 2010 performance on the 45-day timeline by RRC/RPTAC region showed little variation. The mean performance across 5 of the 6 regions was between 90% and 100% and the performance for the region with the outlier state had a performance of 88%.

Figure 1 shows the 45-day timeline data analyzed by the percent of children served in state Part C programs. The chart shows a tendency for states serving the highest percentages of children to have slightly higher percentages of timely evaluations, assessments, and initial IFSP meetings, which is consistent with the findings from FFY 2009.

Figure 1

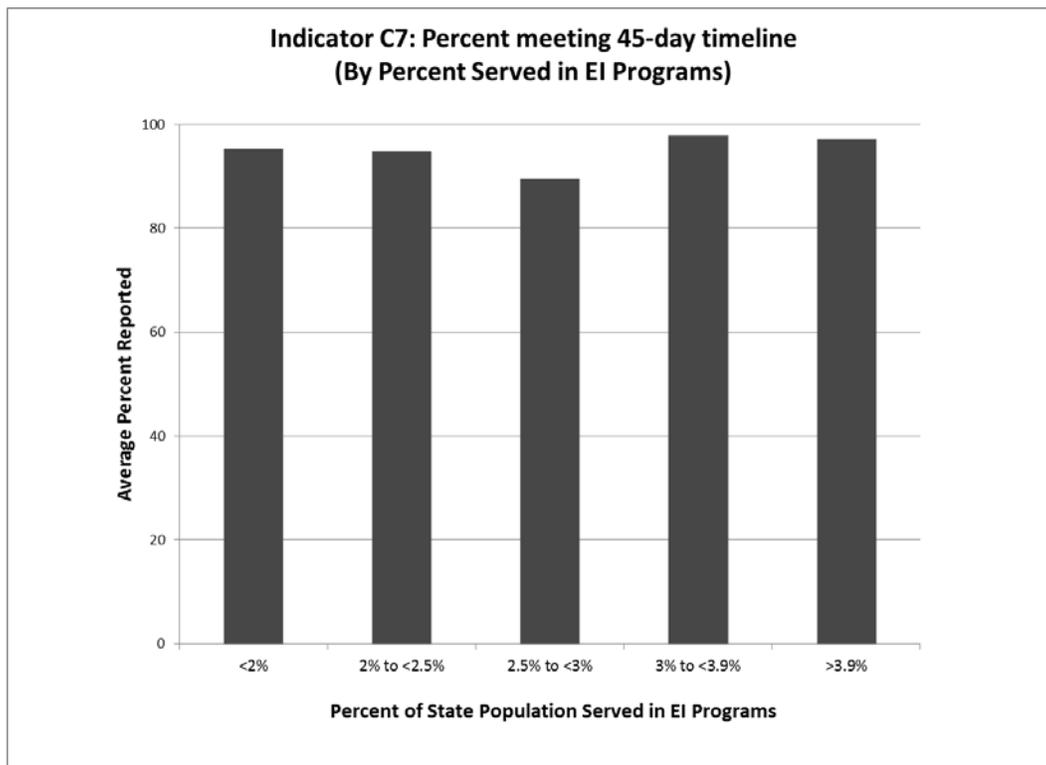
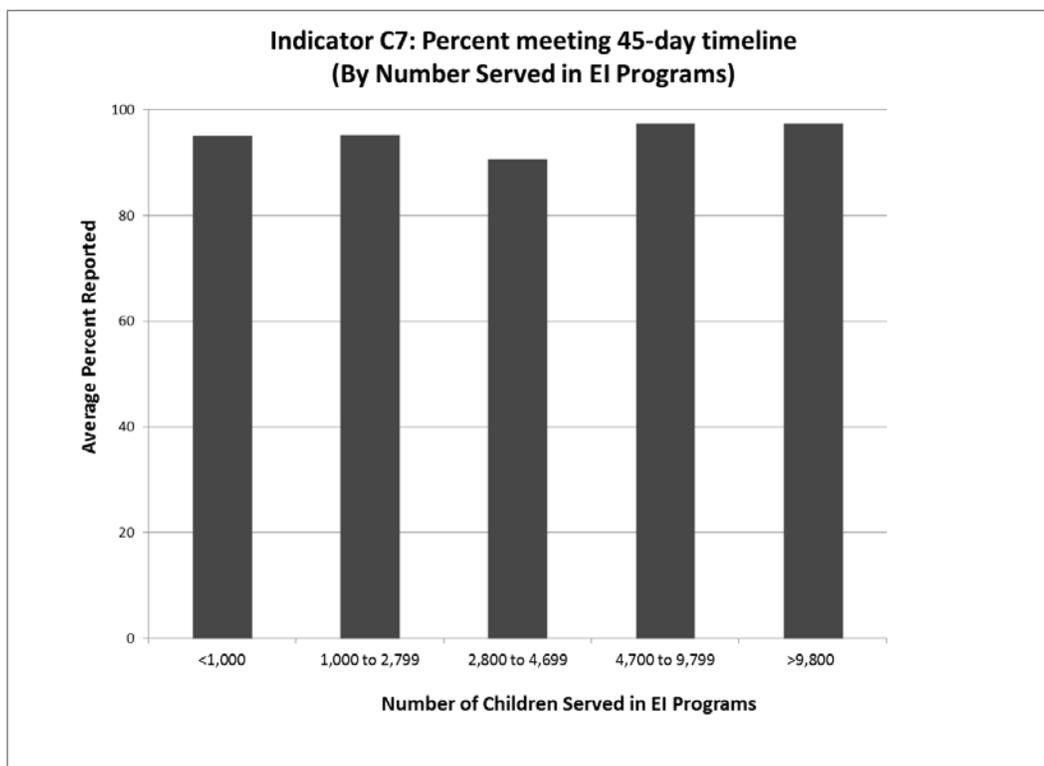


Figure 2 shows the 45-day timeline data analyzed by the number of children served in states' Part C programs. This chart shows a tendency for states serving the highest numbers of children to have slightly higher percentages of timely evaluations, assessments, and initial IFSP meetings.

Figure 2



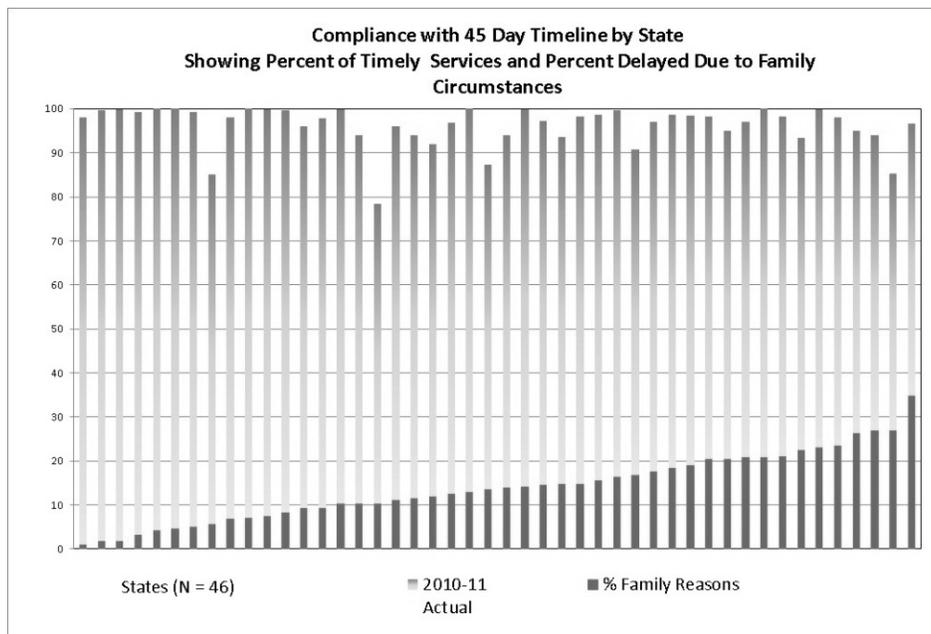
Family Circumstances

As mentioned above, when reporting data related to the 45-day timeline, states have the option of differentiating between delays that are due to exceptional family circumstances and delays that are program related. If they use this option, all instances of delay due to family circumstances can be counted as being in compliance with the timeline.

In FFY 2010, 46 states provided data on the number of delays due to exceptional family circumstances that were included in both the numerator and denominator when calculating their data. Family reasons included: family vacations, cancellations, scheduling preferences, and scheduling conflicts; child illnesses; surrogacy issues not related to the Infants and Toddlers Program; and severe weather or a natural disaster.

The percentage of delays due to family reasons varied among states from 1% to 35%, with a mean of 14%. Figure 3 shows the percent of children with delays due to family reasons in the lower section of each state's bar. The top section of each bar shows the percentage of children with no delays in meeting the 45-day timeline. Both sections together total each state's total timeliness.

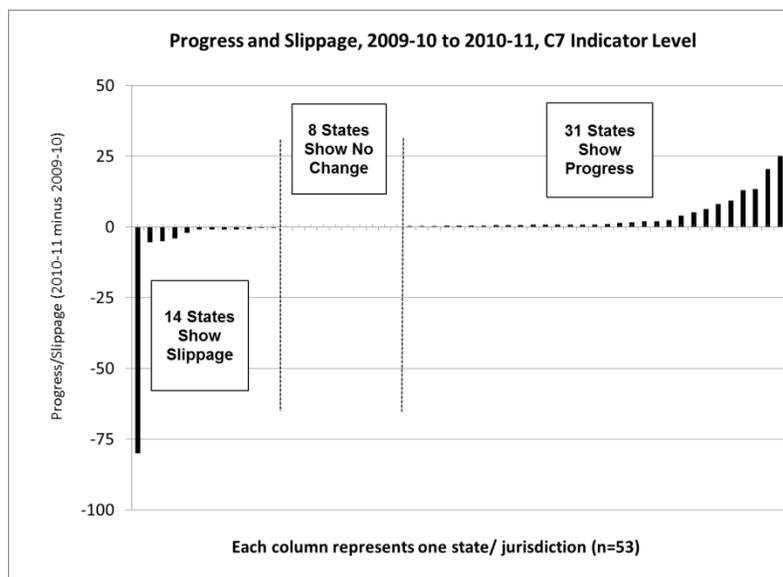
Figure 3



PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Figure 4 shows data on the relative progress and slippage in percentage points for each of 53 states that reported data in both FFY 2009 and FFY 2010. For the purpose of this analysis, progress and slippage were defined as any increase or decrease in performance, including incremental changes of less than one percentage point. Using this definition, 31 states showed progress from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010, 14 states showed slippage, and eight states showed no change.

Figure 4



Further analysis of progress and slippage revealed the following:

- Thirty-one states showed an overall change (progress, slippage, or no change) of less than one percentage point from last year. Of these states, all were strong performers meeting the 45-day timeline for 92% - 100% of eligible infants and toddlers. Twenty-eight of these states performed at 97% or greater, and seven met their 100% target for both reporting years.
- Fifteen states showed progress of one percentage point or more in FFY 2010 and of these states, four showed progress of more than ten percentage points.
- Seven states showed slippage of one percentage point or more in FFY 2010. Five of these states performed at 94% or higher in FFY 2010. Only one state reported more than ten points of slippage.

Explanation of Progress

Many of the 31 states showing progress from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010 reported using improved timeline tracking processes through their data systems and improved monitoring practices. States also reported hiring new staff; providing targeted TA to address scheduling protocols and train providers on the importance of timelines; and streamlining referral, intake, screening, and eligibility determination activities. One state reported providing TA and training on child find activities to increase referrals of children with a greater probability of program enrollment. Another state reported that implementation of the primary service provider (PSP) approach by more EI programs continued to support their capacity in meeting the 45-day timeline.

The state showing the most progress for the current reporting period (from 69% to 94%) reported that they had developed a new multi-disciplinary team (MDT) process for determining eligibility and had moved to an electronic scheduling system for assigning staff to MDTs and reassigning staff when someone was out. This state also reported receiving TA from the WRRC and NECTAC to review and analyze FFY 2009 APR data and respond to procedural changes to help ensure meeting the timeline requirements.

Many states that are consistently high performers report that they review IFSP data and timelines regularly, require reports on every instance of delay, use corrective action plans (CAPs) to address all findings of noncompliance, and use data from their state data system to analyze reasons for delay and develop targeted TA and training for program improvement.

Explanation of Slippage

Many states continued to attribute slippage to a persistent shortage of qualified personnel, including PTs, OTs, SLPs, and service coordinators. States also attributed slippage to scheduling challenges, a lack of bilingual assessors and interpreters, funding issues, staff turnover, and difficulty getting prior authorizations and prescriptions from physicians in a timely manner. One state reported that Medicaid changed to managed care without prior notification to providers, which caused unexpected delays.

Another state reported experiencing increases in the number of children referred each year (a 5.2 point increase over the past year and a 17.1 point increase since FFY 2007), without being able to hire additional staff due hiring freezes. A state reporting significant slippage (from 84% to 78%) attributed it to natural disasters resulting in loss of office space, loss of records, and displacement of staff. The following summarizes some key challenges states continue to report in FFY 2010:

Personnel Issues

- Shortages of qualified professionals, including PTs, OTs, SLPs and service coordinators.
- Insufficient availability of interpreters and bilingual assessors.
- High referral rates and high staff turnover rates.
- Inability to pay competitive salaries.

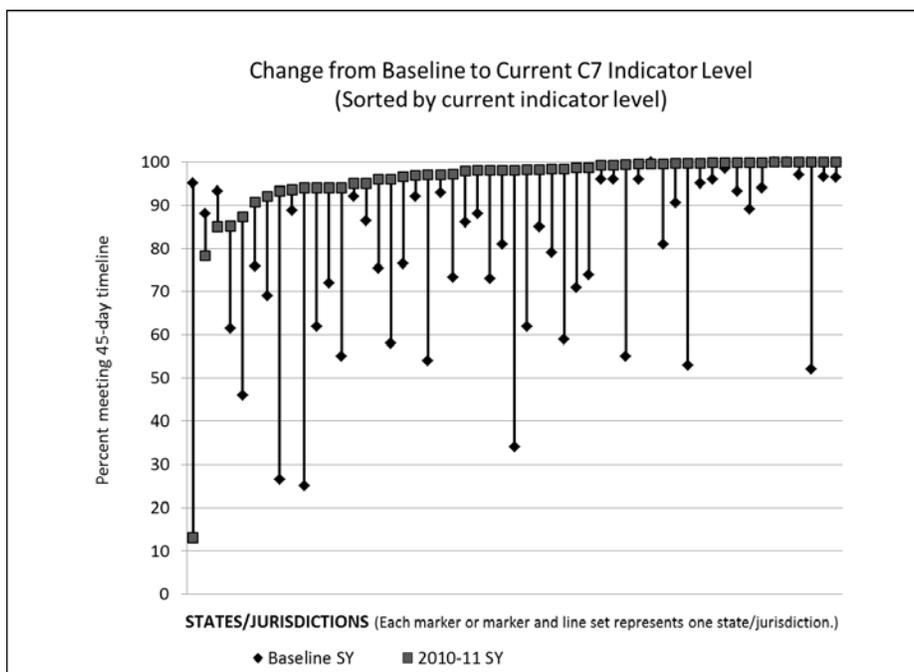
Inefficient Processes or Procedures

- Inefficiencies in local procedures for intake and scheduling of appointments.
- Scheduling conflicts and delays, including difficulties contacting families to schedule evaluations/assessments and IFSP meetings.
- Communication challenges, such as sharing of information in a timely manner, delays from point of entry, insufficient referral information, delays in receiving physician prescriptions, and delays in receiving evaluation or medical reports.
- Delays in getting prior authorization for services.

Trajectories from Baseline to FFY 2010

Figure 5 illustrates states' trajectories from baseline (for most states this was FFY 2004) to performance in FFY 2010. This figure includes 53 states that have both baseline data and FFY 2010 data for Indicator 7. Each line represents one state. The longest vertical lines denote the greatest changes. It is important to note that most of the short lines, which indicate little change over time, represent states that have continuously performed at 90% or greater since baseline.

Figure 5



Of particular interest are the following observations:

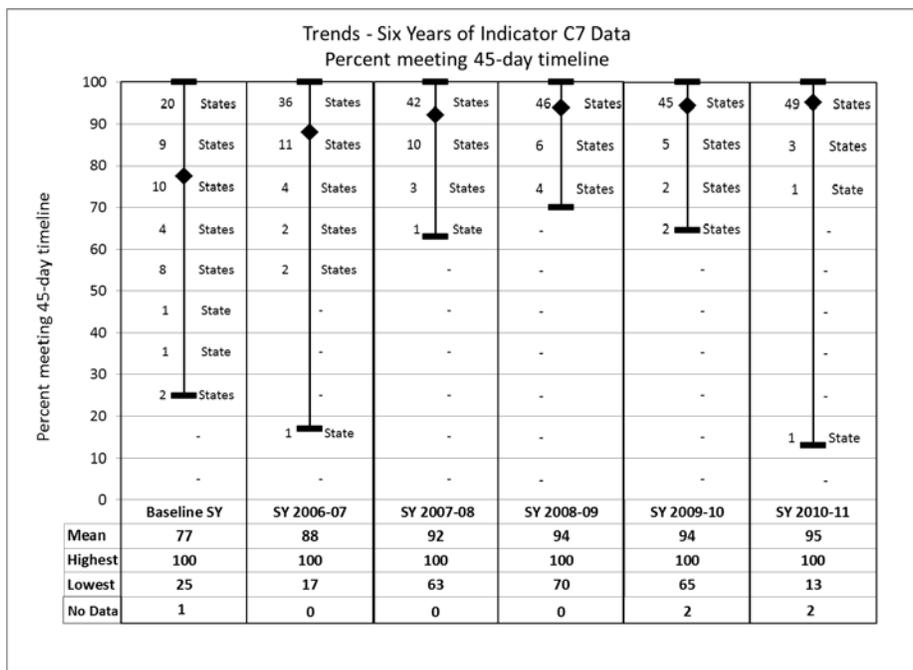
- Forty-seven states have improved their performance from baseline to FFY 2010.
- Two states have maintained their performance of 100% from baseline to FFY 2010.
- Nineteen states have shown high performances of 90% or above from baseline to FFY 2010.
- Twenty-two states have improved their performance by more than 20 percentage points since baseline. Of these, 20 performed at 90% or higher in FFY 2010.
- Of the four states whose current performance is below baseline, one has consistently been a strong performer with a performance of 99.6% in FFY 2010 and slippage of only 0.4 percentage point since baseline.
- The state with the lowest baseline performance demonstrated the greatest improvement by FFY 2010, from 25% to 94%, an increase of 69 percentage points.

Trends over Time

The number of states reporting valid and reliable data on the Part C 45-day timeline requirement has varied over the years; however the overall data continues to show a national trend toward improved performance over time. Most, but not all states were able to establish baseline data for this indicator in FFY 2004. Fifty-five states have baseline data, 54 states reported data in FFY 2005, 56 states reported data in FFY 2006 - FFY 2008, and 54 states reported data in FFY 2009 and FFY 2010.

Figure 6 shows trend data for this indicator. It includes baseline data, as well as data for the most recent 5 reporting years. The mean performance increased from 77% at baseline to 95% in FFY 2010, an overall increase of 18 percentage points. Additionally, in FFY 2010, 49 states performed in the 90-100% range, compared to 20 states at baseline. Only 2 states performed below 80% in FFY 2010, compared to 26 states at baseline.

Figure 6



FEATURED IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The improvement activities most frequently reported by the states in FFY 2010 can be grouped under the following main categories: continuous monitoring and review of data, technical assistance and training, increasing and redeploying personnel, and clarifying/revising policies and procedures. Some specific activities featured in FFY 2010 included the following:

Continuous Monitoring and Review of Data

- Many states reported enhancing their state data systems in order to improve tracking of compliance, eliminate scheduling errors, and assist providers in identifying referrals approaching 45-days. Some examples include: adding a new field to collect real time data related to the 45-day timeline; adding or clarifying categories for delays due to family and program circumstances; generating regular timeline reports for regional and local program managers, supervisors, service coordinators, and service providers; and generating data reports to help track trends, analyze reasons for delays, and plan targeted training and technical assistance activities.

- States also continued to improve their monitoring practices to help identify instances of non-compliance and root causes of delay. For example, states reported using ongoing verification visits, focused monitoring of local programs, regular (weekly, monthly, quarterly) reviews of data, regular local performance reports and documentation of each instance of non-compliance, and CAPs to correct noncompliance. One state began to use performance data related to Indicator 7 when conducting interim and annual performance evaluations.

Training and TA

- A number of states provided orientation training for all new hires and developed provider competencies to help focus professional development activities.
- States continued to provide training and follow-up TA on recommended practices (use of assessment tools for measuring child outcomes; screening, eligibility determination, and assessment procedures; team-based service delivery models; family assessment practices, and routines-based interviews).
- States continued to provide targeted TA to address root causes of delay and to enhance providers' capacity to use data for program improvement.
- One state provided training on the best use of available professionals.

Increase and Redeploy Personnel

- States used a variety of strategies to address personnel shortages, including: use of paraprofessionals for direct services to relieve professionals; increased use of Medicaid revenue for the Part C system, which resulted in an increased number of Part C providers; increased funding to reimburse private providers for team time & IFSP meetings; hiring of new service coordinators and evaluation specialists; contracting with part-time EI personnel and using MCH nurses to complete timely evaluations/assessments; and using ARRA funds to hire additional assessors, interpreters, and bilingual therapists.
- States also continued to implement team-based service models to improve the efficient use of personnel.
- One state increased its number of professional development/training personnel by converting the responsibilities of existing Point of Entry (POE) staff.

Clarify/Revise Policies and Procedures

- States continued to revise their regulations and develop new procedures to help streamline the intake, evaluation, and scheduling process. Several states revised their IFSP forms and/or made them Web-based. States also developed guidance on accurately reporting referral dates, documenting exceptional family circumstances, and performing evaluations during program breaks. A number of states developed checklists to help clarify steps to be in place and timelines to be met in developing the IFSP. One state revised its regulations to require that all service coordinators be certified as early intervention case managers and one state implemented a new Early Intervention Targeted Case Management Program, which provides Medicaid reimbursement for service coordination.

- A number of states reported that they worked closely with OSEP-funded TA Centers on program improvement activities, such as: clarifying, revising and streamlining eligibility and evaluation practices; piloting an Initial Service Coordinator service model; conducting focused monitoring program reviews; developing additional questions on the family outcomes survey regarding the 45-day timeline; analyzing FFY 2009 APR data and responding to procedural changes to help meet time-line requirements; and redesigning the 45-day process to ensure completion of all required components in a timely manner.

CONCLUSION

Although states continue to report challenges in meeting the 100% target for Indicator 7, the overall data shows a national trend toward improvement over time. States continue to overwhelmingly attribute progress to ongoing monitoring practices, refinements to their data collection systems and the improved use of data for identifying and addressing root causes of delay. States also attribute progress to revised policies and procedures; the streamlining of referral, intake, screening, and evaluation/assessment activities; recruiting, retaining, and redeploying personnel; providing TA and training on recommended practices; and implementing team-based service models.

INDICATOR 8: EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITION

Completed by NECTAC

Indicator 8: 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.

INTRODUCTION

Indicator 8 is a compliance indicator with a performance target of 100%. Each of the three sub-indicators of Indicator 8 corresponds to specific Part C regulations. In 2011, the Part C regulations were amended, but for the purposes of this reporting period, the citations and requirements from the **former** regulations still apply.

- 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 FFY 2010 Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for 56 states and territories. For the purpose of this report, all states and jurisdictions are referred to collectively as “states”.

DATA SOURCES/ MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

The data sources for each sub-indicator in the FFY 2010 APR were recorded in order to identify and track trends for data collection methods used by states. There were three main sources of data reported by states: monitoring (e.g. file review and self-assessment), data systems, and combinations of the two. The data source for two states was not reported or clearly described.

Although states are increasing the use of electronic data systems, many states continue to rely on monitoring mechanisms for reporting purposes. An increased number of states across all three sub-indicators are combining monitoring processes with data systems. Examples of this include files being selected randomly from a data system for

manual review and on-site verification or file review of records is used to verify data entry.

Sixteen states required program self-assessment as part of the monitoring process. Self-assessment practices were most commonly utilized by states to determine if IFSPs contained transition plans with steps and services (8A) and to determine documentation of timely transition conferences (8B) rather than for notification. Three states combined the use of self-assessment in conjunction with their data system, but typically states using self-assessment relied on monitoring strategies as their data source. For most of these states, self-assessment was required statewide for all programs.

States reporting cyclical monitoring processes as a primary data source showed variation in the number of files reported. While some states continue to describe cyclical program monitoring as a primary data source, an increasing number of states are using a census approach and reviewing files for all children. For the purpose of this analysis, census was defined as reporting on all children for the entire reporting period or a specific time frame within the reporting period. A specific time frame was typically a quarter within the reporting year.

Table 1 shows the total number of states reporting census data by indicator. Twenty-one states (38%) reported data for all children in FFY 2010 across all three sub-indicators. Of the 21 states, 14 reported on all children for the entire reporting period and seven reported on all children within a specific time frame. More than 50% of the states are reporting data on all children for notification to the LEA (8B). The number of states reporting data for all IFSPs (8A) increased slightly as well demonstrating a positive trend in capacity for both sub-indicators.

Table 1

Number of States Reporting Census Approach: FFY 2010					
8A Transition Steps		8B Notification to LEA		8C Transition Conference	
Yes	26 (46%)	Yes	31 (55%)	Yes	27 (48%)
No	28 (50%)	No	20 (36%)	No	24 (43%)
Not Given/ Unclear	2 (4%)	Not Given/ Unclear	5 (9%)	Not Given/ Unclear	5 (9%)

The use of data systems as a primary data source has increased over time for all three sub-indicators until this reporting period. An analysis of state approaches for FFY 2010 indicates more states are combining monitoring strategies with the use of data systems. Figure 1 shows the data sources for sub-indicator 8A. In FFY 2010, monitoring was reported by the largest number of states as their source of data (25 states, 45%). An equal number of states reported using data systems (15 states) and combined approaches (15 states). One state did not report their data source. Over time, the sole use of monitoring as a data source for 8A has decreased while the use of data systems and monitoring/ data system combinations has increased.

Of those states using data systems, eight states reported sharing transition data using a unique child identifier, representing an increase of one state since the last reporting period. One additional state reports being engaged in a development and refinement process. The Part C programs using unique child identifiers are primarily located in departments of health (5 states) with two located in departments of education and one program located within a department of developmental disabilities.

Figure 1

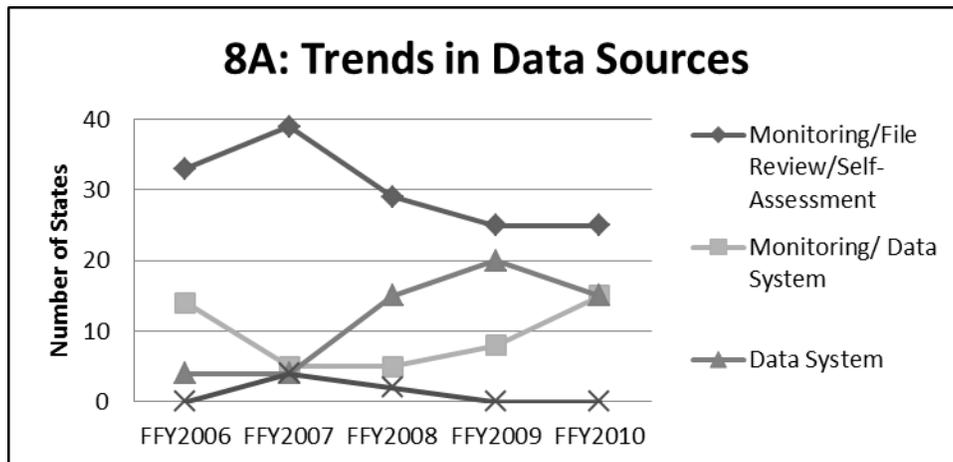


Figure 2 shows trends in data sources for sub-indicator 8B. In FFY 2010, states continue to report data systems as the most frequent data source (23 states, 42%) followed by monitoring (17 states, 31%). A number of states used various combinations of these sources (15 states, 27%), representing an increase from previous reporting periods. The number of states only using monitoring as a data source for notification to the LEA continues to decrease showing a pattern similar to Indicator 8A.

Figure 2

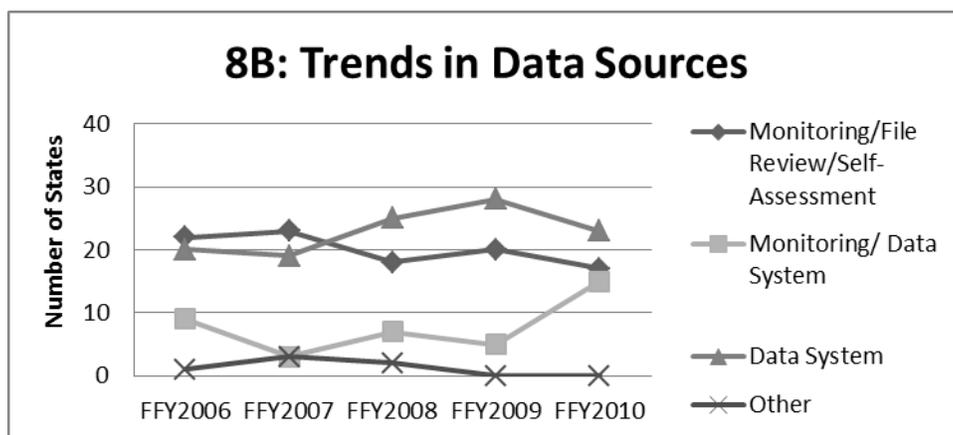
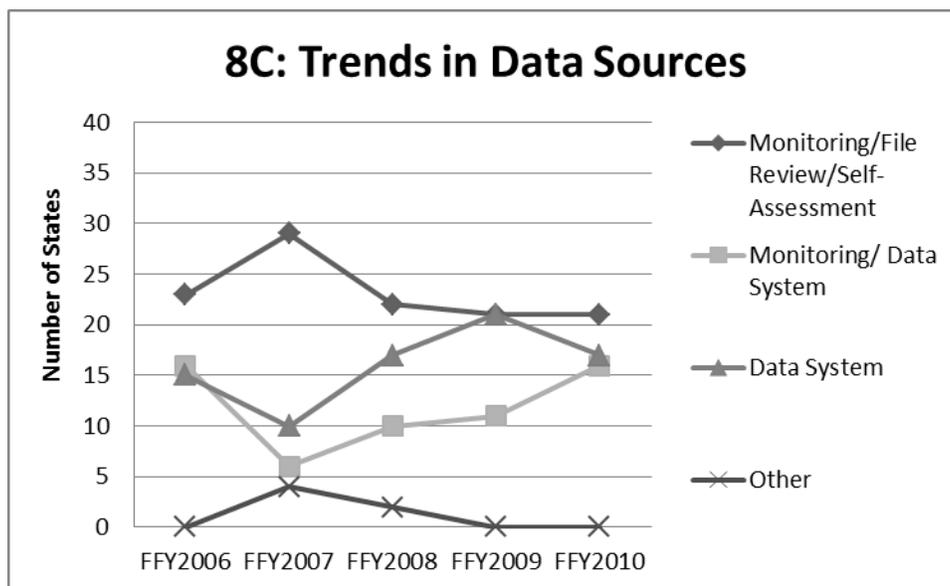


Figure 3 shows trends in data sources for sub-indicator 8C. In FFY 2010, the majority of states primarily used monitoring approaches (21 states) with the remaining states using either a data system (17 states) or a combination of approaches (16 states). Similar to the pattern seen for the other indicators, the number of states using a combination approach has increased. The number of states only using monitoring has remained relatively stable for the last three reporting periods.

Figure 3



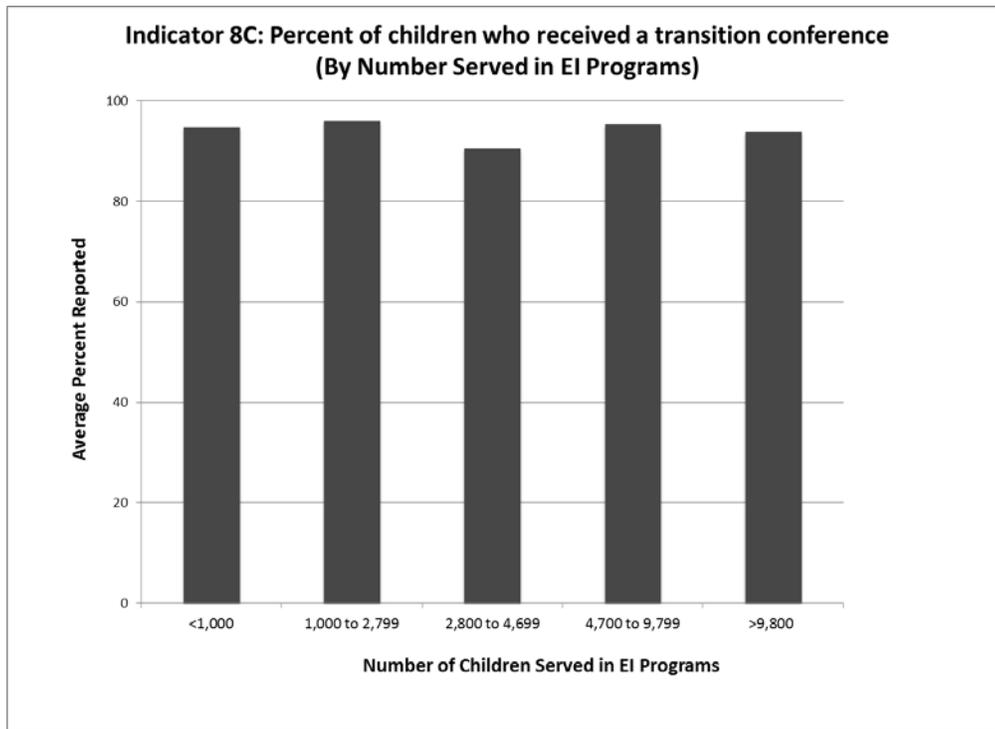
ACTUAL PERFORMANCE FOR FFY 2010

Overall, the FFY 2010 means reported by states for the three sub-indicators were as follows: sub-indicator 8A was 97%, sub-indicator 8B was 98%, and 8C was 94%.

Comparative Analysis of Child Count, Percent Served, and Region

A comparative analysis was conducted for all states submitting data by the variables of child count, percent children served, and RRCP/RPTAC region for all three sub-indicators. No patterns were found in these comparisons for sub-indicators 8A or 8B. Sub-indicator 8C indicated a dip in compliance for those programs serving between 2,800 to 4,699 children, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4



The percent of children with timely transition conferences (8C) also varied somewhat by RRC/RPTAC region (Figure 5) and by percentage of state population (Figure 6).

Figure 5

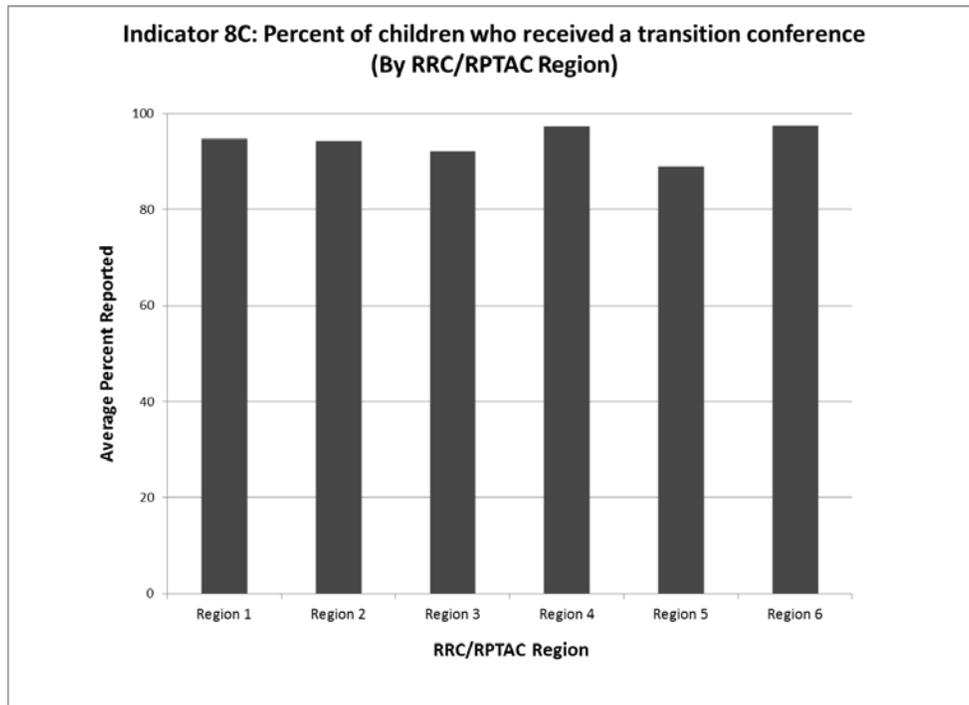
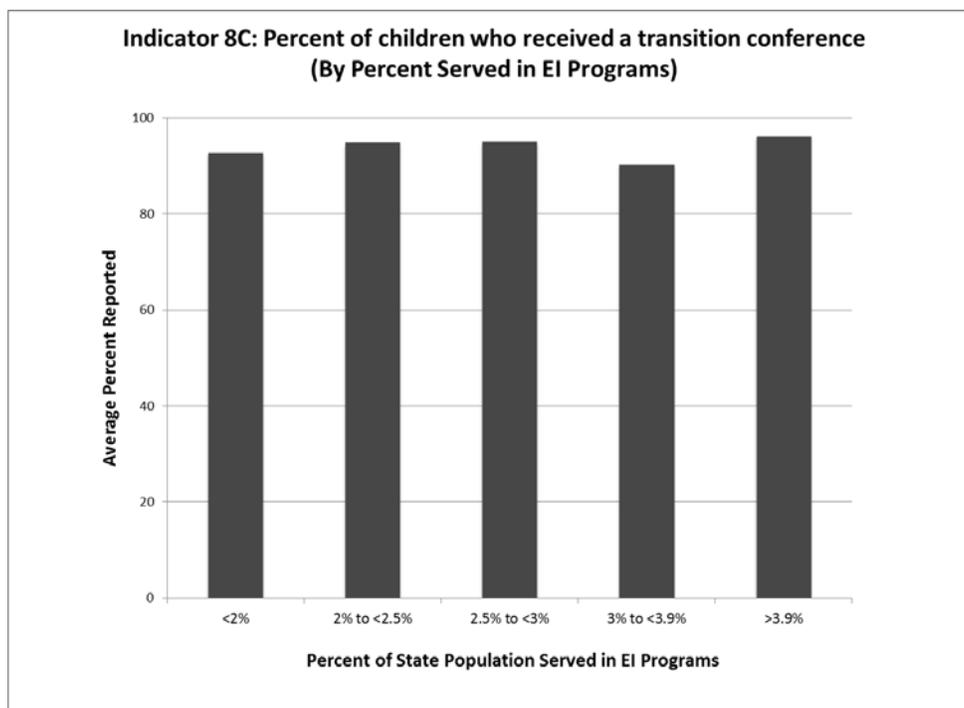


Figure 6



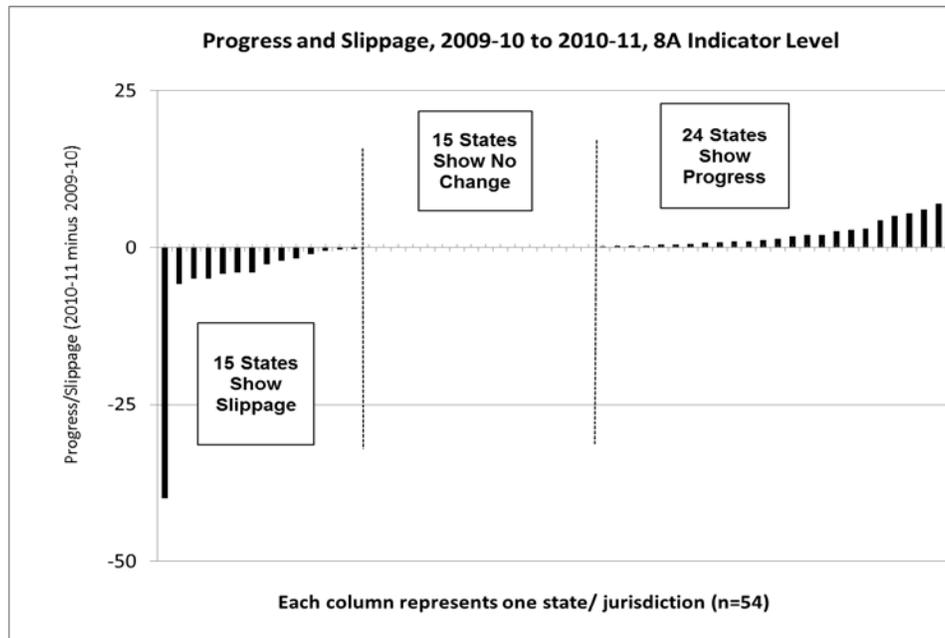
Progress and Slippage

Overall, states continue to make progress on all sub-indicators of early childhood transition, but for the first time the means did not increase. There was no change in the mean for sub-indicator 8B (98%) and 8C (94%) from FFY 2009 to this reporting period. The mean for sub-indicator 8A decreased by one percentage point from 98% in FFY 2009 to 97% in FFY 2010. Progress and slippage are calculated for the 54 states for which actual data were reported for both FFY 2009 and FFY 2010.

8A - IFSPs with Transition Steps and Services

States continued to report progress in documenting transition steps and services on IFSPs (sub-indicator 8A) as shown in Figure 7. Twenty-four states demonstrated progress, with six of those states improving by 3 to 7 percentage points. Of those states showing progress, 12 reported a performance of 97% or higher and ten reached full compliance. Thirteen of the 15 states maintaining performance from the previous reporting period demonstrated full compliance. As compared to the previous reporting period, the number of states demonstrating slippage increased from nine in FFY 2009 to 15 in FFY 2010. Only seven of those states reported slippage of more than four percentage points. One state reported slippage of 40 points due to a large number of records that did not include transition planning documentation. Four of the 15 states with slippage reported performance at 99% with an additional seven states still reporting performance above 92%.

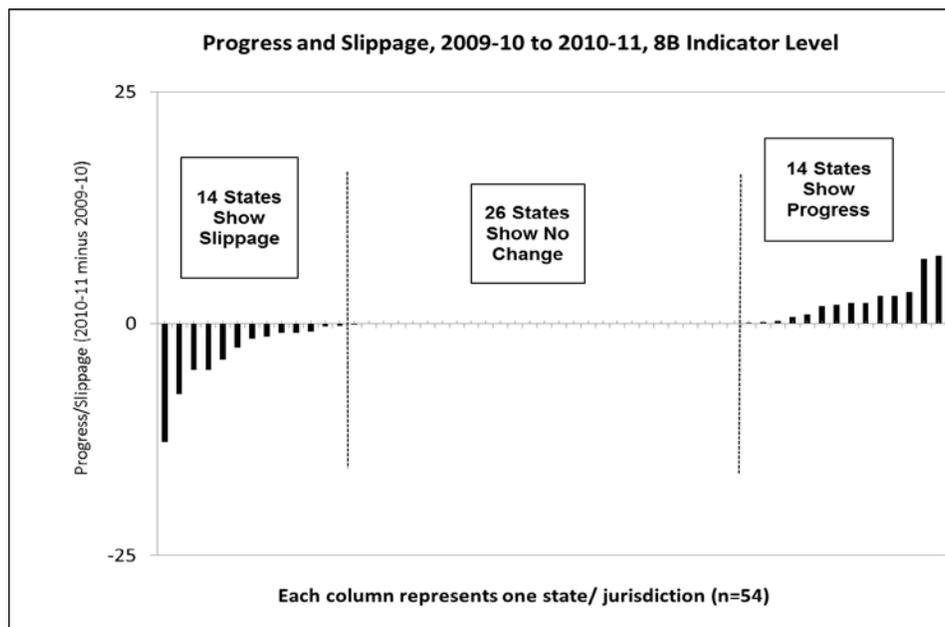
Figure 7



8B - Notification to LEA

This sub-indicator continues to show the highest performance with the greatest number of states (32) demonstrating full compliance. As seen in Figure 8, 14 states made progress. Five of the 14 states increased performances by 3 to 7 points. Of those states demonstrating the most progress, six reached full compliance and five were at or above 95%. Of the 14 states who demonstrated slippage, eight states reported performance of 95% or higher. All of the 26 states reporting no change maintained full compliance from the previous year.

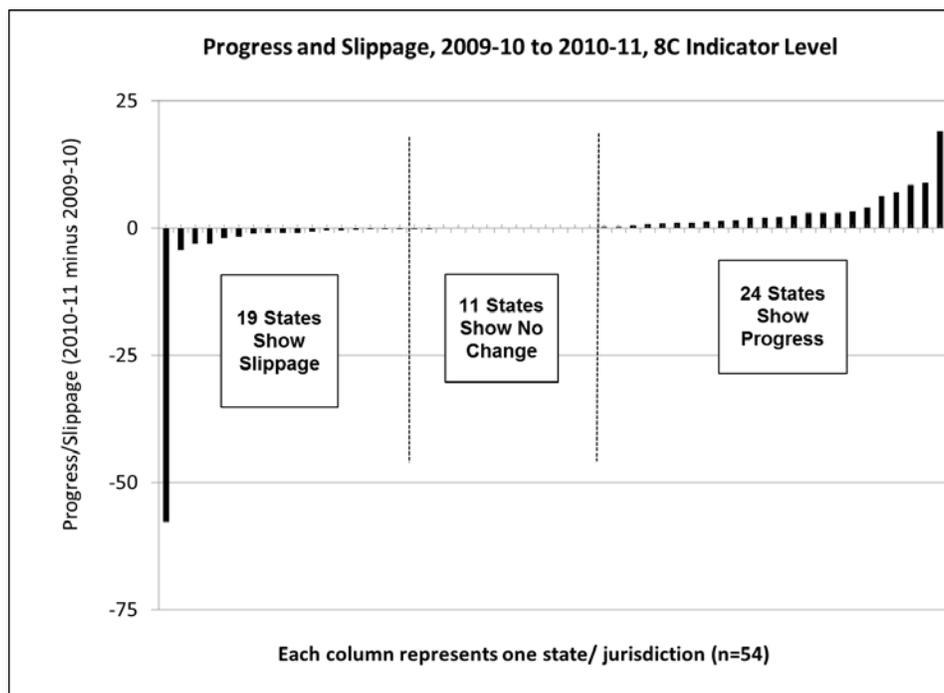
Figure 8



8C - Transition Conference

For sub-indicator 8C, 24 states reported progress, as shown in Figure 9. Sixteen of the 24 states that demonstrated progress reported performances of 95% to 100%, with two states achieving full compliance. The ten states making the most progress improved performance by 3 to 19 percentage points. More states demonstrated slippage in 8C in comparison to 8A and 8B, which is consistent with previous reporting periods. Twelve of the 19 states demonstrating slippage reported performances of 95% or higher, with eight performing at or above 98%. Seven of the 11 states reporting no change maintained 100% compliance from the previous year.

Figure 9



Explanation of Progress and Slippage

Explanation of progress was addressed by 30 states with 10 states providing information for all three sub-indicators. Some states provided explanations for progress that were relevant across the three sub-indicators such as improved monitoring processes (increased file review and verification activities), increased and targeted technical assistance strategies, data system modifications with resulting data entry guidance and training, and clarification of transition regulations and policies.

Some states also explained progress specific to each sub-indicator. In sub-indicator 8A, for example, which focuses on the presence of transition steps and services in the IFSP, states described activities related to the content and use of the IFSP form. States described efforts to clarify expectations and improve documentation, revise the actual IFSP form to explicitly include the required data, and improve accuracy of staff data entry into new electronic data systems. Twenty-seven states described using a statewide IFSP form with a transition section, reflecting an addition of six states since

the last reporting period. Three states described having electronic or web-based IFSP formats and one state mentioned being in the development and piloting process of a statewide form.

For notification to the LEA (8B), there was less explanation of progress or slippage due to the overall stability of performance over time. However, states did describe activities put in place in response to the *OSEP Early Childhood Transition FAQs: SPP/APR Indicators C-8 and B-12* (2009) regarding notification policies, clarifying children who are potentially eligible for Part B, and opt-out provisions. States discussed refinements for collecting and sharing child notification data with Part B and the clarification of opt-out policies. In particular, states attributed progress to an improved ability to track children due to adding new data elements to their data systems, generating and sharing reports more frequently with programs, implementing data sharing agreements, providing targeted training and technical assistance (TA) on notification, and clarifying the definition of potentially eligible children and opt-out policies when applicable.

For explanation of progress on conducting transition conferences (8C), states reported that clarification and guidance was provided for documenting exceptional family circumstances and programs convening conferences too close to the 90 day timeline. States also described increased attention to timelines as part of their monitoring process and utilizing alerts for conference timelines in their data systems. A few states described efforts to embed transition conference timeline requirements into mandatory training for new service coordinators and efforts to enhance supervision of these requirements.

Explanation of slippage by sub-indicator was addressed by 24 states. Three states provided explanations for all three sub-indicators. In some cases, states attributed slippage to the same factors in more than one sub-indicator or described multiple reasons for slippage by sub-indicator. States that relied on cyclical monitoring as a method of data gathering mentioned the issues of basing performance on a small number of programs. Some states reported slippage as caused by specific program non-compliance rather than due to widespread systemic issues. The primary causes identified for non-compliance were incomplete documentation, incomplete or inaccurate data entry, scheduling errors, calculating timelines incorrectly, and staff availability. A few states described issues related to severe weather events, increased referrals impacting system capacity, budget cuts, and staff vacancies. It should be noted that many of the states reporting slippage demonstrated high performance.

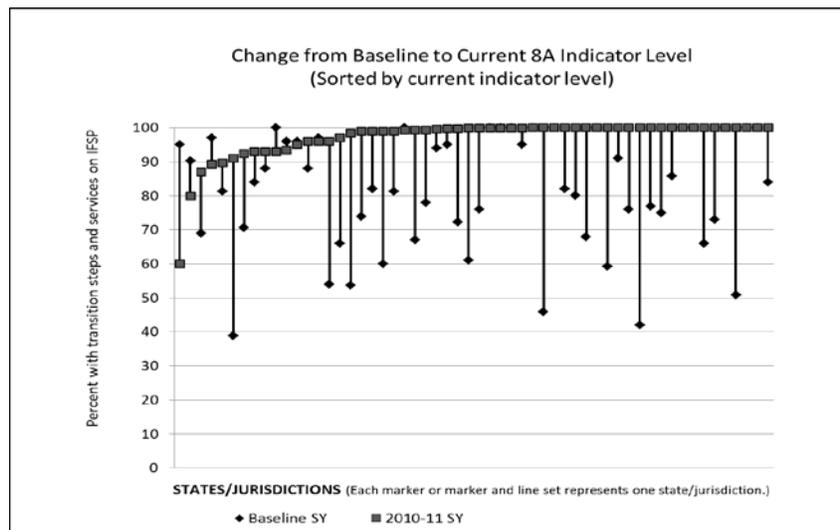
Comparison of Baseline to Actual Performance

Figures 10, 11, and 12 illustrate the trajectories from FFY 2005 baseline to FFY 2010 performance for each of the three sub-indicators. Most states demonstrated improvement in performance, with some states showing dramatic improvement from baseline on all three sub-indicators.

Figure 10 shows the trajectory for sub-indicator 8A (IFSP with Transition Steps). A majority of states demonstrate a positive trajectory from baseline to FFY 2010 performance, with 45 states currently at 95%- 100%. This includes 12 states who

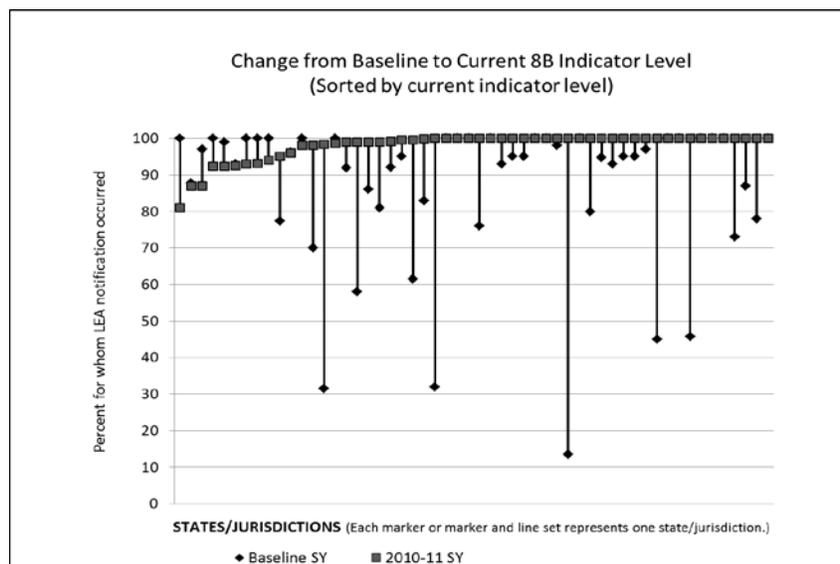
reported full compliance at both baseline and FFY 2010. Eleven states demonstrated a negative trend from baseline to FFY 2010. Six of the 11 states reported a change of one percentage point or less. Four states demonstrated a negative trend of 7 to 35 percentage points. Of the 11 states showing a negative trajectory for this reporting period as compared to baseline, six reported performance of 95% and higher.

Figure 10



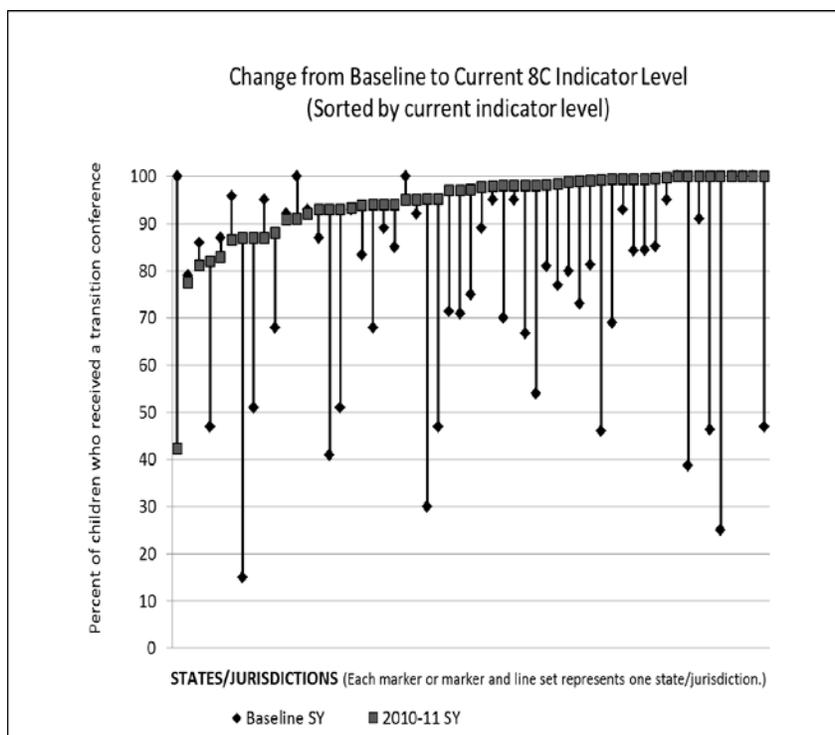
As seen in Figure 11, the majority of states (29) moved in a positive direction regarding notification to the LEA. Performance for notification to the LEA (8B) has always been high, with thirteen states reporting full compliance at both baseline and FFY 2010. Twelve states reported lower actual performance in FFY 2010 than at baseline. Seven out of the 12 states demonstrated a negative trajectory of 6 to 19 percentage points with the remaining states demonstrating a negative trajectory of less than 2 points.

Figure 11



For sub-indicator 8C (timely transition conference), the majority of states (40) demonstrate a positive trajectory (Figure 12). Twenty-nine of the 40 states with a positive trajectory reported performance of 95% and higher. However, fewer states (4) reported full compliance at both baseline and FFY 2010. Ten states demonstrated a negative trajectory. Three states decreased their performance by less than two percentage points, six decreased their performance by four to nine percentage points, and one state decreased significantly by 58 percentage points.

Figure 12



Performance Trends

Generally, the performance trends are very positive, with the majority of states reporting performance of 90% to 100% on all three sub-indicators, though the most positive performance trends are seen for 8A (Transition Steps on the IFSP) and 8B (Notification to LEA).

Figure 13 shows that state performance on sub-indicator 8A (Transition Steps on the IFSP) increased from a mean of 88% in FFY 2005 to 97% in FFY 2010, an increase of 9 percentage points over the five reporting periods. The mean percentage decreased by one percentage point from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010. For the current year, only five states reported performance below 90% with four performing between 80% to 89% and the lowest at 60%. Of the 51 states reporting performance above 90%, 23 states (45%) demonstrated full compliance and 22 states (43%) demonstrated performance above 95%. The remaining six states reported performance between 91% and 94%.

Figure 13

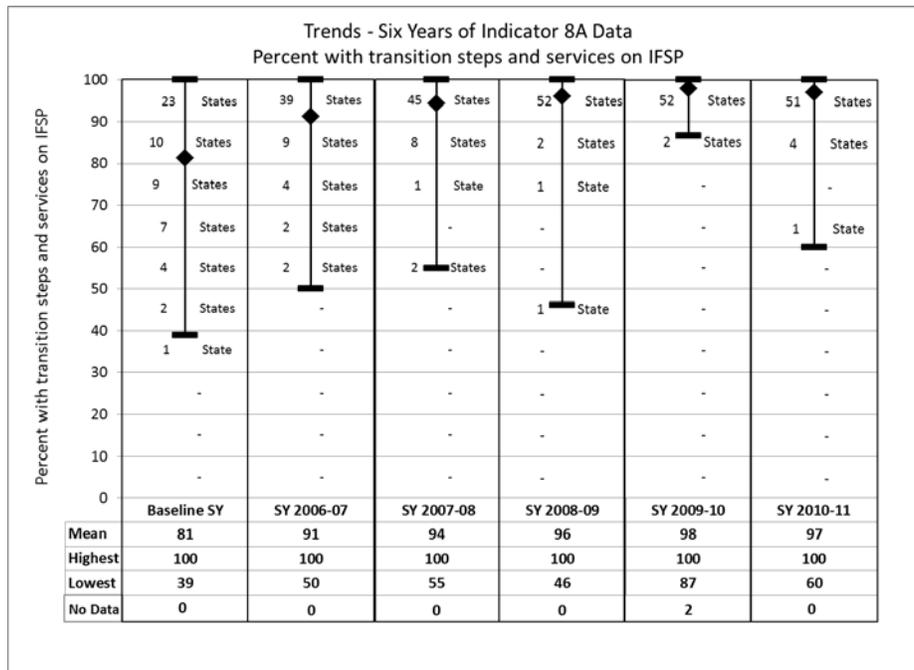


Figure 14 illustrates improved state performances on sub-indicator 8B (Notification to the LEA) over time with an overall change in mean performance of 11 percentage points from baseline to FFY 2010 (from 87% in FFY 2005 to 98% in FFY 2010). In FFY 2010, only three states reported performance below 90%, with the lowest at 81%. Of the 53 states reporting performance above 90%, 32 states (60%) demonstrated full compliance and 14 states (26%) demonstrated performance at or above 95%. The remaining seven states reported performance between 91% and 94%. For Notification to the LEA (8B), significantly more states (N=32) were in full compliance than for either of the other two sub-indicators, a consistent performance trend across previous reporting periods.

Although state performance on sub-indicator 8C (Transition Conference) remains the lowest of the sub-indicators, performance has improved the most over time compared to the other two sub-indicators (see Figure 15). There has been an 18 point increase in mean performance, from 76% in FFY 2005 to 94% in FFY 2010. In FFY 2010, only two states reported performance below 80%. Of the 46 states reporting performance above 90%, nine states demonstrated full compliance, 26 states demonstrated performance at or above 95%, and the remaining 11 ranged from 90-94%.

Figure 14

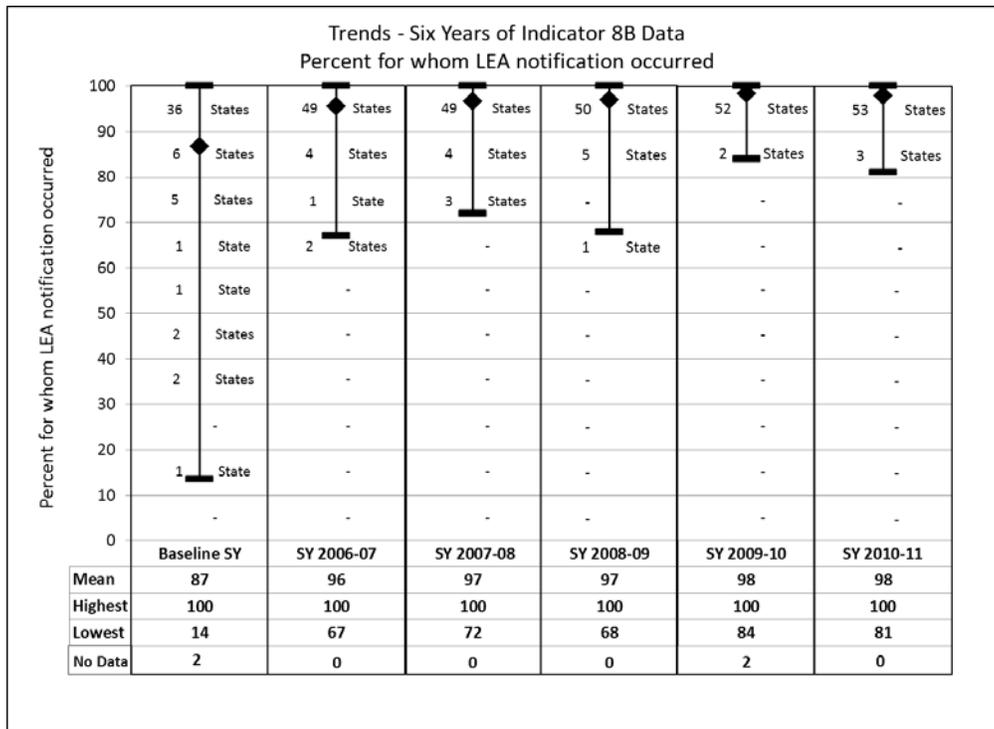
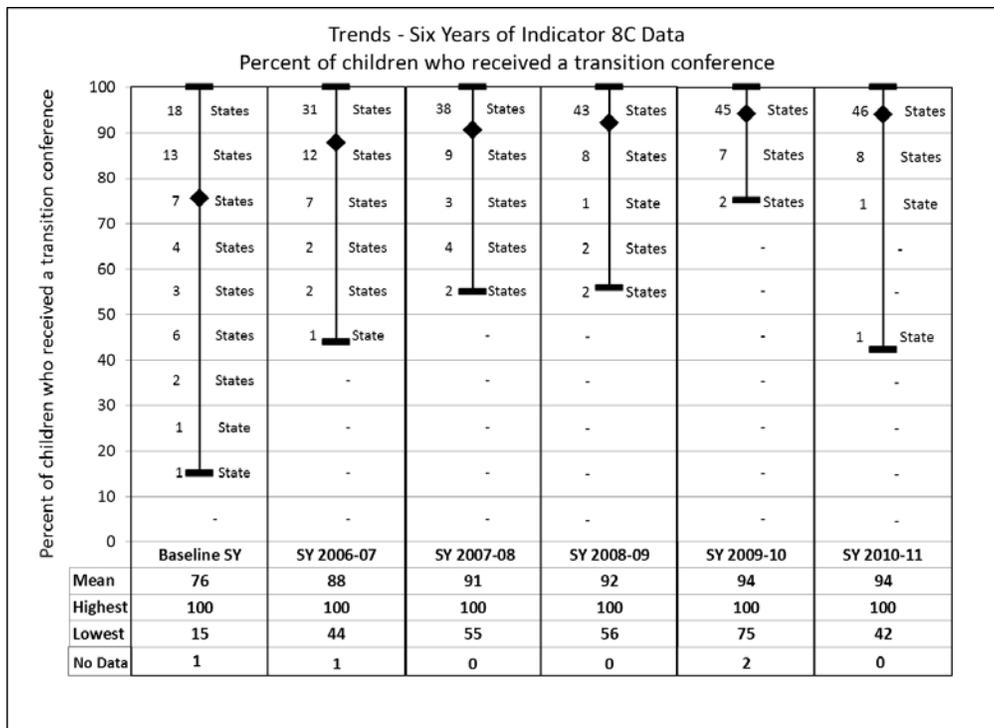


Figure 15



FEATURED IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

This section provides examples of improvement activities within the general categories of:

- Technical assistance, training and professional development.
- Systems administration and monitoring.
- Policies and procedures.
- Data collection and reporting.
- Collaboration and coordination.

Many of the states achieving and maintaining high performance described improvements in infrastructure, such as monitoring processes, data collection and analysis, policy clarification, and training and TA. Many of these infrastructure supports have become routine and standard practice.

Technical Assistance, Training, and Professional Development

Training and technical assistance opportunities, often designed and conducted collaboratively, were provided at statewide meetings and conferences, as part of the monitoring process, at routinely required trainings, in conjunction with new policies or procedures, and at the request of local administration. A few states updated or created online training modules. Other featured activities include:

- Requiring service coordinators to complete an online training on transition.
- Adding transition content to a required service coordinator competency test.
- Requiring service coordinators to complete training on a new Part C procedure manual which included transition requirements and policies.
- Requiring training prior to provider program enrollment in Part C.
- Including transition requirements in staff orientation and training designed for new staff.
- Using transition mentors in Early Intervention Programs (EIPs) to meet routinely with staff to review timelines, requirements and recommended practices.
- Conducting regional training collaboratively with Head Start.
- Coaching and providing other professional development supports to community transition teams.

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 in the form of regularly scheduled review of data. Other featured activities include:

- Jointly supporting an “alert system” shared by Part C and Part B to allow local personnel to notify state staff of compliance issues unable to be resolved locally.

- Including transition practices and requirements on exit surveys with families to gain input.
- Monitoring the quality of IFSP outcomes in addition to documentation of required transition steps and services.
- Including questions about transition in a family outcomes survey as part of a Data Quality TA Project.
- Including at least one parent on monitoring teams for on-site visits.
- Requiring regional staff to determine program compliance before entering data into the state database.
- Requiring programs to complete a self-assessment if they are not monitored
- Requiring the development of improvement plans for the grant application process.
- Identifying an individual on the monitoring team to specialize in transition.
- Creating a new pilot initiative to target transition issues and provide training and TA supports.

Collaboration and Coordination

Collaborative activities and coordination across programs were often mentioned. States reported a variety of collaborative activities with Part B, families, and other community stakeholders. Activities included training, the formulation of policies, clarification and understanding of transition processes, and the development, revision, and dissemination of training and guidance documents. Such documents included family information in the form of packets, booklets and brochures as well as memorandums of agreement. Other featured activities include:

- Requiring and supporting the development of local interagency agreements between EIPs and LEAs statewide.
- Providing state level TA and support to community transition teams.
- Providing a transition brochure to all families during intake and when their children reach age two.
- Using a checklist developed by the statewide transition project for annual monitoring and evaluation of interagency agreements.
- Developing and implementing regional action plans for improving practices between EIPs and LEAs.
- Supporting a pilot project to examine joint evaluation practices between LEAs and Part C program staff.
- Studying the feasibility of joint assessment of children at the local level and considering the use of forms to meet the needs of each program.

Data Collection and Reporting

States reported a variety of activities to develop, refine, or maintain data collection and reporting capacity. Activities included electronic transfer of notification information (sub-indicator 8B) and the addition of “ticklers” or prompts for upcoming date-sensitive and child-specific requirements for transition. Eight states reported the use of unique child

identifiers and another state reported being in the process of developing this approach to tracking child data from Part C to Part B. Other featured activities include:

- Jointly supporting an “alert system” operated by Part C and Part B to allow local personnel to notify state staff of compliance issues. The system is maintained through a data sharing agreement to document alerts in a tracking log.
- Using ARRA funds to improve and refine a statewide data system to include transition planning activities.
- Routinely using a family survey to collect data on transition experiences.
- Creating training on transition data requirements for service coordinators.
- Determining quality indicators for transition by surveying families on effective transition practices.
- Including transition requirements in electronic IFSPs.
- Using a child transition tracking form used by personnel in both the Part C and Part B programs.
- Making data system enhancements to automate timelines for conferences, notification and documenting barriers to timely conferences by EIPs.
- Developing a revised organizational reporting structure to ensure consistent data management and data quality procedures.

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 procedures to both families and providers. Nineteen states reported implementing an opt-out policy, representing an increase from FFY 2009. Twenty-one states described their definition and approach for determining children who are potentially eligible for Part B. Some states described efforts to clarify notification policies, and address the use of exceptional family circumstances. States also reported revisions, updates and creation of new policies, handbooks, toolkits, and IFSP formats. Other featured activities include:

- Using a stakeholder process used to define ‘potentially eligible’.
- Implementing a new direct referral process to LEAs for children referred to Part C after 34 months of age.
- Implementing a new Part B policy requiring an LEA to respond within 10 days of a referral.

CONCLUSION

States have made significant progress in implementing the early childhood transition requirements of the IDEA as evidenced by the APR trend data described in this report. These positive data indicate increased state attention to ensuring every potentially eligible child and their family receives a coordinated, planned, supported, and timely transition to Part B services. Successful improvement activities included developing joint or coordinated policies and procedures, conducting training and TA, and utilizing on-going, highly targeted general supervision and monitoring activities.

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." States must meet a target of 100% measured by the "percent of noncompliance corrected within one year of identification" using the following formula:

Percent of noncompliance corrected within one year of identification = # of findings of noncompliance divided by # of corrections completed as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification times 100.

States are required to describe the process for selecting local programs for monitoring. Additionally, states must provide the actual numbers used in the calculation and describe the results of the calculations, comparing them to the 100% target. All findings of noncompliance must be included regardless of the specific level of noncompliance. Monitoring data collected through all components of the general supervision system must be included and disaggregated by indicator and other areas of noncompliance.

States must demonstrate correction in accordance with OSEP Memorandum 09-02 and Frequently Asked Questions document (FAQs) dated September 4, 2008. The instructions for the APR indicate that states are required to provide:

- detailed information about the correction of noncompliance, including any revisions to general supervision procedures, technical assistance provided, and/or any enforcement actions taken;
- information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification); and
- information on the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed, and any enforcement actions taken.

Overall, DAC reviewed 56 APRs for this summary. These included 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 are fewer than 56 responses, and this is noted in the narrative.

ACTUAL (2010-11) TARGET DATA AS COMPARED TO 100 PERCENT TARGET

Of the 56 states, reviewed seven states either did not issue any findings in FFY 2009 or were determined by OSEP to not have valid and reliable data for this indicator. Of the remaining 49 states:

- Thirty-nine states (79.6%) met OSEP’s designation of substantial compliance for this indicator, including 34 states meeting the 100% target and five states with performance between 95-99.9%.
- Ten states (20.4%) did not meet OSEP’s 95% designation of substantial compliance. Of these 10 states:
 - four states reported performance between 90% to 94%.
 - five states reported performance between 70% and 89%.
 - one state reported performance less than 70%.

PROGRESS AND SLIPPAGE

Based on the Indicator 9 data reported in the APR, OSEP determines whether each state has shown progress or slippage from the previous year. Two visuals that reflect the progress states have made in meeting the 100% target are provided below.

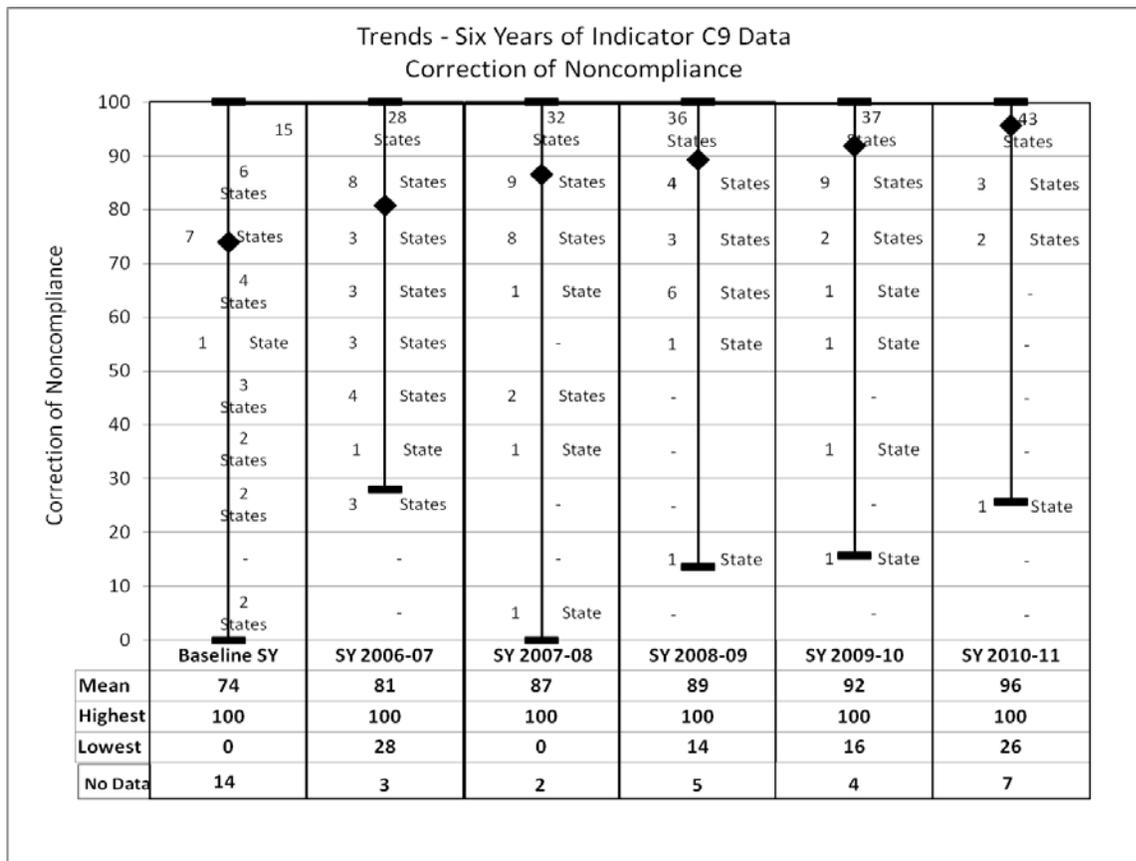
Figure 1 demonstrates the continual progress in the number of states that have made gains in meeting the 100% requirement over the last several years. From 2005–06 to 2010–11, the mean of states’ Indicator 9 performance has increased from 74% to 96%.

Figure 2 below depicts the number of states that showed progress in Indicator 9 performance, those states that had no change, and those that showed slippage from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010. Nine states (9) were omitted from this analysis because of missing data in either FFY 2009 or FFY 2010. Of the 47 states in the analysis, 25 states (53%) had no change in their performance in Indicator 9 from FFY 2009. Ten states (21%) had slippage from their FFY 2009 performance, while 12 states (26%) reported progress from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010.

States are asked to describe in each APR the reasons for slippage and progress. DAC analyzed these responses for this summary. It is important to note that this analysis reports on progress or slippage from the standpoint of each state’s description. There was a great deal of variability in how states reported under this required category. In fact, some states did not use the terms “progress” or “slippage” at all. However, many states did provide narrative under this category that could be characterized as a description of progress or slippage. In those instances, this analysis summarizes those descriptions.

Of the 49 states that reported data in Indicator 9 for FFY 2010, 25 states reported no change as they had 100% in FFY 2009 and FFY 2010 for this indicator. DAC completed an analysis of the 22 states that had progress or slippage from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010. Of these 22 states, 14 described reasons for progress or slippage.

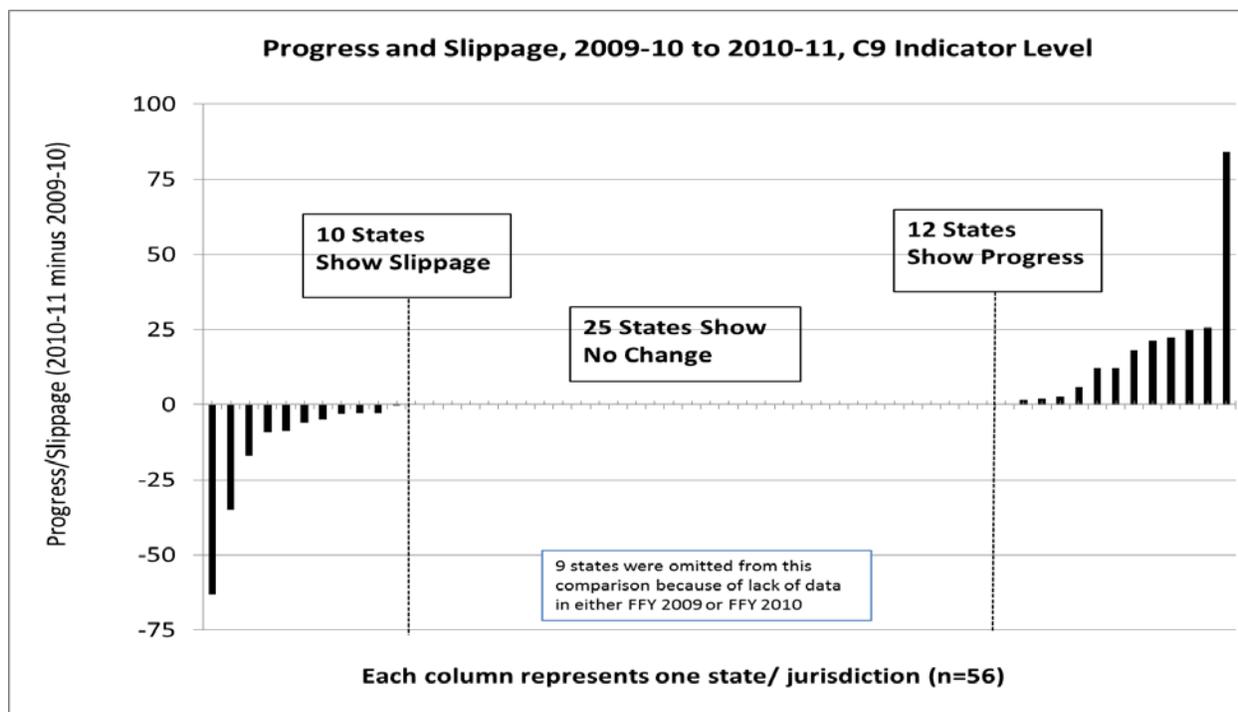
Figure 1



The descriptions of reasons for progress included:

- implementation of revisions and improvements to the state's general supervision system;
- increased capacity for correction and technical assistance due to increased state staff or training of state and regional staff;
- technical assistance (TA) from OSEP and regional and national TA providers;
- state leadership focus on program improvement and general supervision;
- providing ongoing TA activities to early intervention programs about general supervision and correction of noncompliance requirements;
- developing and posting training modules to ensure ongoing access and annual trainings on correction of noncompliance;
- creating a database to track status toward correction, including sharing this with regional and local programs;
- instituting a focused onsite monitoring process approach based on local program need;
- revising corrective action plan (CAPs) process to include monthly required progress report; and
- establishing protocols to conduct onsite visits to review child records and systems in order to ensure verification of correction.

Figure 2



Descriptions of reasons for slippage included:

- challenges in particular local programs, including budget, staff turnover, high caseloads, high poverty rate, and increased families whose primary language is not English;
- not issuing as many findings in FFY 2009 in comparison to FFY 2008, resulting in each finding not corrected having greater impact on percentage of correction;
- previous Part C Coordinator did not issue formal letters of findings; and
- change in state correction procedures that now require 100% to be achieved for correction instead of previous threshold.

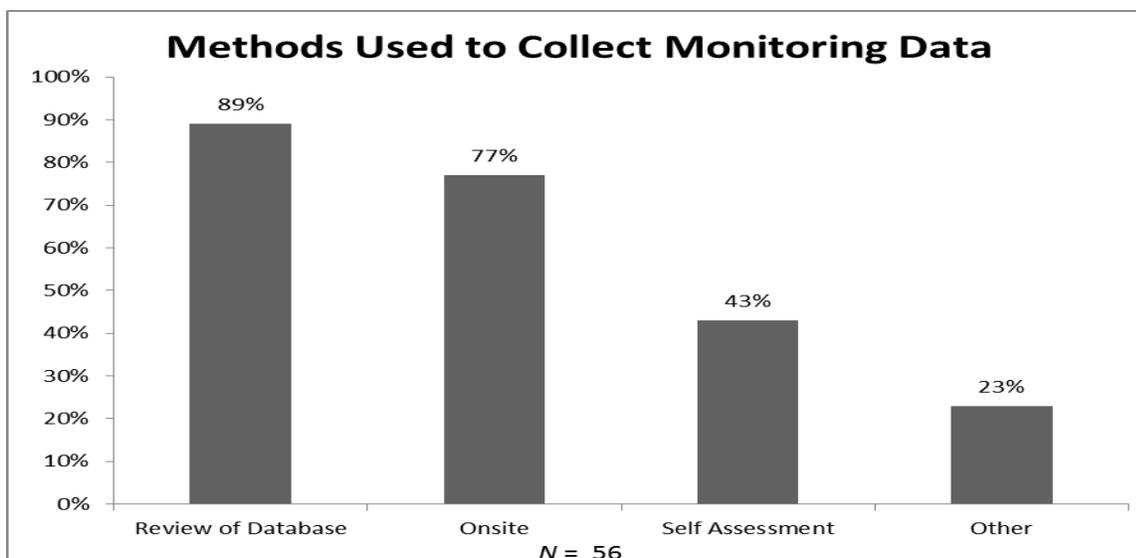
METHODS USED TO COLLECT MONITORING DATA

DAC reviewed Indicator 9 for the 56 states that submitted APRs to identify the methods states used to collect monitoring data. All 56 states provided in Indicator 9 a description of the methods used for the collection of monitoring data.

Most states reported more than one activity to collect monitoring data and seemed to be describing their complete monitoring system in the narrative for Indicator 9. Figure 3 below shows the extent to which states reported use of specific monitoring methods in Indicator 9. The most frequently reported methods used were onsite monitoring and

state review of the state database. Review of the state’s database to collect monitoring data was the most frequently reported method, used by 89% of state Part C Lead Agencies. Seventy-seven percent of the 56 states reported using onsite monitoring. The next most frequently reported method, at 43% of states, was self-assessment. Twenty-three percent of states reported using other monitoring activities, primarily related to fiscal monitoring, including Medicaid monitoring, billing and claims review, and ensuring family income and insurance documentation.

Figure 3



METHODS USED TO VERIFY INDICATOR 9 DATA—CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Due to the increased importance being placed on verifying the correction of noncompliance, DAC reviewed the 56 APRs to identify how states reported on the process used to verify correction in accordance with OSEP Memorandum 09-02 and the FAQ from September 2008. From FFY 2006 to FFY 2010, there has been a significant increase in the number of states reporting how they verify correction of noncompliance. In FFY 2010, only four states did not specify any methods for verifying correction as compared to FFY 2006, in which only 24 states reported verification of correction methods.

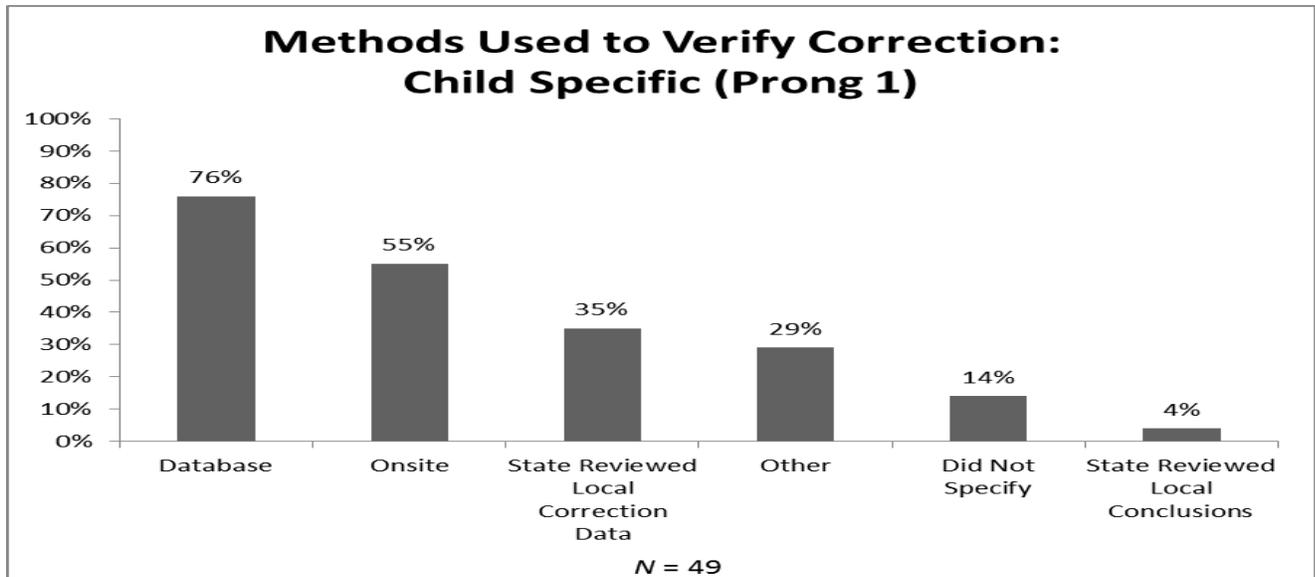
OSEP Memorandum 09-02 requires procedures to ensure verification of correction of noncompliance. Two distinct steps are required that are referred to as “prongs.” The first prong of correction is to ensure that the local program/agency has corrected each individual case of noncompliance identified. The second prong is to ensure that the local program/agency is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance), based on the state’s review of subsequent data.

DAC analyzed the FFY 2010 Indicator 9 submissions to describe the methods states used to verify both required prongs of correction.

VERIFYING CORRECTION OF CHILD-SPECIFIC NONCOMPLIANCE (PRONG 1)

The most frequently reported methods of verification under prong 1 were state review of the state database and onsite monitoring (see Figure 4 below). In FFY 2010, 76% of states reported using the state's database to verify correction, an increase compared with 53% of states in FFY 2009. In FFY 2010, 55% of states reported using onsite monitoring to verify correction as compared with 44% of states in FFY 2009.

Figure 4



The next most frequently reported method in FFY 2010, at 35%, was a state's review of local correction data submitted. This compared with 27% of states reporting using that method to verify prong 1 in FFY 2009. Four percent of states reported reviewing locally completed child record review forms or local statements of conclusion that correction had occurred in both FFY 2009 and FFY 2010.

In FFY 2010, 29% of states reported using other activities to verify prong 1 of child-specific correction as compared to last year, when 16% reported other methods. These other methods included observations of child and family visits, review of claims data and billing records, interviewing providers to verify their understanding of the requirements, reviewing the early intervention record with the parent, and reviewing revised policies and procedures. Seven states (14%) did not specify in Indicator 9 how prong 1 of correction was verified.

VERIFYING CORRECTION BY REVIEWING SUBSEQUENT DATA (PRONG 2)

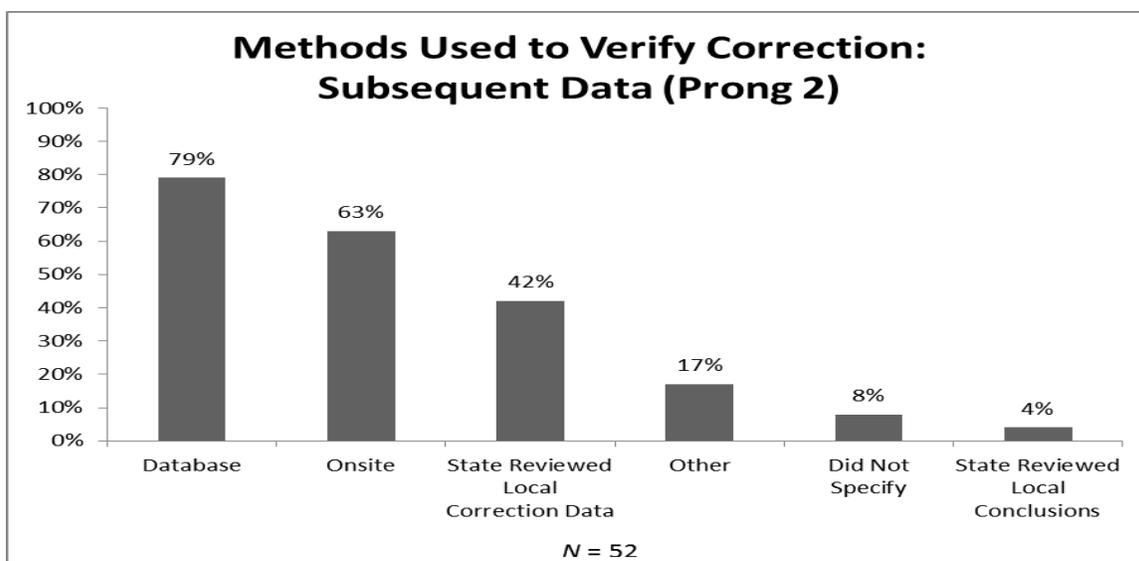
The most frequently reported methods for completing prong 2 of correction were the states' review of the state database and onsite monitoring. In FFY 2010, 79% of states reported using the state's database to verify prong 2 of correction as compared to 71% in FFY 2009. Sixty-three percent (63%) of states reported using onsite monitoring to verify prong 2 of correction in FFY 2010 as compared to 58% in FFY 2009.

The next most frequently reported method of verifying prong 2 of correction, at 42% was a state’s review of local correction data submitted as compared to 33% in FFY 2009. Seventeen percent of states described other activities used to verify prong 2 of correction in FFY 2010 as compared to 16% in FFY 2009. These included review of data and billing records, self-assessment data, interviewing providers to verify their understanding of the requirements, and reviewing revised policies and procedures.

Four percent of states reported reviewing locally completed child record review forms or local statements of conclusion that correction had occurred in both FFY 2009 and FFY 2010.

Four states (8%) did not specify in Indicator 9 how prong 2 of correction was verified.

Figure 5



IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

DAC reviewed the improvement activities reported in Indicator 9 by the 56 states. For this review, DAC selected improvement activities that appeared to be making a difference, having a particular effect, or were considered promising practices. Ongoing or routine activities, while important, were not selected for this review. States that were identified in FFY 2009 as having improvement activities that were considered promising practices were not identified in FFY 2010.

Five states identified improvement activities in FFY 2010 that may be helpful to other states. In these instances, the state name is provided so states can be contacted for additional information.

It should be noted that states did not always characterize actions or steps taken as improvement activities, but any state descriptions that seemed to reference meaningful actions or steps toward improvement are included in this analysis.

The selected improvement activities included:

- Louisiana has been working for several years with a stakeholder group to incorporate quality indicators into the State's general supervision system. The process has involved development of quality indicators, measurements for these indicators, and data collection strategies to collect this monitoring information. Once completed, the State integrates each quality indicator into its monitoring procedures.
- Maryland implements an annual process for improvement planning to address results indicators. The State requires every local planning team to develop an improvement plan as a part of their application for funding. The plan must address a number of factors related to the family survey, including increasing response rate, assisting local stakeholders to understand the purpose of the survey, analysis of results, and targeted improvement activities. The plan must also address natural environment and child find indicators if the local team does not meet the state targets. All local teams are required to report on progress toward state targets twice a year.
- Georgia has developed and implemented a new focused onsite monitoring process that selects health districts for onsite visits based on their percentage of children served. After review of statewide performance data, the State selected improvement in child find as the focus for onsite selection and monitoring visits. Three health districts were selected for visits in year one of this effort based on low child find numbers. The first district's monitoring visit focused on referral to development of the initial IFSP with an emphasis on data quality.
- Vermont's State Performance Plan and Part C policies and procedures provide a foundation for Vermont's Children's Integrated Services (CIS). APR, State, and regional data continually inform the implementation of CIS. All CIS services are required to use the One Plan/IFSP, which service providers from all CIS services developed and reviewed. The state CIS Team requires all CIS providers to comply with the Part C timelines for service provision, including transition, and provides technical assistance related to the timeline provisions via the CIS blog, during conference calls, through the CIS list serve, and during monthly meetings of the CIS Intake Coordinators. The State CIS Team also is discussing adapting the Part C determination process for all CIS services and refining the Part C onsite focused monitoring process to encompass all of CIS.
- Pennsylvania's oversight and general supervision system includes the assignment of a State advisor to each early intervention program to serve as the primary contact for the program to address budget issues, compliance issues, complaint issues, policy and procedural requirements, and overall program performance. Contacts occur throughout the year during verification visits, validation visits, training and technical assistance visits, complaint investigations, biannual leadership meetings, and local regional meetings. This process allows State staff to be aware of program concerns and issues and provides the State Lead Agency with the ability to ensure a comprehensive and effective general

supervision system that identifies and addresses issues of noncompliance, ensures timely correction, and allows for the implementation of improvement and enforcement strategies in a timely manner.

USE OF RESULTS INDICATORS IN MONITORING

In accordance with the increased emphasis on improving results indicators, DAC also reviewed Indicator 9 for examples of state Lead Agencies reporting the use of results indicators in the states' general supervision system. It should be noted that this is not a required component of C9 reporting.

While, most states did not address results indicators in Indicator 9, eight states did reference the use of results indicators in the state's general supervision system. Examples of these references include focusing onsite monitoring activities on local performance in results indicators, adding results indicators to monitoring tools, using performance on results indicators in local determinations, and requiring local improvement plans to address performance in results indicators.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, DAC reviewed 56 APRs for this Indicator 9 summary. This included 50 states, the District of Columbia, and other jurisdictions eligible for and participating in the Part C program. In FFY 2010, states continued to make progress in the timely correction of noncompliance. In FFY 2010, 39 states (79.6%) met OSEP's designation of substantial compliance for this indicator, including 34 states (69%) meeting the 100% target and five states at performance between 95-99.9%. This compares with 58% of states meeting the 100% target for 2009 and 43% of states in 2008.

There remains variability in how states address progress or slippage in the APRs. Of the 49 states that reported findings in Indicator 9 for FFY 2009, 25 states reported no change as they had 100% in FFY 2009 and FFY 2010 for this indicator. DAC completed an analysis of the 24 states that had progress or slippage from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010. Of these 24 states, 14 states described reasons for progress or slippage.

In this APR cycle, states continued to report on the use of monitoring methods. These methods included use of onsite monitoring visits, state review of state data systems, and use of self-assessment. Comparing states' reporting of monitoring methods from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010, the use of state review of states' databases increased by 5 percentage points, while the use of onsite monitoring decreased by 12 percentage points. The use of self-assessment as a monitoring activity decreased by 12%.

OSEP Memorandum 09-02 requires state procedures to ensure verification of correction of noncompliance. This analysis reviewed states' methods for correction of prong 1, child-specific noncompliance as well as methods for review of prong 2, the review of subsequent data. According to this year's analysis, most states are reporting the methods used for verification of noncompliance.

For prong 1, the review of child-specific correction, 76% of states reported using state review of data systems. Fifty-five percent (55%) of states reported using onsite review for prong 1, and 35% reviewed local correction data submitted. Fourteen percent of states did not specify what method was used to verify under prong 1.

For prong 2, the review of subsequent child records, 79% of states reported using state review of data systems. Sixty-three percent used onsite review for prong 2, and 42% reviewed local correction data submitted. Eight percent (8%) of states did not specify what method was used to verify under prong 2.

DAC reviewed the improvement activities reported in Indicator 9 by the 56 states. For this review, DAC selected improvement activities that appeared to be making a difference, having a particular effect, or that were considered promising practices. Ongoing or routine activities, while important, were not selected for this review. Five states were selected with improvement activities that may be helpful to other states. Their names are provided above so they can be contacted for additional information.

INDICATORS 10, 11, 12, AND 13: DISPUTE RESOLUTION UNDER PART C **Prepared by Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education** **(CADRE)**

INTRODUCTION

The IDEA requires states receiving grants under Part C to make available four dispute resolution (DR) processes, and to report annually to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on their performance.¹ The processes, which include signed written complaints, mediation, due process complaints, and resolution sessions associated with due process (where Part B due process procedures are adopted), offer a formal means for resolving disagreements and issues arising under the IDEA.

The following summary and analysis of the FFY 2010 State Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for the DR indicators under Part C includes:

- **Indicator 10:** Percent of signed written complaints with reports issued that were resolved within the 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.

Readers should note that while there are examples of lead agencies successfully improving their performance in each of the four dispute resolution areas, specific details on improvement strategies are beyond the scope of this document. Also, while there is a relationship between overall DR system functioning, leadership, and resources, including those directed toward specific improvement activities, past or current performance does not necessarily predict future performance.

DATA SOURCES/MEASUREMENT APPROACHES

Sources for this report include FFY 2010 APRs, applicable APR clarifications, OSEP-verified APR data, and information on state DR activities drawn from CADRE's longitudinal DR database, which includes data from prior APRs and states' Section 618 reports.² Summaries of longitudinal data from FFY 2003 through FFY 2010 are included here to demonstrate change over time in state compliance and performance

¹ For the purposes of this report, the terms "states" and "states/entities" are used interchangeably to refer to all 56 Part C grant recipients (i.e., the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands).

² CADRE maintains a national longitudinal DR database using the following reported data: 1) from FFY 2002 to the present, state DR activity reported to OSEP in the APRs, first as Attachment 1 and later as Table 7; 2) from FFY

related to these Indicators.³ And unless otherwise specified, years stated in the text refer to federal fiscal years (FFY); for example, FFY 2010 may also be shown as 2010 or 2010-11.

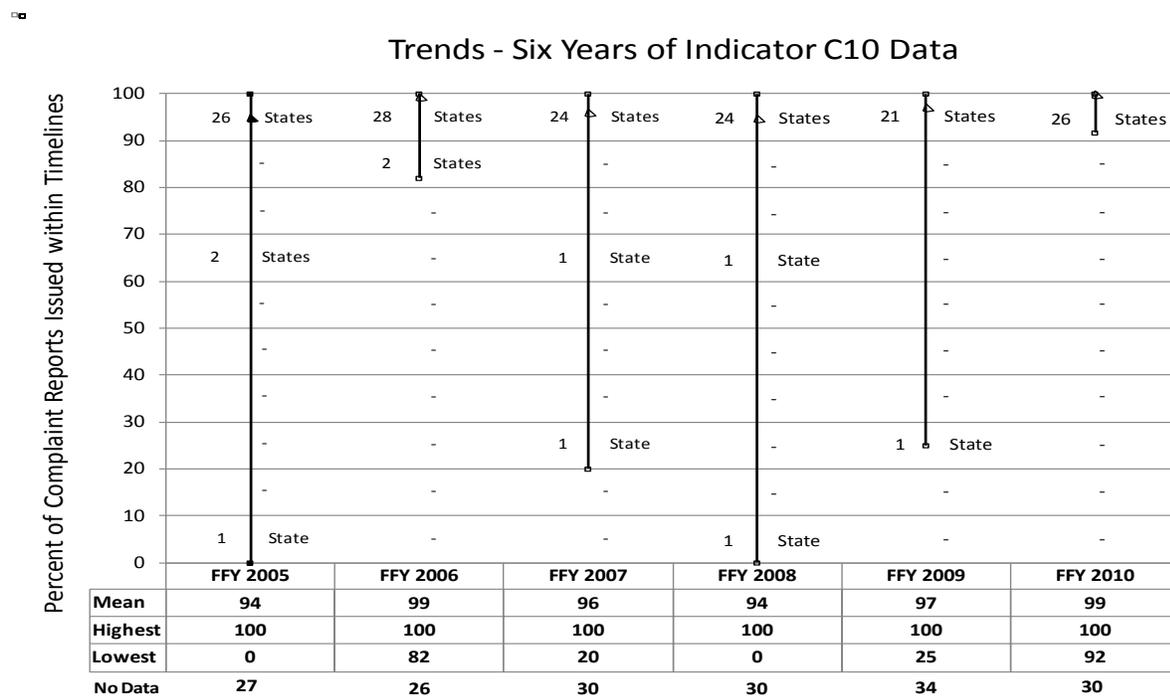
SUMMARY BY INDICATOR: PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Indicator 10: Signed Written Complaint Reports Issued Within Timelines

Indicator 10 is a compliance indicator with a target of 100%. States must issue signed written complaint reports within the 60-day timeline, or a timeline appropriately extended.

Each of the bands in Figure 1 reflects a 10% range of performance for Indicator 10, and the number of states falling within each range. The uppermost band shows the number states that performed $\geq 90\%$ on this indicator; the next band down shows the number of states that performed in the 80% to $<90\%$ range, etc.

Figure 1



Note: "No data" indicates the number of states/entities reporting no activity or lacking valid/reliable data.

In FFY 2010, 25 states produced signed written complaint reports, with the mean performance level for all states ranking at 99%. Twenty-three states reached the 100% target, while two states – those with the most complaint reports issued – performed at

2006 to the present, Section 618 data reported by states to the Data Accountability Center (DAC); and 3) DAC state DR activity data, following publication in OSEP's Annual Report to Congress.

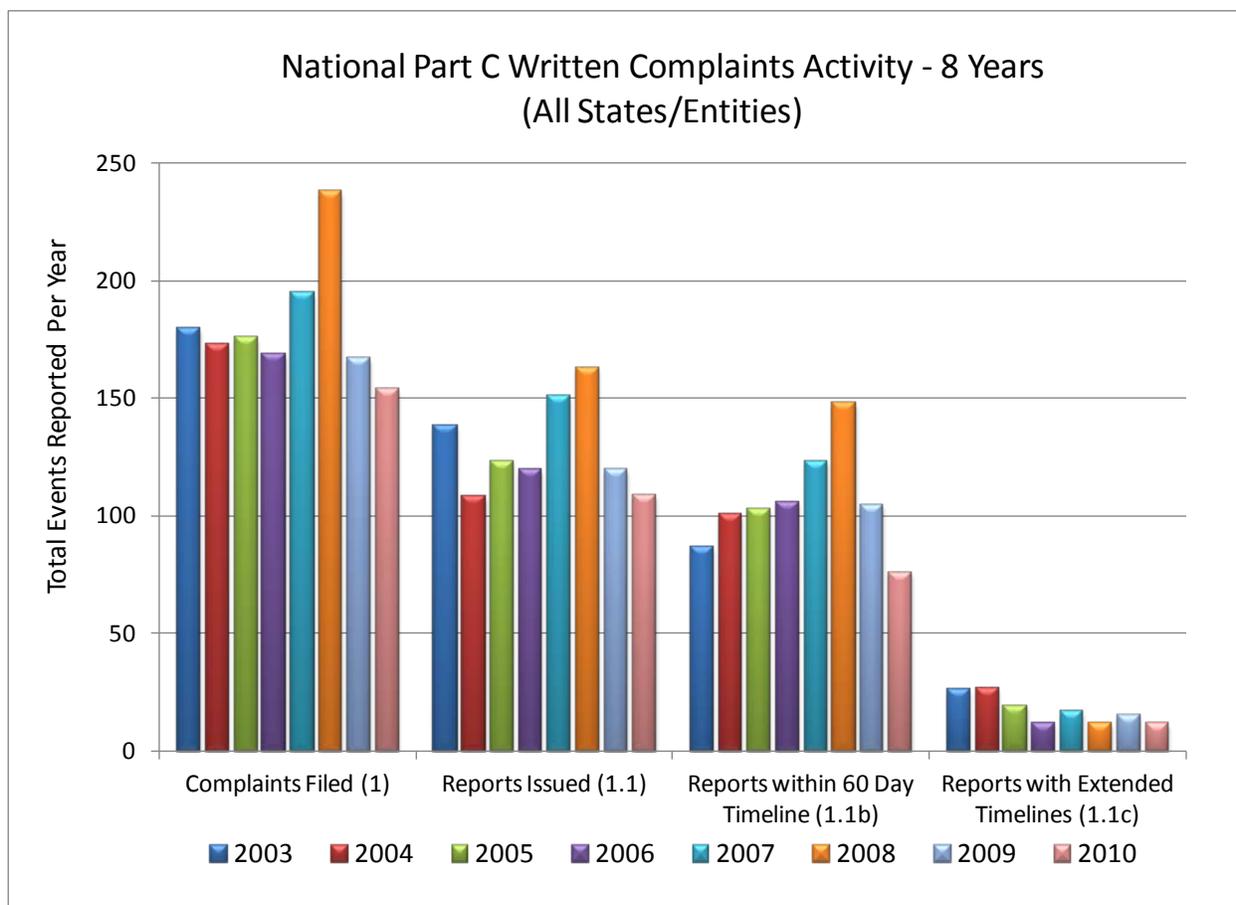
³ Since complete Table 7 data are no longer uniformly reported in the APRs, current APR data can only be used to generate summaries of changes in the indicator values, not summaries of broader dispute resolution activity.

91%. These numbers suggest that the national trend toward substantial compliance ($\geq 95\%$) is positive.

Very few states issue more than ten signed written complaints reports in any given year and 2010-11 was no exception, when only four states did so. The balance of states produced fewer than five reports, and all of those were reported as being on time.

The use of signed written complaints is the procedural safeguard most utilized under Part C of the IDEA, and Figure 2 offers a look back at the past eight years' data. Complaint activity has remained relatively stable over time, peaking in FFY 2008. That year, about half the growth was attributable to anomalous activity in a single state, which dropped back to more characteristic levels in FFY 2009.

Figure 2



It is important to note that the data showing whether reports were issued within the 60 day timeline, or within an extended timeline, does not provide a fully accurate picture of states' use of extended timelines. States inconsistently show their performance calculations for Indicator 10.⁴ For this reason, each current year's data are estimated,

⁴ The formula used to report Indicator C10 data is drawn from the Section 618 Table 4: [(1.1.b. reports within timelines + 1.1.c. reports within extended timelines)/1.1 complaints with reports issued x 100]. When states report only the sum of the digits in the parentheses, providing no detail on the number of reports issued within extended timelines, it complicates analysis on the use of extensions.

and updated after the Section 618 data becomes available. Overall though, it appears that states are using extended timelines for exceptional bases, in accordance with the IDEA and OSEP guidance.

Indicator 10 Improvement Activities

State Performance Plans (SPP) and APRs often lack detail regarding how a state/entity approaches DR management; however, improvement activities associated with each indicator offer a glimpse into what each state has identified as its current priorities. Many states have adopted OSEP's "Featured Improvement Activities" taxonomy and incorporated this into indicator-specific activity charts that specify planned activities, associated resources, proposed timelines, and anticipated outcomes.

For Indicator 10, a number of states reported improved system administration and monitoring, including holding regular meetings with EI providers and programs to review both formal and informal complaints. States use these opportunities to identify issues and/or needs that are ripe for technical assistance, training, and professional development activities, which are then made available to staff and stakeholders.

Other improvement activities mentioned in states' APRs are stakeholder engagement and public outreach, including an emphasis on developing social media and video resources. It was noted by several states that while traditional parental rights brochures and procedure booklets are provided to families, sharing these through social media (means that are familiar to today's parents) appears to be an especially effective means of communicating the information.

In addition to 12 states highlighting informal DR activities in their APRs, anecdotal information from Part C lead agencies suggests that disputes between families and providers are usually resolved informally, often with the assistance of another staff member.⁵ Some states collect data on informal DR activity that reaches the lead agency, while others track data for those at the EI program-level.

The low number of signed written complaints under Part C seems predictable, given OSEP's guidance that IFSP services should be provided to children in their natural environment, the close relationship that may develop between families and providers, and the short period of time that a child may be eligible for services under Part C compared to Part B.

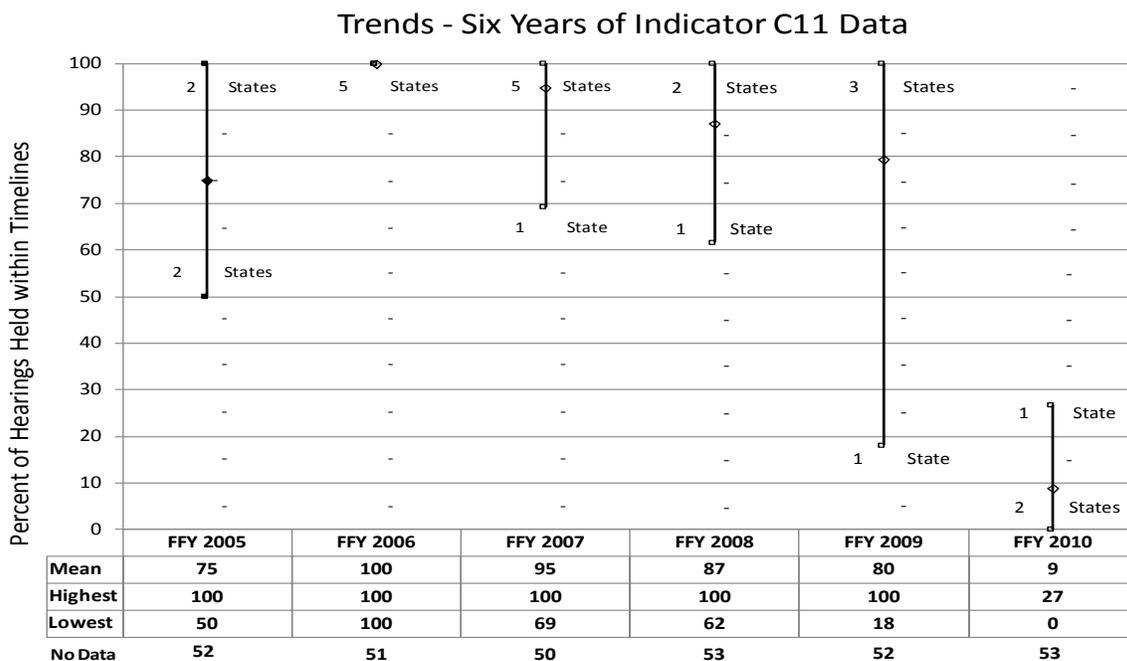
Indicator 11: Due Process Hearings Held and Decisions Issued Within Timelines

Indicator 11 is a compliance indicator with a target of 100%. This indicator measures whether due process hearing decisions were issued within the hearing timelines; all states must meet this standard.

⁵ States describe informal complaints as those where complainants do not submit signed written complaints but instead place phone calls or initiate conversations to discuss "frustrations" (versus "complaints").

Each of the bands in Figure 3 reflects a 10% range of performance for Indicator 11, and the number of states falling within each range. The uppermost band shows the number states that performed $\geq 90\%$ on this indicator; the next band down shows the number of states that performed in the 80% to $<90\%$ range, etc.

Figure 3



Note: "No data" indicates the number of states/entities reporting no activity or lacking valid/reliable data.

As Figure 3 demonstrates, the timeliness with which hearing decisions were issued in FFY 2010 represents a significant departure from the performance levels of past years. In 2010, only three states held due process hearings and none of these achieved compliance for the 17 total hearings held. One large state reported 27% compliance (4 of 15 decisions were issued timely). In the other two states, each having held one hearing, both decisions were issued late. It is important to note that all three of these states reported following Part C due process procedures which, at the time, contained no provision in the Part C regulations to permit a hearing officer to extend hearing timelines.⁶

Indicator 11 Improvement Activities

The one large state mentioned above reported seeking technical assistance to improve the performance of their DR system. In that particular state, due process hearings are managed by a state office of administrative hearings, so the lead agency has little to do with the day-to-day activities as a complaint proceeds to hearing. Working together, the

⁶ The updated Part C regulations, issued in the September 28, 2011 Federal Register, include a provision allowing a hearing officer to grant an extension of the hearing timeline at the request of either party. See 34 C.F.R. § 303.437(c).

hearing office and lead agency performed a root-cause analysis on the 11 decisions issued beyond the 30-day due date. In ten cases, they found that the hearings were heard within 30 days but that the hearing officer did not sign the decision until later. The other case was heard on the 34th day, and signed on the 41st day.

Also of note, this same state received nearly twice as many complaints in FFY 2009 (245) as in FFY 2010 (125), with 44 of the 2009 cases going to hearing, compared to 15 in 2010. The state attributed the difference between the two years to several key activities, including providing technical assistance and training opportunities to staff and stakeholders, updated information publications, and changes to the state’s regulations.

Although only three states held due process hearings in FFY 2010, six other states reported a total of 60 additional due process complaints, all of which were withdrawn or dismissed. A large state accounted for 51 of those complaints. A few states attributed pre-hearing resolution to informal DR activities (as discussed under Indicator 10) and have begun tracking this informal activity in their DR data systems.

Many of the states that reported receiving no due process complaints attributed this to heightened outreach and public awareness activities relating to procedural safeguards, parental rights, and informal DR options. Quite a few of these states also reported collaborating with parent centers to encourage families and EI providers to work together to resolve disputes early, as they arise, for the benefit of the child.

Indicator 12: Resolution Meetings Resulting in Written Settlement Agreements

Indicator 12 is a performance indicator that documents the number of resolution meetings resulting in settlement agreements, and applies only to states that have adopted Part B due process complaint procedures. For performance indicators, states/entities set targets, or goals, in their SPPs. States are not required to set a target or report current performance if they hold fewer than ten resolution sessions in a single year.

In their FFY 2010 APRs, 14 states said that they had adopted Part B due process procedures; however, as shown in Table 1, no states reported holding resolution meetings during 2010.

Table 1

Number of States Reporting Data by Indicator in APR Clarifications

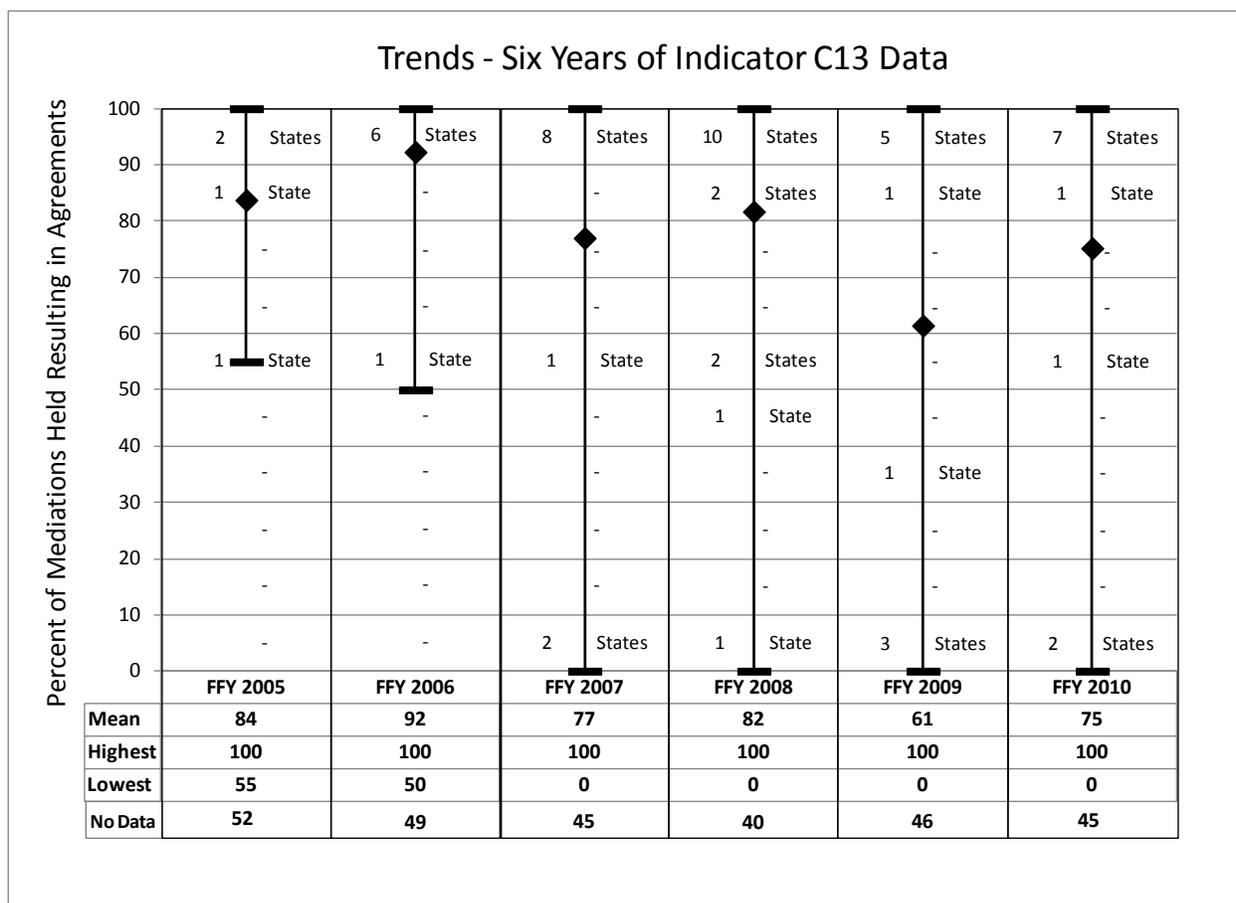
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Indicator C10 – Complaint Reports	29	30	26	26	22	26
Indicator C11 – Due Process Hearings	4	5	6	3	4	3
Indicator C12 – Resolution Meetings/ Written Settlement Agreements	-	1	1	3	-	-
Indicator C13 – Mediation Agreements	4	7	11	16	10	11

Indicator 13: Mediations Resulting in Written Agreements

Indicator 13 is considered a performance indicator that documents the percentage of mediation sessions resulting in written agreements. Like Indicator 12, states are not required to set a target in their APR or report current performance if there are fewer than ten events to report in a single year. Some states/entities choose, however, to set targets and report data on this indicator even though their total number of mediations is less than ten annually.

The bands in Figure 4 reflect state performance on Indicator 13 over a six year period. In FFY 2010, 11 states reported holding mediations. Seven of those states had agreement rates of $\geq 90\%$, including two large states that accounted for 165 (94%) of the 175 mediations held nationally. Eight of the other nine states each held one or two mediations.

Figure 4



Note: "No data" indicates the number of states/entities reporting no activity or lacking valid/reliable data.

Because states do not consistently distinguish due process-related mediations from those not related to due process, the use of mediation relative to due process cannot be determined. However, in states that distinguish due process-related mediations from other mediations, almost all of the Part C mediations they held were due process-related. This is a pattern that has been apparent throughout the past six years.

A look at the past six years' APR data shows that the number of states reporting mediation activity peaked in FFY 2008. With the exception of that year, mediation appears to have been utilized by fewer than 20% of states in any given year. Also of note is that the two most active states, mentioned earlier, have consistently reported mediation agreement rates >80%, suggesting that they are using mediation successfully to address disputes.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite significantly lower levels of activity than their Part B counterparts, Part C state DR systems appear to be working overall. They face very different challenges due to the infrequent use of the formal DR procedures states must make available. These include having staff members, EI providers, and practitioners prepared to ensure timelines are met and procedures are implemented.

An additional distinction is the role that informal dispute resolution plays in day-to-day EI interactions. Because families and providers work so closely, the idea of filing a formal complaint may not be considered necessary or appropriate. States must still ensure that the required DR processes (i.e., signed written complaints, mediation, due process complaints, and resolution sessions – if applicable) are available, and that they are ready to respond when an option is requested.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CADRE prepared this summary and analysis. CADRE provides lead agencies technical assistance using an integrated and systemic approach, assisting with the development and maintenance of their required DR systems. System preparedness, in particular, poses potential challenges for lead agencies since the level of formal DR activity is substantially less under Part C than Part B. To assist states in building and maintaining their DR systems, CADRE has identified some key attributes of effective DR systems. While several have been featured in this chapter, a more complete list is provided here:

Oversight Guided by a Clear and Integrated Vision of the DR System

- Management structure that includes a specific individual or group having responsibility and authority for coordination and performance of the system.
- Reliable financial and personnel resources adequate to support all system components.
- Transparency in the design, implementation, performance and evaluation of the system.
- Use of evaluation data to guide continuing system improvement efforts.
- Active and meaningful engagement of a broadly representative group of system stakeholders in planning, promotion, evaluation and improvement activities.

A Continuum of DR Options and Practices

- Preventative or upstream DR approaches that offer alternatives to due process and formal complaint procedures.

- A single point of entry for families, including personal assistance to provide information, help identify and resolve issues, or suggest an appropriate DR option.
- Educational materials comparing DR procedures and describing how to prepare for and use them effectively.
- Information and training in collaborative strategies available to educators and parents include dispute prevention and conflict management skills.

Standards, Training, and Technical Assistance

- Relevant experience, education, and training requirements for personnel in the DR system.
- Clearly articulated standards and guidance for performance, practice, and expected results for all personnel.
- Continuing education and professional development opportunities that respond to identified DR training needs.
- Technical assistance at the state and local level that leads to improved performance in specific activities and in overall system functioning.

Public Awareness, Outreach, and Stakeholder Involvement

- Collaboration between lead agency and stakeholder organizations (i.e., PTIs and CPRCs) to develop resources and ensure availability and distribution to the widest audience possible.
- Publicly available, accessible resources and materials outlining DR system options and processes.
- A wide range of outreach activities and methods of information dissemination including web, print, television/radio, and in-person presentations in multiple languages.
- Continual recruitment of new stakeholders.
- Activities to keep experienced participants engaged and appeal to individuals who are new to special education.

Collection, Analysis, and Reporting of Evaluation Data for Continuous Quality Improvement

- Standards that incorporate benchmarks and assess against best practices.
- Mechanisms for data collection and tracking that provide systematic information about individual DR practices and practitioners, as well as the performance of the system as a whole.
- Procedures for assessing how well the standards, personnel guidance, training and technical assistance are achieving the organizational mission.

INDICATOR 14: TIMELY AND ACCURATE DATA

Prepared by DAC

INTRODUCTION

Indicator 14 measures the timeliness and accuracy of state-reported data (618 and SPP/APR-616). The data source for this indicator is state selected and includes data from the state data system as well as monitoring systems. States must meet a target of 100%. Measurement of this indicator is defined in the SPP/APR requirements as:

State reported data (618 and State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report) are timely and accurate.

The data source and measurement in the measurement table requires states to ensure that:

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, and settings; 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 616 and 618 data submitted by states. Use of this rubric was mandatory for FFY 2010 APR submissions.

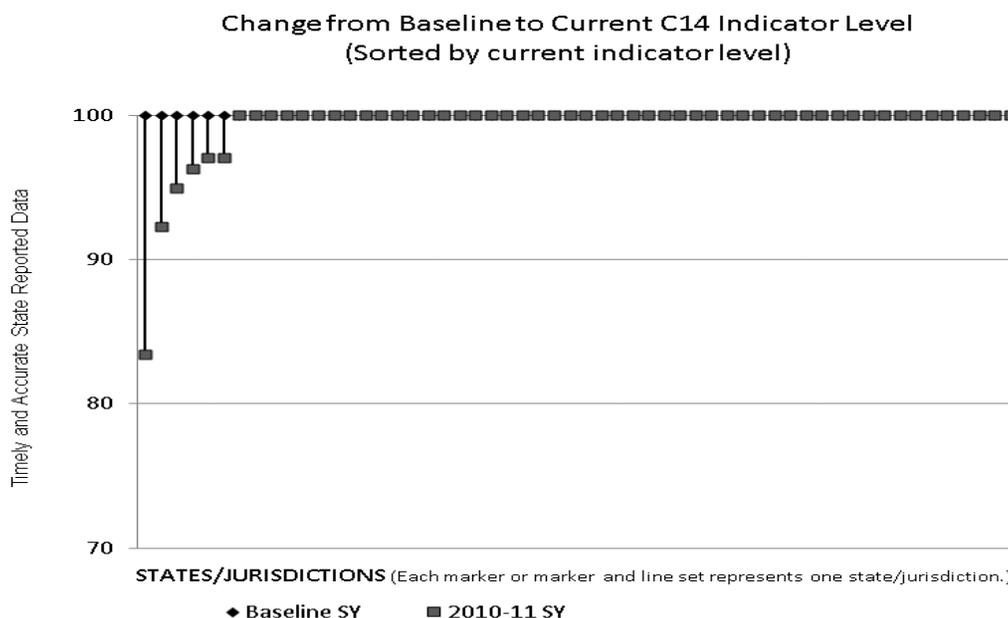
The Data Accountability Center (DAC) reviewed a total of 56 FFY 2010 APRs. These included the 50 states, District of Columbia, and other jurisdictions eligible for and participating in the Part C program. (For purposes of this discussion, all of these will be referred to as states, unless otherwise noted.) Analysis of the actual target data as reported by states indicates:

- Fifty (89%) states reported that their data were 100% accurate.
- Five states (9%) reported accuracy between 90 and 99%.
- One state (2%) reported accuracy of 83%.

See Figure 1 below.

The remainder of this analysis focuses on three elements: (1) states' descriptions of progress and/or slippage, (2) descriptions of how states ensured timely and accurate data, and (3) states' improvement activities.

Figure 1



PROGRESS OR SLIPPAGE

The majority of states (41 states or 73%) reported that they had maintained compliance. Eleven states (20%) reported progress and four (7%) reported slippage (see Figure 2).

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

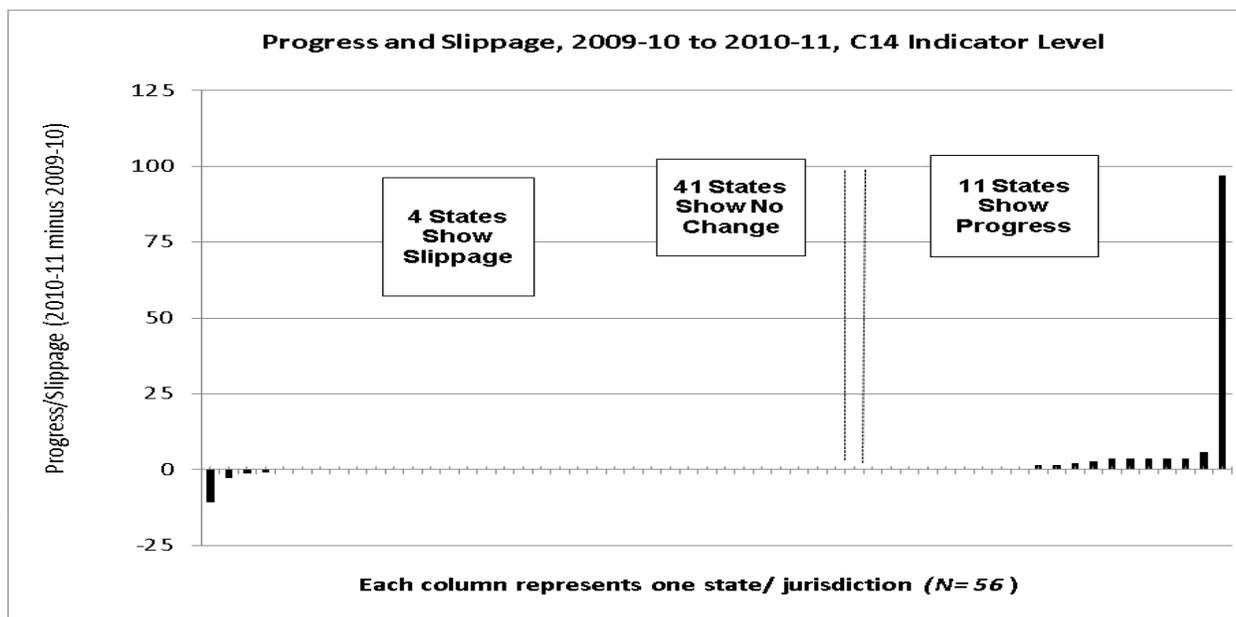
- targeted technical assistance received from DAC, RRCs, and/or NECTAC;
- improved data validation procedures; and
- improved compliance procedures.

States reported that the targeted technical assistance received from the TA centers allowed them to create and/or revise data validation and compliance procedures. These actions lead to improved data collection and validation.

States attributed slippage to:

- mistakes in the 618 data;
- errors in the calculations in the 616 data; and
- the Lead Agency not being able to access the data in a timely manner.

Figure 2



DESCRIPTION OF METHODS OF ENSURING TIMELY AND ACCURATE DATA

The majority of states, 42 (75%), provided some description of how they ensured that data were timely and accurate. Many states relied on their data systems to provide timely and accurate data. Thirty-four states (61%) had built-in edit checks, validations, and/or generated reports to ensure that the data were valid. Thirty states (54%) also relied on training and technical assistance to help ensure timely and accurate data. Some states also used onsite monitoring, data manuals, and data reviews.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

One of the requirements of this indicator is the implementation of improvement activities that will increase compliance. Among the 56 states, 18 states (32%) did not report improvement activities in their FFY 2010 APR. Updating or establishing new data systems was the most widely reported activity, while improving system administration and monitoring was the least frequent activity. The most frequent improvement activities were improving data collection and/or reporting (61%) and providing technical assistance or training or professional development (46%).

Many states indicated that technical assistance or training led them to meet the target or make progress. One improvement activity that most states used was improving the data collection or reporting practices, including using their database to help with the technical assistance being provided. Thirty-four states (61%) were creating or revising reports that providers could access monthly or quarterly. Nineteen states (34%) reported that they held monthly or quarterly trainings to inform providers of required data collection elements. Eleven states (20%) started to integrate data reviews into their monitoring process.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO STATES

DAC reviewed technical assistance logs and records to determine the number of states receiving specific levels of technical assistance from DAC in FFY 2010. 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 technical assistance—100%;
- B. individual state technical assistance—55%; and
- C. customized technical assistance—13%.

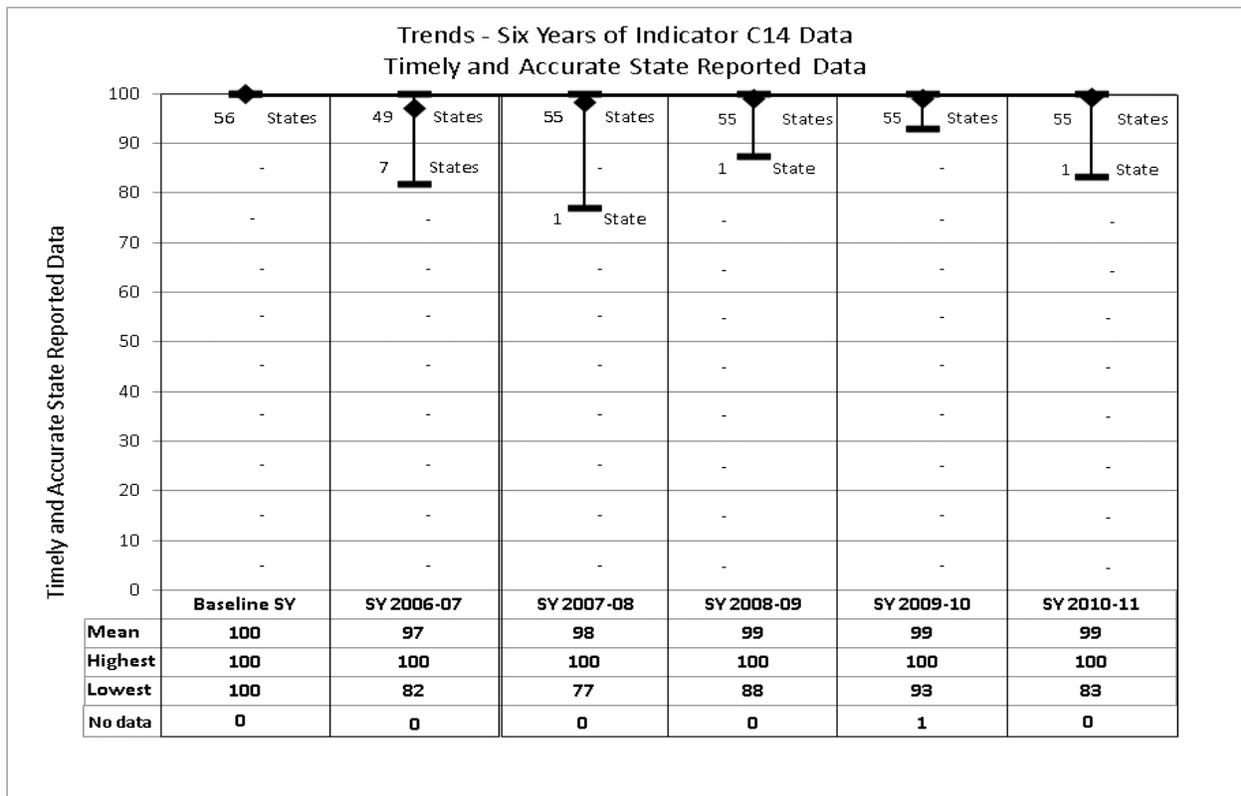
During FFY 2010, DAC provided national technical assistance support to all states through www.IDEAdata.org. DAC provided individual technical assistance primarily through email and telephone contact based on individual state requests. DAC also provided customized technical assistance to several states specifically related to this indicator.

Three states (5%) reported receiving technical assistance from DAC that helped them make progress or meet the target. Three states (5%) also reported receiving technical assistance from the RRCP, which helped the state make progress or meet the target. Two states (4%) also reported receiving technical assistance from NECTAC, which helped them make progress or meet the target.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Comparing performance over the last five years, it can be noted that the mean percentage reported in FFY 2006 was 97%, with the lowest being 82%. This has increased to a mean of 99%; with the lowest being 83% for FFY 2010 (see Figure 3 below). The number of states between 90% and 100% increased from 49 in FFY 2006 to 55 in FFY 2010. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, most states reported improved data collection methods. This was clear from the number of states that had either updated or implemented a new data system.

Figure 3



Also noteworthy are some of the difficulties that came up while trying to analyze these data. Most states did not attribute their progress or slippage to a cause or provide much description about how their programs ensure timely and accurate data. Many 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.

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 78% between FFY 2006 and FFY 2008. The percentage decreased for FFY 2009 to 31%, but went back up to 75% for FFY 2010. Interestingly though, the number of states that reported improvement activities dropped from 94% in FFY 2007 to 68% in FFY 2008 to 20% in FFY 2009, but went back up to 68% for FFY 2010. It is unclear why FFY 2009 was so low compared to other years, but FFY 2010 data seem to be more in line with the previous trend of data. This may have to do with the increased emphasis on technical assistance for FFY 2010. In FFY 2010, 54% of states relied on technical assistance to help ensure valid and reliable data. In previous years, the percentage of states ranged between 35% and 38% of states.