

Local Contributing Factor Tool

SPP/APR Results Indicators: C-2, C-4, C-5, C-6

Collecting and Using Valid and Reliable Data to Determine Underlying Factors
Impacting Local Performance to Develop Meaningful Improvement Plans

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Priority Teams

General Supervision

Purpose and Background

Through technical assistance work in a number of states, this tool has been developed to assist local programs in collecting valid and reliable data to determine contributing factors impacting performance on State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators C-2, C-4, C-5, and C-6.

The purpose of this document is to provide ideas for the types of questions a local team would consider in identifying factors impacting performance. General questions that are applicable to all indicators are included as well as questions specific to each indicator. Suggested questions are categorized into two main areas: 1) *Systems/Infrastructure* and 2) *Providers/Practice*. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of questions. Some questions are designed to determine adequacy of local agency management and oversight while others are geared for gathering information from service coordinators and providers and about actual practices. Data collected from this investigation should be used to identify contributing factors that relate to program infrastructure, policies and procedures, funding, training and technical assistance, supervision, data, personnel and provider practices. These factors, once identified, can lead to the development of meaningful strategies for improvement. Based upon the results of the investigation and analysis of data, it is expected that strategies would only be developed in those areas impacting current performance.

States' accountability systems use a variety of off-site and on-site methods to monitor the performance of Local Early Intervention Programs (EIPs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in their implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Such methods may include:

- data system reports
- self-assessments
- parent surveys
- child outcomes data
- complaints
- focus groups
- timely correction of noncompliance logs
- record reviews

Regardless of the monitoring methods used, performance challenges may be identified by the state agency.

If monitoring identifies noncompliance, the state must issue a written finding. Correction of the identified noncompliance must be verified as soon as possible but in no case more than a year. If the monitoring identifies performance issues within a results indicator, States use a variety of methods, including the use of local Improvement Plans (IPs) to ensure improvement at the local level. Improvement planning should involve investigating the underlying factors contributing to current performance.

Instructions

It is recommended that local agencies use a team of parents, providers, administrators and other relevant stakeholders to collect and analyze data in order to determine the factors impacting performance. This analysis will help in the development of meaningful improvement activities designed to improve performance and reach state established targets. Data collection can include review of local program data, review of local policies and procedures, review of child records, and interviews with parents and providers. The depth or scope of the analysis should be based upon the degree of challenges with current performance. Local programs may need state technical assistance to develop meaningful CAPs/IPs and this tool can assist in that process. The state agency may have relevant data in the state database that can contribute to the local analysis and save time for the local planning team.

For each indicator, worksheets are provided including indicator specific questions for both Systems/Infrastructure and Providers/Practice, summary questions from the analysis, and an improvement plan framework. A local program would complete the worksheet and analysis on only those indicator(s) for which the program has been found performing below expected targets as designated by the state. Throughout the investigation, however, consideration should be given to the fact that many of the factors and solutions identified for one indicator may in fact impact performance in other indicators.

The results of the local agency investigation of contributing factors related to performance issues can also assist the state in completing its analysis of statewide factors contributing to performance issues for each SPP/APR compliance indicator. Additional resources, including state level investigative questions for each indicator, are available on [The Right IDEA: IDEA Technical Assistance and Guidance](#) website.

General Questions Applicable to All Indicators

The following are general questions applicable to all indicators. The questions are categorized into two main areas: 1) *Systems/Infrastructure* and 2) *Providers/Practice*. These general questions provide an overview of the indicator specific questions included in each of the Indicator Worksheets.

Systems/Infrastructure

- Did we identify a performance issue with this Indicator before others did?
- Do we have clear policies and procedures in place for this results Indicator?
- Do we have valid and reliable data available about performance on this Indicator?
- Do our contracts/agreements have incentive or sanctions in place to facilitate improved performance in this Indicator?
- Do we have routine supervision/monitoring processes in place to measure improved performance in this Indicator?
- Do we develop and implement data-driven performance improvement plans to address continuous improvement in this Indicator?
- Do we have adequate numbers of qualified personnel and an effective recruitment/retention process?
- Do we target training and technical assistance to the needs of the staff in relation to this Indicator?
- Do we have effective collaborative relationships with community partners to support continued improvement in this Indicator?

Providers/Practice

- Do our disaggregated data (from database or child record) show patterns of performance based on specific providers, ages of children, zip codes, etc?
- Do our data (from database or child record) show trends that are useful in determining the root cause(s) of the performance issue?
- When interviewed or observed, do our service coordinators/providers:
 - Know there is a performance issue with this Indicator?
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the requirements and evidence-based practices related to this Indicator?
 - Have ideas about what barriers are contributing to the performance issue in this Indicator?
 - Have suggestions regarding possible strategies would be helpful in improving performance in this Indicator?
- When interviewed, do our community partners:
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the requirements and evidence-based practices related to this Indicator?
 - Know there is a performance issue with this Indicator?
 - Have ideas about what barriers are contributing to the performance issue in this Indicator?
 - Have suggestions regarding possible strategies would be helpful in improving performance in this Indicator?
- When interviewed, do parents:
 - Know there is a performance issue with this Indicator?
 - Have ideas about what barriers are contributing to the performance issue in this Indicator?
 - Have suggestions regarding possible strategies would be helpful in improving performance in this Indicator?

Indicator Specific Worksheets

SPP/APR Indicator C -2: Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<p>Did we know that this area was a problem for us before the State identified it?</p> <p>How do we ensure that EI services provided in natural environments are a meaningful part of the child and family's life?</p> <p>What activities are we engaged in to increase inclusive community opportunities for infants and toddlers with disabilities?</p> <p>Do we have clear policies and procedures in place regarding providing EI services in natural environments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The kind of information that providers/service coordinators share with families about our Early Intervention Program's services and why services are provided services in natural environments (how children learn, requirements of the law, etc.)? 	<p>Do our service providers know we have a problem with the provision of services in natural environments?</p> <p>Based on a review of child records, including those where services are not provided in natural environments, and/or local data available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there evidence of a discussion with families about their everyday routines and activities of their child and family, including what's working, what's challenging and what they would like to be able to do? ▪ Is there evidence that the IFSP outcomes and strategies appear to incorporate the following evidence-based practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Priorities that the family wants for their child, what they want to do with their child, and the challenges they face in everyday routines and activities? b) A child's natural motivations to learn and do?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The IFSP team (not one person's decisions) decides the location of each service after developing functional and contextualized IFSP outcomes and strategies? ▪ The development of appropriate justifications for not providing services in a natural environment when necessary? ▪ Implementing services and IFSP strategies in the context of everyday routines and activities of the child and family? <p>Do we provide opportunities for providers to receive training and TA on the key principles, quality EI practices, and the requirements related to providing services in natural environments?</p> <p>Is our monitoring and supervision for this requirement adequate? Do we use our data on a regular basis to determine our performance in providing services in natural environments (e.g., if our program meets, exceeds or is below the state target or if we are making progress towards meeting the state target)?</p>	<p>c) The child's participation in community and family life and what the child or family will be able to do in the context of everyday routines and activities?</p> <p>d) Naturally occurring routines and learning opportunities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For those records where not all services are provided in natural environments are there written justifications? If so, are the justifications appropriate (e.g., do they describe valid reasons as to why outcomes cannot be achieved in natural setting rather than preferences of providers or families regarding location of services and do they include timelines for when the service will be provided in natural environments)? ▪ What do the data tell us when the proportion of services provided at home are compared with services provided in community-settings? Is that proportion what we want? Do we want to increase one or the other? If yes, how might we do that? ▪ In looking at disaggregated data, is there a difference in location of services based on a specific service coordinator, a specific provider/agency/discipline, or on some other variable in our program?
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<p>Do we have valid and reliable data available about the provision of services in natural environments, including justifications for providing services in settings other than natural environments?</p> <p>Is this data used to address continuous improvement through the use of data-driven performance improvement plans?</p> <p>Do we have adequate numbers of personnel to provide services in natural settings? If not, what are we doing to recruit and retain personnel?</p>	<p>Based on interviews (or observation), do our providers/service coordinators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate an understanding of policies, procedures, and quality practices related to providing EI services in natural environments? ▪ Feel comfortable explaining our program and the importance of providing early intervention services in natural settings to families? ▪ Feel comfortable conducting routines based interviews/conversations with families and exploring what's working and challenging for their child and family? ▪ Feel comfortable exploring the various settings in which the child and family participate as part of their everyday routines and activities to determine location of services to meet IFSP outcomes? <p>What are the reasons that our service coordinators/providers give for our performance issues related to providing services in natural environments?</p>
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	<p>What do our service coordinators/providers identify as the barriers to providing services in natural environments?</p> <p>What solutions do service coordinators/providers identify that will address these barriers?</p> <p>When community partners are interviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do they know we have a performance issue with the provision of early intervention services in natural environments? ▪ Do they demonstrate an understanding of the requirements and evidence-based practices related to providing services in natural environments? ▪ What do they identify as the barriers to providing services in natural environments? ▪ What solutions do they identify that will address these barriers?
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	<p>When parents are interviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do they know we have a performance issue with the provision of early intervention services in natural environments? ▪ What do they identify as the barriers to providing services in natural environments? ▪ What solutions do they identify that will address these barriers?
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Summary From Indicator C-2 Analysis

- Based on the data/ information identified above and data provided by the State, what categories of factors/reasons (e.g. procedures, infrastructure, practice, training, technical assistance, data and supervision) relate to our current performance?

- What strategies related to these categories of factors/reasons should we include in our local Improvement Plan?

For each strategy, include who is responsible and the timeline for completing the strategy.

Contributing Factor Area	Strategies	Who is responsible?	Timeline
Policies and Procedures			
Infrastructure			
Data			
Training/ Technical Assistance			

Contributing Factor Area	Strategies	Who is responsible?	Timeline
Supervision			
Provider Practices			

SPP/APR Indicator C-4: 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.

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
Section 1: Questions related to dissemination of family survey and collecting family outcomes data (This section may need to be modified depending on local programs' responsibilities with the dissemination and collection of family surveys)	
<p>Did we know that this area was a problem for us before the State identified it (below the state target)?</p> <p>How do we participate in disseminating family surveys and collecting family outcomes data in collaboration with the state?</p> <p>Do we have clear policies and procedures that guide our distribution of family surveys to families, including who distributes, when, and to whom? Do our policies and procedures specify how we support families who need assistance in responding to the survey (e.g., translation, oral presentation)? Do we have procedures in place that ensure a high response rate? Do they specify what steps we should take to ensure that our response rate is representative of the population we serve (race/ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)? Do our policies and procedures align with the state's requirements?</p> <p>Do we provide training and TA to those personnel (e.g., service coordinators, providers, others) who disseminate and provide support to families in completing the survey?</p>	<p>Do our service providers know we have a performance issue with the provision of early intervention services in natural environments?</p> <p>Do our service coordinators and providers demonstrate understanding of our policies and procedures related to the distribution of family surveys, supporting families in completing the survey, etc.?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do our service coordinators and providers think are the reasons why our family survey response rate is low and/or our family survey responses are not representative of our population? ▪ What do service coordinators and providers identify as barriers? ▪ What solutions do service coordinators and providers identify to address these barriers and improve our performance?

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<p>Do we collaborate with the State when conducting monitoring and supervision activities regarding the family survey and/or the collection of family outcome data?</p> <p>Have we established effective collaborative relationships with community partners to support continued improvement in this indicator?</p> <p>Do we have valid and reliable family outcomes data?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is our family survey data (response rate) representative of the population that we serve (race/ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)? If not, what do we need to do to improve representativeness? ▪ Is our response rate high enough for us to draw conclusions from our family outcomes data about our program's performance? If not, what do we need to do to improve our response rate? 	

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this data used to address continuous improvement through the use of data-driven performance improvement plans? 	
Section 2: Questions related to improving performance related to helping families	
<p>How do we help families: A) know their rights; B) effectively communicate their children's needs; and/or C) help their children develop and learn?</p> <p>Do we have adequate numbers of personnel as well as a recruitment retention process in place?</p> <p>Do we have clear policies and procedures in place that address how to help families know their rights, effectively communicate their children's needs, and help their children develop and learn?</p> <p>Do we have family friendly materials explaining the family's role and participation in EI services, as well as their rights and safeguards? Are these materials readily available to providers and regularly shared with families?</p>	<p>Do our service coordinators and providers demonstrate understanding of our policies and procedures related to helping families know their rights, effectively communicating their children's needs, and helping their children develop and learn?</p> <p>Do our service coordinators and providers implement quality practices related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing and explaining parent rights? Providing ongoing opportunities for and facilitating conversations with families regarding what's working/what's challenging regarding their children's functional participation in everyday routines and activities (to support families in communicating their child's needs)? Planning with families about how to use various learning opportunities that occur throughout everyday routines and activities to help their children develop and learn?

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<p>Do we provide opportunities for providers to receive training and TA on how to help families know their rights, effectively communicate their children's needs, and help their children develop and learn?</p> <p>Is our monitoring and supervision of the implementation of these policies and procedures and quality practices adequate? Did we know that our performance on this indicator was below the state target before the State informed us it was a problem?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using a variety of intervention strategies including modeling, coaching, sharing information/resources, etc. that assist families in helping their children grow and learn? <p>In looking at disaggregated data, including child records, is there a pattern as to whether or not certain service coordinators or service providers are challenged with implementing policies, procedures, and quality practices that support families knowing their rights, effectively communicating their children's needs, and helping their children develop and learn?</p> <p>Do the data collected show trends that are useful in determining the root cause(s) of why the obtained family outcomes data are below the state target?</p> <p>Based on interviews, do service coordinators and providers feel comfortable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing and explaining parent rights? ▪ Providing ongoing opportunities for and facilitating conversations with families regarding what's working/what's challenging with their children's functional participation in everyday routines and activities (to support families in communicating their child's needs)?

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning with families about using various learning opportunities that occur throughout everyday routines and activities to help their children develop and learn? <p>Using a variety of intervention strategies including modeling, coaching, sharing information/resources, etc. that assist families in helping their children grow and learn?</p> <p>Do providers, community partners, and parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate an awareness that our family outcomes data are an issue (i.e., area of concern)? ▪ Identify reasons for why our family outcomes data are below the state target? ▪ Identify barriers to help families know their rights, effectively communicate their children's needs, and help their children develop and learn?

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify solutions to address barriers and improve performance?

Summary From Indicator C-4 Analysis

- Based on the data/ information identified above and data provided by the state, what categories of factors/reasons (e.g. procedures, infrastructure, practice, training, technical assistance, data and supervision) relate to our current noncompliance?
- What strategies related to these categories of factors/reasons should we include in our CAP/IP?

For each strategy, include who is responsible and the timeline for completing the strategy.

Contributing Factor Area	Strategies	Who is responsible?	Timeline
Policies and Procedures			

Contributing Factor Area	Strategies	Who is responsible?	Timeline
Infrastructure			
Data			
Training/ Technical Assistance			
Supervision			
Provider Practices			

SPP/APR Indicator C-5: Percent of infants and toddlers birth to 1 with IFSPs compared to National data.

SPP/APR Indicator C-6: Percent of infants and toddlers birth to 3 with IFSPs compared to National data.

Note: Although comparison to national data is not applicable to local programs, comparing a local program's performance on the number of children served (birth to 1 and birth to 3) with other programs in the state is a meaningful analysis as well as comparing local program's performance to the state's data for SPP/APR Indicators C-5 and C-6.

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<p>Did we know that our child find performance was a problem for us before the State identified it?</p> <p>How do we ensure that we are identifying all potentially eligible children birth to age 1 in the catchment area we serve? Do we know what percentage of children we should be serving based upon our catchment areas' population by age (birth to 1; birth to 3)?</p> <p>Do we have adequate public awareness and child find materials/resources? Are our materials culturally sensitive and translated in a variety of languages in accordance with the population of our catchment area? If not, what is needed?</p> <p>Do we have clear policies and procedures related to public awareness and child find activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are they consistent with State requirements? 	<p>Do our service providers know we have a problem with our performance in child find?</p> <p>Based on interviews or observations, do service coordinators and providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate understanding of our policies and procedures related to child find activities, including their responsibilities (as appropriate) in conducting community screenings or other child find activities, distributing public awareness materials, and conducting individual child screenings? ▪ Carry out specific activities related to child find including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Selecting culturally appropriate instruments when conducting screening? b) Accessing interpreters when necessary?

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they specify a broad array of public awareness and child find activities that we do on an ongoing basis? ▪ Do they outline how we target our activities to address specific needs based upon analysis of our child find data? <p>Do we coordinate our child find activities with other community agencies/partners (e.g., schools, health, social services, physicians, hospitals, high risk register/tracking system, newborn hearing screening, etc.) that also conduct child find activities and/or refer children and families to our program? Do our local interagency agreements address this coordination and each agency's responsibilities?</p> <p>How do we involve families in developing and conducting our public awareness activities? Do we regularly request feedback from families regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of our public awareness and child find materials and activities?</p>	<p>c) Communicating with primary referral sources?</p> <p>What reasons do service coordinators and providers give for why our child find performance is below the state target?</p> <p>What do service coordinators and providers identify as barriers to identifying and serving all potentially eligible children?</p> <p>What solutions do service coordinators and providers identify to address these barriers and improve our performance?</p> <p>When community partners are interviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do they know we have a performance issue related to child find? ▪ Do they demonstrate an understanding of the requirements and evidence-based practices related to child find activities?

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<p>Do we provide ongoing and targeted training and technical assistance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary referral sources regarding the population we serve, eligibility criteria, and what early intervention services are and their benefits? ▪ Staff/providers based upon their needs related to carry out child find and public awareness responsibilities? <p>Do we have valid and reliable data for this indicator?</p> <p>Do we have routine monitoring and supervision processes in place to measure performance in this indicator?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do we use our data on a regular basis to determine our child find performance (e.g., if our program meets, exceeds or is below the state target or if we are making progress towards meeting the state target)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do they identify as the barriers related to child find? ▪ What solutions do they identify that will address these barriers? <p>When parents are interviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do they know we have a performance issue related to child find? ▪ What do they identify as the barriers to child find? ▪ What solutions do they identify that will address these barriers?

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do we know who the potential referral sources are in our community? Do we collect data that identifies which of our potential referral sources are making referrals? Are we able to determine which referral sources may need to be targeted in our public awareness efforts or with training? ▪ Do we know if we are finding children in all areas of our catchment area where children and families reside? Are we able to determine if certain portions of our catchment area should be targeted for our public awareness and child find activities? ▪ Do we know if we are finding the right mix of children according to age, gender, race/ethnicity, Socio Economic Status (SES) in relationship to the population of our catchment area? Are we reaching traditionally underserved or hard to reach families? ▪ Do we know how many children are referred and not found eligible? If it's a high percentage, are there patterns regarding which referral sources are referring children who are not eligible? 	

Systems/Infrastructure	Providers/Practice
Do we have sufficient resources (personnel, funding) to carry out necessary public awareness and child find activities? If not, why not? What can we do differently?	

Summary From Indicator C-5 and C-6 Analysis

- Based on the data/ information identified above and data provided by the State, what categories of factors/reasons (e.g. procedures, infrastructure, practice, training, technical assistance, data and supervision) relate to our current noncompliance?
- What strategies related to these categories of factors/reasons should we include in our CAP/IP?

For each strategy, include who is responsible and the timeline for completing the strategy.

Contributing Factor Area	Strategies	Who is responsible?	Timeline
Policies and Procedures			

Contributing Factor Area	Strategies	Who is responsible?	Timeline
Infrastructure			
Data			
Training/ Technical Assistance			
Supervision			