SSIP Phase III Process Guide

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Project Officers: Meredith Miceli & Richelle Davis(DaSy), Julia Martin Eile (ECTA Center), Richelle Davis & Meredith Miceli (IDC), and Perry Williams & Shedeh Hajghassemali (NCSI)

SSIP Phase III Process Guide

The online version of this guide is available at: http://ectacenter.org/topics/ssip/ssip_phase3.asp

The Part C State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) Indicator Measurement Table describes the requirements of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase III as:

> "Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation. In Phase III, the State must, consistent with the evaluation described in Phase II, assess and report on its progress in implementing the SSIP. This will include data and analysis on the extent to which the State has made progress toward and/or met the State-established short-term and long-term objectives for implementation of the SSIP and its progress in achieving the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision. Also, the State must provide a rationale for any revisions that have been made, or revisions the State plans to make, in the SSIP in response to evaluation data, and describe how stakeholders were included in the decision-making process."

In Phase III, states move to implementing and evaluating the SSIP that was developed with input from stakeholders during Phase II. This plan, which was based on the data and infrastructure analyses, theory of action, and coherent improvement strategies from Phase I, serves as the guide for SSIP implementation. Improvement strategies with associated activities are being implemented, and data are being collected to assess progress in implementing the SSIP and in determining improvements in outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Analyses of process and outcome data from Phase III-Year 1 (June 2015 – July 2016) will be used to inform modifications that will need to be made to the plan and reported in the April 2017 submission. Figure 1: SSIP Components illustrates the connections between the three phases of the SSIP, and Figure 2: SSIP Timelines specifies with timelines for submitting required components for each phase of the SSIP.

This SSIP Phase III Considerations and Resource Guide includes key considerations and resources to support states in implementing the SSIP and evaluating implementation progress and outcomes. The guide is organized according to the following sections:

- Overview of Phase III and Submission Requirements
- Kicking off Phase III
- Implementing the Improvement Plan
- Evaluating Implementation Process and Outcomes
- Communicating Implementation Progress and Outcomes
- Making Adjustments in the Improvement and Evaluation Plans
- Tools and Resources
- Key Terms
- Contributors to this Guide

The term "the plan" refers to the SSIP Phase II Plan and includes the set of activities, steps, and resources described in the Part C Indicator Measurement Table. As SSIP Phase III unfolds and additional resources are developed, they will be added to this online guide.

Figure 1: The components included in Phase I, II, and III of the SSIP and the connection between the Phases

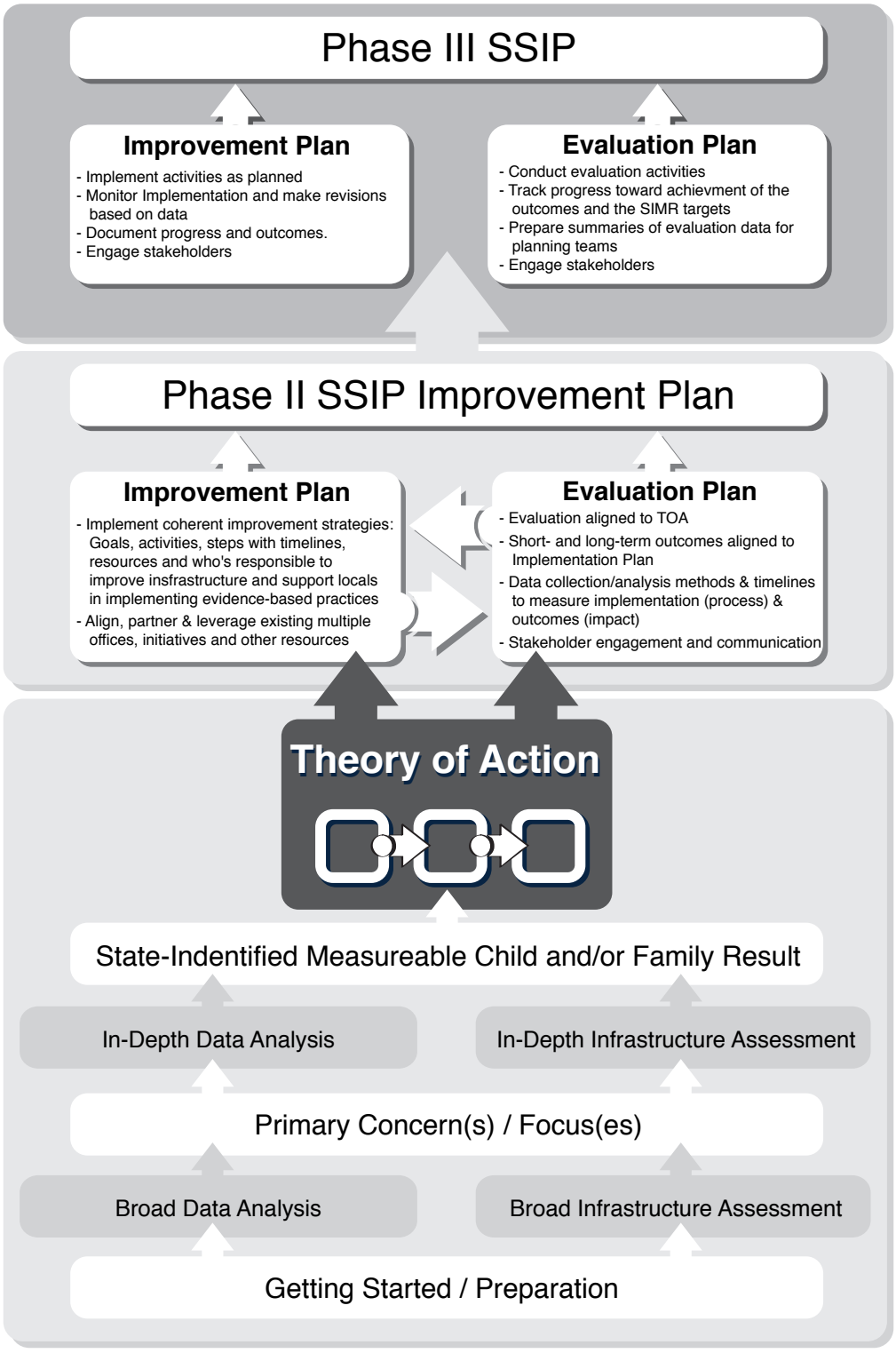

Figure 2: Timelines and Descriptions of Each Phase of the SSIP, adapted from the Part C Indicator Measurement Table

Year 1 – FFY 2013 Delivered April 2015	Year 2 - FFY 2014 Delivered April 2016	Years 3-6 - FFY 2015-2018 Due April 2017-2020
Phase I: Analysis	**Phase II: Plan**	**Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation**
• Data Analysis • Description of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity • State-identified Measureable Result (SIMR) • Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies • Theory of Action	• Phase I Content/Updates • Infrastructure Development • Support for EIS Program and/or EIS providers in Implementing Evidence-Based Practices • Evaluation Plan	• Phase I and Phase II Content/Updates • Progress toward short- and long-term outcomes • Revisions to the SPP and evaluation data to support decision(s)

What States Need to Submit to OSEP

This information is forthcoming.

Continued Focus on Stakeholders

In the Part C Indicator Measurement Table, OSEP stressed the importance of stakeholder engagement throughout the SSIP process. Some considerations related to engaging stakeholders in SSIP Phase III process include:

- Educate and engage stakeholders in the implementation and evaluation of the plan developed in SSIP Phase II.
- Involve stakeholders in meaningful ways in the implementation and evaluation processes.
- Use multiple opportunities and formats (e.g., websites, newsletter, state conferences) to share information and gain input about ongoing implementation and evaluation of the plan.
- Create opportunities for stakeholders to share information with their communities. Consider the "messaging" for the participating local programs.
- If the state uses planning or implementation teams, engage stakeholders not included on these teams in a discussion about how they would like to get information, provide input into updating the plan, and discuss potential implications for future learning.
- Document the input received from stakeholders on implementation and evaluation processes and how the state has responded.

Kicking Off SSIP Phase III

As states begin SSIP Phase III, the focus shifts from plan development to implementation and evaluation of the plan. Planning is a process, not a single event or a final written document; it is about engaging staff and stakeholders to work toward achieving the State-Identified Measurable Result (SIMR). This document offers considerations and resources as states begin the journey of implementation. Each section provides key resources and key considerations to support states in implementing and evaluating the SSIP.

Here are some key considerations for implementation in Phase III:

Project Management: How will the various activities of the plan be managed?

- Appoint a lead person for each major activity or initiative.
  - Designate a person to lead each activity.
  - Share information, coordinate the work, and track progress.
  - Review activities and determine the best place to start.
- Communicate with and engage staff, stakeholders, providers, families, and communities.
  - Share the plan in multiple ways with as many key stakeholders as possible (e.g. Parent Centers, early intervention providers, other state agencies with whom Part C coordinates).
  - Involve staff to provide insight into issues, challenges, and opportunities.
  - Foster buy-in and commitment by engaging stakeholders in execution of tasks and activities in the plan.
  - Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Link the implementation to everyday activities.
  - Integrate the plan into current agency and program initiatives to leverage resources and create commitment.
  - Discuss at staff and stakeholder meetings at all levels.
- Track and summarize progress.
  - Track and summarize progress through a well-defined process (e.g., project management processes and tools, plan-do-study-act cycles).
  - Acknowledge partial progress; this can keep people motivated.
  - Prioritize available resources to support the implementation of ongoing activities laid out in the plan.

- Learn from experience.
  - Use process and outcome data to leverage implementation successes and make adjustments in the plan to address implementation barriers.
  - Ensure that feedback loops are in place to promote sharing of information about implementation.
- Create a culture to support the change.
  - Remember that change is hard and takes time.
  - Create a culture from top to bottom of commitment to reaching the State-identified Measureable Result.
  - Celebrate successes both small and significant.
  - Create open communication/feedback loops.
  - Make success everyone's responsibility.

Roles and Responsibilities: Who will be responsible for implementation and evaluation?

- Clarify roles, responsibilities, and expectations for implementing the improvement and evaluation plans if not identified in Phase II.
- Team member roles are assumed or assigned. Roles define who will do what.
- Responsibilities are the specific tasks or duties that team members are expected to complete as a function of their roles. For example, a responsibility of a team lead might be to ensure that all activities are coordinated. Responsibilities define who will do what.
- Each role and responsibility should be clearly defined through collaboration among all implementation team members. Expectations clarify how and when the work will be done. Including team members in establishing expectations helps to build agreement, commitment, and a common understanding.

Implementing the Improvement Plan

During Phase III, states will implement the improvement plans developed in Phase II, which include improvement strategies in two primary areas: infrastructure development and support for EIS program and/or EIS provider implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs). The SSIP includes the activities, steps, and resources needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies with attention to the research on implementation and timelines for implementation.

Many states have established teams to support implementation of improvement activities during Phase III. These implementation teams support work at the state level and in local programs. They leverage resources across offices and agencies and address barriers to implementation as they arise. Information is shared among the teams using established feedback loops and communication protocols. Adjustments to the implementation plan are made based on progress and outcome data with input from stakeholders.

The following section addresses considerations and resources that can be used by state staff in implementing improvement strategies and associated activities. Resources and tools related to the implementation process in general, infrastructure development, and support for implementation of EBPs are included in this guide.

Infrastructure Development

During Phase III, states will be implementing improvement strategies and associated activities to enhance the state infrastructure to better support EIS programs and/or EIS providers in implementing and scaling up evidence-based practices to achieve the SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. These strategies, which were developed with input from stakeholders during Phase II, address improvements to one or more components of the state system including: governance, fiscal, quality standards, professional development, data, technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring.

States will continue to work toward further aligning and leveraging other state improvement plans and initiatives that impact infants and toddlers with disabilities. In addition, states will continue to engage multiple offices within the state lead agency (LA), as well as other state agencies (such as the state educational agency or SEA, if different from the LA), in implementing improvement activities and associated activities related to improving its infrastructure.

Considerations:

- Ensure infrastructure improvements are connected to root causes identified in Phase I.
- Document what infrastructure changes have been made to support SSIP implementation.
- Use implementation teams to make sure infrastructure improvements are made at both the state and program level as appropriate, track progress, and modify as necessary.
- Revisit timing of implementation of identified infrastructure improvements to ensure that supports are in place for implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs).
- Use feedback loops to address barriers and make additional modifications to the infrastructure improvements.
- Access sufficient resources to make and sustain infrastructure improvements, including fiscal and human resources.
- Ensure implementation drivers are addressed in the infrastructure improvements to support implementation of EBPs.
- Keep stakeholders informed of progress and engage them in making recommendations for modifications to the infrastructure improvements in the improvement plan.

Implementing Evidence-based Practices

During Phase III, states will be supporting EIS programs and/or EIS providers in implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs) to achieve the SIMR(s). States took one of two approaches in the selection of EBPs during Phase II. One approach was to identify a model/approach with specific practices determined by that model/approach. A second approach was to identify a model or approach but practices were not yet identified. A few states had yet identified a model/approach or specific practices for implementation.

States are also using varied approaches to implementation. Some states are planning to begin with initial implementation sites and later expand or scale up to other programs/providers while other states are planning statewide implementation. States needed to take into account their implementation approach (i.e., other sites or statewide) as they consider how they will implement and evaluate EBPs in Phase III.

Some states may need to make adjustments to their implementation plans based on data and stakeholder input in Phase III. These adjustments may include changes in models/approaches or changes in EBPs.

Considerations:

- States that have not yet selected their EBPs will need to identify the EBPs that EIS programs/EIS providers will implement to achieve the SIMR. Key questions states should consider in this process include:
  - Do the EBPs fit with the state's culture, values, and service philosophy?
  - Do the EBPs align with current practices/initiatives in the state?
  - Which specific practices are likely to have the most direct impact on expected outcomes and the SIMR? How many specific practices can EIS programs/EIS providers reasonably implement with fidelity? (Be careful not to select too many practices that will make implementation with fidelity challenging.)
  - What opportunities can be provided to engage stakeholders in the process of selecting EBPs?
- All states will need to operationalize their Phase II plans for implementing EBPs based on the activities, steps, and timelines included in their plans using the implementation science and/or improvement science concepts. Some key things to consider when implementing EBPs include ensuring that:
  - A communication plan is in place and implemented to build awareness and support and solicit stakeholder engagement throughout implementation;
  - Necessary infrastructure and administrative supports are in place including resources (e.g., people, funding, materials) to begin implementing EBPs;
  - If necessary, professional development and other content, such as practice profiles that operationalize the practices included in the model, innovation, or training, are provided or may need to be developed;
  - Coaches and mentors are trained on the practices that will be implemented;
  - Ongoing support for practitioners such as coaching and mentoring are in place and implemented over time;
  - Feedback loops are used with initial implementers to identify barriers and make changes to materials/processes prior to expanding or scaling up to other programs/providers;
  - Tools to track practice fidelity (observation checklists, self-assessments) are identified/developed and used;
  - Practitioners use data to track progress in implementing EBPs and inform what practices to target with TA, training, and coaching/mentoring;
  - Fidelity of implementation of EBPs is monitored and well-documented;
  - A clear process is in place to expand/scale up use of EBPs by additional providers/programs as appropriate;
  - Continuous improvement cycles are used to evaluate and improve the implementation plan activities and process over time; and
  - Strategies to ensure sustainability of practice fidelity are implemented.

Evaluating Implementation Process and Outcomes

During Phase III, states will collect, analyze, report, and use evaluation data based on the methods and timelines outlined in the Phase II plan. These data will be used to track implementation progress, track progress toward achieving the SIMR, and revise the improvement and evaluation plans. States will report progress and outcome data as well as revisions to the plans to OSEP in the Phase III SSIPs due in April 2017.

Data should be used regularly to monitor the improvement process and revise the improvement plan, as needed.

Considerations

- Align the evaluation plan with the theory of action and logic model.
- Review intended outcomes and ensure that they remain related to and logically follow the improvement strategies and related improvement activities.
- Review performance criteria and indicators and make adjustments as needed based on implementation.
- Make adjustments in data collection strategies/sources as needed to better measure intended outcomes.
- Analyze data to address critical evaluation questions.
- Review and adjust resources, as needed, to conduct all components of the evaluation plan.
- Review and adjust, as needed, the individuals involved in each stage of the evaluation plan (data collection activities, data analyses, etc.), including stakeholders.
- Continue to use data to support and guide improvement strategies and implementation processes.

Communicating Implementation Progress and Outcomes

During Phase II, states developed strategies and processes including feedback loops to support effective communication of SSIP implementation and progress toward achieving desired outcomes. These strategies and processes were designed to support meaningful interaction with stakeholders regarding the plan and provide implementation and planning teams with the communication processes and protocols needed to review implementation barriers, leverage implementation successes, and make adjustments in implementation as needed.

In Phase III, effective and timely communication will be essential to successful implementation and to achieving desired outcomes. Information from implementers will flow to the state implementation and planning teams to convey related barriers, successes, and outcomes. The implementation and planning teams will need to communicate on a regular basis to review data and information provided through feedback loops. This will enable the teams to make adjustments in policy, implementation, and resources as needed and to convey these changes to local programs and practitioners. This feedback loop between the state and local programs and practitioners will support effective and successful communication.

Considerations

- Review the communication strategies and processes developed in Phase II to determine if adjustments need to be made to support implementation and evaluation activities in Phase III.
- Ensure that communication protocols and feedback loops are in place and are being effectively utilized to support communication across all levels of the state system.
- Ensure the messaging regarding the SSIP implementation and outcomes is reflective of the work and is current. Adjustments should be made as needed.
- Continue to engage existing stakeholders and review their roles and responsibilities. Identify and engage new stakeholders as appropriate.
- Disseminate information about implementation and evaluation to all stakeholder groups and intentionally utilize feedback to inform adjustments to the plan.

Making Adjustments in the Improvement and Evaluation Plans

Ongoing review and analysis are essential to meeting intended outcomes and targets established in the SSIP. Organizations that are most effective at achieving results and sustaining change revisit the written plan and update on a regular basis, taking advantage of opportunities and addressing challenges that arise. This is a chance to celebrate initial successes and adapt the plan as needed to continually move toward achieving outcomes and targets. A regular review and update of progress allows states to stay on track and make needed adjustments based on informed decisions.

Considerations for Updating the Written Plan

- Establish a schedule to regularly review and update progress on the improvement and evaluation plans.
- Review internal and external factors that may require adjustments to improvement strategies and related activities.
  - Are you making expected progress toward the SIMR?
  - Are there agency changes in priorities, new partners, or a shift in resources or mandates that shift priorities?
  - Are timelines sufficient to allow for internal approval, if needed, in order to make modifications to strategies and activities?
- Adjust or add new action and/or evaluation activities based on available data to inform decisions.
- Communicate the results of the plan using data gathered from evaluation efforts.
- Review financial cost of implementing activities and assess availability of resources to implement continued or new activities.
- Use data and analysis to make informed decisions about whether to modify the current plan.
- Include stakeholder input in decisions made regarding the plan.
- Update the written document to reflect the rationale behind any modifications made to the plan.

SSIP Phase III: Tools and Resources

The items below include the resources used in Phase III of the SSIP. The potential uses of each resource are provided.

Tools and Resources: Implementation Process

A Guide to Implementation Process: Stages, Steps and Activities: Companion State and Local Level Self-Assessments

This guide, developed by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), is based on implementation science research and the collective experiences of federally funded technical assistance centers in conducting statewide system change initiatives. The guide includes critical implementation activities for five implementation stages (e.g. Exploration, Installation, Initial Implementation, Full Implementation, and Expansion/Scale-up). Outcomes are also provided for each of the stages.

A Pre-Test can be used to determine status of implementation. The companion State-Level and Local-Level Self-Assessments can be used by leadership teams as they guide and evaluate the systematic implementation, expansion, and sustainability of new practices or innovations. The tools provide a way to systematically assess outcomes that have been achieved and to determine outcomes that need to be addressed.

Source: Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (2014). *A guide to implementation process: stages, steps and activities*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/implementprocess.asp

An Integrated Stage-Based Framework for Implementation of Early Childhood Programs and Systems

This brief provides an integrated stage-based implementation framework that builds on implementation science literature. This framework is based on the following: (1) implementation happens in four discernible stages, and (2) three common threads, or core elements, exist across each of these stages. The three core elements are: building and using implementation teams to actively lead implementation efforts; using data and feedback loops to drive decision-making and promote continuous improvement; and developing a sustainable implementation infrastructure that supports general capacity and innovation-specific capacity for individuals, organizations, and communities.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Humans Services: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. (2015.). *An integrated stage-based framework for implementation of early childhood programs and systems*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/an-integrated-stage-based-framework-for-implementation-of-early-childhood-programs-and-systems

Get Started: A set of quick start videos and guides developed to help you and your team get started with Active Implementation

The National Implementation Research Network's Get Started webpage includes videos that can be used to support teams in implementing innovations including evidence-based practices. In addition, the website includes resources related to usable interventions, implementation stages, implementation drivers, implementation teams, and improvement cycles. Modules and lessons with aligned activities are also available.

Source: National Implementation Network. (2016). *Get started: A set of quick start videos and guides developed to help you and your team get started with active implementation*. Retrieved from http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu

The Basics of Implementation Science

The Basics of Implementation Science presentation includes an overview on developing an infrastructure that supports implementation, scale-up, and sustainability of effective practices and highlights core components of implementation. Highlighted components include: implementation stages, implementation drivers, implementation teams, usable interventions, and improvement cycles.

Source: Davis, Susan. (2015). *Basics of implementation science*. Retrieved from https://ideadata.org/resource-library/55ba8132140ba05f7e8b4575/

Science of Improvement: How to Improve

The Model for Improvement, which was developed by the Associates for Process Improvement, is designed to accelerate improvement of programs utilizing existing change theories. The steps included in this model are the following: forming the team, setting aims, establishing measures, selecting changes, testing changes (which includes the Plan-Do-Study-Act [PDSA] Cycle), implementing changes, and spreading changes.

Source: Institute for Healthcare Improvement. (2016). *Science of improvement: how to improve*. Retrieved from http://www.ihi.org/resources/pages/howtoimprove/scienceofimprovementhowtoimprove.aspx

90-Day Cycle Handbook

This document provides an overview of the 90-Day Cycle and provides information on each of the stages of the cycle. The 90-Day Cycle can be used to identify barriers to implementation and to target specific processes that are needed to address the barriers. Associated tools and resources related to the 90-Day Cycle are included.

Source: Park, S., and Takahashi, S. (2013). *The 90-day cycle handbook*. Retrieved from http://cdn.carnegiefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/90DC_Handbook_external_10_8.pdf

Practice Brief: Best Practice Recommendations for Building and Measuring Capacity

This document defines the essential components of capacity building and provides an at-a-glance summary of best practice recommendations for building and measuring capacity.

Source: National Center for Systemic Improvement. (2016). *Practice brief: best practice recommendations for building and measuring capacity*. Retrieved from http://ncsi.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/PracticeBriefCapacity.pdf

Tools for Building and Measuring Capacity

This document categorizes capacity tools so that teams can determine which ones may be most helpful in their efforts to build and measure capacity.

Source: National Center for Systemic Improvement. (2016). *Tools for building and measuring capacity*. Retrieved from http://ncsi.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ResourceList-ToolsforBuildingMeasuringCapacity.pdf

Tools and Resources: Improvement Strategies to Support Infrastructure Development

A System Framework for Building High-Quality Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs

The framework, which was developed by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), can be used by state Part C and Section 619 coordinators and their staff to evaluate their current systems; identify potential areas for improvement; and develop more effective, efficient systems that support implementation of evidence-based practices leading to improved outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families. The ECTA System Framework is organized around six interrelated components: Governance, Finance, Personnel/Workforce, Data System, Accountability and Quality Improvement, and Quality Standards. Each component contains a set of subcomponents that identify key areas of content within the component. Each subcomponent contains a set of quality indicators that specify what needs to be in place to support a high-quality Part C/Section 619 system. Each quality indicator has corresponding elements of quality that operationalize its implementation.

Source: Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (2015). *A system framework for building high-quality early intervention and preschool special education programs*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/sysframe/

Framework Self-Assessment Tool

The Framework Self-assessment Tool, which was developed by the ECTA and the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy) with input from partner states, provides an Excel-based tool that state staff can use to record the current status of their state system, set priorities for improvement, and measure progress over time.

Source: Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (2015). *Framework self-assessment tool.* Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/sysframe/selfassessment.asp

Applying Implementation Science to State System Change: An Example of Improving the Finance System Component: Implementation of a Family Cost Participation Program in a Hypothetical State

This document provides an example of how implementation science could be applied to improving a hypothetical state's finance system through the implementation of a family cost participation program. Goals for each of the implementation stages are addressed, and stage-based implementation activities are provided.

Source: Lucas, A., Hurth, J., and Kelley, G. (2015). *Applying implementation science to state system change: an example of improving the finance system component: Implementation of a family cost participation program in a hypothetical state*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/sysframe/implement-finance-example.pdf

Creating A Strategic Financing Plan to Achieve Results at Scale: Resources and Tools

This presentation provides practical suggestions for creating a financing plan for implementing and scaling-up improvement initiatives. Areas addressed include estimating costs, mapping current resources, and assessing gaps. Information is also provided on identifying and prioritizing short-term and long-term financing strategies.

Source: Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2009). Retrieved from http://www.cssp.org/community/neighborhood-investment/other-resources/CreatingaStrategicFinancingPlantoAchieveResultsatScale.pdf

Tools and Resources: Implementing Evidence-based Practices

Planning Guide to Statewide Implementation, Scale-up, and Sustainability of Recommended Practices

Developed by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), this guide can be used to support widespread use of EBPs designed to improve outcomes for young children with or at risk for delays or disabilities and their families. The guide, which was developed through the Center's Reaching Potential through Recommended Practices initiative (RP2), focuses on implementation of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices and can be used statewide or in specific regions by cross-agency teams to implement RP2 throughout the early childhood and early intervention service-delivery systems where young children with disabilities and their families are served.

The guide includes information on the three major elements that are instrumental in the process of planning and sustaining the high-fidelity implementation of the DEC Recommended Practices. The first element is the Stages of Implementation (see http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu /module-4 and http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/implementprocess.asp), which refers to the major steps that must be followed in any effort of full-fledged implementation. The second element is an overview of the four major structures that are needed for high-fidelity implementation of Recommended Practices: (1) the State Leadership Team, (2) the state's Master Cadre of coaches/trainers, (3) demonstration and implementation sites, and (4) data and evaluation systems. The third element covered in this introduction is the State Benchmarks of Quality, a tool for planning and monitoring the implementation process.

Source: Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (2014). *Planning Guide to Statewide Implementation, Scale-up, and Sustainability of Recommended Practices*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/implement_ebp /ECTA_RP_StateGuide_2-2015.pdf

Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices

This document was developed by the Council for Exceptional Children's Division for Early Childhood Education (DEC) to support practitioners and families in implementing research supported practices that are designed to improve outcomes and promote development of young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays or disabilities. The Recommended Practices, which were updated in collaboration with ECTA, consist of eight domains: leadership, assessment, environment, family, instruction, interaction, teaming and collaboration, and transition. Videos about the practices are available on DEC's website.

Source: Division for Early Childhood. (2014). *DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education*. Retrieved from http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices

ECTA Resources for Recognizing and Performing the DEC Recommended Practices

The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) has developed numerous resources to support the implementation of the DEC Recommended Practices. These resources, which are available on the Center's website, include performance checklists, illustrations (video vignettes), Practice Guides for Practitioners, and Practice Guides for Families.

The Practice Guides and Checklists can support teams in evaluating implementation of EBPs. The Checklists and Practice Guides can support operationalizing and defining the core components of the DEC Recommended Practices, an essential task when developing fidelity tools. Specifically, the Performance Checklists are intended for practitioners (and leaders where noted) to increase their understanding and use of the DEC Recommended Practices and for self-evaluation of one's use of the practices.

Source: Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2015). *Resources for Recognizing and Performing the DEC Recommended Practices*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/decrp

How to Scale Up Effective Programs Serving Children, Youth, and Families

This research brief reviews the best practices for scaling up effective programs based on a comprehensive literature review. Examples of experiences of several programs that were successfully scaled up are included.

Source: Sacks, Vanessa, Belts, Martha, Beckwith, Samuel, and Anderson-Moore, Kristin. (2015). *How to scale up effective programs serving children, youth, and families*. Retrieved from http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2015-43ScaleUpPrograms.pdf

Practice Profile Planning Tool

This planning tool can be used to identify core components or essential functions of the evidence-based practices that are being implemented. Core components of the practices can be defined or operationalized, and expected, developmental, and unacceptable practice variations can be shown. This tool can be used to support identification or development of fidelity measures to understand if the practice is being implemented as intended.

Source: State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center and National Implementation Network. (2014). *Practice Profile Planning Tool*. Retrieved from http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/NIRN-Education-PracticeProfilePlanningTool.pdf

Tools and Resources: Evaluating Process and Outcomes

Recommended Resources for Planning to Evaluate Improvement Efforts

This document provides a list of recommended resources to support evaluation planning for program improvement efforts including the SSIP. Resources relevant to early intervention and preschool special education are included in the list, which will be updated as new and relevant resources become available.

Source: Winer, A., Nelson, R., Kahn, L., Derrington, T., Davies-Mercier, E., Cochenour, M., and Copa, N. (2015). *Recommended resources for planning to evaluate improvement efforts*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/ssip/plan_eval_program_improvement.pdf

A Guide to SSIP Evaluation Planning

This guide describes key steps for developing a well thought out plan for evaluating an SSIP. The guide provides considerations for how to incorporate each step into an evaluation plan, as well as a series of worksheets that correspond to each step and can be used to facilitate the planning process. Preferred use of the guide, along with its corresponding worksheets, is by TA providers in partnership with state staff.

Source: IDEA Data Center. (2015). *A guide to SSIP evaluation planning*. Retrieved from https://ideadata.org/resource-library/5697cca3140ba0ca5c8b4599/

Sample SSIP Action Plan Template

This sample action plan template was designed by DaSy, ECTA, IDC, and NCSI to provide states with a suggested format and examples of potential content for their Phase II SSIP improvement and evaluation plan. States should feel free to adapt the template or use one that best meets their needs and communicates how they will implement and evaluate their SSIP in Phase III. This template is based on a logic model approach. It links activities and steps needed to implement the improvement strategies with intended outcomes and uses the activities and outcomes as the basis for the evaluation plan.

Source: Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center). (2015). *Sample SSIP action plan template*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~docs/topics/ssip/ssip_improvement_plan_template.doc

Implementation Evaluation Matrix

This resource was designed by the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) to provide states with a sample approach and tool to plan and track measures of State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) implementation. This resource will assist states in addressing the SSIP requirements laid out in the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Part B and Part C Indicator Measurement Tables and the SSIP Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool, which call for the evaluation of implementation as well as outcomes.

Source: National Center for Systemic Improvement. (2016). *Implementation evaluation matrix*. Retrieved from http://ncsi.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Implementation_Evaluation_Matrix-1.docx

Assessing Impact of Infrastructure Improvements

This national webinar was hosted by NCSI, ECTA, and DaSy for state Part B and Part C staff and focused on strategies for assessing the impact of SSIP infrastructure improvements. Representatives from two state departments of education and two state Part C programs participated in a “virtual state panel” and shared their experiences with implementing infrastructure changes as well as their approaches to assessing the impact of those changes on their SSIP improvement strategies and ultimately, their SIMR.

Source: National Center for Systemic Improvement. (2016). *Assessing impact of infrastructure improvements*. Retrieved from https://vimeo.com/169687158

Building Implementation Capacity: Data to Drive Change

The presentation focuses on how to use high-quality data to support effective implementation. Information is included on the use of data for decision-making and improvement and the conditions under which high-quality data can make the most difference.

Source: Blasé, K. (2015). *Building implementation capacity: Data to drive change*. Retrieved from https://ideadata.org/resource-library/55c8c10b140ba0a8218b4574/

Considerations for Making Changes to SIMR Baseline and Targets

This white paper focuses on factors that could lead Part C or Part B state agencies to propose changes in their SIMR baselines or targets. The paper addresses questions that state agency personnel should propose when establishing baselines and targets and considerations that may need to be addressed when revising targets.

Source: Ruggiero, T. and Kahn, L. (2015). *Considerations for Making Changes to SIMR Baseline and Targets*. Retrieved from https://ideadata.org/resource-library/5682b8ab140ba0fb0f8b45a7/

Measuring the Quality and Quantity of Implementation in Early Childhood Interventions

This research brief, which is available from the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, addresses the importance of incorporating quality measures into the implementation evaluation process. Examples are provided on how quality and quantity constructs are assessed and examined in relation to early care and education program outcomes.

Downer J. and Yazejian, N. (2013). *Measuring the quality and quantity of implementation in early childhood interventions*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/measuring-the-quality-and-quantity-of-implementation-in-early-childhood

Reaching Potential through Recommended Practices (RP^2): State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality

This brief offers examples of how quality and quantity constructs are assessed and examined in relation to early care and education program outcomes.

Source: Smith, B. J., Fox, L., Dunlap, G., Strain, P., Trivette, C. M., Perez Binder, D., Bovey, T., McCullough, K., & Blase, K. (2015). *Planning guide to statewide implementation, scale-up, and sustainability of recommended practices*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/implement_ebp/ECTA_RP_StateGuide_2-2015.pdf

Reaching Potential through Recommended Practices (RP^2): Benchmarks of Quality for Home-Visiting Programs

This assessment tool is for home visiting program leadership teams to use in assessing their status in the critical elements of program-wide implementation.

Source: Trivette, C. and Jones, A. (2015). *Reaching potential through recommended practices (RP^2): Benchmarks of quality for home-visiting programs*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/calls/2015/decrp-2015-02-11/Benchmarks_Home%20Visiting.pdf

Reaching Potential through Recommended Practices (RP^2): Benchmarks of Quality for Classroom-based Programs

This assessment tool is for preschool special education programs' leadership teams to use in assessing their status in the critical elements of program-wide implementation.

Source: Trivette, C. and Jones, A. (2015). *Reaching potential through recommended practices (RP^2): Benchmarks of quality for classroom-based programs*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/calls/2015/decrp-2015-02-11 /Benchmarks_Home%20Visiting.pdf

Activity 7.1: Designing a Fidelity Assessment System

These activities will support evaluation teams in designing and developing fidelity assessments. The Designing a Fidelity Assessment activity allows teams to identify, categorize, and discuss challenges to implementing a fidelity assessment.

Source: National Implementation Research Network and State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center. (2016). *Designing a fidelity assessment*. Retrieved from http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources /activity-7-1-designing-fidelity-assessment

Activity 7.2: Developing a Fidelity Assessment

These activities will support evaluation teams in designing and developing fidelity assessments. Once the essential components or functions of the EBPs have been identified, the Developing a Fidelity Assessment activity will support teams in brainstorming fidelity assessments.

Source: National Implementation Research Network and State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center. (2016). *Developing a fidelity assessment*. Retrieved from http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources /activity-7-2-fidelity-module-7-capstone-developing-fidelity-assessment

Evaluation and Planning Tools, Drivers

This website can support teams in evaluating and planning for coaching and training systems and implementing and assessing best practices.

Source: National Implementation Research Network and State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center. (2016). *Resource library: Evaluation and planning tools. Drivers*. Retrieved from http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/results/taxonomy%3A23%2C40

SSIP Phase III: Key Terms

Note: A full glossary of terms from Implementation Science prepared by the ECTA Center is available at: http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/glossary.asp

Evaluation Plan: A written document describing how information will be collected about and used to inform key activities of the SSIP.

Evaluation Questions: The key questions the state wants to answer with the evaluation. For example, are providers implementing the evidence based practices effectively?

Evidence-Based Practices: "...for the early childhood field: Evidence-based practice is a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom and values." (Buysse & Wesley, p.12) and “evidence-based practices can be defined as: Practices that are informed by research, in which the characteristics and consequences of environmental variables are empirically established and the relationship directly informs what a practitioner can do to produce a desired outcome." (Dunst, et al., p.3)

Buysse, V., & Wesley, P. W. (2006). *Evidence-based practice in the early childhood field*. Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE. https://secure2.convio.net/zttcfn/site/Ecommerce/193252082?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=1221&store_id=1461

Dunst, C. J., Trivette, C. M., & Cutspec, P. A. (2007). *Toward an operational definition of evidence-based practice*. (Winterberry Research Perspectives, v.1, n.1). Morganton, NC: Winterberry Press. http://www.wbpress.com/shop/toward-an-operational-definition-of-evidence-based-practice/

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2015). *System Framework for Part C & Section 619: Glossary of Terms*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/sysframe/glossary.asp#Evidence-Based_Practices

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2015). *Evidence-Based Practice Topical Webpage*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/topics/evbased/evbased.asp

Feedback Loops: Feedback loops are communication processes used to gain input, analyze data and problem solve during the implementation process. Feedback loops are used among the State Leadership Team, Implementation Teams and Implementation Sites.

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2014). *Implementation Process: Glossary Terms*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/glossary.asp#def-feedbackloops

Implementation Drivers: Implementation drivers are a framework for organizing the capacity and infrastructure that influences the successful implementation of a new innovation or practice. Drivers include capacity for promoting competency through professional development, leadership and organizational supports such as policy and procedures, funding, administration, data systems, etc.

> Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2014). *Implementation Process: Glossary Terms*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/glossary.asp#def-implementationdrivers

The Phase II plan should include the implementation drivers used to achieve short- and long-term SSIP outcomes. The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) website provides detailed information about the types and uses of implementation drivers.

> The National Implementation Research Network. *Implementation Drivers*. Retrieved from http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu /learn-implementation/implementation-drivers

Implementation Science: The principles of Implementation Science (Fixsen, *et.al.*, 2005) have been embedded into the design of the SSIP process and OSEP expects that states will use the principles in planning and implementing improvement strategies. The definition of the plan for Phase II from the *Part C State Performance Plan (SPP)* and *Annual Performance Report (APR): Part C Indicator Measurement Table* includes that the planning will be developed "with attention to the research on implementation." Throughout this document, we will introduce and embed key concepts of Implementation Science as they relate to the plan to be developed in Phase II. Included in each section are resources for readers to learn more about Implementation Science. Although all implementation frameworks (e.g. implementation teams, usable interventions, implementation stages, implementation drivers, and improvement cycles) need to be considered in Phase II, the implementation drivers are critical to address in the plan.

> Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. &Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

Implementation Team: Implementation Teams (also called Local Leadership Teams) provide active leadership at the regional or program level to manage the implementation efforts and support the people using the new innovation or practice. The teams engage in continuous communication and feedback with the State Leadership Team about the issues, successes, and needed resources to support successful implementation and expansion.

> Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2014). *Implementation Process: Glossary Terms*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/glossary.asp#def-implementationteam

Improvement Plan: A written document that includes the activities and steps for implementing the improvement strategies to achieve the intended outcomes.

Improvement Strategies: A state's improvement strategies outline the course of action in achieving the Theory of Action.

Logic Model: A systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan, and the changes or results you hope to achieve.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004. *W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide*. Retrieved from https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide

Outcomes:

Intended Outcome: Outcomes at all levels of the system (state, regional/local, practitioner, family, and child) that are intended to be achieved by implementing the specified improvement strategy to improve the state's SIMR (long-term outcome). States can use the "assumptions" from their Theory of Action (if sufficiently detailed) to identify their intended outcomes.

Intermediate Outcome: Changes in actions or behaviors based on knowledge or skills acquired through outputs.

Changes in adult actions or behaviors based on knowledge or skills acquired

Fidelity of the intervention

Improved organizational functioning

Improved infrastructure and system functioning

Long-Term Outcome: The results that fulfill the SSIP's goals; the SIMR is the key long-term outcome but some states may have others.

- Broadest program outcomes
- Results that fulfill the project's goals
- Impact on children or families
- Program scale-up and sustainability

Example: [SIMR] There will be an increase in the percentage of infants and toddlers exiting early intervention services who demonstrate an increased rate of growth in positive social-emotional development.

Short-Term Oucome: Direct results of the activities and their outputs.

- What participants learn as a result of activities/outputs
- What awareness, attitudes, or skills participants develop

Example: EI practitioners have improved understanding of child development including social-emotional development for infants and toddlers.

PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act): An iterative, four-stage problem-solving model used for improving a process or carrying out change

Performance Indicator: The item of information that measures whether intended outcomes are being achieved. For example, an indicator might be: “An increase (direction) in the average score (number) on the Proficiency Test given at the end of training (method of measurement).

Example: There will be an increase in the percent of providers who can correctly identify age appropriate social-emotional skills after the training.

Stakeholder: An individual or group directly or indirectly affected by an initiative or project.

Stakeholder Engagement: The use of stakeholders as participants in a collaborative process that guides the planning, implementation, and monitoring of an initiative or project.

State Leadership Team: (also called state management or state implementation team) is the group of individuals at the state level who manage the change effort by actively leading and providing the internal supports needed to move the selected innovation or practice through all the stages and steps of implementation.

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2014). *Implementation Process: Glossary Terms*. Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/glossary.asp#def-stateleadershipteam

Theory of Action (TOA): The TOA provides a general statement of the rationale for the state's improvement strategies.

Terms of Reference: Terms of Reference describe a format for setting guidelines and expectations for team function, scope, and mission. A key part of a Terms of Reference document is to outline the communication protocols for a project.

Usable Intervention: A usable intervention needs to be teachable, learnable, doable, and readily assessed in practice if it is to be used effectively to reach all students who could benefit.

Contributors to this SSIP Phase III: Process Guide

This *SSIP Phase III Process Guide* describes the requirements and a proposed process for developing a high-quality plan, and is intended to support states in designing a high-quality process for completing Phase III. The guide will be updated as content is developed and finalized.

The Process Guide was developed by a collaborative team from ECTA, DaSy, NCSI and IDC including:

Grace Kelley, ECTA/DaSy/ NCSI

Siobhan Colgan, IDC

Carolee Eslinger, IDC

Monica Mathur-Kalluri, NCSI

Anne Lucas, ECTA/DaSy

Cornelia Taylor, ECTA/DaSy/NCSI

Megan Vinh, ECTA/DaSy

Ardith Ferguson, NCSI

The following additional individuals provided input into the content of the Guide:

Betsy Ayankoya, ECTA/DaSy

Jeanna Mullens, IDC

Linda Lynch, IDC

Kristin Reedy, NCSI

Joanne Cashman, NCSI

Abby Winer, ECTA/DaSy

Traci Kataka, DaSy

Jessica Hardy, ECTA/DaSy

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Project Officers: Meredith Miceli & Richelle Davis(DaSy), Julia Martin Eile (ECTA Center), Richelle Davis & Meredith Miceli (IDC), and Perry Williams & Shedeh Hajghassemali (NCSI)