



Technical Assistance Bulletin

TO: WV Birth to Three Payees, Practitioners, and Service Coordinators
WV Birth to Three Regional Administrative Units

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WV Birth to Three

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ISSUE: Statewide Implementation of WV Birth to Three Outcomes Measurement Under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The purpose of this Technical Assistance Bulletin is to provide enrolled practitioners and the public with information regarding the background and next steps in implementation of the WV Birth to Three Child Outcomes measurement process as required under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Effective January 1, 2008, the Child Outcomes measurement process will be implemented statewide.

As a brief background reminder, Child Outcomes measurement requirements were implemented by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Program (OSEP), in response to the Department's obligation to provide systematic national data on the effectiveness of federally-funded early childhood education programs. The U.S. Government Accounting Office (GAO), in order to make recommendations about the continued funding of programs, conducts PART reviews of all federally-funded programs to determine if there is data that demonstrates the effectiveness of the programs. In 2002, the GAO conducted reviews of Part C and Section 619 of IDEA. Those reviews determined that there was no systematic, national data to demonstrate that early intervention and/or preschool special education services resulted in improved developmental and educational outcomes for the infants, toddlers, and preschoolers served. This doesn't mean that children do not benefit from these services, but there was no consistent, national means of measuring and reporting child progress at that time.

As a result of the PART review, the U.S. Department of Education funded the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) to develop national outcomes measures that would provide a consistent means of measuring and reporting the impact of services under Part C and Section 619 of IDEA. The ECO Center utilized a multi-year, broad-based stakeholder process that resulted in the recommendation of national Child Outcomes and Family Outcomes measures, for which each state must develop systems to measure and report the progress of children who receive Part C and Section 619 services, as well as the benefit of those services to their families. Each state was required to submit to OSEP, a six year State Performance Plan in December, 2005 that outlined how the state would measure and report on the required Child Outcomes and Family Outcomes measures as well as twelve other national performance measures under Part C of IDEA. The WV Birth to Three State Performance Plan is available on the website at www.wvdhhr.org/birth23.

Following are Child and Family Outcomes for Part C of IDEA.

Children who receive services through WV Birth to Three will have:

- Positive social emotional skills (including positive social relationships);
- Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication); and
- Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Families who participate in WV Birth to Three will report that WV Birth to Three helped them:

- Know their rights;
- Effectively communicate their children's needs; and
- Help their children develop and learn

West Virginia held an initial Kick-Off meeting in September, 2005 to gather input and to provide an outline of the State's approach to implementing a system to measure and report the progress of children toward achieving the three Child Outcomes measures under Part C and Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

WV Birth to Three is dedicated to implementing a child outcomes measurement system that promotes the understanding of typical child development, and enhances the opportunities for children with special needs to participate in, and learn through, typical daily routines and activities. It is critical that the child outcomes measurement system also support the desired family outcomes by including the families as integral partners in the evaluation and intervention process.

WV Birth to Three has decided to use the nationally developed Child Outcomes Summary Tool as the foundation for teams to measure each child's progress toward the three Part C Child Outcomes. The Child Outcomes Summary Tool assists IFSP teams to understand and record a child's functional abilities in the three outcomes areas at various intervals, and to use this information to affect the day to day strategies of family members and other adults who are supporting the child's development.

In April, 2005, WV Birth to Three began a pilot child outcomes measurement process in Regions III, IV, VI, and VII. In March, 2006 the pilot was expanded to all newly eligible children in Regions III, IV, VI, and VII and the following counties: Barbour, Randolph, and Taylor.

Effective January 1, 2008 the child outcomes measurement process will be expanded statewide to include all newly eligible children in Regions I, II, and VIII and Lewis, Preston, Tucker, and Upshur counties. Additional training and technical assistance opportunities will be provided over the next few months, to all enrolled practitioners and service coordinators in these regions, in order to prepare for fully implementing the child outcomes measurement process by January 1, 2008.

The following is a general summary of how the child outcomes measurement process will be implemented as it is expanded statewide effective January 1, 2008:

- Effective January 1, 2008, each Evaluation/Assessment (E/A) team must include a Developmental Specialist who has been approved by WV Birth to Three as a Child Outcomes Summary Tool (COST) Facilitator. Developmental Specialists who want to be approved as COST Facilitators must successfully complete a COST training and submit a copy of their certificate along with an original signed COST Facilitator Agreement to the State WV Birth to Three Office. By signing the COST Facilitator agreement, the

Developmental Specialist is assuring that he/she is knowledgeable of typical development for children under age three, and is agreeing to facilitate the COST process within the policy and procedures of WV Birth to Three.

- The Interim Service Coordinator, or Ongoing Service Coordinator, will be responsible for assisting the family to select an enrolled developmental specialist who has been identified by WV Birth to Three as a COST Facilitator. (Service Directory listings will be updated to identify when a Developmental Specialist has been approved as a COST Facilitator- this will be noted in the 'license' section of the Service Directory listing.)
- Only Developmental Specialists who have been approved as COST Facilitators can be selected to provide Evaluation/Assessment activities.
- For children who are determined to be eligible for WV Birth to Three, the Developmental Specialist/COST Facilitator will facilitate the IFSP team's completion of the COST during the IFSP meeting.
- All IFSP team members, including the family, will participate and contribute in completing the COST. The COST is not an eligibility or assessment tool, it is a tool for facilitating and recording the team's understanding of the child's functional ability across multiple settings and activities, related to the three national child outcomes.
- Interim Service Coordinators (for new referrals) and Ongoing Service Coordinators (for annual and exit measurements) will prepare families by telling them about the child outcomes measurement process. Families should be helped to understand that the child outcomes measurement process will allow WV to evaluate the effectiveness of our early intervention services, and it will help to guide the family and other team members in the development of functional, measurable individualized child and family outcomes.
- The Child Outcomes Summary Tool (COST) will be completed for each newly eligible child at the initial IFSP meeting. From that point forward, the COST will be completed for these children at their annual IFSP meetings and just prior to exit from the WV Birth to Three System (typically at their exit meeting).
- The Interim Service Coordinator or Ongoing Service Coordinator (for annual and exit measurements) will be responsible for sending the completed COST to the appropriate RAU for entry in the child's educational record.

WV Birth to Three will be providing ongoing training on the Child Outcomes Summary Tool process. These trainings will provide a background on the importance of child outcomes measurement, and the specifics about how that process is working in WV Birth to Three. Initially, priority for training registration will be given to Developmental Specialists, in order to assure that currently enrolled Developmental Specialists in the expanded regions are able to complete the training prior to January 1, 2008. However, it is very important that all practitioners and service coordinators who provide service in the designated regions and counties, are knowledgeable of the Child Outcomes Summary Tool process, as all team members play an important role.

Please check the WV Birth to Three website at www.wvdhhr.org/birth23 for additional information. The Child and Family Outcomes tab provides links to background information on why states are implementing a Child Outcomes measurement process, a Question and Answer document, links to resources on typical child development, West Virginia's COST training materials, and a brochure to help explain the process to families. The Child Outcomes Summary Tool (COST) training is on the training registration section of the website.

For questions regarding the Child Outcomes measurement process, please contact your State Regional Technical Assistance Specialist or email to wvbtt@wvdhhr.org.