

SSIP Phase II Process Guide

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Office of Special Education Programs
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SSIP Phase II Process Guide

The online version of this guide is available at: http://ectacenter.org/topics/ssip/ssip_phase2.asp

The *Part C State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR): Part C Indicator Measurement Table* describes the focus of the SSIP Phase II–Plan as:

“The focus of Phase II is on building state capacity to support Early Intervention Service (EIS) programs and/or EIS providers with the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs) that will lead to measurable improvement in the State-identified Measurable Result(s) (SIMR) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.”

The Part C State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR): Part C Indicator Measurement Table (subsequently referred to as the Part C Indicator Measurement Table) defines three components which must be included in the April 2016 submission of the SPP/APR Indicator C-11 and B-17, the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) including:

1. Infrastructure Development;
2. Support for EIS Programs and/or EIS Provider Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices; and
3. Evaluation

The SSIP Phase II Process Guide describes the steps needed to accomplish the work of the three components of Phase II. Thus, the SSIP Phase II Process Guide is organized according to the following sequential phases of work to be done, rather than by the three components.

1. Kicking off Phase II
2. Developing the improvement plan
3. Developing the evaluation plan
4. Communicating the plan

Throughout The SSIP Phase II Process Guide the term “the plan” refers to the set of activities, steps, and resources described in the Part C Indicator Measurement Table.

The three components are included throughout the sections of the SSIP Phase II Process Guide.

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

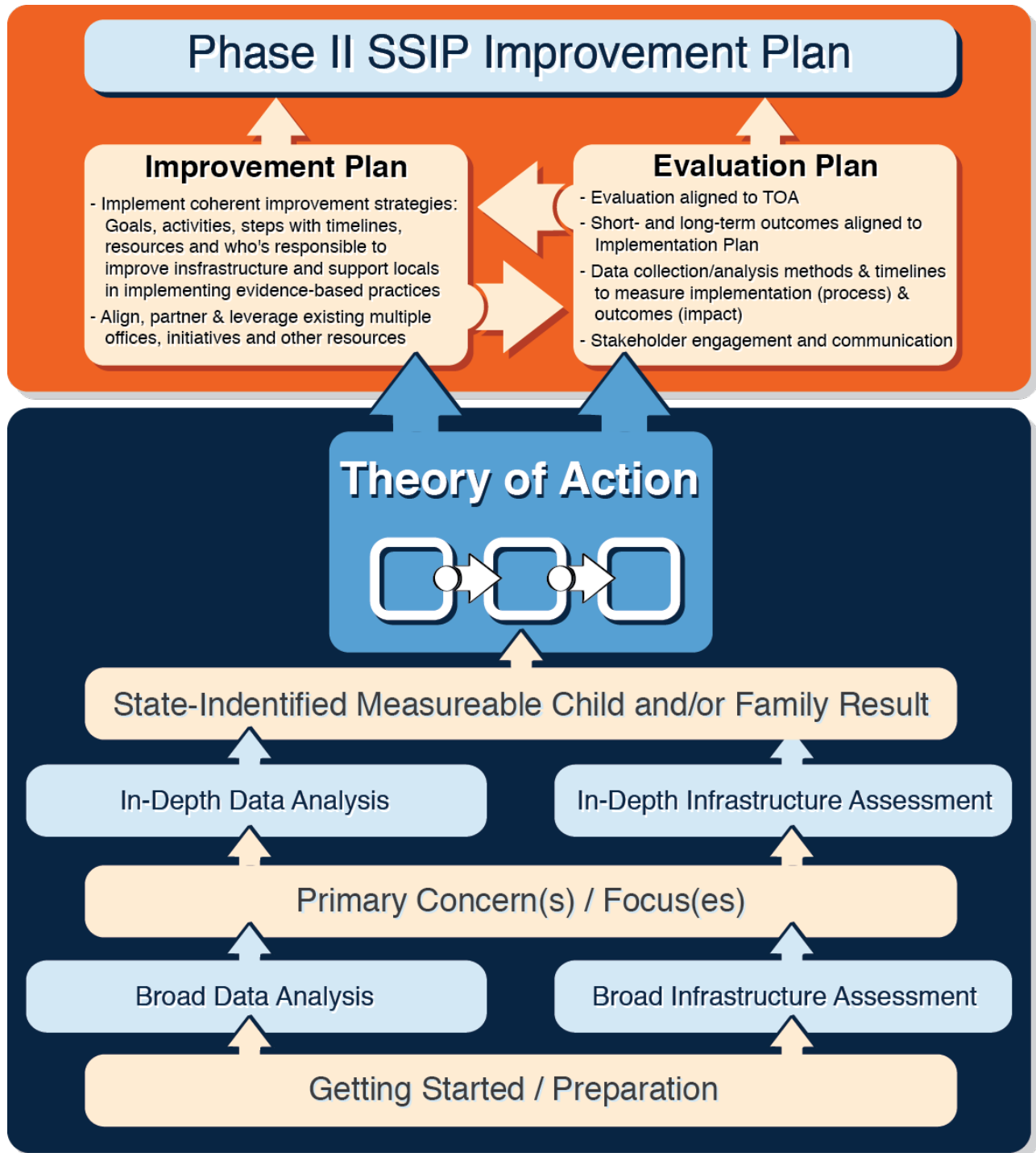


Figure 1 shows the link between Phase I–Analysis and Phase II–Plan and the connections among the components of Phase II. Phase II should be integrally connected to Phase I–Analysis and Phase

III—Implementation and Evaluation. The theory of action (ToA) developed in Phase I will drive Phase II and lay out the work to be completed in Phase III. Many states are taking steps to install some of the system changes, like enhancements to the professional development system, that are most critical to supporting the improvement strategies identified in the SSIP. Although these implementation activities are required under Phase III and not Phase II, beginning to install them early in the process may be critical to meeting future timelines. States also are likely to make changes to the Phase I ToA and improvement strategies, in order to align the work to the most recent knowledge of state strengths, challenges, and capacity, and they will need to document the reasons for these changes. As states begin the installation of activities to improve the infrastructure in Phase II, they should track the activities, including the start date and progress, to ensure that they can accurately report and evaluate all activities they completed under the SSIP.

Timeline for Submission to OSEP

Figure 2 shows the timeline for submission of each Phase of the SSIP to OSEP and provides a brief description of the content included in that Phase.

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

Phase I: Analysis

- 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

Year 2 - FFY 2014
Due April 2016

Phase II: Plan

- Multi-year plan addressing:
- Phase I Content/Updates
 - Infrastructure Development
 - Support for EIS Program and/or EIS providers in Implementing Evidence-Based Practices
 - Evaluation Plan

Years 3-6 - FFY 2015-18
Due February 2017- 2020

Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation

- Reporting on Progress including:
- Phase I and Phase II Content/Updates
 - Progress toward short- and long-term outcomes
 - Revisions to the SPP and evaluation data to support decision

States will submit Phase II SSIPs through GRADS360 using a process similar to that used for Phase I according to OSEP requirements.

Stakeholder Engagement in Phase II

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 kicking off the Phase II plan include:

- Reengage stakeholders to the work of Phase II based on the status of Phase I of the SSIP and the purpose of the SSIP.
- Use multiple opportunities and formats (e.g. websites, newsletter, state conferences) to share information about the development of Phase II of the SSIP with stakeholders and create opportunities with stakeholders so they can share information with their communities.
- Consider the "messaging" for the participating local programs. Are the messages co-created? How will the state garner their support? If the state selected subsets of programs having low performance to achieve the SIMR, how will the state garner programs' support without focusing on the negatives that prompted their inclusion in the state's efforts?
- 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 planning, and discuss potential implications for future learning.

What States Need to Submit as a part of SSIP Phase II

Excerpted from: *Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool*.

Updated Data

In its FFY 2014 through FFY 2018 SPPs/APRs, due yearly February 2016 through February 2020, the state must provide updated data for the specific FFY (expressed as percentages) and those data must be aligned with the SIMR(s) for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families. In its FFY 2014 through FFY 2018 SPPs/APRs, the state must report on whether or not it met its target.

Part C SPP/APR Collection Tool

Part C Indicator Measurement Table

Components

Phase II Component #1: Infrastructure Development

- 1a) Specify improvements that will be made to the state infrastructure to better support EIS programs and providers to implement and scale up EBPs to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- 1b) Identify the steps the state will take to further align and leverage current improvement plans and other early learning initiatives and programs in the state, including Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, Home Visiting Program, Early Head Start, and others which impact infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- 1c) Identify who will be in charge of implementing the changes to infrastructure, resources needed, expected outcomes, and timelines for completing improvement efforts.
- 1d) Specify how the state will involve multiple offices within the State Lead Agency, as well as other state agencies and stakeholders in the improvement of its infrastructure.

Phase II Component #2: Support for EIS programs and providers Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

- 2a)** Specify how the state will support EIS providers in implementing the evidence-based practices that will result in changes in Lead Agency, EIS program, and EIS provider practices to achieve the SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- 2b)** Identify steps and specific activities needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies, including communication strategies and stakeholder involvement; how identified barriers will be addressed; who will be in charge of implementing; how the activities will be implemented with fidelity; the resources that will be used to implement them; and timelines for completion.
- 2c)** Specify how the state will involve multiple offices within the Lead Agency (and other state agencies such as the SEA) to support EIS providers in scaling up and sustaining the implementation of the evidence-based practices once they have been implemented with fidelity.

Phase II Component #3: Evaluation

- 3a)** Specify how the evaluation is aligned to the theory of action and other components of the SSIP and the extent to which it includes short-term and long-term objectives to measure implementation of the SSIP and its impact on achieving measurable improvement in SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- 3b)** Specify how the evaluation includes stakeholders and how information from the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders.
- 3c)** Specify the methods that the state will use to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended improvements in the SIMR(s).
- 3d)** Specify how the state will use the evaluation data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation; assess the state's progress toward achieving intended improvements; and to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary.

Phase II Technical Assistance and Support

Describe the support the state needs to develop and implement an effective SSIP.

Kicking Off SSIP Phase II

The first step in getting started on Phase II is identifying who will do the work, what they will do, and when and how they will do the work. Planning up-front facilitates clear communication with state staff and stakeholders about the types of work they will be expected to do and the time commitment they are making. States can choose to complete the work through a number of structures, one of which is to develop or use existing teams to plan and oversee implementation. As teams are created it is important for states to be intentional about how stakeholders are actively involved in the work. If teams are used to complete the work of Phase II, defining the purpose and membership of the team and processes they will follow will make the teams more efficient and avoid miscommunication. Four key concepts from Implementation Science will be integrated into this part of the SSIP Phase II Process Guide including: *State Leadership Team*, *Implementation Team*, *Feedback Loops*, and *Terms of Reference*.

Step 1. Review and address OSEP's recommendations for improving Phase I.

Purpose

- Ensure work is aligned to OSEP's expectations for the state.

Resources

Feedback from OSEP state contact.

Step 2. Identify the activities and timelines described in Phase I that need to be completed during Phase II.

Purpose

- Ensure that sufficient progress is being made on the activities identified in Phase I.

Resources

There are no resources listed for this step.

Step 3. Review the requirements for Phase II.

Purpose

- Align planning and deliverables to the requirements OSEP described.

Resources

Part C SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table
Part B SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table
Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool
Part B State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool

Step 4. Generate an initial Gantt Chart listing the work to be done in Phase II.

Purpose

- Create a visual of the activities and timelines required to complete Phase II.
- Have a tool to track state progress toward completing Phase II.

Resources

SSIP Phase II Gantt Chart Template

Step 5. Identify a staffing structure and those responsible for completing Phase II.

Purpose

- Identify the team or teams that will be responsible for completing Phase II of the SSIP (State Leadership Team, Implementation Teams).
- Complete initial planning of how those teams will coordinate (Linked Teams).
- Identify staff with expertise and interest to support the evaluation design and make sure the team or teams that are completing the planning have access to these staff.

Resources

A Guide to the Implementation Process: Stages, Steps, and Activities: Stage 2: Installation
AI Hub Module 3: Implementation teams
An Integrated Stage-Based Framework for Implementation of Early Childhood Programs and Systems
Planning Guide to Statewide Implementation, Scale-up, and Sustainability of Recommended Practices
State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality

Step 6. Describe the role of stakeholders in Phase II.

Purpose

- Ensure that various viewpoints and expertise will have a role throughout the development of Phase II.
- Identify the people who need to be invited to participate.
- Ensure that stakeholders are involved in creating the activities and undertaking relevant pieces of the plan.

Resources

Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement

Circles of Involvement

Step 7. If state uses a State Leadership Team and Local Implementation Teams, invite team members to participate in Phase II.

Purpose

- Alert potential team members to the need for a time commitment.
- Establish the group that will need to be moved through orientation to Phase II.

Resources

State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality

Step 8. Ensure stakeholders and planning team members have an active role in Phase II.

Purpose

- Increase stakeholder understanding of the findings and conclusions of Phase I.
- Increase the active role of stakeholders for Phase II.
- Increase understanding of the requirements of Phase II.
- Increase focus of stakeholder discussion on the key requirements of Phase II.
- Increase stakeholder engagement in actively planning for Phase II.
- Have an expectation that stakeholders will share these ideas with their networks and bring back relevant ideas.

Resources

Getting Ready for Phase II of the SSIP

Developing the Improvement Plan

"Planning is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up."

~ Christopher Robin to Winnie the Pooh (A.A. Milne)

This section describes the steps in developing an improvement plan. While there are many ways that a state may choose to develop a written improvement plan, this guide provides the basic steps in improvement planning. A state may complete the steps in a different order, or add or eliminate steps and should use this resource in a way that fits state needs.

During Phase I of the SSIP, states reviewed their data at all levels, assessed their current infrastructure, and developed Coherent Improvement Strategies and a Theory of Action that specifies how the State-Identified Measureable Result (SIMR) will be achieved. Now it is time to put this all into action! An improvement plan for Phase II will provide the details needed to achieve the expected outcomes and make progress toward achieving the state's SIMR.

Improvement planning is an organizational management activity that is used to:

- Set priorities
- Focus energy and resources
- Ensure that internal and external stakeholders are working toward common goals
- Establish agreement on intended outcomes/results implementation

Planning occurs all the time, both informally and formally. Effective improvement planning is intentional and provides an opportunity to assess the current status, determine if what is being done needs to be done, and decide where to go in the future. Improvement planning involves setting priorities, assessing internal and external resources, and engaging all interested parties in defining the activities, desired outcomes, and implementing/revising improvement strategies as needed to achieve the SIMR.

In Phase II, developing the written plan will provide states with the structure and detail needed to achieve the SIMR through implementation of the improvement strategies. Including stakeholders, key partners, and staff in this process ensures that all perspectives are represented. The evaluation measures provide the feedback needed to track progress and make needed adjustments.

The improvement plan must address improving the infrastructure and how the state will support EIS programs and/or EIS providers in implementing the evidence-based practices. It should include the following:

- Activities and steps that will be implemented, who is responsible, and according to what timelines
- Resources needed for each activity
- Leverage points and partners from within the lead agency and other initiatives and agencies
- Communication strategies and stakeholder involvement
- How identified barriers in the infrastructure will be addressed
- How activities will be implemented with fidelity
- Procedures for monitoring the plan's implementation and strategies, timeframe for plan evaluation, and modifications, if needed, to ensure progress toward desired outcomes is achieved.

Improvement Plans answer the following questions:

- **Where are we now?** Use this opportunity to review the current environment and clarify the vision, mission, and purpose.
- **Where are we going?** Think ahead several years to assure consistency and alignment with the direction the organization is headed.
- **What will achievement of the SIMR look like?** Identify the expected short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes that will result from achieving the SIMR.
- **How will we get there?** Lay out the road to connect current activities with future desired goals. Develop an improvement plan with clearly defined activities.
- **How will we know we've been successful?** Determine benchmarks of success. Develop an evaluation plan that leads to improving and adjusting the activities to ensure a dynamic and responsive process is in place to achieve the SIMR and the intended outcomes.

Other questions to consider include the following:

- **What actions or changes will occur?**
- **Who will carry out these changes?**
- **When will the changes will take place**, and for how long?
- **What resources are needed** to carry out the activity (e.g., staff, funding, supplies)?
- **How will the improvement plan be communicated** to stakeholders, the public, providers, and families?
- **How will input be provided to make needed adjustments to the improvement plan?**

Step 1. Convene the core staff and/or stakeholders responsible for the written plan. Core staff/stakeholders responsible for the written improvement plan might represent various levels of the system and offer expertise in a broad range of areas.

Purpose

- Develop a process for collecting and compiling information for the improvement plan.
- Identify fiscal and human resources available for planning and/or implementation of the SSIP.

Resources

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

An Integrated Stage-Based Framework for Implementation of Early Childhood Programs and Systems (*see p. 20*)

DIY Committee Guide: Strategic Plan Step 5: Writing Your Plan

Step 2. Determine timeline and responsibilities for developing the written improvement plan.

Purpose

- Develop a timeline to ensure submission to OSEP by April 1.
- Assign responsibility for completing assignments.

Resources

AI Hub Activity 5.2: PDSA Who am I?

SSIP Phase II Gantt Chart Template

Step 3. Establish the process for developing the improvement plan, including meeting schedule, agenda format, and a format for documenting and sharing decisions made in planning meetings.

Purpose

- Ensure that information provided to planning groups is consistent.
- Ensure that information needed for the written improvement plan is collected.

Resources

Community Tool Box: Chapter 8, Section 5:
Developing an Action Plan

Step 4. Determine how stakeholders, staff, and partners will be engaged and organized to provide input for the improvement plan.

Purpose

- Ensure that stakeholders, staff, and partners actively engage in developing the improvement plan.
- Provide clear expectations on how improvement plan will be developed.
- Assign responsibility for completing assignments.

Resources

Leading by Convening: Ensuring Relevant Participation

Step 5. Determine communication protocols to coordinate communication (for the internal group actively engaged in developing the improvement plan) at all levels during the planning process.

Purpose

- Ensure that communication occurs across all levels.
- Ensure that all members working on developing the improvement plan are in communication loop.

Resources

AI Hub Handout 8: Communication Protocol Worksheet

Step 6. Establish protocols for communicating with key external stakeholders who are not actively engaged in developing the written plan.

Purpose

- Ensure members of the internal planning team communicate about the improvement plan with other stakeholders in their agency.
- Ensure buy-in for implementation of the SSIP.

Resources

Template for Strategic Communications Plan
(see Step 3: Develop Messages)

Step 7. Review the state's or program's vision, mission, and purpose, if appropriate.

Purpose

- Ensure alignment of SSIP with state or agency priorities.

Resources

Vision and Direction in Leadership Checklist

Step 8. Provide brief overview of the Theory of Action (TOA) and Improvement Strategies developed in Phase I. This may need to be repeated at each meeting.

Purpose

- Ensure planning team members are familiar with the TOA and Improvement Strategies.
- Keep planners focused on how their work fits into the larger SSIP.

Resources

State Theory of Action
State Improvement Strategies
State logic model, if developed

Step 9. Review and identify evidence-based programs, practices, or approaches that would be expected to positively impact the SIMR. This review will yield a set of practices, potential programs, or approaches and infrastructure improvements to be considered by planners.

Purpose

- Ensure program, practices, or approaches align with TOA.
- Define the set of evidence-based programs, practices, or approaches to be considered by planning teams.
- Define the activities to be completed to strengthen the infrastructure for improving practices, programs, or approaches.

Resources

DEC Recommended Practices & Glossary
What Works Clearinghouse
A System Framework for Building High-Quality Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs

Step 10. Review, discuss, and select potential practices or programs in relation to need, fit, resources–sustainability, strength of evidence, readiness for replication and capacity to implement.

Purpose

- Ensure that the practices selected are doable and a good fit.

Resources

The Hexagon Tool

Offering our Best to Children and Families:
Program-Wide Implementation

Step 11. Determine the initial implementation sites for the installation of the evidence-based program or practice.

Purpose

- Ensure that the initial sites are ready for installation.
- Ensure actions are included in the plan addressing capacity of installation sites.

Resources

The Hexagon Tool

Step 12. Identify short-term and intermediate outcomes that will need to be achieved to improve the long-term outcome (SIMR).

Purpose

- Ensure the improvement plan activities and steps are designed to achieve outcomes of the SSIP.
- Link the improvement plan with the evaluation plan.

Resources

Recommended Resources for Planning to Evaluate Program Improvement Efforts (including the SSIP)

Step 13. Select the format to be used to develop the written implementation plan (e.g., sample template, template of state choice).

Purpose

- Provide document for capturing information throughout the process of developing the written improvement plan.

Resources

Sample SSIP Action Plan Template
W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model
Development Guide

Step 14. Develop the written improvement plan that identifies how the improvement strategies will be implemented to achieve the short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.

Purpose

- Ensure written improvement plan follows the guidance from OSEP for Phase II.
- Guide implementation of the SSIP work now and in future.

Resources

Part C SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table
Part B SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table
Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool
Building an SSIP Evaluation Plan
Developing a High Quality Improvement Plan
(see slides 3-11)

Step 15. Review the written plan to ensure that the activities are Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely (SMART).

Purpose

- Ensure that the activities planned can be evaluated.

Resources

Benchmarks of Quality for Home-Visiting
Programs

Step 16. Share the written plan with stakeholders, parents, providers, agency staff, and partners for their review and comment.

Purpose

- Ensure buy-in of staff, stakeholders, and partners.

Resources

There are no resources listed for this step.

Step 17. Finalize the written plan.

Purpose

- Include a narrative summary of the Phase II development process and detailed improvement plan.

Resources

There are no resources listed for this step.

Tips

- **Planning may take several sessions.** Develop drafts for review and input from stakeholders at multiple points in the process.
- **An effective improvement strategy may require several actions and related activities to achieve full implementation.**
- **Remember to address infrastructure.** Identify how you will build on the strengths and address the weaknesses identified in Phase I of SSIP development.
- **Carefully consider the evidenced-based practices or approaches to be selected.** What practices or approaches will most effectively improve outcomes for children and families?
- **Consider evaluation and ways to measure change when developing the improvement plan.** How will you know activities are implemented with fidelity? How will you know the activities are making the expected difference?
- **Criteria for a good improvement plan:**
 - **Aspirational:** Does the improvement plan reflect the current work? Are newly emerging opportunities and barriers addressed? Does it address the identified infrastructure issues and provide supports for implementation of evidenced-based practices?
 - **Complete:** Does it list all of the action steps or changes to be sought at all levels of system (e.g., practitioner, district, local program, and state)? Does it include partnerships with other programs and agencies and leverage existing initiatives?
 - **Clearly define responsibilities and timelines:** Is it apparent who will do what, by when?
 - **Evaluate progress and make adjustments:** Does the evaluation plan address the process and impact of implementing improvement strategies?

Developing the Evaluation Plan

This section of the process guide will cover the development of the evaluation plan. A good evaluation plan is a written document that:

- spells out exactly what the state is trying to accomplish, including the impact of the SSIP activities on the SIMR and other key outcomes such as changes to infrastructure and practice (i.e., intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes at each level of the system relative to strategies, activities, timelines and ranked priorities);
- outlines how the state will measure the intended outcomes and identifies the best way to capture the most relevant information (i.e., meaningful performance indicators, targeted evaluation questions, and specific data collection methods) that will enable staff to:
 - a. determine whether activities are on the right track;
 - b. make mid-course corrections to improve the implementation of activities; *and*
 - c. determine the degree to which intended outcomes were achieved;
- provides opportunities to critically examine the extent to which implemented activities and strategies are functioning as intended and may guide mid-course corrections to implementation processes and activities; *and*
- provides opportunities for reporting and dissemination that address the question of whether or not what has been accomplished is what was intended.

Stakeholder involvement is critical to all aspects of the SSIP process. Accordingly, state leaders need to use purposeful strategies to meaningfully engage those stakeholders. Evaluation is no exception. One way to ensure the relevance and usefulness of an evaluation is to include the perspectives and insights of as many individuals, groups, and other stakeholders as possible throughout the evaluation planning process. Engaging a wide range of stakeholders in each step of the evaluation planning process also provides opportunities to address questions, explore assumptions, and develop a shared understanding of what the evaluation will address and the findings it is expected to produce. Indeed, meaningful engagement of stakeholders can take a variety of forms. Sometimes stakeholder involvement is limited to reviewing or reacting to a draft of the evaluation plan, while in other cases, it is actually developing the evaluation plan alongside states.

Many resources exist related to evaluation. IDC developed *A Guide to SSIP Evaluation Planning* which includes worksheets to guide users through the evaluation process. Three other key resources that TA staff found useful in understanding all steps of evaluation were:

The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation, 2nd Edition

We Did It Ourselves: An Evaluation Guidebook

Taking Stock: A Practical Guide to Evaluating Your Own Programs

Evaluations can be presented in many different ways, with varying terms and components. The following steps show one way to conceptualize the steps involved in developing an evaluation plan.

Step 1. Identify intended outcomes of key activities.

Purpose

- Clarify and create a written record of the expected results of activities and steps if they are well implemented.

Resources

State developed SSIP Theory of Action developed in Phase I
State's completed SSIP Action Plan Template

Step 2. Develop a logic model, periodically review and revise as needed.

Purpose

- Link the SSIP theory of action developed in Phase I to the improvement plan completed in Phase II.
- Create a visual representation of the logical relationships among activities, intended outcomes, and the SIMR.
- Identify gaps in logical relationships between the intended outcomes and SIMR.
- Ensure that the outcomes identified are sufficient to achieve the SIMR.
- Give priority to those outcomes most critical to achieving the SIMR.
- Include intended outcomes necessary to fill logical gaps.
- Eliminate outcomes not necessary to achieve the SIMR.

Resources

State developed SSIP Theory of Action developed in Phase I

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide

Logic Models as a Platform for Program Evaluation Planning, Implementation, and Use of Findings

Developing a Logic Model

Step 3. Develop evaluation questions.

Purpose

- Create a written record of the questions the state wants to answer with the evaluation.
- Align evaluation activities and state priorities.

Resources

The Data are in the Details: Translating Evaluation Questions into Detailed Analytical Questions

Critical Questions About Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education

Guidance Table for Analyzing Child Outcomes Data for Program Improvement

Step 4. Develop performance indicators.

Purpose

- Create a written record of the metrics and criteria that will be used to define achievement of intended outcomes.
- Ensure that evaluation questions can be answered with data collected.

Resources

State developed data dictionaries
State developed activity timelines

Step 5. Identify data source(s)/methods.

Purpose

- Create a written record of:
 - data collection methods,
 - tools/instruments for collecting data,
 - participants in evaluation, *and*
 - Existing data sources.
- Ensure data will be available to answer the evaluation questions identified.

Resources

State's Data Dictionary
DaSy Data System Framework, Quality Indicator SD4
Common Education Data Standards (CEDs)

Step 6. Plan preliminary data analysis.

Purpose

- Ensure that data collected are sufficient to answer evaluation questions.
- Improved communication with staff responsible for data analysis.

Resources

Guidance Table for Analyzing Child Outcomes Data for Program Improvement
Planning, Conducting, and Documenting Data Analysis for Program Improvement

Step 7. Develop timelines for the evaluation.

Purpose

- Align evaluation activities with the overall timeline of improvement activities.
- Ensure the evaluation activities will provide information in a timely way.

Resources

State developed timelines from the SSIP improvement plan

Step 8. Identify how the data will be used to inform implementation.

Purpose

- Ensure that data collected are sufficient to answer evaluation questions.
- Improved communication with staff responsible for data analysis.

Resources

AI Hub Module 1, Framework 5: Improvement Cycles
AI Hub Handout 14: Improvement Cycles

Step 9. Involve stakeholders the evaluation planning process.

Purpose

- Identify stakeholders to be included in the evaluation planning process.
- Prepare stakeholders to support development and implementation of the evaluation plan.
- Ensure that stakeholders are included in each step, as appropriate.

Resources

A Practical Guide for Engaging Stakeholders in Developing Evaluation Questions
Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement
Stakeholder Engagement in Data System Initiatives: An Online Module for Part C and Part B 619 State Staff

Communicating the Plan

There are many times throughout the development of an improvement plan when state staff should consider processes for effective communication. Such processes help to ensure that those developing and implementing the improvement and evaluation plans and those impacted by the plans can communicate easily. Appropriate and timely communication also allows for refinements to the plan throughout development and implementation, ultimately ensuring the success and sustainability of the activities.

This section outlines steps, purposes, and resources in two subsections:

- Development of communication activities within the improvement plan; *and*
- Communication of completed Phase II plans.

The "plan" referenced throughout includes both the improvement plan and the evaluation plan components of the overall SSIP.

Key considerations for communication activities:

- Do activities reflect communication in all directions (i.e., activities supporting communication from multiple stakeholders to the state and vice versa)?
- Has sufficient time been allocated to request, gather, synthesize, and use input for each activity?

Developing Communication Activities

Step 1. Establish and document communication protocols for the SSIP team.

Purpose

- Establish a transparent communication process.
- Provide clear expectations and responsibilities for team members.
- Establish how the team communicates internally, with external stakeholders, and with the broader public.
- Document how communication is facilitated and how frequently it should occur.

Resources

AI Hub Handout 8: Communication Protocol Worksheet

Leading by Convening: One-Way and Two-Way Learning

Step 2. Document the mission and purpose of the communication with external stakeholders.

Purpose

- Define the goals and reasons for communicating SSIP activities.

Resources

Template for Strategic Communications Plan

Step 3. Identify stakeholder groups that need to be involved in each improvement strategy.

Purpose

- Ensure that the SSIP process will have input and feedback from diverse partners.
- Document stakeholder involvement for OSEP.

Resources

Community Tool Box: Chapter 7, Section 8:
Identifying and Analyzing Stakeholders and Their Interests

Leading by Convening: Ensuring Relevant Participation

Leading by Convening: Measuring Progress

Step 4. Identify existing communication supports and resources within the state.

Purpose

- Build upon existing resources.

Resources

Existing state communications and online support.

Step 5. Develop communication processes in order to share progress between groups and receive input from stakeholder groups and public audiences.

Purpose

- Provide opportunities for feedback from groups that haven't been represented on SSIP work teams.
- Ensure stakeholders are responsible for communicating progress and gathering feedback from the groups they represent (or other groups as assigned).
- Integrate feedback into plans prior to submitting to OSEP.

Resources

AI Hub Module 5, Topic 3: Practice-Policy Feedback Loops
AI Hub Activity 2.4: Mapping Feedback and Feed Forward Pathways

Communicating Completed Plans

When thinking about communicating the completed Phase II SSIP document, strategies must go beyond dissemination. Communication should incorporate continual feedback loops that include sharing and receiving information.

The following steps describe the milestones of communicating completed improvement and evaluation plans. These steps, purposes, and resources for communicating completed plans support meaningful interaction with stakeholders and the development of a high-quality Phase II SSIP.

Step 1. Plot the communication strategies used so far to communicate with stakeholders and the public.

Purpose

- Become aware of the types and levels of strategies that are used.
- Build upon existing resources.
- Identify any biases in communication strategies.

Resources

Leading by Convening: One-Way and Two-Way Learning (see pg. 6-7)

Step 2. With core stakeholders, plan and co-create the messages to be conveyed.

Purpose

- Use a consistent message about what the SSIP is, how the state is planning to roll it out and the role of stakeholders and the public.
- Include core features, components and expected outcomes of any new practices or systems to be implemented.

Resources

Template for Strategic Communications Plan (see pg. 8-11)

Step 3. Strategize communication channels needed to reach intended audiences.

Purpose

- Intentionally select communication channels (e.g. print, online, presentations) in order to reach targeted stakeholders and public audiences.

Resources

Choosing the Right Communication Channel

Leading by Convening: Ensuring Relevant Participation

Step 4. Create a list of stakeholder groups/public that have not yet been engaged so that they have opportunities to provide feedback for the plans.

Purpose

- Use existing stakeholders to identify whose input is missing.

Resources

Leading by Convening: Meet the Stakeholders

Step 5. Develop feedback loops for dissemination of completed plans and receipt of feedback.

Purpose

- Provide opportunities for stakeholder groups and public audiences to interact with and respond to the plans (e.g., encourage stakeholders and champions to engage the groups they represent).
- Ensure that the feedback that is being submitted is intentionally considered and integrated.
- Create a process where stakeholders who have provided input can see that their input was considered and, if appropriate, how it was used.

Resources

Leading by Convening: Dialogue Guides

Problem of Practice: Creating Active Engagement

AI Hub Module 5, Topic 3: Practice-Policy Feedback Loops

Communication Cycles

Step 6. Develop a timeline for communication of the completed plan, including allowance for time needed for public feedback.

Purpose

- Provide adequate time to communicate and receive feedback on the completed plan.

Resources

How-To: Make a Gantt Chart in Excel

SSIP Phase II Tools and Resources

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

AI Hub Activity 2.4: Mapping Feedback and Feed Forward Pathways

Integration of Implementation Drivers, including creating information/communication pathways, is a key facet of doing Active implementation. This mapping activity, which includes an Implementations Drivers diagram, will help improve and integrate feedback and feed forward processes.

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/AIModules-Activity-2-4a-MappingCommunicationPathways.pdf>

AI Hub Activity 5.2: PDSA Who am I?

An activity that highlights the importance of PDSA cycles in data-based decision making and guides participants in reflections about team strengths and weaknesses.

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/AIModules-Activity-5-2-PDSAWhoAml.pdf>

AI Hub Handout 8: Communication Protocol Worksheet

This Communication Protocol Worksheet can be used to promote system alignment and facilitate communication.

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/AIHub-Handout8-CommunicationProtocolWorksheet.pdf>

AI Hub Handout 14: Improvement Cycles

Implementation teams employ improvement cycles in order to intentionally identify problems and solutions. As a result, practices improve and hospitable environments are developed to support more effective and efficient ways to work. The Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle or PDSA Cycle underlies the different types of improvement cycles described in this active implementation framework (Deming, 1986).

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/AIHub-Handout14-ImprovementCycles.pdf>

AI Hub Module 1, Framework 5: Improvement Cycles

Framework 5 of this webpage outlines two different conceptualizations of improvement cycles: *Plan-Do-Study-Act*, and *Practice-Policy*.

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/module-1/improvement-cycles>

AI Hub Module 3: Implementation Teams

This module located on the Active Implementation Hub provides an introduction to implementation teams, including definitions, rationale, key functions, and best practices for establishing and maintaining these teams.

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/module-3>

AI Hub Module 5, Topic 3: Practice-Policy Feedback Loops

Practice-Policy Feedback Loops are PDSA cycles designed to provide organizational leaders and policy makers with information from the practice level about implementation barriers and successes so that a more aligned system can be developed.

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/module-5/topic-3-practice-policy-feedback-loops>

Benchmarks of Quality for Home-Visiting Programs

This worksheet provides benchmarks of a high-quality home-visiting program and a self-assessment tool.

Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/calls/2015/decrp-2015-02-11/Benchmarks_Home_Visiting.pdf

Choosing the Right Communication Channel

Communication cycles are designed to intentionally address communication gaps as education systems work to improve student outcomes.

Retrieved from <https://www.melcrum.com/research/strategy-planning-tactics-intranets-digital-social-media/choosing-right-communication>

Circles of Involvement

This is an exercise developed to identify key partners for implementing system changes. The version linked here includes instructions for use in a specific public health initiative. The most useful part of the document may be the definition of the Circles of Involvement. Consideration of all of the various types of stakeholders identified in the Circles of Involvement and the benefit they will bring to the implementation of the SSIP can improve the quality of stakeholder involvement. This process links to the Implementation Science recommendation that members of implementation teams should represent different perspectives and range across multiple levels of the system.

Retrieved from http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/community-health-assessment-and-improvement-planning/upload/http___www-naccho-org_topics_infrastructure_mapp_framework_clearinghouse_loader.pdf

Common Education Data Standards (CEDS)

The Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) project supports state work to develop common data standards for a key set of education data elements which streamlines the exchange, comparison, and understanding of data within and across P-20W. States already implementing CEDS can use the standards to identify data elements available for analysis. For states building their data system infrastructure to support the SSIP evaluation, CEDS would be an important resource for planning data collections.

The CEDS Alignment Tool is a Web-based tool that allows stakeholders to:

- import or input their organizations' data dictionaries,
- compare (or "map") their data dictionaries (element names, definitions, and options sets) to CEDS, *and*;
- compare their data dictionaries with those of other participating organizations.

The *CEDS Connect Tool* allows stakeholders from varied educational organizations to identify policy questions and related data elements, define analytic approaches, calculate metrics and indicators, address reporting requirements, and accomplish many other data tasks.

Retrieved from <https://ceds.ed.gov>

Communication Cycles

Facilitators and barriers encountered in practice are rapidly (at least monthly) communicated to the highest level required for a solution. For example, 'not enough time for competent coaches to support teachers learning to use new instruction practices' can be taken from the school to the district leadership. If district leadership cannot find a solution for some reason, the issue is not dropped – it is taken to the State Management Team. In this way, local issues can be resolved locally and more systemic issues can be resolved at a statewide level.

Retrieved from <http://sisep.fpg.unc.edu/news/sisep-enotes-may-2015>

Community Tool Box: Chapter 7, Section 8: Identifying and Analyzing Stakeholders and Their Interests

Identifying stakeholders and their interests is an important aspect of the participatory process. Chapter 7 of the *Community Tool Box* goes into depth about the process of identifying and engaging stakeholders.

Retrieved from <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main>

Community Tool Box: Chapter 8, Section 5: Developing an Action Plan

The *Community Tool Box* provides tips and guidelines for developing a strategic plan and organizational structure, from defining a vision to bringing about real change.

Retrieved from <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/strategic-planning/develop-action-plans/main>

Critical Questions About Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education

This tool is designed to help programs identify evaluation questions. The tool is a good starting point for states beginning to or working toward customizing their evaluation questions to align with their needs. Evaluation questions are divided into three outcome areas:

1. child/family,
2. practitioner, *and*;
3. program/agency.

Also helpful: Each question is identified as essential ("must-have") or aspirational ("nice-to-have").

Retrieved from <http://dasycenter.org/critical-questions>

DaSy Data System Framework

States can use this resource in planning the infrastructure to support their evaluation and data collection activities for the SSIP. The quality elements within each component outline what needs to be in place to collect and use data effectively. The DaSy Framework subcomponent *Data Governance and Management* outlines activities that are helpful when looking for secondary data and developing procedures for collecting new data. Section 2 of this subcomponent (Quality and Integrity) should be carefully considered when new data are being collected. Sections 1 (Authority and Accountability) and 3 (Security and Access) must also be considered as states think about where new data will be housed and how the data can be accessed.

Retrieved from: <http://dasycenter.org/resources/dasy-framework>

The Data are in the Details: Translating Evaluation Questions into Detailed Analytical Questions

This 2015 presentation focuses on breaking down and/or rephrasing evaluation questions, perhaps into several questions, that clearly communicate the details needed for data analysts to understand what you want to analyze and how. Clearly articulated analytical questions will help you to determine what data are needed and to more efficiently and effectively obtain the answers that you need, using data to support success in the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).

Retrieved from <http://dasycenter.org/the-data-are-in-the-details-albuquerque>

DEC Recommended Practices & Glossary

The DEC Recommended Practices provide guidance to practitioners and families about the most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth through age 5, who have or are at risk for developmental delays or disabilities.

Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>

Developing a High Quality Improvement Plan

This presentation includes information about how VA Part C elicited membership for planning teams, how the team meetings are conducted, and how the teams are coordinated. This can be used as a model for developing a process.

Kicking off Phase II: Slides 11-23 are most relevant to staffing for planning.

Developing the Improvement Plan: Slides 3-11 are most relevant.

Retrieved from https://appam.certain.com/accounts/register123/air/events/pdconf/userfiles/0x1255388f65dDeveloping_a_High-Quality_Improv.pptx

Developing a Logic Model

This is a teaching guide that can be used in the development of a logic model. It includes definitions of the components of a logic model (inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes) and examples of some of the categories underneath the components.

University of Wisconsin-Extension. (2010a). *Developing a logic model* [Slide presentation]. Madison, WI: Author.
Retrieved from <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

DIY Committee Guide: Strategic Plan Step 5: Writing Your Plan

This guide gives a series of steps to help an organization plan its development strategically and outline its goals and aims.

Retrieved from <http://www.diycommitteeguide.org/resource/strategic-plan-step-5-writing-your-plan>

Getting Ready for Phase II of the SSIP

This annotated presentation provides an overview of Phase II focused on getting ready for Phase II of the SSIP. States can copy the slides into presentations that they are planning to kick off Phase II.

Retrieved from <http://ectacenter.org/~ppts/calls/2014/ssip/ssip2-1-2014-12-01.pptx>

Guidance Table for Analyzing Child Outcomes Data for Program Improvement

This guidance table is designed to help identify key issues, questions, and approaches for analyzing and interpreting data on outcomes for young children with disabilities. The tool outlines a series of steps related to defining analysis questions, clarifying expectations, analyzing data, testing inferences, and conducting data-based program improvement planning. It also includes examples of questions and approaches and sample figures to consider.

Retrieved from <http://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/AnalyzingChildOutcomesData-GuidanceTable.pdf>

A Guide to the Implementation Process: Stages, Steps, and Activities: Stage 2: Installation

This interactive guide on the implementation stages includes information on forming a state leadership team to plan and oversee implementation and scaling up of evidence-based practices. Content is provided on the development of the state leadership teams that links to the activities included in kicking off Phase II.

Retrieved from <http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/interactive/stage2/intro.asp>

A Guide to SSIP Evaluation Planning

This guide describes key steps for developing a well-thought-out plan for evaluating a 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. The guide, along with its corresponding worksheets, is intended for TA providers to use in partnership with state staff.

<https://ideadata.org/resource-library/5697cca3140ba0ca5c8b4599>

The Hexagon Tool

The Hexagon Tool helps states, districts, and schools systematically evaluate new and existing interventions via six broad factors: needs, fit, resource availability, evidence, readiness for replication and capacity to implement.

Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-Education-TheHexagonTool.pdf>

How-To: Make a Gantt Chart in Excel

Although Excel is not a graphical tool by design, it is possible, with quite a bit of formatting, to make a Gantt chart in Excel. You can do this by turning your project tables into an Excel Gantt chart using Excel's bar graph functionality, and importing your Gantt charts into PowerPoint.

Retrieved from <https://www.officetimeline.com/gantt-chart-excel>

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

This brief introduces key elements of effective implementation within an integrated, stage-based framework. This framework posits that (1) implementation happens in four discernible stages; and (2) three common "threads" or core elements exist across each of these stages.

Kicking off Phase II: Pages 5 and 6 include a useful summary of implementation teams. Included in the summary are: a definition of implementation teams, membership of implementation teams, relationships among teams, rationale for using implementation team, and core competencies required of implementation teams.

Developing the Improvement Plan: The entire document is useful for this activity.

Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/es_cceepa_stage_based_framework_brief_508.pdf

Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement

Dialogue is necessary when implementing practices. This dialogue guide can be used to develop shared meaning and create effective dialogue.

Retrieved from <http://www.ideapartnership.org/building-connections/the-partnership-way.html>

Leading by Convening: Dialogue Guides

This document contains models for stakeholder interaction around issues.

Retrieved from <http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Blueprint%20USB/Meetings%20to%20Co-Create%20Dialogue%20Guides.pdf>

Leading by Convening: Ensuring Relevant Participation

This document has tips for encouraging and supporting relevant participation from the full range of stakeholders, including asking at which level individuals want to be engaged early in your collaboration.

Retrieved from <http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Blueprint%20USB/Ensuring%20Relevant%20Engage%20Everybody.pdf>

Leading by Convening: Measuring Progress

These qualitative rubrics are tools that can be used to generate data on interactions. These data will help you understand the growth of critical relationships to ensure stakeholders are engaged.

Retrieved from <http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Blueprint%20USB/Bringing%20it%20All%20Measuring%20Progress.pdf>

Leading by Convening: Meet the Stakeholders

For every issue, there are a number of groups that have deep and durable connections at the practice level. Some are very closely aligned with the issues that you are trying to influence. Others have more distant, yet still important, connections. In either case, stakeholder groups have influence in what practitioners know, believe and do. Stakeholder groups can be important allies in moving new and/or proven practices to implementation! This template will help leaders identify and reach out to potential partners in order to meet and address persistent challenges.

Retrieved from <http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Blueprint%20USB/Coalescing%20Around%20Meet%20the%20Stakeholders.pdf>

Leading by Convening: One-Way and Two-Way Learning

This PowerPoint presentation offers a blueprint for authentic engagement by considering different types of learning strategies, communication styles, and leadership models.

Retrieved from <http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Blueprint%20USB/Doing%20the%20Work/One-way%20and%20Two-way%20Learning.pdf>

Logic Models as a Platform for Program Evaluation Planning, Implementation, and Use of Findings

This presentation is geared toward helping practitioners develop useful logic models. The slides address the hallmarks of well-constructed, useful logic models and how to use logic models for program evaluation planning, implementation, and using the findings. The slides break down and explain the different components and terminology associated with a logic model. Additional resources and sites are also cited. States can use this presentation as an introduction to logic models and as guidance for key components to create a meaningful logic model for their SSIP evaluation.

Honeycutt, S. & Kegler, M.C. (2010). Retrieved from <http://comm.eval.org/viewdocument/?DocumentKey=79c7da3d-6978-452c-8e8b-7056d3626966>

Part B SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table

The table describes the requirements for Phase II of the SSIP for Part B.

Retrieved from <https://osep.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/4603>

Part B State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool

The Part B SSIP Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool is based on the three components described in Phase II of the Measurement Table under Indicator 17 (Part B). Those components are 1) Infrastructure Development; 2) Support for LEA Implementation of EBPs; and 3) Evaluation. Phase II builds on the five components developed in Phase I. Phase II must be submitted by April 1, 2016 as part of the FFY 2014 SPP/APR. The Phase II components are in addition to Phase I content (including any updates).

Retrieved from <https://osep.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/8823>

Part C SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table

The table describes the requirements for Phase II of the SSIP for Part C.

Retrieved from <https://osep.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/4604>

Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool

The Part C SSIP Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool is based on the three components described in Phase II of the Measurement Table under Indicator 11 (Part C). Those components are 1) Infrastructure Development; 2) Support for EIS Programs and EIS Provider Implementation of EBPs; and 3) Evaluation. Phase II builds on the five components developed in Phase I. Phase II must be submitted by April 1, 2016 with the FFY 2014 SPP/APR. The Phase II components are in addition to Phase I content (including any updates).

Retrieved from <https://osep.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/8824>

Planning, Conducting, and Documenting Data Analysis for Program Improvement

This document provides information to help state staff define and limit the scope of data analysis for program improvement efforts, including the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP); develop a plan for data analysis; document alternative hypotheses and additional analyses as they are generated; and summarize findings and document results.

Retrieved from http://dasycenter.sri.com/downloads/DaSy_papers/DaSy_SSSIP_DataAnalysisPlanning_20150323_FINAL_Acc.pdf

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

This guide includes TA process documents and the implementation process, structures, and tools for planning and monitoring implementation used in ECTA Intensive TA for Implementing, Sustaining, & Scaling Up Evidence-Based Practices to Improve Child Outcomes.

Kicking off Phase II: The section on p. 6 provides an overview of the major structures of the RP2: Reaching Potentials through Recommended Practices Initiatives including:

- State Leadership Team
- Master Cadre of Training and TA providers
- Implementation and Demonstration Sites

Also useful are the sections related to the Planning/Installation Stage embedded under each of the major structures.

Developing the Improvement Plan: The entire document relates to developing the improvement plan.

Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/implement_ebp/ECTA_RP_StateGuide_2-2015.pdf

A Practical Guide for Engaging Stakeholders in Developing Evaluation Questions

This guide provides strategies for involving stakeholders in setting the direction for evaluation. While it is geared toward evaluation consultants, it provides useful information for state staff to guide efforts to promote stakeholder engagement throughout the SSIP process.

Preskill, H., & Jones, N. (2009). Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Evaluation Series. Retrieved from <http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/web-assets/2009/01/a-practical-guide-for-engaging-stakeholders-in-developing-evalua>

The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation, 2nd Edition

This manual, written for program managers, contains tips, worksheets, and samples to help program managers understand each step of the evaluation process.

Most relevant sections:

- o Outline of the basic evaluation steps (*pg. 8-9*)
- o Chapter 5: Outlines the steps to prepare for an evaluation (*pg. 30-41*)
- o Sample logic model and logic model worksheet (*pg. 42-43*)
- o Sample and worksheet for describing implementation objectives in measurable terms (*pg. 44-45*)
- o Sample and worksheet for describing participant outcome objectives (*pg. 46-47*)
- o Sample outline for an evaluation plan (*pg. 59-61*)
- o Sample data collection plan (*pg. 74-75*)
- o Worksheet for developing a data collection plan (*pg. 76*)

Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/the-program-managers-guide-to-evaluation>

Problem of Practice: Creating Active Engagement

This rubric describes the key actions and behaviors that leaders need to pay attention to in order to create active engagement at the informing level, networking level, collaborating level, and transforming level.

Retrieved from <https://wested.app.box.com/s/oh0wkij7a0a7hsfyfoxrv0f0u55ljdj3>

Recommended Resources for Planning to Evaluate Program Improvement Efforts (including the SSIP)

This document provides a list of recommended resources to support evaluation planning for program improvement efforts, including the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).

Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/topics/ssip/plan_eval_program_improvement.asp

Sample SSIP Action Plan Template

This sample action plan template provides states with a suggested, but not required, format and examples of potential content to assist them in completing their Phase II SSIP improvement plan and evaluation plan.

Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~docs/topics/ssip/ssip_improvement_plan_template.doc

SSIP Phase II Gantt Chart Template

The Gantt Chart is a tool to track state planning activities with timelines.

Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~docs/topics/ssip/ssip_phase_ii_gantt_chart.docx

Stakeholder Engagement in Data System Initiatives: An Online Module for Part C and Part B 619 State Staff

This online module provides foundational information on effective stakeholder engagement and includes a session (Session 3) on strategies and resources for state staff to use when leading stakeholders in data system initiatives (including the SSIP).

DaSy (2014). Retrieved from <http://dasycenter.org/stakeholder-engagement-in-data-system-initiatives-an-online-module-for-part-c-and-part-b-619-state-staff-2>

State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality

The State Benchmarks of Quality is can be used by the State Leadership Team (SLT) to assess progress and plan future actions so that Recommended Practices (RPs) are available for providers and families statewide. Sections of this document are particularly useful in considering the structure and staffing of the state leadership team, including on pages 3-4.

Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/implement_ebp/ECTA_RP_Benchmarks_4-2015.pdf

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

The system framework guides coordinators and staff in successfully addressing state needs, then implementing evidence-based practices, and finally bringing about positive outcomes for children and their families.

Retrieved from <http://ectacenter.org/sysframe>

Taking Stock: A Practical Guide to Evaluating Your Own Programs

This manual is written for community-based organizations and focuses on internal evaluation conducted by program staff, which will be useful for states planning to conduct their SSIP evaluation internally. The manual provides an overview of the evaluation process and includes the basic steps of planning for and conducting internal program evaluation, including practical strategies for identifying quantitative and qualitative data.

Most relevant sections:

- Chapter 4: What Are You Trying to Do? Defining Goals and Objectives (*pg. 15–19*)
- Evaluation Planning Chart (*pg. 25*)
- Chapter 6: Finding the Evidence: Strategies for Data Collection (*pg. 27-37*)
- Chart of program objectives to evaluation questions (*pg. 47*)
- Roadmap for evaluation design (*pg. 61-62*)
- Appendices: Example evaluation reports

Bond, S.L., Boyd, S.E., Rapp, K.A., Raphael, J.B. and Sizemore, B.A. (1997). Horizon Research. Retrieved from <http://www.horizon-research.com/taking-stock-a-practical-guide-to-evaluating-your-own-programs>

Template for Strategic Communications Plan

This template provides guidance for the development of a strategic communication plan (*see Step 3: Develop Messages, pg. 2*).

Using the *Message Development Worksheet* will help convey goals and objectives, deliver important information about the issue, and compel the targeted audience to think, feel, or act. (*see Message Worksheet, pg. 11*)

Retrieved from <https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/01/template-for-strategic-communications-plan>

Vision and Direction in Leadership Checklist

This checklist includes examples of steps leaders can take to help create a well-functioning and forward-thinking organization and to help practitioners feel a sense of belonging as they understand their purpose within the organization. The checklist can also be used as a self-evaluation by leaders at both state and local levels.

Retrieved from http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/decrp/LDR-3_Leaders_vision_direction.pdf

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide

This guide is written for a broad audience to clarify the what, why, and how of logic models. The contents of discussion include what logic models are and the different types, why a program should develop a logic model, and how a logic model can be used to guide implementation and plan for evaluation.

The guide also includes templates and checklists that states can apply to their SSIP. This guide provides useful explanations and definitions of evaluation terminology.

Most relevant sections:

- Figure 2: How to read a logic model graphic (*pg. 3*)
- 3 Approaches to logic models (*pg. 9–10*)

Retrieved from <https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide>

We Did It Ourselves: An Evaluation Guidebook

This guidebook is written for the person who has never done an evaluation before. It provides step-by-step instructions on how to design and carry out an evaluation. It could also be used as a reference by people interested in certain phases of the evaluation process, such as writing performance indicators or designing a survey. The guidebook details how to:

1. develop outcome statements, indicators, and evaluation questions;
2. formulate an evaluation methodology and collect, assess, and summarize data; *and*
3. develop and disseminate evaluation findings and recommendations.

The guidebook also contains a glossary, sample outcome and indicator statements, evaluation resources, and real-life stories of how community organizations used evaluation tools. This resource is lengthy but full of useful explanations of evaluation concepts. It has some wonderful worksheets and resources that states can use for the SSIP and that TA providers can use with states during sessions and workshops.

Most relevant sections:

- Worksheets to develop evaluation questions (*pg. 35–39*)
- Implementation questions (*pg. 58*)
- Worksheet for documenting strategies and activities (*pg. 61*)
- Examples of documentation forms (*pg. 62-66*)
- Examples and worksheets for developing an evaluation work plan (*pg. 91–96*)
- Exercise for analyzing training attendance data (*pg. 154–155*)

SRI International (supported by the Sierra Health Foundation) (2000). Retrieved from <https://www.sierrahealth.org/pages/525>

SSIP Phase II: 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 Outcome: 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 II: Process Guide

This *SSIP Phase II 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 II. The guide will be updated as content is developed and finalized.

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