

## Ohio EI FFY20 State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Summary

### *SSIP Overview and Ohio's SSIP History*

The State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) is a comprehensive multi-year plan for improving results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Each year, states must report on their plan's progress within the state's Annual Performance Report (APR). From FFY13 to FFY20, Ohio's SSIP focused on the State-Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) of improving acquisition and use of knowledge and skills among children served in EI. Throughout this time, the state completed data and infrastructure analyses; established an implementation plan including short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes needed to make improvements in the SIMR and specific activities needed to achieve these outcomes; and developed an evaluation plan including data utilized to measure progress in each of the established outcomes and the SIMR. Ohio's EI system achieved each of the identified activities and made significant progress in the selected SIMR area in this timeframe.

### *Selecting a New SIMR*

As Ohio's EI system completed all the activities identified in first SSIP cycle, the DODD and EI stakeholders began to consider the next SSIP cycle, including selecting a new SIMR area in which to focus the state's SSIP efforts. Both data and anecdotal evidence collected over the past several years suggest that Ohio needs to place additional emphasis on social-emotional development. The state's EI stakeholders also expressed increasing interest in more formally addressing children's social-emotional needs, further aligning with other initiatives outside of EI. Finally, addressing social-emotional needs has become more pressing as children and families experience unique challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In consideration of these factors DODD and EI stakeholders selected the following SIMR to focus on during FFY20-25:

***Substantially increase the rate of growth in the percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved social-emotional skills***

### *Evaluation and Implementation Plan*

Ohio selected new improvement strategies around which to structure the SSIP to address the new SIMR. These improvement strategies focus on the same broad areas as the state's previous plan, but are streamlined to address social-emotional development:

- Improve the identification of children's social-emotional strengths and needs through the assessment process, including the COS
- Improve the quality of IFSP outcomes addressing social-emotional skills
- Improve the delivery of evidence-based EI services and families' ability to support social-emotional development

DODD established short-term and intermediate outcomes to be achieved in each of the three improvement strategy areas. These outcomes are needed in order to make improvements in the state's SIMR area, which serves as the long-term outcome. The state developed an evaluation plan that encompasses these outcomes and includes specific evaluation questions, outlines how each outcome will be met, and describes data that will be collected and analyzed to evaluate progress toward achieving each outcome. This evaluation plan, along with Ohio's new Theory of Action, are posted on the EI website: <https://ohioearlyintervention.org/federal-reporting-and-postings>

DODD is also finalizing an implementation plan that includes activities to be completed to achieve each of these outcomes, along with timelines for completion.

### *Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)*

Ohio identified Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices (RPs) that align with the state's new SIMR and outcomes. The RPs the state will implement with this SSIP include:

- **RP A4** - Practitioners conduct assessments that include all areas of development and behavior to learn about the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and interests (Improvement Strategy 1)
- **RP A7** - Obtain information about the child's skills in daily activities, routines, and environments such as home, center, and community (Improvement Strategy 1)
- **RP F4** - Practitioners and the family work together to create outcomes or goals, develop individualized plans, and implement practices that address the family's priorities and concerns and the child's strengths and needs (Improvement Strategy 2)
- **RP F5** - Practitioners support family functioning, promote family confidence and competence, and strengthen family-child relationships by acting in ways that recognize and build on family strengths and capacities (Improvement Strategy 3)
- **RP TC1** - Practitioners representing multiple disciplines and families work together as a team to plan and implement supports and services to meet the unique needs of each child and family (Improvement Strategy 3)

The selected EBPs align with the newly developed Theory of Action and outcomes identified as needed to implement each improvement strategy area: RPs A4 and A7 address conducting quality assessments; RP F4 addresses creating quality, individualized IFSP outcomes; and RPs F5 and TC1 address service delivery and increasing family capacity. These EBPs will be integrated into activities needed to achieve the identified outcomes.

### *Evaluating Progress*

As part of the state's evaluation plan, DODD will utilize ongoing data to evaluate progress in the achievement of identified outcomes and implementation of the EBPs that align with these outcomes. Specifically, the DODD will collect and analyze data regarding:

- How well social-emotional strengths and needs are being identified through the assessment process, including the COS;
- Parent understanding of their child's social-emotional strengths and needs;
- Quality of IFSP outcomes addressing supporting social-emotional development;
- Parent involvement in developing outcomes that support social-emotional development;
- Provider ability to deliver evidence-based EI services to support social-emotional development; and
- Parent ability to support their children's social-emotional development.

### *Stakeholder Involvement*

In addition to extensive involvement in the selection of the state's new SIMR, the EI Advisory Council and stakeholder group are heavily involved in all aspects of Ohio's new SSIP. The group participated in the infrastructure analysis at the May 2021 meeting where they identified strengths and opportunities for growth related to Governance, Professional Development, Technical Assistance, Quality Standards, Accountability/Monitoring, Finance, and Data. At their November 2021 meeting, the group was given a link to provide input regarding activities and potential data related to each of the three improvement strategy areas. Additionally, the stakeholders were engaged in multiple conversations over several years around Ohio's APR targets, including the targets selected for the state's SIMR area. DODD has shared the state's new evaluation plan with the state's EI field and will collaborate with stakeholders in finalizing the activities to be included in the implementation plan in order to achieve these outcomes.