

**Ohio Early  
Intervention  
State Systemic  
Improvement Plan  
(SSIP)**

FFY 2021 (July 1, 2021– June 30, 2022)

## Section A: Data Analysis

### *What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)?*

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

### *Has the SiMR changed since the last SSIP submission?*

No

### *Is the State using a subset of the population from the indicator (e.g., a sample, cohort model)? (yes/no)*

No

### *Is the State's theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)*

No

### *Please provide a link to the current theory of action.*

<https://ohioearlyintervention.org/storage/ocali-ims-sites/ocali-ims-oei/documents/Ohio-SSIP-Theory-of-Action-FFY20-through-FFY25.pdf>

### *Please provide the data for the specific FFY listed below (expressed as actual number and percentages).*

FFY21: 54.34%

#### Targets and Data

FFY	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	63.10%	52.00%	52.00%	53.00%	53.00%	54.00%	55.00%
Data	51.06%	52.18%	54.34%				

### *Provide the data source for the FFY 2021 data.*

Ohio extracted the FFY21 SIMR data, along with all COS data, from the state EI data system. COS data for all children who were exited in FFY21, served in EI at least six months, and had entry and exit COS scores were included in the analysis. As the SIMR reflects data for the entire population of children included in the COS analyses, this percentage corresponds to Indicator 3A, Summary Statement 1 in Ohio's Annual Performance Report. Further details about data collection and analysis are included subsequently.

### *Please describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR.*

Beginning in January 2015, the Child Outcomes Summary process was integrated into the child and family assessment and overall IFSP process. At that time, Ohio began to collect the following Child Outcomes Summary statements (adopted from Maryland), using its data system, for each of the three outcome areas:

- Relative to same age peers, child's functioning might be described as like that of a much younger child. He shows early skills, but not yet immediate foundational or age expected skills in this outcome area
- Relative to same age peers, child is showing some emerging or immediate foundational skills, which will help him to work toward age appropriate skills in the area of (outcome)
- Relative to same age peers, child is not yet using skills expected of his age. He does however use many important and immediate foundational skills to build upon in the area of this outcome
- Relative to same age peers, child shows occasional use of some age expected skills, but more of his skills are not yet age expected in the area of this outcome
- Relative to same age peers, child shows many age expected skills, but continues to show some functioning that might be described like that of a slightly younger child in the area of this outcome
- Relative to same age peers, child has the skills that we would expect of his age in regard to this outcome; however, there are concerns
- Relative to same age peers, child has all of the skills that we would expect of a child his age in the area of this outcome

The COS is required as part of the initial assessment process, as well as annually, so entry COS are completed as part of the IFSP process and documented on Ohio's IFSP form, as well as in the state data system. Local programs use the COS decision tree, along with all the information discussed in the child and family assessments, to help IFSP team members choose which statement above best describes the child's development compared to same-age peers. Each statement corresponds to a score of 1 through 7, respectively.

Exit COS are also required for all children who have been served in Early Intervention in Ohio and are exiting for a reason other than being deceased or loss of contact with the family. Although it is not a part of the IFSP process, the IFSP team, including the family, complete the Exit COS. An optional Exit COS form that mirrors the COS section of the IFSP form is available on the Ohio EI website and Exit COS statements are required to be entered in EIDS on the Exit page unless the child record is being exited due to one of the reasons mentioned above.

As described in the previous section, COS data for the FFY21 SIMR data, along with all COS data, were extracted from the state EI data system including all children who were exited in FFY21, served in EI at least six months, and had entry and exit COS scores. Since Ohio's SIMR data encompass the entire population included in the COS, the SIMR percentage was calculated in the same manner as all COS percentages: all children whose entry COS score was greater than 1 and whose exit COS score was higher than the entry score, divided by all children whose entry or exit COS score was below 6.

***Optional: Has the State collected additional data (i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey) that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? (yes/no)***

Yes

***Describe any additional data collected by the State to assess progress toward the SiMR.***

The collection and analyses of data related to the evaluation plan and other data related to social emotional development is described in Section B and summarized in the appendices.

***Did the State identify any general data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period? (yes/no)***

Yes

***Describe any data quality issues, unrelated to COVID-19, specific to the SiMR data and include actions taken to address data quality concerns.***

Ohio integrated COS into the child and family assessment process in 2015 and transitioned from collecting COS ratings to COS statements at that time. DODD recognized the data quality challenges and concerns as this significant process transition occurred. While the implications regarding data quality became less significant over time, FFY18 was the first reporting year where all included COS data were collected using the new process.

In addition to the implementation of the new COS process, DODD provided a significant amount of technical assistance (TA), created numerous resources, and made available a considerable amount of data related to the COS process to the state's EI field over the last several years. Ohio implemented a new IFSP form in July 2019 that more prominently emphasized the assessment process, including completing the COS. The COS descriptor statements were placed directly on the IFSP form, and DODD required more active involvement of evaluation and assessment teams in documenting the evaluation and assessment results—including the COS statements—on the IFSP form. Additionally, last reporting year, DODD made significant updates to the COS resources page on the Ohio EI website, including posting a new, Ohio-specific decision tree for selecting COS statements. This updated page also includes a recording of a COS webinar, a COS "cheat sheet," resources for engaging families in the COS process, a program guide for monitoring the COS process, and national COS resources. Finally, the last several reporting years, the EI regional program consultants placed a particularly substantial emphasis on the COS process in the local EI programs' TA and training plans.

With this increased focus on the COS, Ohio believes the percentage for Ohio's SIMR, along with the percentages for other COS indicators, now more accurately reflect child outcomes. The percentages for these indicators have begun to even out; however, Ohio acknowledges that with continued emphasis on and improvements in the COS process, there may be some instability in the data for some additional period of time.

***Did the State identify any data quality concerns directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the reporting period? (yes/no)***

Yes

***If data for this reporting period were impacted specifically by COVID-19, the State must include in the narrative for the indicator: (1) the impact on data completeness, validity and reliability for the indicator; (2) an explanation of how COVID-19 specifically impacted the State's ability to collect the data for the indicator; and (3) any steps the State took to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the data collection.***

COVID-19 may not have had a direct effect on SIMR data, but certainly continued to impact EI processes and families, more generally. While less common, some parts of the EI process are still being completed virtually in some parts of the state due to or as a residual effect of the pandemic, which continues to have an impact on the way data and information are collected in some capacity. Though many children birth to age three during the height of the pandemic are now over the age three, DODD recognizes that

the social-emotional impact of the pandemic on these children and their families likely also continues to be a factor both in EI and beyond in school settings. DODD continues to examine and tease out the impact of the pandemic, including in the interpretation of data.

## Section B: Phase III Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

*Please provide a link to the State's current evaluation plan.*

<https://ohioearlyintervention.org/storage/ocali-ims-sites/ocali-ims-oei/documents/Ohio-SSIP-Evaluation-Plan-FFY20-through-FFY25.pdf>

*Is the State's evaluation plan new or revised since the previous submission?*

No

*Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period.*

Ohio is still in the early phases of this plan and the implementation of improvement strategies. Some short-term and intermediate activities have been completed or are underway as the state has begun to provide resources, trainings, and data related to social-emotional strengths, needs, and development. However, this reporting year, the state primarily collected data to inform decisions on what activities are needed to achieve intermediate and long-term outcomes. Activities related to the short-term and intermediate outcomes, associated evidence-based practices, and data collected and analyzed as part of the state's evaluation plan are described in more detail in the subsequent sections.

*Describe the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved for each infrastructure improvement strategy during the reporting period including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Please relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up.*

Ohio developed the following short-term outcomes as part of the state's new evaluation plan:

- Local programs and families have increased access to resources, trainings, and data related to assessing social-emotional strengths and needs through the assessment process, including the COS
- Local programs and families have increased access to resources, trainings, and data about their role in the team development of IFSP outcomes supporting social-emotional development
- Local programs and families have increased access to resources, trainings, and data related to supporting social-emotional development through evidence-based service delivery

The short-term outcomes focus on identifying needs and making needed trainings, resources, and TA available. As such, these outcomes involve many aspects of the systems framework. Issues and needs will be identified via the data, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, and technical assistance areas. The implementation of new resources and trainings involves the professional development area, which also involves the finance area in some cases in order to make these trainings and resources available.

This reporting year, the state made progress toward achieving short-term and intermediate outcomes. In the previous reporting year, the state collaborated with its Central Intake and Outreach vendor, Bright Beginnings, to add information specific to social-emotional development to the state's existing

developmental wheel, which previously only listed broader developmental milestones. The added information, aligned with CDC's Act Early initiative, includes key social-emotional milestones and tips parents can use to enhance development in each six-month increment until age three. Local EI programs, as well as other early childhood partners, child care programs, health professionals, and community organizations, can request the wheels at no cost through the EI website. In October 2022, Bright Beginnings also began to offer the ASQ and ASQ-SE online as a child find effort to help families understand how their children are developing. More than 170 screenings were completed online through the end of 2022 and referrals for families who completed them were made to both Early Intervention and Home Visiting. Bright Beginnings also created area of delay-specific outreach materials in 2022. One of these outreach materials is oriented around social-emotional development.

In addition to continuing to offer trainings that involve EI topics and development more broadly, the state also continued to offer trainings covering social-emotional development more in depth. DODD again offered trainings on The Newborn Behavioral Observations (NBO) system™, which is an infant-focused, family centered, relationship-based tool, designed to foster positive parent-infant interactions and contribute to the development of a positive parent-infant relationship from the very beginning. Additionally, through an interagency agreement (IAA) with The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS), Hopewell Health Centers conducted numerous trainings related to social-emotional development which were offered statewide to all EI personnel, including:

- Social Emotional Development as a Foundation for Learning
- Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders
- Building Your Bounce: Adult Resilience
- FLIP-IT! Overview and Four- Step Strategy
- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants and Toddlers (DECA-I/T)

DODD and OHMAS also enhanced their existing IAA to ensure: EI teams have access to an Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) consultant; parents served by EI teams have access to an ECMH consultant; and Development Specialists become more confident and competent in providing interventions to caregivers with infants and toddlers experiencing social-emotional delays. The role of the ECMH consultants includes attending team meetings, providing mental health expertise, providing child/family consultation, sharing resources, assisting with identifying appropriate referrals, and providing trainings. Additionally, DODD and OHMAS are launching a pilot in early 2023 for ECMH consultants to participate in evaluation and assessment teams in and in IFSP meetings in 18 of Ohio's 88 local programs, with the ultimate goal of increasing efficiency in providing families with needed services and supports.

Finally, DODD gathered data directly from families and providers related to social-emotional skills and development via the state's annual family questionnaire and a newly developed provider survey. DODD also continued to complete IFSP outcome ratings, focusing on outcomes addressing social-emotional development. These data are discussed in additional detail subsequently in the section regarding data collection to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change. DODD will use these data along with information obtained via the ECMH pilot to determine additional activities needed to achieve outcomes and make improvement in the state's SIMR.

Activities related to the short-term outcomes are necessary in order to ultimately achieve the SIMR, and in the sustainability of systems improvement efforts as they lay the foundation for achieving the intermediate and long-term outcomes. To facilitate increased knowledge and improve practices, which will be attained via activities to achieve the intermediate and long-term outcomes, the state is

necessarily first gathering data and implementing applicable information, resources, and trainings to address needs identified in each improvement strategy area.

***Did the State implement any new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategies during the reporting period? (yes/no)***

No

***Describe each new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategy and the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved.***

N/A

***Provide a summary of the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.***

Over the next reporting year, Ohio will continue to offer trainings related to assessing social-emotional strengths and needs and supporting social-emotional development; collect and analyze data included in the state's evaluation plan to determine whether progress is being made toward achieving outcomes; and examine and discuss data obtained through the family questionnaire, provider survey, and IFSP outcome ratings. Additionally, DODD will provide technical assistance and training for ECMH consultants working in EI; have discussions to determine what is working well and what could be improved with the ECMH pilot; and, if the pilot is successful, make plans for and begin to implement the participation of ECMH consultants on evaluation, assessment, and IFSP teams statewide. Finally, DODD will collaborate with other early childhood entities to address infant and toddler social-emotional needs. Through these discussions, data analyses, and collaborations, the state will continue to determine additional activities needed to achieve the state's identified outcomes and make progress in the SIMR area, including identifying associated infrastructure areas, applicable evidence-based practices, and timelines for completion of each selected activity.

***List the selected evidence-based practices implemented in the reporting period:***

The resources provided, trainings offered, data collected and analyzed, and activities implemented center around evidence-based practices (EBPs). The state's short-term and intermediate outcomes focus on obtaining thorough information around social-emotional development and ensuring families understand their children's social-emotional skills, strengths, and needs through the assessment process; families and practitioners collaborating to develop IFSP outcomes that address social-emotional needs; and the ability of practitioners and families to support children's social-emotional development. Specifically, the following DEC Recommended Practices (DEC RPs) related to the SIMR, along with activities needed to achieve outcomes, will continue to be implemented over the next several years:

- RP A4
- RP A7
- RP F4
- RP F5
- RP TC1

***Provide a summary of each evidence-based practice.***

A description of each of the EBPs Ohio follows:



- **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** – Practitioners 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)

*Provide a summary of how each evidence-based practice and activities or strategies that support its use, is intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (e.g. behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child/outcomes.*

The selected EBPs align with the Theory of Action associated with the state’s new SIMR 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. Because these EBPs will be integrated into activities needed to achieve the identified outcomes and the achievement of these outcomes will ultimately lead to improvement in the SIMR, the selected EBPs thus also impact this improvement.

*Describe the data collected to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change.*

Because the selected EBPs align with the Theory of Action and outcomes and are being integrated into the activities needed to achieve each outcome, the data collected as part of the state’s evaluation plan are being used monitor the fidelity of implementation to assess practice change. As part of the evaluation plan, DODD is collecting ongoing 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 that address 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. Each intermediate outcome in the state’s evaluation plan, the measurement and data collection methods, and the FFY21 data are included in Appendix A. A summary of the data collected this reporting year follows:

- Of 2,702 respondent families, 2,373 (87.82%) reported they agree or strongly agree that EI has helped them better understand the child’s social-emotional strengths and needs (on a five-point scale)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Parent report data were collected via Ohio’s 2022 annual Family Questionnaire.

- Of 640 IFSP outcomes rated that were identified as addressing social-emotional development, 244 (38%) met all six of the ECTA six-step criteria<sup>2</sup>
- Of 1,914 respondent families, 1,732 (90.49%) reported they agree or strongly agree that during their time in EI, they actively participated in developing IFSP outcomes that support their child's social-emotional development (on a five-point scale)
- Of 383 respondent EI providers, 276 (72.06%) rated their ability to deliver evidence-based EI services to support social-emotional development as a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale<sup>3</sup>
- Of 2,696 respondent families, 2,416 (89.61%) reported they agree or strongly agree that EI has helped them better support their child's social-emotional development (on a five-point scale)

Please note data regarding how well social-emotional strengths and needs are being identified through the assessment process have not yet been collected, but DODD plans to begin reviewing assessments to collect baseline data for this outcome later this year.

***Describe any additional data (e.g. progress monitoring) that was collected that supports the decision to continue the ongoing use of each evidence-based practice.***

DODD collected additional baseline data related to social-emotional development through the state's family questionnaire, provider survey, and IFSP outcome rating process. The additional data collected in each of these ways are described below and along with the data that are part of the evaluation plan, summarized in Appendix B, Appendix C, and Appendix D, respectively.

Through the family questionnaire, in addition to data collected for the evaluation plan, the state received input from families about their:

- Confidence in their child's social-emotional development; and
- Involvement in helping their team learn more about their child's social-emotional development.

In addition to data collected as part of the evaluation plan, EI providers responded to items on the provider survey regarding their:

- Involvement in the assessment process to identify children's social-emotional strengths and needs;
- Participation in identifying IFSP outcomes to support social-emotional development;
- Confidence in comparing children's positive social-emotional skills to same-age peers;
- Confidence in identifying children's social-emotional strengths and needs;
- Understanding of children's social-emotional skills/development;
- Confidence in developing outcomes to address social-emotional needs; and
- Confidence in delivering evidence-based EI services to address social-emotional development.

In addition to data collected as part of the evaluation plan, DODD analyzed the following data related to IFSP outcomes addressing social-emotional development:

- The number of outcomes that met each of the six criteria
- The number of outcomes that met one, two, three, four, and five criteria

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<sup>2</sup> A representative sample of outcomes added to IFSPs January through June 2022 were selected, prioritizing outcomes the local program had indicated social-emotional development was being addressed. DODD rated each of these items on the ECTA six-step criteria and identified whether the outcome addressed social-emotional development. Outcomes included in this report include only those that DODD staff indicated addressed social-emotional development.

<sup>3</sup> Provider report data were collected via Ohio's inaugural Provider Survey.

***Provide a summary of the next steps for each evidence-based practices and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.***

DODD will continue to disseminate resources, offer trainings, provide TA, examine data, and implement activities to make improvements in each of the EBP areas listed and summarized previously. Further, the state will continue to identify activities needed to achieve outcomes, and ultimately, the SIMR, in each of these EBP areas over the next reporting year and beyond. DODD expects to achieve short-term outcomes and make progress toward intermediate outcomes this reporting year.

***Does the State intend to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications?  
(yes/no)***

No

***If no, describe any changes to the activities, strategies or timelines described in the previous submission and include a rationale or justification for the changes.***

DODD selected a new SIMR for the state's SSIP work during the last reporting year as well as new broad improvement strategies and short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes that would facilitate progress in the chosen SIMR area. The state also developed a new evaluation plan including measures to track progress in the each of the intermediate and long-term outcomes. DODD is continuing its SSIP work with the same SIMR, improvement strategies, and outcomes and collected baseline data for most of the intermediate outcomes this reporting year. Over the next reporting year, DODD will collect baseline data for the outstanding intermediate outcome. DODD will continue to collect and analyze data through the evaluation plan to determine if any changes to the activities or strategies are needed, but anticipates continuing to implement the current plan without any modifications.

## Section C: Stakeholder Engagement

### *Description of Stakeholder Input*

DODD values feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders, including families, when implementing activities to improve outcomes for children with disabilities and their families. The state solicits feedback broadly from its EI field through its bi-weekly newsletter, in a more targeted manner from its ICC and broader stakeholder group at quarterly meetings, directly from families via the state's annual Family Questionnaire, and from other sub-groups of stakeholders through targeted surveys, work groups, emails, or meetings, as needed. More specific details about stakeholder involvement in key improvement efforts follow in the next section.

### *Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts.*

In the previous reporting year, DODD collaborated with the state's Early Intervention Advisory Council (EIAC) and stakeholder group to select the state's new SIMR and complete a new infrastructure analysis. The state also engaged stakeholders in the process to select APR targets for FFY20 through FFY25, including the target for the state's new SIMR. Finally, DODD shared the new Theory of Action and evaluation plan, last year's full report, and a summary of last year's report with Ohio's EI field.

This reporting year, DODD obtained input from the EIAC and stakeholder group when developing items related to social-emotional development for the state's annual family questionnaire and inaugural provider survey. DODD used these surveys to collect baseline data for the state's evaluation plan and to receive additional input directly from families and providers in the state's EI system. The specific data collected are described in earlier sections of this report and summarized in Appendices B and C. The state shared summary data from the family questionnaire and intends to share high level summary data from the provider survey with local programs. The state also obtained feedback from EI Administrators, ECMH consultants, and local EI leaders to develop ECMH pilot this reporting year, and continues to involve ECMH consultants more meaningfully in the evaluation and assessment process through the pilot implementation.

### *Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities?*

No

### *Describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.*

N/A

## Additional Implementation Activities

### *List any activities not already described that the State intends to implement in the next fiscal year that are related to the SiMR.*

N/A

### *Provide a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes for these activities that are related to the SiMR.*

Timelines for completion of activities will be considered in the coming months as the state continues to have discussions about the data and determine activities needed to achieve outcomes. The data collection measures and outcomes are included in the state's evaluation plan and a link for this plan is

provided in Section B of this document. The state collected baseline data related to families' understanding of their children's social-emotional strengths and needs; quality of outcomes addressing social-emotional development; family participation in developing outcomes addressing social-emotional development; practitioners' ability to deliver evidence-based EI services; and families' ability to support their children's social-emotional development this reporting year. Aside from practitioners' ability to deliver evidence-based EI services, which likely will not be examined again until the final year of this plan, DODD plans to collect, analyze, and report on other data on an annual basis. Ohio will collect and analyze baseline data regarding the identification of social-emotional strengths and needs through the assessment process in the coming months and will determine the schedule for collecting and analyzing these assessment data going forward.

*Describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.  
Provide additional information about this indicator (optional).*

N/A