North Carolina Part C

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

Phase III – Year 3

North Carolina Early Intervention Branch
Infant-Toddler Program
4-1-2019

North Carolina Part C – SSIP – Phase III, Year 3

Phase III, Year 3 Report

A. Summary of Phase III

The focus of North Carolina's State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) is to improve the social-emotional outcomes of infants and toddlers, ages birth to three, with developmental disabilities or delays and their families, who are enrolled in the N.C. Infant-Toddler Program (ITP). This report, the N.C. ITP SSIP Implementation Phase III – Year 3 Report, provides an update on progress related to activities and implementation of activities. Language in the report referring to the SSIP reporting year refers to the April 2018-March 2019 reporting window.

North Carolina's State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) focus is Indicator 3A, Summary Statement 1, which measures ***the percent of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention (EI) services with IFSPs who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) and a substantial increase in their rate of growth by the time they turn three years of age or exit the program.***

The core focus of last year's Phase III-Year 2 SSIP was to begin to build shared capacity in using implementation science principles and to establish an overall SSIP teaming structure. During this reporting period, North Carolina has continued its focus on the development and maintenance of this solid foundational infrastructure for evidence-based practices and processes for implementation and continued to build capacity by using implementation science principles. The priority strategies for N.C.'s SSIP are: Coaching and Natural Learning Environment Practices (NLEP), Global Outcomes (GO) integration and Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning hereafter referred to as the Pyramid Model (PM).

Two events have had a major impact on both implementation and evaluation activities during this reporting period. The first – the institution of the State Implementation Team (SIT) – which was a goal set in last year's SSIP. The SIT, part of a system of accountability and support outlined in the state's theory of action (TOA), was established to be the engine to move the work of the SSIP forward. Through this team's research of materials and implementation strategies and its overall geographic and performance diversity, the SIT is well positioned to ensure that CDSA staff and providers statewide have the supports necessary to implement Coaching and NLEP, GO and the Pyramid Model. The SIT consists of the six Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) directors from the Phase 1 implementation sites.

Other SIT members include two CDSA directors from the original GO pilot sites, two directors from the state's largest CDSAs, and two State Design Team (SDT) members. The SSIP co-lead, who is a CDSA director, and a member of the SDT, facilitates the team's monthly meetings and teleconferences.

If the SIT is the engine that moves the SSIP work forward, the SSIP state co-lead/data manager is the starter. The November 2018 departure of the person in this position majorly impacted the progress of the SSIP work during this reporting period. This staff person had

been the initiator behind evaluation efforts and the primary expert in implementation science and systems change work. Over the 18 months she was employed, the SSIP co-lead/state data manager brought clarity in communication and purpose and consistency to the overall work of the SSIP and all work associated with it. Although progress has been made in the implementation of many of the strategies, this vacancy and the length of time the position remains unfilled has the potential to slow the momentum and movement of the SSIP work. As the position is in the process of being filled, the SDT, SIT, and ITP data staff have collaborated to develop survey tools and other methods to evaluate implementation and oversee the SSIP work.

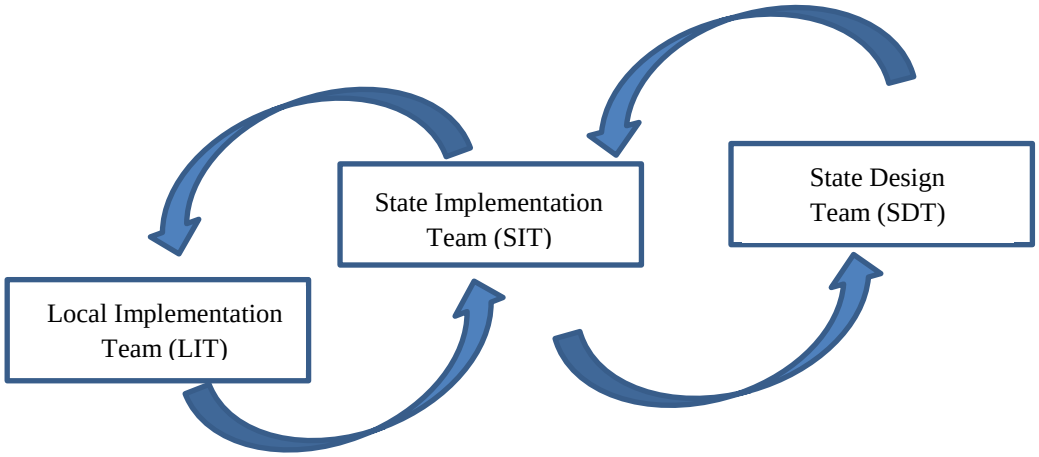
1. Theory of action (ToA) or logic model for the SSIP

NORTH CAROLINA INFANT-TODDLER PROGRAM THEORY OF ACTION				
Strands of Action	If N.C. ITP. . .	Then. . .	Then. . .	THEN
Infrastructure	develops a statewide implementation infrastructure using principles of implementation science to implement evidence-based practices (EBPs)	N.C. ITP will establish a system of accountability	to ensure staff and providers have implementation supports to implement EBPs	**N.C. will increase the percentage of children who demonstrate progress in positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) while receiving ITP services**
Evidence-Based Practices	uses implementation science principles to implement Coaching and NLEP and Pyramid Model	N.C. will ensure EBPs are being used with fidelity; CDSA staff and network providers will have access to clearly defined EBPs to use with children and families to support social emotional development	providers and local programs will use evidence-based practices, particularly around social-emotional development	
Global Outcomes	expands the integrated global outcomes (GO) process; disseminates GO data at the CDSA level	parents will better understand their child's functioning related to same age peers, including social/emotional functioning; GO summary ratings, will more reliably represent the children served	parents will be more likely to report being able to effectively communicate their children's needs, parents will be more likely to report being able to help their children develop and learn	

2. The coherent improvement strategies or principle activities employed during the year, including infrastructure improvement strategies

   As part of its ToA to support its implementation of EBPs and to build a system of accountability, the N.C. Infant-Toddler Program created the infrastructure below.

Infrastructure Improvement Strategies



SDT

The SDT is comprised primarily of the team leads who spear-headed efforts that identified N.C.'s initial list of 18 SSIP recommendations. The SDT made the shift this year from setting the agenda for the SSIP work to providing oversight and guidance for implementation of the three priority strategies. In this capacity, the SDT retains responsibility for decision-making on SIT recommendations, leading state-level communications, overseeing evaluation work, removing barriers, and identifying resources to support successful implementation.

SIT

The SIT held its kick-off meeting August 2018. At its monthly meetings and teleconferences, the SIT shares information, creates materials and plans for implementation, reviews data, makes recommendations to the SDT, and provides additional strategy-related information to Early Intervention Branch staff. During this reporting period, the SIT has been particularly instrumental in reviewing materials to support Coaching/NLEP sustainability, expansion of GO, and exploring next steps for implementing the Pyramid Model.

LIT

The establishment of CDSA local implementation Teams (LITs) is planned for late summer/early fall of 2019. The LITs will be charged to carry out implementation and system-building activities as directed by the SIT, provide feedback to the SIT about barriers, and support collaborative relationship-building.

3. The specific evidence-based practices that have been implemented to date

Coaching/NLEP

Collaboration continues with Dr. Dathan Rush and staff at the Family, Infant and Preschool Program (FIPP). Thus far, this collaboration has resulted in all staff at the 16 CDSAs having completed the initial training in Coaching/NLEP. A February 2019 survey of staff at the 16 CDSAs indicated that 85% of the 400 respondents said they use coaching with the families they currently serve. Some successes cited by respondents are below:

I have found that families are great at expressing ideas and showing what they have been working on throughout their daily routines.

My families are being held accountable and realizing that their ideas/methods are effective.

I have seen a shift from EISCs (early intervention service coordinators) and clinical staff feeling like they have to do all the work to putting the responsibility back on the caregivers to be a partner in services.

I write strategies on IFSP outcomes totally different now than before the coaching training.

Challenges and barriers to implementation cited by staff who took the survey include parent/caregiver limitations/challenges and resistance heavy caseloads, and additional paperwork associated with coaching.

A cadre of Master Coaches (MCs) are trained and in place at each of the CDSAs. Ninety-nine of them responded to a February 2019 survey. Successes they noted included seeing the growth in their staffs and providers and the positive ways that coaching has impacted their work with families. Challenges/barriers encountered in implementing master coaching primarily centered on time management/time constraints given high caseloads and increased associated paperwork (coaching logs) and staff/provider resistance. To overcome these challenges, respondents suggested faster or different methods of documentation and more frequent training opportunities for staff and providers.

The SIT has begun the identification and development of relevant procedures and tools to measure the fidelity of Coaching/NLEP implementation by CDSA staff to use beginning June 2019.

GO

The GO team continued its work preparing for eventual implementation at the Phase 1 CDSAs. Staff turnover in the N.C. ITP resulted in the appointment of a new state co-lead for this team. The GO team has concentrated primarily in two areas critical in moving the work forward during this SSIP reporting period:

- IFSP revision: North Carolina's IFSP has been revised to integrate GO. The revised IFSP is being reviewed by Branch TA staff and will go to the SIT for review before approval by the SDT.
- Material development and training*:* The GO team has developed a plan that includes specific train-the-trainer trainings and development of surveys for intake and assessment to inform materials to support families through the GO process.

Pyramid Model

- Several SDT members attended a regional N.C. Pyramid Model conference in April 2018 to explore and align with early intervention statewide collaborative efforts.
- SDT participated in targeted technical assistance provided by the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI).

4. Overview of the year's evaluation activities, measures, outcomes, and progress implementing the SSIP

   During this reporting period, survey and document analysis were used to assess the progress made in key outputs and intended intermediate outcomes. **Appendix 1** contains the overview of N.C.'s evaluation activities and updates on progress of its SSIP strategies.

5. Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies

   Highlights of changes to N.C.'s SSIP implementation progress include the following:

   - GO timeline change for developing integration implementation plan to June 2019
   - GO timeline change to develop staff, provider, and family training with training materials to September 2019

B. Progress in Implementing the SSIP

1. Description of the State's SSIP implementation progress

   Appendix 1 provides a description of N.C.'s implementation progress. It includes accomplishments with an accompanying description of N.C's successes with respect to intended outputs and planned activities. Where applicable, timeline revisions are also noted.

2. Stakeholder involvement in SSIP implementation

   a. How stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing implementation of the SSIP

   Adhering to the SSIP communications plan referenced in the Phase III, Year 2 SSIP, the SDT has informed stakeholders of on-going implementation of the SSIP through a variety of methods. Communications have occurred via electronic communications (email, the N.C. ITP newsletter, *Buzzworthy*, semi-annual stakeholder newsletter and *What's Up With SSIP*, **Appendix 2**), as well as through teleconferences and meeting presentations.

In addition, SSIP co-leads and SDT members have given face-to-face updates on SSIP work at all bi-monthly EI Branch Leadership meetings and at CDSA directors' bi-monthly conference calls, presentations at state Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) meetings and other local stakeholder meetings.

Further, SDT members have continued to engage stakeholders through collaborative meetings to ensure statewide alignment and to leverage on-going efforts in N.C.'s early childhood system. The Branch Head, who is a member of the SDT, serves on the N.C. Early Childhood Foundation's *Pathways to Grade-Level Reading* initiative and the Department of Health and Human Services' (N.C. DHHS) *Early Childhood Action Plan* (ECAP). The plan centers on these themes: that North Carolina's young children are healthy, grow up safe and nurtured, and are well-supported to be learning and ready to succeed. The ECAP, which began as a departmental initiative, has expanded statewide by the Governor's Executive Order and has involved approximately 15,000 stakeholders.

b. How stakeholders have had a voice and been involved in decision-making regarding the on-going implementation of the SSIP

Stakeholders are given updates and the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions with every update of the SSIP. These opportunities helped shape the work of the SDT and most recently, the work of the SIT since its establishment. Data collection, primarily through surveys, continues to help engage stakeholder voices in implementation improvement and success.

Some SSIP opportunities and/or challenges that stakeholders have offered input on include:

- Readiness assessment by Phase I CDSAs to implement SSIP initiatives
- Prioritization of SSIP strategies and related activities
- Feedback and input concerning development of tools/resources/modules for sustainability of Coaching/NLEP
- Feedback and review of the GO materials and resources

C. Data on Implementation and Outcomes

State Baseline and Target Data: Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships). Of those children who entered and exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

Historical Data and Targets

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Target	73.50%	73.50%	73.50%	73.50 %	73.50 %
State Data	73.13%	70.74%	71.28%	70.88 %	72.07 %

For FY 2017, the N.C. ITP saw a slight increase in our statewide data, with little variation in scores between FY 2013 and FY 2017.

Pilot Site Data

In the Phase I report, six CDSAs were selected to represent the CDSAs based on the following factors: geographic diversity, performance diversity, and concerns of data quality related to the variability of child outcome data. Targets were established (for a 5% increase) from 2014-17. Data for these six CDSAs has been used in calculating our SiMR.

Pilot Sites	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Blue Ridge	60.7%	50.0%	51.9%	57.1%	64.1%
Cape Fear	56.2%	56.5%	57.1%	57.1%	56.5%
Elizabeth City	53.3%	64.9%	78.9%	73.5%	66.9%
Greensboro	86.4%	76.5%	80.9%	79.8%	83.2%
Sandhills	56.0%	68.8%	61.1%	70.1%	70.5%
Winston-Salem	81.4%	86.9%	86.0%	84.8%	84.0%
SiMR Target	**65.67%**	**65.67%**	**66.84%**	**66.84%**	**68.29%**
SiMR - Actual	**65.7%**	**67.3%**	**69.3%**	**70.4%**	**70.9%**

The N.C. ITP has seen an increase in its SiMR score every year and exceeded SiMR targets since 2014. These data clearly suggest that the N.C. ITP revisit originally designated targets. Also, the SiMR data cannot be attributed to SSIP activities, as initial implementation of Coaching/NLEP training did not occur until mid-year 2016, expansion of GO has not started, and the Pyramid Model has not begun. On an individual CDSA-level there is no consistent pattern of increase or decrease. These data reinforce the need for the N.C. ITP to standardize ways that CDSAs determine child outcomes scores to address potential variability in child outcomes, i.e., an issue of data quality. The SDT and N.C. ITP data team have had the opportunity to review these data and will explore ways to reevaluate targets and enhance data quality.

The variability in child outcomes scores provides further justification to implement GO integration, which is intended to help create more reliability and validity in child

outcomes ratings. **Section D.1.** further discusses how the N.C. ITP proactively deals with issues of data quality.

In late spring 2018, the CDSA directors at the original Phase 1 sites that were used to calculate the SiMR were given the opportunity to re-evaluate their CDSAs' readiness to implement GO and other SSIP initiatives and determine their continued willingness to implement during Phase 1. Management at two of these CDSAs (Blue Ridge and Cape Fear) no longer felt their CDSAs could effectively implement new initiatives and these CDSAs were removed from the pilot group. The Greenville CDSA, one of the original GO pilot sites, requested to be added to the group. This CDSA has seen a sharp decline in its child outcomes scores overall and wanted to participate in piloting other SSIP initiatives in hopes that they would positively impact the child outcomes scores.

The table below represents the updated pilot site actual data from 2013-2017, along with the current target and what the SiMR data would have looked like with this group of CDSAs over time:

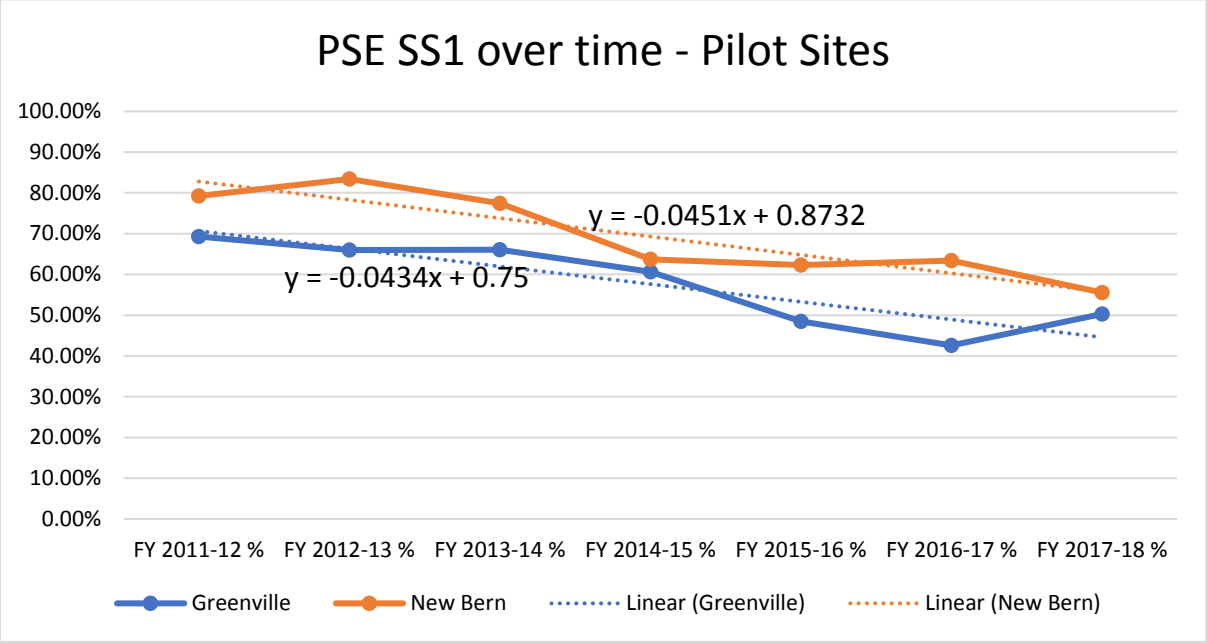
Pilot Sites	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Elizabeth City	53.3%	64.8%	78.9%	73.4%	66.9%
Greensboro	86.3%	76.4%	80.9%	79.7%	83.2%
Greenville	66.1%	60.6%	48.4%	42.5%	50.2%
Sandhills	55.9%	68.8%	61.0%	70.1%	70.5%
Winston-Salem	81.3%	86.8%	85.9%	84.8%	84.0%
SiMR Target	**65.67%**	**65.67%**	**66.84%**	**66.84%**	**68.29%**
SiMR - Actual	**68.6%**	**71.5%**	**71.0%**	**70.1%**	**71.0%**

Review of the data from the two CDSAs that have implemented GO Integration (see table below), provides further evidence that the N.C. ITP needs to reevaluate targets as additional CDSAs begin to implement this SSIP initiative. The data in the table below represents the percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrated improved positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) as measured by an increase in their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

CDSA Global Outcomes Pilot CDSAs	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Greenville	69.30%	66.01%	66.10%	60.63%	48.48%	42.59%	50.25%
New Bern	79.22%	83.41%	77.45%	63.69%	62.33%	63.39%	55.56%

As can be seen in the table above, the scores for Summary Statement 1 for positive social-emotional skills decreased substantially with the implementation of the GO process for these two CDSAs, and the scores have remained relatively low over time

compared to other CDSAs. The graph below shows how this decrease in scores has been virtually identical for the two pilot CDSAs. Note that the trend lines have almost identical slopes.



The two pilot CDSAs accounted for about 8% of the total population served by the N.C. ITP. Changes in their child outcomes scores had a minimal effect on the data for the N.C. ITP as a whole. The four additional CDSAs that plan to roll out GO in FY 2018-19 account for almost one-quarter of the N.C. ITP's enrolled children. It is anticipated that the scores at these CDSAs will decrease similarly to what the pilot sites experienced. Given the more substantial number of children impacted by the process change at these CDSAs, the decrease in their child outcomes scores is likely to have a more significant impact on both the N.C.ITP's SiMR and overall child outcomes scores.

The N.C. ITP plans to review the FY 2018-19 data for the two original pilot sites to determine whether the trends continue to hold. The N.C. ITP will then project the future change for the Phase 1 sites, and base SiMR targets off that projection. Additionally, the N.C. ITP will regularly continue this re-projection process based on changes at the original pilot sites and data from the Phase 1 sites as they implement GO and other improvement strategies.

Finally, the SiMR has historically been calculated using the average of the scores for the six pilot sites, without taking into consideration substantial differences in CDSA size. As the N.C. ITP updates the CDSAs included in the SiMR, it is also changing the SiMR calculation process to make it more mathematically sound. Starting in FY 2018-19, the SiMR will be calculated using the total number of children in each progress category for the five Phase 1 CDSAs. This will give a more accurate reflection of the social-emotional progress of the children across these CDSAs.

The table below represents using this calculation process for the updated site targets and actual data from 2013-2017. It includes what the SiMR data would have looked like over time:

Pilot Sites	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Elizabeth City	53.33%	64.86%	78.95%	73.48%	66.94%
Greensboro	86.39%	76.50%	80.93%	79.76%	83.24%
Greenville	66.10%	60.63%	48.48%	42.59%	50.25%
Sandhills	55.96%	68.84%	61.09%	70.11%	70.47%
Winston-Salem	81.37%	86.86%	85.96%	84.81%	84.01%
SiMR - ALL Phase 1 Children	**74.94%**	**75.28%**	**74.74%**	**75.42%**	**76.16%**

1. How the State monitored and measured outputs to assess the effectiveness of the implementation plan

   As mentioned earlier, the establishment of the SIT and the resignation of the SSIP co-lead/state data manager have impacted implementation and evaluation activities. As a result, the SDT, SIT, and ITP data staff have worked closely to develop survey tools and other methods to evaluate implementation.

   This process is still in its early stages, and many of the strategies the N.C. ITP intended to initiate during this reporting period have been pushed into FY 2019. However, N.C. was still able to conduct some of the same evaluation activities used in prior years, including surveys and review of available information including meeting notes from original content area teams (CATs), reports and updates provided at Leadership meetings related to the SSIP.

   Information about evaluation activities that have been implemented or are in development to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the implementation plan related to implementation infrastructure, Coaching/NLEP, and GO are listed below.

Infrastructure

In this reporting year, a survey of the CDSAs' landscape of social-emotional/early childhood mental health measures was undertaken to help support program planning. This survey asked CDSA directors about the:

- social-emotional evaluation/assessment tools being used.
- number of licensed mental health professionals on staff or contracted by the CDSAs.
- trainings that are being provided to increase knowledge of social-emotional development.
- service gaps that exist to support social-emotional development for children.

- EBPs that CDSA staff/contractors are using to support social-emotional development.

Key findings from the survey are listed below.

- Many CDSAs provide training related to social-emotional health, but the content and frequency varies significantly.
- There is a lack of trained/licensed CDSA staff and contract providers in mental health in many parts of the state.
- There is a need for standardized screening tools that address social-emotional development.
- Coaching/NLEP and Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) are the two most commonly-used EBPs used to support social-emotional development.
- CDSA directors were clear on the need for more state-sponsored training related to social-emotional development.

Results from the survey will be used by the SDT and SIT to work toward a standardized approach to assessing and addressing the social-emotional health of the children enrolled in the N.C. ITP.

Coaching/NLEP

One of the most significant changes since the N.C. ITP's last SSIP report is the initiation of the SIT to spearhead implementation. The SIT has developed surveys for staff who have taken the basic two-day Coaching/NLEP training and for those who have taken MC training. These surveys were approved for distribution by the SDT on February 6, 2019 and shared with EI Branch staff and CDSA directors at the EI Leadership Meeting that month prior to being distributed to staff across all CDSAs.

The survey for all staff gathered information on:

- whether staff felt they understand coaching as an interaction style, NLEP, and resource-based practices
- staff use of coaching with the families they serve
- staff successes with coaching, NLEP, and resource-based practices
- challenges and barriers to implementing these practices
- training or supports needed to continue to use these practices

For MCs, the survey gathered information on:

- the number of CDSA staff and contract providers they support
- MC successes
- challenges and barriers experienced implementing Master Coaching and what would help them overcome them

Global Outcomes

While the implementation of Coaching/NLEP was the focus of N.C.'s SSIP work during Phase III, Year 3, the focus of the GO team has been to develop tools that ensure CDSA preparedness for implementation at the Phase 1 CDSAs. This includes:

- selecting readiness tool(s) for Phase 1 CDSAs.
- developing a survey on intake, assessment, and IFSP processes that would inform the development of GO documents to support families.
- updating training tools, including an orientation to GO
- updating the IFSP document to include GO information
- developing implementation plans/timelines for use by Phase 1 sites once GO implementation has begun.

a. How evaluation measures align with the theory of action

The N.C. ITP is working to finalize and implement evaluation plans for its SSIP strategies in Phase III, Year 4. Input and support from the SIT will help inform decisions regarding key measures used for evaluation efforts. North Carolina will seek TA support to develop evaluation plans, incorporating relevant measures that clearly align with the ToA.

b. Data sources for each key measure

Multiple data sources were and will be used for each key measure.

- N.C.'s Health Information System (HIS) provides information on children enrolled in the programs
- Family and provider surveys:
  For GO: The Family Outcomes Survey (FOS) will be used to help with evaluation efforts for GO integration. Baseline data from the FOS is available for the CDSAs preparing to implement GO integration and will be presented to those CDSAs prior to training staff in the GO process. The FOS survey gathers critical data related to the percent of families who report that early intervention has helped the family: *(a) know their rights; (b) effectively communicate their children's needs; and (c) know how to help their children develop and learn.* As a critical aspect of the GO work is increasing family engagement so that families can be partners in child outcomes ratings, the FOS will be a critical tool in this evaluation.

  For Coaching/NLEP and GO: provider surveys have been and will continue to be administered to staff and providers receiving training in these strategies.
- Focus groups: Focus groups will be used to gather input from ITP leadership, CDSA staff, the ICC, families and other stakeholders on experiences with the SSIP and ITP activities.

- Provider observations: For selected strategies, the routine observation of staff who serve in a coaching capacity and/or with families, is critical for monitoring and measuring practice change and fidelity, as well as for triangulation of other sources of data. This will likely be implemented in FY 2019.

c. Description of baseline data for key measures

As noted earlier, refined evaluation plans will note revised baseline data for key measures.

d. Data collection procedures and associated timelines

As noted above, during Phase III-Year 3, the N.C.ITP conducted surveys of CDSA staff and directors regarding both Coaching/NLEP training and practices, and the landscape of practices related to social-emotional development across the CDSAs.

In FY 2019, intentional efforts will be made to create and refine evaluation plans for selection strategies that will articulate data collection procedures and associated timelines. In conjunction with evaluation plans, processes for analyzing and interpreting data will be documented.

e. How data management and data analysis procedures allow for assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvements

In this SSIP reporting year, members of the SDT and N.C. ITP Data and Evaluation Team have been involved in evaluation efforts for various SSIP strategies. The SSIP state leads and data team have primarily led data management and analysis efforts. In FY 2019, the SIT will be incorporated into the evaluation efforts, including participating, along with the SDT and data team staff, in developing procedures and processes that outline how these efforts will support on-going assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvements.

2. How the State has demonstrated progress and made modifications to the SSIP as necessary

a. How the State has reviewed key data that provide evidence regarding progress toward achieving intended improvements to infrastructure and the SiMR

Key data collected in this SSIP reporting year that provide information about intended improvements to infrastructure and the SiMR have been discussed previously. In addition, information from meeting minutes and feedback from stakeholders (as a result of presentations conducted) were used to inform development of improvement strategies and products/resources. These data have been shared and discussed at monthly meetings of the SDT and SIT and at bi-monthly Leadership team meetings, as well as at quarterly ICC meetings.

b. Evidence of change to baseline data for key measures

As noted earlier, data suggest that the N.C. ITP evaluate baseline targets established in Phase 1. Baseline data and SiMR targets will be reviewed on an on-going basis by the N.C. ITP's data team. The data will be shared with both the SDT and SIT for final decision making on any proposed changes to the targets.

c. How data support changes that have been made to implementation and improvement strategies and inform next steps in the SSIP implementation.

As detailed earlier, data collected from surveys has been used to support changes to improvement strategies and changes to implementation, and to help inform next steps in SSIP implementation. Data collected from SDT members, CDSA directors, and staff have identified successes and areas for improvement of SSIP processes and implementation activities. Shifts in SSIP activities and improvement strategies have been guided by findings from evaluation efforts. In FY 2019, additional data collection efforts will help inform opportunities for continuous quality improvement and *plan-do-study-act* cycles.

d. How data support planned modifications to intended outcomes (including the SiMR)—rationale or justification for the changes or how data support that the SSIP is on the right path

The SiMR data highlights the need for the N.C. ITP to explore modifications to baseline and targets. As N.C. has consistently exceeded its originally established targets and is well above the anticipated increase, N.C. will be evaluating the SiMR and discussing the possibility of readjusting targets.

3. Stakeholder involvement in the SSIP evaluation

a. How stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing evaluation of the SSIP

The SDT has engaged stakeholders to participate in SSIP evaluation efforts and informed stakeholders of SSIP evaluation activities by a variety of methods. The N.C. SSIP has used the Feedback Nest and its communications plan to help engage stakeholders. (These documents can be found in N.C. ITP's Phase III-Year 2 report as Appendices 7 and 8 respectively.) Critical stakeholders for N.C.'s SSIP include the 16 CDSA (leadership and staff), the ICC, and a broad stakeholder group, engaged from Phase I through Phase III (that includes representation from other early childhood state agencies, local non-profits, institutes of higher education, local and national experts, training and TA providers, and families). Communications have occurred via electronic communications (email and Branch publications), teleconferences, and face-to-face presentations and meetings.

b. How stakeholders have had a voice and been involved in decision-making regarding the ongoing evaluation of the SSIP

In Phase III-Year 3, stakeholders have primarily provided input/feedback into evaluation efforts for the SSIP through quantitative and qualitative data. These data

have been collected via surveys to help identify areas of success and improvement. Stakeholders have been provided results from data collection efforts and have provided input into the progress of SSIP activities. Collective interpretation of findings from evaluation efforts have led to critical decisions regarding process improvements and ongoing evaluation of the SSIP.

In Phase III-Year 3, the SIT was convened and has since provided a critical voice as a partner with the SDT regarding evaluation plans and implementation. Likewise, evaluation plans, efforts, and findings will continue to be shared with the ICC on a quarterly basis.

D. Data Quality Issues

1. Data limitations that affected reports of progress in implementing the SSIP and achieving the SiMR due to quality of the evaluation data.

   a. As noted in previous SSIP reports, the N.C. ITP electronic health information system (HIS) does not support all the data requirements necessary for monitoring practice fidelity and performance data. Likewise, the system is not flexible enough to adapt and meet changing program needs. For example, HIS does not have a data field available for the N.C. ITP to track whether and how the Family Outcomes Survey was offered to a family during the semi-annual IFSP review process. This data field is important to identify the method(s) that provide the most effective delivery system to improve a family's ability to access and complete the survey. These limitations require the development of work-arounds to capture or generate needed information.

      The N.C. ITP spent much of this reporting period exploring the acquisition of a new data system to meet program compliance, performance, and evaluation requirements. Step 1 approval was obtained from N.C. DHHS IT governance body to continue the exploration of a new data system. However, this process was put on hold as a result of the resignation of the SSIP co-lead/state data manager. The process will resume when the position is filled.

      To support evaluation efforts, the N.C. Early Intervention Branch used *Qualtrics*™ to implement statewide surveys and support data collection from CDSAs. *Qualtrics*™ has been used to conduct staff surveys on Coaching/NLEP training statewide and to get a sense from CDSA directors on the current landscape and practices around social-emotional development at the CDSAs.

   b. Concern or limitations related to the quality or quantity of the data used to report progress or results.

      As noted above, the GO data revealed a decrease in the progress of children enrolled in the N.C. ITP at the initial two pilot sites. While these decreases in GO ratings did not affect state performance overall, individual implementation sites associated with the SSIP can probably expect to see a similar decline in child progress, which will likely have some impact on the overall state date. The two GO pilot CDSAs

accounted for about 8% of the total population served by the N.C. ITP, however, the additional four Phase 1 CDSAs planned for GO implementation account for almost one-quarter of the N.C. ITP's enrolled children. Changes in their child outcomes data is likely to have a more significant impact on the N.C. ITP's future overall data.

The downward trend in child outcomes scores appears consistent with what other states that use these processes have seen. North Carolina is continuing to watch the GO data from the original pilot sites to see if the decline in child outcomes scores level off and begin to increase within the next one to two years. The N.C. ITP believes that the reduction in the GO ratings, once the new processes are implemented, is likely due to an increase in accuracy of children's development data and increased inter-rater reliability due to increased staff knowledge of child development (typical and atypical), inclusion of parents in the rating process, and the standardization of on-going child assessment and rating methodology. While it is ultimately the goal of the SSIP to improve the social-emotional outcomes of children, the data for CDSAs that implement GO will likely not show improvement for three or more years.

c. Implications for assessing progress or results

As noted earlier, there is great variability in child outcomes scores among CDSAs, though the state's overall scores have remained stable over time. In particular, the child outcomes scores at the CDSAs that have piloted the GO process are different from those CDSAs that have not yet implemented. The N.C. ITP's ongoing efforts to improve data quality make it difficult to assess true results. Further, the increasing SiMR scores without attributable evidence to SSIP activities, has presented a challenge for N.C. ITP to assess progress and/or results.

d. Plans for improving data quality

Establishing a data quality management (DQM) plan was a first step toward ensuring that quality data are available for routine review and local program improvement. As noted in the FY 2016 SSIP report, the N.C. ITP required all CDSAs to submit a DQM plan to help ensure data quality associated with GO ratings and other data collected and reported by the state. The DQM template has instructions that include 19 queries that CDSA staff can run from the N.C. ITP's Client Services Data Warehouse (CSDW), including queries related to GO data. Queries are also in development to allow CDSAs to track their child outcomes data against the N.C. ITP's targets throughout the year and to track the percent of children receiving exit child outcome summary ratings. These queries have been tested by one of the original GO pilot sites and will be shared with all CDSAs no later than the beginning of FY 2019-20.

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and reported by the state. The DQM template has instructions that include 19 queries that CDSA staff can run from the N.C. ITP's Client Services Data Warehouse (CSDW), including queries related to GO data. Queries are also in development to allow CDSAs to track their child outcomes data against the N.C. ITP's targets throughout the year and track the percent of children receiving exit child outcomes summary (COS) ratings. These queries have been tested by one of the original GO pilot sites and will be shared with all CDSAs no later than the beginning of FY 2019-20.

As a part of its monitoring and TA processes, the N.C. ITP has identified the DQMs specifically and the CDSA quality assurance (QA) process generally as areas where additional TA is needed. CDSAs are being required to submit updated DQMs in April 2019. During FY 2019-20, state office monitoring and TA staff plan to begin working with selected CDSAs on data literacy and their use of the DQM queries. This will help to ensure that the queries are being used as part of a robust local QA process and that local data is timely, accurate, reliable, and being used to drive local decision-making.

Another component in ensuring data quality is the process to identify a new data system to replace HIS. Once a new data manager has been hired, the N.C. ITP will be able to continue this process.

E. Progress Toward Achieving Intended Outcomes

1. Assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvements

Progress with various SSIP recommendations, organization, and infrastructure has continued during this reporting period. The SIT has been working diligently in partnership with the SDT toward achieving intended improvements since its kick-off meeting in August 2018. Although staff vacancies and turnover have continued to impact N.C.'s progress, significant strides have been made. See **Appendix 1** for the progress and accomplishments with the SSIP Phase III-Year 3 revised activities, measures, and outputs and progress toward achieving intended improvements to the early intervention system.

a. Infrastructure changes that support SSIP initiatives, including how system changes support achievement of the SiMR, sustainability and scale-up.

Progress was achieved toward all the outputs and most of the objectives leading to the SiMR. The most significant infrastructure improvement for this reporting period is in the successful implementation of the system teaming structure proposed in the SSIP Phase III-Year 2 Report and its on-going operation according to implementation science principles. In keeping with those principles, the SIT has functioned to assess and support effective implementation of selected interventions and practices. The functional role of the SDT has also evolved primarily to provide oversight and guidance. This includes providing feedback and decision-making on SIT recommendations, leading state-level communications and dissemination of SSIP

work, overseeing evaluation work, and removing barriers and identifying needed resources to support successful implementation. Highlights of accomplishments and changes which support sustainability, scale-up, and achievement of the SiMR include: establishment of a cadre of MCs to which all CDSAs now have access; initial development of centralized resource materials to support local programs in sustainability of Coaching/NLEP; completion of exploration, evaluation, and recommendation for online modules for GO expansion; SDT and SIT study and incorporation of implementation science principles and frameworks to guide SSIP work.

An EI Branch staff member and a CDSA director, both members of the SDT, lead and facilitate the SIT and serve as liaisons for communications and work between the two teams. During this reporting period, the SIT has prioritized and developed a timeline of activities related to the three SSIP improvement strategies below.

1) Development and implementation of tools/guides/modules—including fidelity checklists/measures—to support sustainability of Coaching/NLEP
2) Continued expansion of the GO integration process
3) Continued exploration of readiness and implementation steps for the Pyramid Model

The SIT has set a target date of June 2019 for completion and approval of recommendations and materials to support Coaching/NLEP and has completed meaningful steps toward this goal, including: evaluating potential fidelity measures and tools from experts both internal and external to Part C programs nationwide; initial implementation of electronic system for coaching logs; establishing ongoing schedule of regional MC trainings to address turnover and support sustainability; evaluating online modules as method for initial training for new staff and for contract provider initial training; development and distribution of surveys of all CDSA staff trained in Coaching/NLEP and CDSA staff and providers who received any MC training; and completing initial draft of statewide Coaching/NLEP infographic for parents and providers. See **Appendix 3** for more detailed SIT timeline and activities information.

Because initial training for Coaching/NLEP has already been provided to all CDSAs, and MCs are available at each CDSA to support these EBPs, the implementation of these activities received the highest priority. Results of staff surveys indicate progress toward intended outcomes. Results of the survey show that all 16 CDSAs had received initial training from FIPP. Responses were received from approximately 400 staff with 100 percent CDSA representation.

Survey results also demonstrated that all 16 CDSAs have received training for selected MCs. Responses to this survey included approximately 100 staff and providers who had received any MC training. Subsection **b** (below) describes survey

findings related to fidelity. Additionally, Section **F** includes a discussion of SDT and SIT teams' plans for sharing and utilizing survey results and involving key stakeholders in the process. The focus of the GO team has continued to be the development of tools to ensure CDSA preparedness for eventual implementation.

Progress toward Pyramid Model exploration has included participation in the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) targeted technical assistance. Goals for this technical assistance include understanding how the Pyramid Model framework can be used for Part C with respect to Coaching/NLEP and resource-based practices; and learning strategies other states have found effective in implementing and sustaining the Pyramid Model. A revised Provider Agreement, which includes increased accountability for compliance with N.C. ITP policies, procedures, and EBPs, has been successfully implemented statewide.

b. Evidence that SSIP's evidence-based practices are being carried out with fidelity and having the desired effects

According to the survey findings from the MC survey administered in February 2019, 68% of trained CDSA MCs have reached fidelity based on determination of fidelity coaches, 19% are working toward fidelity, and 12% began but did not complete MC training.

According to the survey findings from the February 2019 Coaching/NLEP survey for all CDSA direct-service staff:

- more than 95% of respondents reported they have an understanding of coaching as an interaction style.
- 85% indicated they use coaching with families they currently serve.
- 87% indicated they had an understanding of NLEP.
- 88% reported they had an understanding of resource-based practices.

c. Outcome regarding progress toward short-term and long-term objectives that are necessary steps toward achieving the SiMR

Appendix 1 provides information concerning progress towards short-term and long-term outcomes/objectives.

F. Plans for Next Year

1. Additional activities to be implemented next year, with timeline

The table below provides a high-level overview of activities to be implemented next year, with timelines. Priority activities include finalizing and implementing plans for evaluation, sustainability, and on-going TA for Coaching/NLEP; maintaining and enhancing teaming and communication structures and protocols; developing

implementation timeline and steps for Pyramid Model; finalizing all GO materials and resources and engaging selected sites in implementation preparation.

Implementation Infrastructure: Teaming Structure			
March - June 2019	July-Sept 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-March 2020
Maintain and build further capacity within established teaming structure	Further engage CDSA staff and establish Local Implementation Teams (LIT)	Identify additional ongoing intervention and system supports to ensure intended process improvements are successful to support reaching outcomes	Implement additional on-going intervention and system supports to ensure intended process improvements are successful to support reaching outcomes
Develop and implement guidance for LITs to support implementation of EBPs	Develop tools and resources to be used for evaluating effectiveness of communication across SDT, SIT and LIT	Implement tools and resources to be used for evaluating effectiveness of communication across SDT, SIT and LIT	Build LIT knowledge of EBPs and implementation science
Create tools/resources for buy in and readiness to implement selected strategies	Implement tools/resources developed for buy in and readiness	Build LIT knowledge of EBPs and implementation science	Maintain established communication protocol between SSIP teams—review and revise with input from all teams
Build LIT knowledge of EBPs and implementation science	Build LIT knowledge of EBPs and implementation science	Maintain established communication protocol between SSIP teams	Communicate progress of SSIP and evaluation findings with stakeholders
Maintain established communication protocol between SSIP teams	Maintain established communication protocol between SSIP teams—review and revise with input from all teams	Communicate progress of SSIP and evaluation findings with stakeholders	
Communicate progress of SSIP and evaluation findings with stakeholders	Communicate progress of SSIP and evaluation findings with stakeholders		

Implementation Infrastructure: Data and Evaluation			
March - June 2019	July-Sept 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-March 2020
Explore revision of SiMR targets	Explore revision of SiMR targets	Discuss potential target revisions with SSIP stakeholders	Change SiMR targets, as needed
Integrate collection of evaluation data into data system when established	Collect data and review results – share findings with SSIP stakeholders	Collect data and review results – share findings with SSIP stakeholders	Collect data and review results – share findings with SSIP stakeholders
Work with National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) TA to refine and create evaluation plans for selected infrastructure, EBP, and GO strategies	Review data to identify areas of improvement, successes, lessons learned and shifts to SSIP	Review data to identify areas of improvement, successes, lessons learned and shifts to SSIP	Review data to identify areas of improvement, successes, lessons learned and shifts to SSIP
Evidence-Based Practice: Coaching/NLEP			
March - June 2019	July-Sept 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-March 2020
Finalize tools/resources/modules, including fidelity tool	Implement selected tools/resources/modules at local program level through LITs; collect fidelity data	Continue Implementation of tools/resources/modules and data collection	Evaluate and revise tools/resources/modules
Develop schedule for booster and orientation trainings for new and existing staff Develop schedule for rollout of online initial training for providers	Provide booster training and orientation training to new and existing staff Provide online initial training for providers	Continue booster/orientation/online trainings for providers across State and new CDSA employees	Continue trainings for providers across State and new CDSA employees
Develop schedule for additional Master Coach trainings to further build capacity for sustainability at local program level	Begin implementation of additional Master Coach trainings to further build capacity for sustainability at local program level	Continue implementation of additional Master Coach trainings to further build capacity for sustainability at local program level	Continue implementation of additional Master Coach trainings to further build capacity for sustainability at local program level
Review/finalize evaluation plan	Implement Evaluation Plan	Evaluate implementation efforts and monitor outcomes	Evaluate implementation efforts and monitor outcomes
Review/finalize sustainability plans	Implement sustainability plans	Continue to evaluate effectiveness of sustainability plans and established state-supported system of trainings	Continue to evaluate effectiveness of sustainability plans and established state-supported system of trainings

Evidence-Based Practice: Pyramid Model			
March - June 2019	July-Sept 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-March 2020
Continue participation in targeted TA with NCPMI	Evaluate results of participation in targeted TA in relation to goals established by SIT and assess readiness	Continue to explore implementation drivers required to successfully implement Pyramid Model	Continue to explore implementation drivers required to successfully implement Pyramid Model
Continue exploration with SDT and SIT around readiness for intensive TA for Part C through NCPMI when offered	Continue to explore implementation drivers required to successfully implement Pyramid Model	Identify what elements are needed for universal interventions	Identify what elements are needed for universal interventions
		Develop implementation timeline/steps	Develop implementation timeline/steps
Global Outcomes			
March - June 2019	July-Sept 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-March 2020
Refine trainings and tools/resources	Finalize needed materials coursework and resources	Plan for Phase I site implementation	Engage and provide support to selected sites in work to begin preparing for GO implementation
	Finalize evaluation plan	Disseminate pre-training materials to Phase I implementation sites	Engage and provide support to selected sites in work to begin preparing for GO implementation

2. Planned evaluation activities including data collection, measures, and expected outcomes

   The N.C. ITP recognizes the importance of data and evaluation as critical to helping monitor and measure success. Initial SSIP activities of Phase III-Year 4 will involve creating a revised evaluation plan for Coaching/NLEP, GO, and infrastructure efforts that will articulate evaluation questions, data collection plans and frequency, measures and expected outcomes. Planned evaluation activities will include the continued collection of information on outputs, as well as quantitative and qualitative data. Data collected from evaluation activities will continue to be reviewed on an on-going basis with the SDT, SIT, LITs, and stakeholders to identify strategies for process improvements that will ultimately improve outcomes. Evaluation activities that were originally proposed but not achieved during this SSIP reporting period due to the loss of the SSIP co-lead/state data manager will be carried over to next year. The activities, measures, and outputs/outcomes described in **Appendix 1** lay the groundwork for development of a feasible and more comprehensive plan. Quantitative and qualitative data collected through Coaching/NLEP staff and MC surveys in February 2019 will be utilized by the SIT in March 2019 to

identify key themes for incorporation in finalizing a resource toolkit and sustainability plan and to ensure that feedback concerning successes, barriers/challenges, and support needs are considered and addressed within the plan. The SIT will share results and facilitate solicitation of additional input concerning results and key themes from all CDSA directors, a critical stakeholder group for the SSIP work, at the leadership team meeting to be held in mid-April 2019.

3. Anticipated barriers and steps to address those barriers

   Staff vacancies and turnover have and likely will continue to impact implementation and sustainability of SSIP strategies. Once the new SSIP co-lead/state data manager position is hired, exploration of procuring a data system will resume. The EIB program manager position is also in the process of being hired. A CDSA manager position has also been created and filled to provide additional support to CDSA directors. This position also serves as a liaison between the SDT and SIT to further support SSIP work. An exit interview and transition checklist tool, developed as part of an intrastate effort with NCSI to explore and address staff recruitment and retention, reasons for staff turnover and provide insight into needed supports to ensure smooth transitions of responsibilities.

   Many CDSAs are also understaffed due to processes that do not lead to filling vacancies as quickly as desired. Due to funding limitations, it is difficult to increase and sustain salaries as much as needed. Branch management continues to work with human resources staff to explore strategies to expedite hiring processes. Additionally, the EI Branch Head has pursued expansion budget requests to increase staffing levels, reduce caseload sizes and hired temporary staff to support CDSAs' personnel needs. High caseloads, at many CDSAs, continue to present a challenge in the implementation of SSIP activities, in addition to the on-going need to train new staff on Coaching/NLEP. Strategies explored to address this issue, include identifying alternative fidelity measures which may be less burdensome and time-consuming and exploring the use of a newly available electronic system for entering and coding coaching logs.

   Teletherapy, which can help mitigate staff shortages, will continue to be pursued. A proposal for insurance to cover teletherapy costs has been drafted and vetted internally. A teletherapy pilot that began in one CDSA has been expanded into three CDSA catchment areas. While teletherapy was not identified as a priority SSIP strategy during the prioritization work completed by the SDT in 2017-2018, the pilot and its continued expansion remain a significant Branch infrastructure strategy.

   While the process for establishing long-term support for Coaching/NLEP for CDSA staff and providers is underway, the plans for sustainability and on-going TA are not yet finalized. The SIT will develop and present recommendations for needed supports and sustainability plans to the SDT by June 2019. An identified fidelity tool and required supports for on-going implementation and sustainability of Coaching/NLEP will be included.

4. The State describes any needs for additional support and/or technical assistance

North Carolina continues to actively participate in TA from the NCSI, the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center, and the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy) and has leveraged peer support and resources from other states implementing similar strategies and practices. The SSIP co-lead, who is also a CDSA director, attended the NCSI annual state leads collaborative meeting in San Diego, spring 2018. She, along with four SIT members, all of whom are CDSA directors and part of the Phase I roll-out, attended the NCSI Cross-State Learning Collaborative (CSLC) meeting in Phoenix, fall 2018. Participation in this meeting supported these SIT members' further engagement in the SSIP work, provided opportunities to learn and explore strategies and resources from other states, and fostered collaboration and understanding among team members. For example, N.C.'s participation in NCSI's CSLC, allowed its SIT members to obtain resources on coaching fidelity tools/measures/checklists used by other states for evaluation. Also, the GO work was able to move forward significantly in developing recommended online training modules based on modules developed and used by Maryland Part C as a result of N.C's participation in the collaborative meeting.

During this reporting period, the N.C. ITP also received targeted TA around implementation of the Pyramid Model from NCPMI. Members of the SDT have participated in monthly TA calls to support readiness exploration. Review of NCPMI implementation guides and resources at both the state and program levels and other states' discussions of successes and challenges have been especially helpful in beginning to identify components necessary for implementation readiness. The IDEA Data Center (IDC) has provided review and input into this year's SSIP submission. North Carolina appreciates the informal review provided by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). North Carolina will continue to leverage TA support from NCSI, DaSy, ECTA, and NCPMI, as well as to seek peer support and resources from other states implementing Coaching/NLEP, GO, and the Pyramid Model.

Appendix 1: Revised SSIP evaluation activities, measures, outputs/outcomes, progress and next steps

Improvement Strategy – *Creation of an EI implementation infrastructure to support implementation of evidence-based practices (that includes a system teaming structure, use of implementation science, and a system for implementation/dissemination of evidence-based practices (EBPs)*

Output	How Will We Know the Activity Happened According to the Plan? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline	Phase III, Year 3 Progress/Accomplishments Next Steps
Creation of a system (including information dissemination) which outlines steps and processes for training local program staff and providers	Completed instruction guides/modules are being utilized	Tools/Guides/Modules completed Count of utilization of Tools/Guides/Modules	August 2017 - December 2019	Evaluation of tools/guides/etc. for Coaching/NLEP sustainability Centralized resource Coaching/NLEP toolkit Exploration, evaluation and recommendation completed for online modules for GO expansion Coaching/NLEP tools/guides/etc. finalized for June 2019 implementation Online modules finalized approved in FY 2019
Create a system teaming structure, consisting of a State Design Team, State Implementation Team, and Local Implementation Teams to support implementation of EBPs	Established system teams	Terms of Reference Meeting agendas	July 2016- ongoing	SDT and SIT established and functioning; LIT members identified Development and implementation of guidance for LITs to support implementation of EBPs by June 2019
Incorporate principles implementation science into SSIP work	Implementation science frameworks guide SSIP implementation work	Implementation science frameworks/tools	July 2016 - ongoing	SDT and SIT study and discussion of implementation science principles and frameworks using NIRN's Active Implementation Hub Incorporation of implementation science principles and frameworks to guide SSIP work

Output	How Will We Know the Activity Happened According to the Plan? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline	Phase III, Year 3 Progress/Accomplishments
				Next Steps
				Ensure implementation science principles are incorporated at the LIT level through provision of guidance and training
N.C. ITP has an infrastructure and format for on-going statewide training and coaching in social-emotional development using EBP	Personnel are identified and trained on chosen EBP EBP Trainings developed and delivered	Training materials Training logs Attendance logs	May 2016 – April 2020	All CDSA staff (excluding vacancies) have received initial Coaching/NLEP training CDSAs have cadre of trained MCs to support implementation SIT meeting with Dathan Rush for demo of new electronic system for coaching logs as fidelity measures and further in-depth exploration of tools/resources to support on-going use of Coaching/NLEP practices completed March 2019 Development of recommended statewide training plan and materials N.C. participated in NCPMI targeted TA to explore readiness and implementation steps for Pyramid Model
				Schedule and complete ongoing MC trainings to address turnover and support sustainability of practices across CDSAs Coaching/NLEP tools/guides/etc. finalized and approved Delivery of on-going EBP trainings at SSIP pilot sites and then statewide

Type of Outcome	Outcome Description	Evaluation Questions	How Will We Know the Intended Outcome Was Achieved? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline	Phase III, Year 3 Progress/Accomplishments Next Steps
Long-term Outcome	Provider and CDSA staff will have greater access to best practices and EBPs	Did the state develop a system for distribution/ dissemination of EBPs? Were providers and CDSA staff informed/trained on new system?	100% of CDSA staff have been trained on new dissemination best practices within 1 year >75% of providers have been trained on dissemination practices within 1 year	Records of group correspondence (letters, email) with providers and local programs Training attendance logs EBPs incorporated into provider agreements	August 2017 – December 2019	All CDSA staff, excluding vacancies, have received initial Coaching/NLEP training and follow-up supports CDSAs have a cadre of trained MCs to support local implementation Expectations and requirements regarding EBPs incorporated into provider agreement Completion and implementation of online modules to provide initial Coaching/NLEP training for providers and new CDSA staff by December 2019 Schedule and complete additional MC 2019 trainings to support sustainability of practices and address turnover in FY 2019; develop schedule for on-going trainings Completion and implementation of practice/training instruction guides by December 2019Continue participation in NCPMI targeted TA to explore readiness and implementation steps

Improvement Strategy – *Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices*

Output	How Will We Know the Activity Happened According to the Plan? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline	Phase III, Year 3 Progress/Accomplishments Next Steps
EI Branch develops a collaborative relationship with existing EBP programs in N.C.	Collaborative meetings occur regularly	Meeting minutes Attendance logs	Begin 2016 Ongoing	Continued collaboration with Rush and Shelden and Family Infant and Preschool Program (FIPP) in implementing Coaching/NLEP SDT members' participation in regional N.C. Pyramid Model conference SDT members' participation in NCPMI targeted TA Continue collaborative meetings and work with Rush and Shelden and FIPP Determine readiness for NCPMI intensive TA application by July 2019
EI Branch is able to demonstrate effectiveness of the established system for training and coaching of staff in use of Coaching and Natural Learning Environment Practices and SEFEL	High attendance at training sessions (>90% capacity) High satisfaction (>75%) with trainings and knowledge received	Attendance logs Knowledge pre/post tests Satisfaction surveys after implementation	October 2016 - ongoing	All CDSA staff (excluding vacancies) have completed initial Coaching/NLEP training Survey of all CDSA staff developed and distributed February 2019 Survey of all MCs developed and distributed February 2019 Utilize survey results—involving stakeholders—in finalizing resource toolkit/sustainability plan March and April 2019

Type of Outcome	Outcome Description	Evaluation Questions	How Will We Know the Intended Outcome Was Achieved? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Phase III, Year 3 Progress/Accomplishments Next Steps
Intermediate Outcome	EI practitioners have improved understanding of coaching, natural learning environment practices, and social-emotional development for infants and toddlers and ways to promote healthy parent-child relationships	Do practitioners have improved understanding of coaching, NLEP? Do practitioners have additional ways to promote health parent-child relationships?	75% of trained practitioners will report improved understanding of S/E development? 75% of trained practitioners will report knowing additional ways of promoting healthy relationships	Provider survey administered pre-post implementation	Survey of CDSA Directors whose staff completed initial training in summer 2016 Survey of all CDSA staff developed and distributed February 2019; 95% understanding of Coaching/87% understanding of NLEP Survey of all MCs developed and distributed February 2019; 68% achieved fidelity/19% working toward fidelity SIT utilize quantitative and qualitative data—with stakeholder input—to identify and address key themes March and April 2019 All CDSA staff (excluding vacancies) have received initial Coaching/NLEP training and follow-up supports CDSAs have a cadre of trained MCs to support local implementation Evaluation by SIT of tools/guides/etc. (including fidelity checklists/measures) from Rush and Shelden and other states

					to support Coaching/NLEP sustainability
					Completion and implementation of tools/guides/etc. (including fidelity checklists/measures) for CDSA staff and interested providers by December 2019
Long-term Outcome	EI practitioners implement, with fidelity, relationship-based practices to improve NLEP and social-emotional development for infants and toddlers	Were practitioners trained on chosen EBPs with fidelity?	100% of relevant CDSA staff trained on chosen EBPs 100% of interested providers trained on chosen EBPs	Training logs Attendance records	
					To begin July 2019
Long-term Outcome	EI families are coached in a relationship-based manner to promote their child's social-emotional development	Did CDSA staff and providers use coaching interaction strategies within routines-based settings to support families' competence and confidence?	75% of interested families will receive services from providers and CDSA staff using coaching interaction style of communication.	Improved family survey results on Indicator 4 (b) and (c); Fidelity tool implemented with staff at 90% fidelity	
Long-term Outcome	EI Branch is able to demonstrate effectiveness of practices used to promote social-emotional development for enrolled children	Did the State achieve the SiMR goal?	APR Indicator 11 Data Table	Child Outcomes Data from State Data System	

Improvement Strategy – *Continued expansion of Global Outcomes integration pilot/Disseminate child outcomes data at the CDSA level*

Output	How Will We Know the Activity Happened According to the Plan? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline (projected initiation and completion dates)	Phase III, Year 3 Progress/Accomplishments
				Next Steps
Develop integration implementation plan.	Integration implementation plan completed	Implementation plan	April 2016 - June 2019	Integration implementation plan developed and includes training on GO, local planning and implementation.
				Finalize GO train-the-trainer training and related materials by June 2019
Develop staff, provider and family training with training materials.	Training materials completed Training provided to GO Phase I implementation sites	Training plans Training materials	April 2016 - September 2019	GO train-the-trainer and supporting documents identified for Phase 1 sites with parent education included Recommended DaSy COS training for providers and staff
				Obtain approval for GO train-the-trainer and supporting documents

Type of Outcome	Outcome Description	Evaluation Questions	How Will We Know the Intended Outcome Was Achieved? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline (projected initiation and completion dates)	Phase III, Year 3 Progress/Accomplishments Next Steps
Intermediate Outcome	Staff will be more knowledgeable about child outcomes integration into the IFSP	Did staff increase knowledge about child outcomes integration into the IFSP?	75% of participating staff will report increased knowledge	Staff survey pre and post implementation	First survey will be administered in Fall 2019. Follow-up survey in Fall 2020	GO train-the-trainer training identified GO train-the-trainer training approved and implemented
Intermediate Outcome	Parents will be more knowledgeable about child outcomes ratings	Did parents increase knowledge about child outcomes integration into the IFSP?	100% of participating families will report increased knowledge	Parent survey pre and post implementation	First survey will be administered in Fall 2019. Follow-up survey in Fall 2020	IFSP has been adapted to include global outcomes. Approval of adapted IFSP
Long-term Outcome	The majority of IFSPs will include child outcomes in the IFSP	Do the majority of IFSPs at pilot sites include child outcomes?	>50% of IFSPs contain child outcomes ratings	Manual Review of IFSPs	2019-2020	GO train-the-trainer training approved with Phase 1 sites which covers information on GOs incorporated in the IFSP.
Long-term Outcome	Parents are more likely to report being	Are parents more likely to report being	10% increase in 4B		Beginning in February 2017	The N.C. ITP did see an increase on this indicator greater than 10% (from 72.5% in FY 2015 to 94.9% in FY 2016 due to the change in the survey

	able to ***Effectively communicate their children's needs*; and**	able to effectively communicate their children's needs?		APR Indicator 4B pre and post child outcomes integration		instrument. Past this point a 10% increase is no longer mathematically possible.
						Review targets for all Family Outcomes indicators to reflect use of the FOS-R.
Outcome	Parents are more likely to report being able to ***Help their children develop and learn.***	Are parents more likely to report being able to help their children develop and learn?	10% increase in 4C	APR Indicator 4C pre and post child outcomes integration	Beginning in February 2019	The N.C. ITP saw an increase on this indicator greater than 10% (from 83.07% in FY 2015 to 90.76% in FY 2016 due to the change in the survey instrument used. Past this point, a 10% increase is no longer mathematically realistic.
						Review targets for all Family Outcomes indicators to reflect use of the FOS-R.

Appendix 2: *Buzzworthy* Spring – Summer 2018

BUZZWORTHY

Quarterly Newsletter for the N.C. Infant-Toddler Program

Spring - Summer 2018

NOTES FROM THE BRANCH HEAD

Happy spring! It's been a long, cold, snowy and icy winter that will hopefully end soon! Those intermittent 70 and 80-degree days were bad teases. Since our last issue, a lot of work has been done with the SSIP including the completion of the report that will go to OSEP and be posted on our website. All but three CDSAs have been trained on NLEP and coaching interaction styles of engagement with parents. Master coaches are continuing to be trained and as of March, 11 CDSAs have had the Resource-based Training for service coordinators. This is an exciting time. These practices are here to stay. The Branch looks forward to seeing the momentum and fruits of these trainings continue to grow across the state.

Jill

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC) has been helping the ITP expand our family engagement efforts with parent leadership trainings and focus groups.

Parents as Collaborative Leaders

Twenty-three family participants attended the first *Parents as Collaborative Leaders* (PACL) training, March 16 -17 in Charlotte. Topics included leadership styles, skills needed to work collaboratively with groups and teams, and information about participation in Local Interagency Coordinating Councils (LICCs) and the Interagency

(continued on page 2)

NLEP/COACHING

Although coaching and NLEP trainings have been going on for little more than one year, we're already seeing the positive impact they're having on staff and families' growing confidence in the use of these strategies and their overall acceptance of the coaching philosophy. This information came after a deeper analysis of a staff and provider survey conducted last December. These survey results were discussed at a leadership meeting of CDSA directors and EI Branch staff in February 2018.

Additional themes from the survey related to **provider knowledge, implementation support**, and

(continued on page 2)

KEY INFANT-TODDLER PROGRAM DATES

April 5 - *Branch Staff Meeting*, Raleigh, Robin Room

April 12 - *SSIP State Design Team*, Raleigh, Pine Room

April 18-19 - *ITP Leadership Team*, Raleigh, Eagle Room

April 25 - *Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)* , Raleigh, Cardinal Room

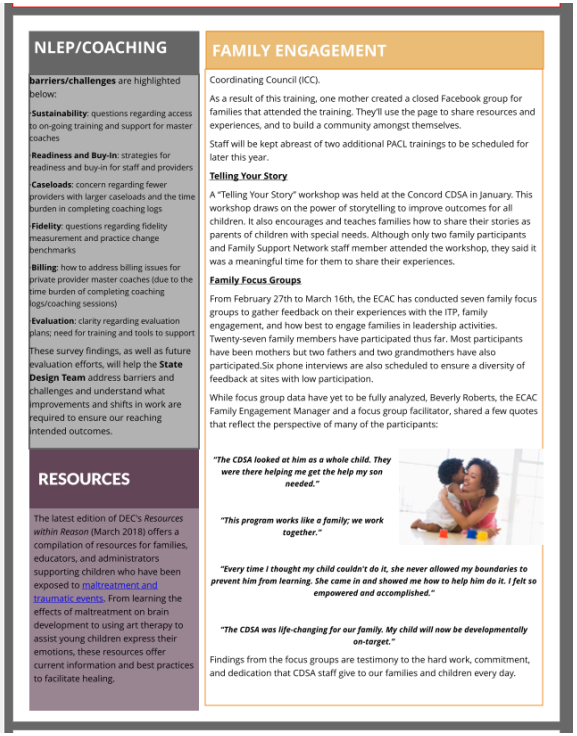
April 24 - 26 - *Pyramid Model Institute*, Winston Salem

May 2- *SSIP State Design Team*, Raleigh, Pine Room

June 6 - *SSIP State Design Team*, Raleigh, Pine Room

June 7 - *Branch Staff meeting*, Raleigh, Pine Room

June 20-21 - *ITP Leadership Team*, Raleigh, Eagle Room



NLEP/COACHING

barriers/challenges are highlighted below:

- **Sustainability**: questions regarding access to on-going training and support for master coaches
- **Readiness and Buy-In**: strategies for readiness and buy-in for staff and providers
- **Caseloads**: concern regarding fewer providers with larger caseloads and the time burden in completing coaching logs
- **Fidelity**: questions regarding fidelity measurement and practice change benchmarks
- **Billing**: how to address billing issues for private provider master coaches (due to the time burden of completing coaching logs/coaching sessions)
- **Evaluation**: clarity regarding evaluation plans; need for training and tools to support

These survey findings, as well as future evaluation efforts, will help the **State Design Team** address barriers and challenges and understand what improvements and shifts in work are required to ensure our reaching intended outcomes.

RESOURCES

The latest edition of DEC's *Resources within Reason* (March 2018) offers a compilation of resources for families, educators, and administrators supporting children who have been exposed to maltreatment and traumatic events. From learning the effects of maltreatment on brain development to using art therapy to assist young children express their emotions, these resources offer current information and best practices to facilitate healing.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Coordinating Council (ICC).

As a result of this training, one mother created a closed Facebook group for families that attended the training. They'll use the page to share resources and experiences, and to build a community amongst themselves.

Staff will be kept abreast of two additional PACL trainings to be scheduled for later this year.

Telling Your Story

A "Telling Your Story" workshop was held at the Concord CDSA in January. This workshop draws on the power of storytelling to improve outcomes for all children. It also encourages and teaches families how to share their stories as parents of children with special needs. Although only two family participants and Family Support Network staff member attended the workshop, they said it was a meaningful time for them to share their experiences.

Family Focus Groups

From February 27th to March 16th, the ECAC has conducted seven family focus groups to gather feedback on their experiences with the ITP, family engagement, and how best to engage families in leadership activities. Twenty-seven family members have participated thus far. Most participants have been mothers but two fathers and two grandmothers have also participated.Six phone interviews are also scheduled to ensure a diversity of feedback at sites with low participation.

While focus group data have yet to be fully analyzed, Beverly Roberts, the ECAC Family Engagement Manager and a focus group facilitator, shared a few quotes that reflect the perspective of many of the participants:

"The CDSA looked at him as a whole child. They were there helping me get the help my son needed."

"This program works like a family; we work together."

"Every time I thought my child couldn't do it, she never allowed my boundaries to prevent him from learning. She came in and showed me how to help him do it. I felt so empowered and accomplished."

"The CDSA was life-changing for our family. My child will now be developmentally on-target."

Findings from the focus groups are testimony to the hard work, commitment, and dedication that CDSA staff give to our families and children every day.

THIS AND THAT . . .

-Check out our Part C Grant Application posted on the website through April 21 for 60 days of public review and comment. The application describes how the ITP will use federal funds to provide supports and services to children and their families.

-The Exceptional Children's Assistance Center has been awarded the ITP contract for ***Family Engagement.*** The contract will create a reimbursement mechanism for AT, respite, transportation and complaint mediation. It will provide family leadership and partnership activities, such as participation in focused-monitoring visits, family trainings, orientation, and focus groups, and assistance in the development of policy and family interview tools.

-Of the 79 LICCs we have in N.C., **68** submitted Child Find Activity Reports this year. That's **86%** of them and a 18 percentage point increase over the 54 reports submitted last year. Twenty-nine of our counties combine to form two- or three-county LICCs while six counties don't have active LICCs. These 68 LICCs are eligible to apply for funds, at least $500, to be used for local child find and public awareness activities . The Department of Public Instruction makes these funds available. Funds will be distributed in late Spring.

-As part of the teletherapy pilot *(See "What's Up with SSIP)*, a "how to" manual has been drafted to replicate the process at other CDSAs. Also a proposal, that will eventually go to Medicaid, has been drafted to help get **teletherapy** funded at the same level as face-to-face services to support **teletherapy** across the state.

DEC RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

There are eight DEC recommended practices, developed to guide families and practitioners in the most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes and promote the development of young children with or at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. In subsequent issues of ***Buzzworthy*** , we'll highlight one of these topic areas from the perspective of definition, resource availability, and real-world challenges experienced across the ITP. The topic areas are ***Leadership, Assessment , Environment, Family, Instruction, Interaction, Teaming and Collaboration*** *and* ***Transition***.

Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children

WHAT'S UP WITH SSIP?

The State Design Team has been working on the annual SSIP report due April 2. The report includes an overview of our implementation infrastructure, priority strategies, evaluation activities and anticipated work. It showcases the progress and success of our **teletherapy pilot** and the revised **provider agreement**.

Teletherapy - According to a satisfaction survey, the four families who participated in the pilot "strongly agreed" that teletherapy has benefited their children and helped them apply strategies to improve their children's communication skills. The pilot is being conducted in the CDSA of Western N.C. in conjunction with a local speech language provider. Because of the pilot's success funds have been allocated to expand it to the Blue Ridge CDSA.

Provider Agreement - Thanks to the diligent work of CDSA directors and staff and EIB staff, the new provider agreement is expected to be implemented July 1. The revisions are expected to increase consistency in statewide ITP service provision, promote the use of EBPs, and enhance enforceability of ITP requirements and practices.

KUDOS TO . . .

-The **New Bern** and **Greenville CDSAs** whose hard work and dedication led to improved provision of timely services for the families they serve. This ended their long-term CAPs. The Directors met with Branch staff to identify barriers that led to the delays in services. Together, they worked on successful strategies that led the CDSAs to come off their CAPs.

-All CDSAs reported **100% compliance** in maintaining ITF certification for their staff and providers. This verification is conducted annually by examining an individual's *Documentation of Continuing Professional Development* and supporting documents.

Appendix 2: *Buzzworthy* Fall 2018

BUZZWORTHY

Quarterly Newsletter for the N.C. Infant-Toddler Program

Fall 2018

NOTES FROM THE BRANCH HEAD

It's truly incredible how quickly the summer goes by. We've received our letter of determination from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) as well as our formal notification of our grant award (which had a bit more money in it than we expected). We've now had three years in a row of "meets requirements," which is no small task given the challenges each CDSA faces in caseload sizes and provider shortages. Additionally, this was all in the context of Branch-level changes – Margo's move to Rocky Mount as its Assistant Director, Brian's shift from TA Coordinator to the new CDSA Manager, and the addition of new staff members, Hope Newsome and Justine Rogoff. We wish each of you luck in your new positions. We're grateful you're here. (continued on page 2)

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC) has completed its second round of focus groups with families from five CDSAs (Rocky Mount, Mecklenburg, Elizabeth City, Cape Fear, and Morganton). The focus groups were conducted in a variety of ways with various family member representation from 31 families. Data obtained from these focus groups help to identify, assess and promote: the needs and best practices that can lead to increased family engagement; the effectiveness of current parent

(continued on page 3)

WHAT'S UP WITH SSIP

The ITP is making strides in putting in place its SSIP implementation teaming structure. This structure will support our SSIP governance, implementation planning and evaluation efforts. The SSIP infrastructure consists of the State Design Team (SDT), State Implementation (SIT), Content Area Team (CAT) and Local Implementation Teams (LITs). The teaming structure and its communication flow is shown below: (continued on page 3)

KEY INFANT-TODDLER PROGRAM DATES

October 3, *SSIP SDT*, Six Forks, Pine Room

October 4, *EIB Staff*, Six Forks Campus, Robin Room

October 17 - 18, *Leadership*, Six Forks Campus, Raleigh, Eagle Room

October 18, *TA Team*, Raleigh, Eagle Room

October 24, *ICC Meeting*, Raleigh, Cardinal Room

November 1, *EIB staff*, Six Forks campus, Robin Room

November 7, *SSIP SDT*, Six Forks Campus, Pine Room

NOTES FROM THE BRANCH HEAD

Since our last issue, there have been a few national trainings, including one where some Part C Coordinators are developing tools and supports to retain new Part C Coordinators. As a member of the Infant & Toddlers' Coordinator's Association (ITCA), I serve as co-chair for its professional development workgroup. This workgroup, with representatives from each of the federal TA centers, are developing useful and timely tools.

The National Association for the Education for Young Children (NAEYC) recently had a Professional Leadership Institute chocked full of great information. Most relevant to us are NAEYC's efforts under the *Power to the Profession* initiative that works to increase pay, accountability and societal recognition of the importance of child care providers, early interventionists, head start workers and all individuals working with the zero to 5 population. So, please participate in any focus groups, polls, meetings, etc., related to this topic. There is a larger movement of big voices for the littlest ones for their mental and developmental well-being from birth onward.

Finally, let me acknowledge the completion of initial state-wide training on natural learning environment practices (NLEP) and the coaching interaction style for CDSA staff. However, completion does not mean ending. We'll be sharing how

(continued on page 3)

DEC RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

The DEC Recommended Practices bridge the gap between research and practice. They offer guidance to parents and professionals across a variety of early childhood settings. Based on the best-available empirical evidence and experience of the field, these practices highlight the most effective ways to improve learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth through age 5 who have or are at risk for developmental delays or disabilities. The practices consist of eight domains: **leadership, assessment, environment, family, instruction, interaction, teaming and collaboration**, and **transition**.

We'd like to emphasize the important practices which make up the **family** practice domain. Time away for specific reasons including specialized care, relaxation and bonding is essential to the overall well-being of the children and families served through the N.C. ITP. This can sometimes present challenges regarding EI supports unless effective family practices are implemented. To ensure continuity and the most effective interventions at home or away, EI service providers can help alleviate disruption by keeping the following family practice themes in mind:

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of the Council for Exceptional Children

Family-centered practices: Treat families with dignity and respect; ensure practices are individualized, flexible, and responsive to each family's unique circumstances; provide family members complete and unbiased information to make informed decisions; and involve them in acting on choices to strengthen child and family functioning.

Family capacity-building practices: Include participatory opportunities and experiences to strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote the development of new parenting abilities that enhance parenting self-efficacy beliefs and practices.

Family and professional collaboration: Build relationships between families and professionals who work to achieve mutually agreed-upon outcomes and goals that promote family competencies and support child development.

A complete listing of the family practices can be found at https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/tgv6GUXhVo

training will continue around these practices. We're also looking at how we'll support getting all CDSAs and providers to use these practices with increasing comfort over time. For now, I thank everyone for your openness to learning and practicing these new skills while balancing your regular responsibilities, staff changes, large caseloads and other everyday challenges you face in serving the children and families of N.C.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

engagement efforts; and strategies to increase response rate on the CDSA family survey.

The following key themes highlighted the impact of the ITP: parents reported a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of services they receive and the people who coordinate and provide those services; families indicated that their Service Coordinators were accessible and responsive to their concerns and the needs of their families; all participants expressed some level of anxiety and concern about exiting the program and transitioning to preschool services; many families felt they would benefit from opportunities to engage with other parents receiving EI services; and the CDSA provides emotional support to help families feel more confident in parenting their children.

THIS AND THAT

Can Babies Do More With Less?

Imagine not giving babies any toys until they can find their hands for play. Deb Curtis asks readers to ponder this in her fascinating article about an approach used by the Pikler Institute in Hungary. Pikler has documented more than 75 ways that babies learn to use their hands for play. Check it out here.

WHAT'S UP WITH SSIP?

Core competencies of all the teams include: knowing the strategies, knowing implementation science/principles and best practices; using data for program improvement; knowing improvement cycles to make strategies and implementation methods more effective and efficient over time and promoting systems change at multiple levels to create hospitable cultures, policies and funding streams.

The SDT, established June 2017, continues to meet monthly to help guide the SSIP work. The SIT held its kick-off meeting August 23. Eight Directors from these CDSAs make-up this team: Elizabeth City, Greensboro, Greenville, Mecklenburg, New Bern, Raleigh, Sandhills and Winston-Salem.

The Global Outcomes Core Team, a CAT that was established to support the development of GO materials and processes, holds regular meetings and includes staff from the Greenville and New Bern CDSAs and Branch Staff.

KUDOS TO . . .

Congratulations to the two support staff at the EIB office: Joyce White, who's been the "voice" of the EI Branch for 12 years left her position on September 14 and in November, Karen Takas celebrates 20 years with the state and all of it spent with the ITP.

Appendix 2: *Buzzworthy* Winter 2019

BUZZWORTHY

Quarterly Newsletter of the N.C. Infant-Toddler Program

Winter 2019

Notes From the Branch Head

Greetings to all! It's hard to believe we are well into 2019 already! I hope the holidays allowed you to enjoy time with family and friends and time to recharge and rejuvenate. Thanks to all the work you do with families, the seemingly endless paperwork and documentation. We completed and submitted the SPP/APR that was due February 1st. Each CDSA has been terrific in maintaining data and checking for errors, which made the Branch's work, especially Barbara Simpson's, so much easier. I also want to commend you on using coaching interaction and natural learning environment practices, and being conscious of keeping services within the context of family routines. Thanks for your willingness to work differently!

There's a lot to look forward to as we break out of winter's grip and move toward spring. The State Implementation Team (SIT) co-lead by Julie Peck (Blue Ridge) and Debbi Kennerson (Greensboro) is collecting resources and tools to develop a toolkit for statewide use. This will be a living toolkit that can grow and be shared with local implementation teams (LITs) for review and inclusion in their implementation plans. We continue to be involved in targeted TA with the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations and most excitedly are working with the Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Center to develop training modules that many of you will get to test out before they are finalized and made available through a learning platform. We look forward to sharing these when they are completed and expanding professional development tools that will help with consistent orientation for new staff at the CDSAs.

Thank you for all that you do. Your compassion and your hard work matter. Parents let us know how helpful and supportive you are and how much you have helped them and their children.

Jill

What's Up With SSIP?

As the April 1 deadline approaches for the submission of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) report, a team is working to document the progress made and challenges encountered this past year. The past year's work on the SSIP has focused on the continued development and maintenance of the infrastructure for evidence-based practices and processes and continuing to build capacity by using implementation science principles.

Two events have had a major impact on both implementation and evaluation activities during this reporting period. The first was the institution of the State Implementation Team (SIT). The SIT reviews data, creates materials and implementation plans, provides strategy-related information to the EI Branch staff and makes recommendations to the State Design Team (SDT). The second was the November 2018 departure of the SSIP state co-lead/data manager. This staff person had been the driving force behind the evaluation efforts and the primary source of expertise in implementation science. This loss has required the SDT, SIT, and ITP data staff to work more closely to develop survey tools and other methods to evaluate implementation. Interviews for this position will take place March 1.

Progress

- All CDSAs received initial Coaching/NLEP training
- SIT established and functioning
- Local implementation teams (LITs) identified
- Trained cadre of master coaches to support implementation

Challenges

- Staff vacancies and staff turnover at CDSAs and EI Branch office

Well, Whad'Ya Know?

He was born prematurely by several weeks and was placed in an incubator where he received high doses of oxygen. At the time, no one knew that high doses of oxygen could damage a newborn's eyes. By the time, he was strong enough to leave the hospital, he was totally blind. But this would not stop him, and by the time he was nine, he'd mastered the piano, harmonica, drums and had begun singing solos in church. At 12 years old, his first hit single, **Fingertips, Part Two,** was released by Motown. Do you know who he is?

Answer: Stevie Wonder

Appendix 2: Buzzworthy Winter 2019

BUZZWORTHY

DEC Recommended Practice - Teaming and Collaboration

As we forge ahead in this new year, we look forward to the many triumphs that it is sure to bring for our dedicated EI workforce, the amazing children, and resilient families served by the North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program (NC ITP). As we look ahead to the new year with personal and professional resolutions in mind, let's take time to reflect on the quality of the relationships and interactions with the families and fellow practitioners with whom we work. Effective teaming and collaboration practices greatly impact the success of early childhood educational programs such as the NC ITP. The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) asserts that effective teaming and collaboration practices are those that promote and sustain collaborative adult partnerships, relationships, and ongoing interactions to ensure that programs and services achieve desired child and family outcomes.

As early intervention service providers, we know that the family is an essential member of their child's Individualized Family Service Planning (IFSP) team and that the team consists of practitioners from multiple disciplines as needed. The teaming and collaboration practices that we strive for should include strategies for interacting and sharing knowledge and expertise in ways that are respectful, supportive, enhance capacity, and are culturally sensitive. The DEC recommends the following practices to support effective teaming and collaboration:

- Practitioners and families work as a team to plan and implement supports and services to meet the unique needs of each child and family.
- Practitioners and families work together as a team to systematically and regularly exchange expertise, knowledge, and information to build team capacity and jointly solve problems, plan, and implement interventions.
- Practitioners use communication and group facilitation strategies to enhance team functioning and interpersonal relationships with and among team members.
- Team members assist each other to discover and access community-based services and other informal and formal resources to meet family-identified child or family needs.

A complete listing of the family practices can be found at: https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/tgv6GUXhWo

PD tools and resources related to the teaming and collaboration domain can be accessed at: http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-teaming.asp

Hellos and Good-Byes

As of this issue, we are saying hello to an old employee in a new position and good-bye to a couple of others. We say good-bye to the "Sharons" - Sharon Loza, former data manager and Sharon Lunn, former technical assistance coordinator. Interviews for the data manager position are scheduled for March 1.

Justine Rogoff, who'd been a temporary employee with the EI Branch working on the Data Team, has accepted a position as data and evaluation consultant. She will start in this position effective, February 25. The Branch is discussing how to continue her work related to billing and our system of payments and how to best support the CDSAs going forward.

This and That

2019 Grant Application

Our federal Part C grant application will be available for public review and comment:

Public review: February 22, 2019 - March 23, 2019
Public comment: March 24, 2019 - April 22, 2019

Comments may be made by:

Email: ei.publiccomment@dhhs.nc.gov
Fax: 919-870-4834
Letter: c/o Part C Coordinator, EI Branch
1916 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1916

Upcoming Meetings

EI Leadership Meeting - April 17, Raleigh, Eagle Room

ICC Meeting - April 24, Raleigh, Cardinal Room

2019 OSEP Leadership Conference - July 22-14, Arlington, VA., June 28 Registration Deadline

Appendix 2: *What's Up with SSIP* Cover Page

P1/ What is SSIP? What is the SiMR
P2/ Infrastructure Improvement Strategies
P3/ Theory of Action
P4/ S18 SIP Recommendations
P5/ Three SSIP Priorities
P6/ SSIP Priority Strategies, SSIP Implementation Sites
P7/ SSIP Priority Strategies,
P8/ Next Steps, Acronym Soup, Resources

What's Up with SSIP?

(Pronounced "S-SIP")

2019 / SPRING EDITION

State-Identified Measurable Result (SiMR)
Increase the positive social – emotional skills of infants and toddlers in the N.C. Infant-Toddler Program.

The State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) is a quality initiative introduced by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). It is a multi-year plan that:
-**Increases** capacity of early intervention programs to implement, scale up, and sustain evidence-based practices and
-**Improves** outcomes for children with special needs and and their families.

This newsletter is intended to summarize key information for N.C. Infant-Toddler Program staff and stakeholders interested in learning about new initiatives related to improving social-emotional outcomes for infants and toddlers in N.C.

Emotions matter, making the case for the role of young children's emotional development for early school readiness.

1

Appendix 3 – State Implementation Team (SIT) Timeline

Timeline	Responsible Party	Completion (Date)
January 2019		
Send all Family Coaching Handouts to the team for review-finalize on the January on call	All SIT members	1/28/19
Schedule meeting with Dathan Rush for a review of materials and technology	Julie Peck	3/5/19
Schedule phone call with Part C folks from VA and TX for a review of implementation strategies	Justine Rogoff	Waiting on Dathan
Discussion with Denise Bennett & Thomas McGhee about integrating the focus of family engagement group with coaching also discuss Child & Youth FE model	Brian Deese	Done
Submit 2 Targeted TA goals to NCPMI	Julie Peck	Done
Provide Contract CDSA members copy of screenshots from Resources folder in EI Leadership drive	Jean Frye	Done
Secure flash drives for contract CDSA members and Jean Frye to be able to share Resources files	Jill Singer Karen Takas	Pending
Call on 1/28/19	Julie Peck – set up Blue Ridge line Bryan- setting up Skype?	Done
February 2019		
Finish review of VA (facilitation guide) https://www.veipd.org/main/pdf/coaching_fac_guide.pdf Tx coaching materials https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/assistive-services-providers/early-childhood-intervention-programs/eci-training-technical-assistance	All SIT members	Move to February
Subgroups will meet to complete surveys to staff (coaching)	Kasey Melvin (lead) Valerie Mitchell Joey Bishop-Manton Tiffany Newkirk Justine Rogoff	Employee Survey draft completed and ready to send to SDT
Subgroups will meet to complete surveys to Master Coaches	Jean Frye (lead) Debbi Kennerson Tracey Karp Tiffany Newkirk Justine Rogoff	MC Survey completed and ready for SIT review by Friday 2/1/19 – then ready for SDT review
Submit surveys to SDT for review	Julie Peck	Done
Survey shared with Director's at Leadership	Julie Peck	Done
GO goals will be reviewed to see if any can be incorporated into these two surveys.	Justine Rogoff	Does not fit with employee survey MC?

Timeline	Responsible Party	Completion (Date)
February 2019 continued….		
Meet with Dathan & calls with VA and TX	All SIT members	3/5/19 done for VA
Submit Family coaching handout to SDT & if ready, present at Feb. leadership mtg.	Julie Peck	Done
Presented Coaching handout at Leadership team	All SIT members	Done
Review of Julianne Woods materials by SIT	All SIT members	Determined to be similar to other materials reviewed. Will look at for content in Toolkit.
February 21, 2019 face to face meeting	All SIT members	Done
SIT EMAIL developed and distributed to increase communication between team	Karen Takas	Done
Employee survey for coaching and NLEP emailed to directors of Phase 1 sites and completed by 2/18/19.	Kasey Melvin & Directors & CDSA staff	Done
Employee Survey RAW data downloaded to be used to complete SSIP report	Justine Rogoff	Done
Master Coach survey for coaching and NLEP emailed to directors of Phase 1 sites and completed by 2/18/19.	Kasey Melvin & all staff that have been MC trained	Done
Master Coach Survey RAW data downloaded to be used to complete SSIP report	Justine Rogoff	Done
Discussion of Julianne Woods materials http://fgrbi.fsu.edu/handouts/approach5/KIManual2018.pdf	All SIT members	
Higher level discussions with DCDEE/ NCPC about using NLEP and coaching in child care.	Brian Deese	
March 2019		
Call Plan next 3 months	All SIT members	
Denise will add approved pictures to coaching handout and review/provide feedback re: content recommended for coaching	Denise Bennett	
Call on 3/25/19 – Revised to Face-to-Face Meeting to work on toolkit.	All SIT members	
SSIP Report due to OSEP	SDT Members	
April 2019		
Face-to-Face meeting 4/18/19	All SIT members	
Formation of Local Implementation Teams	Directors	
May 2019		
Call TBD – regular schedule lands on holiday	All SIT members	
Cross State Collaborative for team leads in Atlanta	Jean & Julie will attend since the SSIP data manager will not be hired by then.	

Timeline	Responsible Party	Completion (Date)
June 2019		
Draft of coaching toolkit	All SIT members	
Master Coach Training – June 17th & 18th	Debbi to send out email to inform Leadership Team- determine number of needed slots.	
Face-to-Face Meeting 6/20/19	All SIT members	
July 2019		
Call 7/22/19 1:00 pm -4:00 pm	All SIT members	
August 2019		
Face-to-Face Meeting	All SIT members	
September 2019		
Master Coach Training September 17th & 18th	Debbi to send out email to inform Leadership Team- determine number of needed slots.	
Face-to-Face Meeting 9/19/19	All SIT members	
Call 9/23/19 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	All SIT members	
October 2019		
Face-to-Face Meeting 10/17/19	All SIT members	
November 2019		
Call 11/25/19 1:00pm – 4:00pm	All SIT members	
December 2019		
Face-to-Face Meeting 12/19/19	All SIT members	
Master Coach Training December 10th- & 11th	Debbi to send out email to inform Leadership Team- determine number of needed slots.	