

# NORTH CAROLINA INFANT-TODDLER PROGRAM STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SSIP) BRIEF PHASE I

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**Purpose of the SSIP:** The SSIP is a multi-year plan for improving results for children with disabilities. Outcomes for children and families were not increasing because of



increased legal compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The focus shifted from looking strictly at compliance, to a more results-oriented focus for improved outcomes for children.

### **The Challenge:**

Although there were no clear areas of low performance found through the Infant-Toddler Program's data analysis, the following were areas of concern:

- Quality and quantity of data concerning families' ability to effectively communicate their children's needs.
- Consistent low percentage of infants and toddlers who show improvement in acquiring and using knowledge and skills.
- Low percentage of infants and toddlers who show improvement in positive social/emotional skills.

### **State-Identified Measurable Result Selection:**

The above concerns, along with the:

- various early childhood initiatives in N.C. on social emotional skills and development,
- high cost of early childhood mental health services, and the
- criticality of positive social emotional skills to overall child development,

became the basis for the state-identified measurable result (SiMR).

The N.C. ITP will focus on a performance indicator that measures ***the percent of infants and toddlers with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships).***

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***"Emotions matter, making the case for the role of young children's emotional developmental for early school readiness."*** (Social Policy Report of the Society for Research in Child

Development, 16 (3), 1-20)

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**Improvement Strategies to Meet the Challenge:**

To address root causes that will lead to improved social/emotional outcomes for children, the following improvement strategies were identified:

- Centralize and expand provider network.
- Expand professional development opportunities and standards.
- Strengthen the State system for planning and dissemination.
- Continued expansion of child outcomes integration pilot.
- Create an EI service delivery model of clearly defined practice standards for equal access for children and families.
- Overhaul family outcomes measurement process.
- Disseminate child outcomes data at the Children’s Developmental Services Agencies (CDSAs) and investigate alternative data to measure child and family outcomes.
- Explore and implement telehealth options to increase access to social/emotional experts.
- Capitalize on and expand partnerships with other agencies and stakeholders to meet program needs.

These strategies were divided under the following representative implementation teams: *State/Local Infrastructure, Professional Development, Evidence-Based Practices, Family Engagement and Expansion of Child Outcomes Pilot*. Six CDSAs, which represent 46 counties, were selected to implement the improvement activities: **Blue Ridge, Cape Fear, Elizabeth City, Greensboro, Sandhills** and **Winston-Salem**.

*SIMR - North Carolina will increase the percentage of children who demonstrate progress in positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) while receiving early intervention services.*

**Next Steps in SSIP Process:**

Year 1-FFY 2013 Delivered by Feb. 2015	Year 2-FFY 2014 Delivered by Feb. 2016	Year 3 - 6-FFY 2015-2018 Delivered by Feb. 2017-2020
<b>PHASE I – ANALYSIS COMPLETED</b>	<b>PHASE II – PLAN</b>	<b>PHASE III IMPLEMENTATION &amp; EVALUATION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis</li> <li>• Analysis of infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity</li> <li>• Measurable result(s) for infants and toddlers with special needs;</li> <li>• Coherent improvement strategies; and</li> <li>• Theory of action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure development</li> <li>• Support for EI programs/providers</li> <li>• Implementation of evidence-based practices</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> </ul>

