

Program Self-Assessment Booklet 18

Using Child Outcomes in Program Self-Assessment

Core Question to guide the Self-Assessment team:

Does the program have an effective system for measuring child outcomes that informs program leaders of patterns of progress for three to five year old children and how the program might be improved?

Purpose:

The purpose is to ensure that programs have a system for measuring child outcomes and using the results to plan for continuous program improvements.

This booklet will help the Self-Assessment team determine if the program has responded to program outcomes as outlined in Section 641A(b) of the *Head Start Reauthorization Act* of 1998 and related guidance that appears in ACYF-IM-HS-00-03 and ACYF-IM-00-18. These IM's address:

- Head Start Child Outcomes Framework
- Timelines for Implementation and Program Monitoring

Related *Performance Standards* include: 1304.21(a)(1)(i); 1304.40(e)(5); 1304.51(a)(1)(ii)-1304.51(a)(1)(iii); 1304.51(g); 1304.51(i)(1)-1304.51(i)(2); Head Start Act, Sections: 641A(a)(1)(B); 641A(b)(4); 642(e); 648A(a)(1)(A).

As you conduct your assessment of the program's outcome measurement system, pay close attention to the:

- Effectiveness of the system in demonstrating patterns of progress for three to five year old children participating in the program
- Conclusions and results of the program's analysis of information on child outcomes

Helpful tools to support data collection in this area follow.

Review:

Ask the Head Start director and/or responsible manager to provide you with access to the following documents:

The Self-Assessment team member should review:

- Child assessment instruments
- Written plans that have been revised to include information on measuring child outcomes
- Written procedures describing methods for data collection, data analysis and how child outcome information will be used in program planning
- Sample data collection reports
- Report of child outcome data analysis
- Ongoing monitoring reports
- Staff training and development plans
- **Important data sources relevant to this area such as the *PRISM* report, *PIR* data, Community Assessment, strategic plan or short and long term program goals**

Use the following checklist to guide your document review:

Do written plans reflect responsibilities associated with collecting, analyzing and utilizing child outcome data?

Yes No

Comment: _____

Are child outcome responsibilities reflected in management systems such as program planning, record keeping and reporting, Self-Assessment, ongoing monitoring and human resources as well as in service areas?

Yes No

Comment: _____

Do child assessment procedures and the instruments used by the program address, at a minimum, the eight domain areas and the thirteen required indicators listed in the *Child Outcomes Framework*?

Yes No

Comment: _____

Is there evidence that the program staff measure children’s progress, at a minimum, in the beginning, middle, and end of the year?

Yes No

Comment: _____

Does the program have a system for recording the results of child outcome measurement so they can be analyzed effectively? Can the reports be used to identify patterns of progress for children?

Yes No

Comment: _____

Do program long-range goals and short-term objectives reflect the findings of ongoing monitoring and the Self-Assessment, including analysis and use of child outcome data?

Yes No

Comment: _____

Interview:

The Self-Assessment team member should interview the Head Start director, members of the management team, and other program leaders involved in the child outcome measurement system.

Questions you may use to guide your interview:

Describe your systems for collecting child outcome data and ongoing monitoring to track patterns of progress and accomplishments.

What process is used by program managers and leaders to analyze data collected during outcome measurement?

How is the child outcome data analysis information shared with the governing body, Policy Council and other stakeholders?

How has the program used the child outcome data analysis information in planning for continuous improvement in the following areas:

Services for individual children?

Strengthening individual classrooms?

Identifying staff training and professional development needs?

Program planning?

Does analysis and use of ongoing assessment data include attention to the progress of different groups of children such as English language learners and children who enter Head Start with different levels of knowledge and skills?

Are there examples of “mid-course corrections” in curriculum, teaching and other child development services occurring based on review of ongoing assessment information at the beginning and mid-points of the program year?

Does analysis of child outcomes information incorporate comparison of trends from past years to highlight patterns of continuity, new areas of need or concern, or enhanced progress of children?

How do you include all children in your process, including children with disabilities?

Is your program measuring outcomes in areas other than those that are mandated (e.g., family outcomes)? Describe which ones.

Yes No

Comment: _____

Special Instructions:

Review the results of the program’s outcome data analysis. Include this information with your booklet summary so that the Self-Assessment leadership team can use this information in planning program improvements.

Team Member Summary Worksheet

Summary of Results for Using Child Outcomes in Program Self-Assessment

Areas where the program is doing well. Provide examples of program strengths or areas where the program exceeds *Performance Standards*:

Areas where the program needs improvement:

Additional areas of concern:
