



STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SSIP) NEWSLETTER

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July – October Activities

The last few months have been a busy time for the SSIP project. The State team completed the Demonstration Site visits with Regions 1, 2, and 3. In addition, the SSIP Phase II Workgroup held its first meeting in September. The State Team is also actively working with national technical assistance centers to learn what other states are doing, and ensure Idaho’s SSIP is on the right track.

Demonstration Site Visits

Regions 1, 2, and 3 were selected as the pilot programs, or demonstration sites, for the SSIP. The role of the Demonstration Sites is to oversee the implementation process, build communication and feedback loops, prepare trainers/coaches, and develop a site plan for putting practices in place.

The State Team visited Region 3 on August 12 and 13, and visited the North Hub on August 25 and 26 to complete the site reviews. It was extremely valuable to visit with the teams, and helped discover the talents of ITP staff and contractors.

During the visits, the State Team had the opportunity to visit with almost every Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), and spent time with the hub leaders to walk through the process and discuss strengths and barriers in their regions. Activities included attending MDT meetings, interviewing staff and contractors, and interviewing hub leaders.

Prior to the visits, staff and contractors completed an Early Childhood Outcomes survey, and select individuals were videoed during home visits. The State Team reviewed this information to help prepare for the visit. Those who participated in the videos deserve a big **THANK YOU!** It is not an easy task, but it creates a great learning experience for all of us.

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The consensus from all teams is that the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) process needs a complete overhaul. The good news is we received great ideas from staff and contractors on how to improve the process, and the feedback was very similar among the regions.

A high-level summary report of the findings is available on the Infant Toddler Program SharePoint Site, State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) page at <http://sharepoint/sites/facs/itp/ssip/SitePages/Home.aspx>. If you do not have access to the SharePoint Site, notify your supervisor and they can share the information with you.



SSIP Workgroup

The SSIP Workgroup held its first meeting on September 29, 2015. In attendance were representatives from Department of Education, Head Start, Idaho Parents Unlimited (IPUL), AIM Early Idaho, IdahoSTARS, Master Mentor Program, and Infant Toddler Program hub leaders and therapists from around the state.

The purpose of the workgroup is to assist the Infant Toddler Program with further developing a plan to improve social-emotional outcomes for infants and toddlers and their families. Yes, it is a big task! To accomplish this mission, the workgroup will need to prioritize and be strategic about planning activities that are within our program's capacity and that can be sustainable.

The workgroup's priorities are to:

- Assist with developing activities, resources, and steps for Idaho's SSIP Implementation Plan

- Design a Professional Development Framework for Infant Toddler Program
- Explore how to accomplish a basic understanding of Early Childhood Outcomes statewide

During the initial meeting, the workgroup made good progress identifying activities for each of the strategies in the Theory of Action. The State Team will use this information to start drafting an Implementation Plan. The workgroup will reconvene in November to discuss the Implementation Plan, as well as start working on an Evaluation Plan.

The minutes and activities from the SSIP Workgroup meeting are located on the SharePoint site, SSIP page.

SSIP Improvement Strategies - Modified

The Theory of Action was modified to simplify the plan and strategies for Idaho's SSIP. Other states have scaled back their strategies as well, and our technical assistance centers felt it would help with planning and evaluation.

The modifications include:

- Removing the "Collaboration" and "Family Involvement" strands of action:
 - Collaboration and family involvement should be at the forefront of all strategies. Rather than having these as separate strands, it is an expectation that each strategy incorporates family involvement and collaboration activities.
- Added a new strategy to "Modify the ECO process for ITP staff, contractors, and families":
 - Based on the results of the site visits, it is apparent that we need to address the issues with the current ECO process in order to be able to provide training and make it meaningful for staff and families.

Strands of Action

If ITP...

Professional Development

...develops a statewide structure that supports the implementation of a standardized, sustainable professional development system for ITP staff and contractors

Monitoring and Accountability

...establishes a statewide quality improvement and assurance system that reviews, monitors, and enhances early intervention evidence-based practices and COS ratings

Assessment Practices

...researches and identifies appropriate functional assessment tools for ITP staff and contractors to use to identify social-emotional needs for infants and toddlers

...modifies the early childhood outcomes process for ITP staff, contractors, and families

What's Next?

The SSIP Phase II Workgroup will have a few more meetings in November and December to finalize the Implementation Plan and Evaluation Plan. During this time, the demonstration sites will receive additional information and guidance to help begin developing their local-level implementation plans.

The SSIP Phase II report is due to the Office of Special Education (OSEP) by April 1, 2016. However, some activities will start before this time.

The SSIP Workgroup will act as the oversight committee, and the activities will be assigned to sub-groups to accomplish each task. Additional members will be added to the sub-groups to expand expertise as needed.

How to Stay Informed

Visit the Infant Toddler Program SharePoint Site, State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) page for up-to-date information regarding the project at <http://sharepoint/sites/facs/itp/ssip/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

If you do not have access to the SharePoint Site, notify your supervisor and they can share the information with you.

SSIP State Team Members

Lauren Ertz, ITP Policy Specialist; SSIP Lead

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AIM EARLY IDAHO



The Infant Toddler Program plans to collaborate with Aim Early Idaho to build infant mental health expertise and confidence among our professionals. The upcoming “2015 Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Institute” in November is a great opportunity to gain knowledge in this topic.

Visit http://aimearlyidaho.org/?post_type=tribe_events to learn more about this event.

Additionally, the State Team is collaborating with the Master Mentor Program to ensure activities are aligned, and coaching and social-emotional concepts are incorporated into our evidence-based practices.



In addition, families and stakeholders can visit the Infant Toddler Program Website to read this “Quarterly SSIP Newsletter” at www.infanttoddler.idaho.gov.

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For questions or additional information, contact Donna McNearney at McNearnD@dhw.idaho.gov or 208-334-4965.

Additional Resources

AIM Early Idaho: www.aimearlyidaho.org

ECTA Center, A Guide to the Implementation Process: Stages, Steps, and Activities: <http://ectacenter.org/implementprocess/implementprocess.asp>

