

# Data as Information

## 5 Things for Part C/619 Stakeholders to Know

1

Data are factual information. Using data allows you to make decisions based on facts, not opinions, guesswork, or feelings. This is sometimes called data-based or data-informed decision-making.

2

Data can be quantitative, measured in quantities as numbers, or qualitative, describing what something is like or what is observed.

3

To be meaningful, data must be reliable, valid, and accessible.

- Reliable means the data are accurate and true every time, e.g., the data would be the same no matter who collected them.
- Valid means the data measure what they are intended to measure.
- Accessible means that the concerns, needs, and abilities of the intended audience are considered when sharing and using the data.

4

IDEA programmatic and policy decision-making relies on the use of aggregate data (i.e., total data for a whole group, such as all of the children receiving Part C services) and disaggregate data (i.e., broken down into smaller groups, such as children receiving Part C services by race/ethnicity), but not individual child or family data. Data can be organized and analyzed in different ways for different purposes, such as a snapshot in time, comparisons between groups, or trends over time.

5

When stakeholders, such as SICC and SAP representatives, see data presented visually they are better able to grasp difficult concepts, identify patterns, and more efficiently take away key messages. The visual representation and presentation of data to enhance understanding is known as data visualization.