

Equity in Family Outcomes: Self-Assessment for Family Outcomes Cohort

Part 1: Representative Family Data

Last updated: July 7, 2020

State Team: **STATE NAME**

Purpose: The purpose of this self-assessment is to support state-level Part C leadership interested in examining their systems with regard to the extent to which their current systems are producing representative family outcomes data.

Examining state data and the system set up for collecting, analyzing and using data for program improvement, requires that states reflect on overarching questions such as:

- To what extent are your state family outcomes data representative of the families served?
- How are you analyzing data to determine representativeness? Which variables are you using to analyze the data? Do you have ready access to the data needed?
- Where are the data not representative?
- How can we engage a representative group of stakeholders in reviewing the data?
- How can we examine the data and data collection processes to understand why families are not responding? How might we improve their response/input?
- What strategies are in place to encourage responses? What changes might be made to increase responses/representation in groups where there is less representation?

Self-Assessment: To get started on the self-assessment, a state will pull together existing family outcomes data as well as respond to new self-reflection questions included in the tables below that relate to representative family data.

- Existing data: Tables and charts of family survey response rates analyzed by key demographic variables. Recommended variables are race/ethnicity, primary language, income, geographic location. Ideally trend data for 3-5 years.
- New data: State team self-assessment of family outcomes measurement system and the extent to which it is set up for gathering representative data. The items presented in this self-assessment are not an exhaustive list but are select items from the [Family Outcomes Framework](#) and includes key questions about the purpose, data collection, reporting and use of family data.

Existing Data: Looking at family survey response rates by demographic variables

[Look-Think-Act is a simple protocol](#) for the process that teams and practitioners might use when analyzing their data. This protocol involves three steps:

1. Look – Examine data for trends, meaningful associations
2. Think – Ask questions related to the data that might help with interpretation
3. Act – Make decisions as a team and identify the action plan needed to put the decision in place

In the “Look” step, teams should refrain from jumping to an inference about the data. In the initial review of the data, teams should identify what they see factually without coming to conclusions. As teams examine the data, they might:

- Identify patterns
- Identify discrepancies
- Look for unexpected results
- Identify questions that result from the data review
- Identify the need to access additional data

In the “Think” step, teams engage in a discussion to make interpretations about the data. The team records notes to begin to identify their inferences or conclusions based on the data that offer evidence for those conclusions. During the “Think” step, teams might ask:

- What factors might be associated with the results indicated by the data?
- What areas of the data need more inquiry or additional data to understand?
- What are major themes or conclusions that we are ready to make from our review of the data?

In the “Act” step, teams identify actions that will be implemented in response to conclusions from the data. Team action steps might include multiple actions, the collection of additional data, or a decision to continue to monitor a particular situation or data set. Actions might involve steps related to:

- Changes to policy or procedures
- Providing training or coaching
- Strengthening family engagement
- Improving data collection and analysis procedures

A few critical questions specific to the family survey response rates:

- What are the different groups we would expect to be represented in the family outcomes responses? Are we analyzing the data by these groups?
- Which groups are under- or over-represented in the family outcomes response data?
- What might be possible explanations for over/under representation in response rates? How would we investigate those possible explanations?

- Have response rates changed for some groups over time? If yes, how? Can those changes be related to any state activities/approaches or current context?
- What are barriers for some groups' participation/response? What are activities that would address those barriers?
- Who else might we included in the interpretation of these data before we determine appropriate actions?

New Data: Reflecting on the current family outcomes measurement system

To what extent is the state's family outcomes measurement system set up for gathering representative data? The items presented in this self-assessment are not an exhaustive list but are select items from the [Family Outcomes Framework](#) and includes key questions about the purpose, data collection, reporting and use of family data. Next to the framework item is an additional 'equity focus' that digs deeper into the self-reflection about the current system.

Put an X in the column that best matches the team self-assessment of the system. The state team should ask themselves – is this item in place Y/N. If yes, is it fully in place or only partially. If no, is that state working on it or not? Use the Evidence column to provide information that explains the rating selected and other details the team would like to capture.

PURPOSE: State has articulated the purpose(s) of the family experiences and outcomes measurement system (PR1).

FRAMEWORK ITEM	EQUITY FOCUS	NO		Yes		Evidence:
		Not working on it (1)	Working on it (2)	Partially (3)	Fully (4)	
State has a purpose/ written statement that addresses why data are being collected and how data will be used (PR1b).	Included in the purpose is a clear statement about ensuring equity across all families.					
Families receiving services are fully informed of the purposes for collecting data on family experiences and outcomes (PR1d).	All families across demographic variables are informed equitably.					

DATA COLLECTION: Data collection procedures are carried out efficiently and effectively (DC1).

FRAMEWORK ITEM	EQUITY FOCUS	NO		Yes		Evidence: (Questions/Probes for TA providers):
		Not working on it (1)	Working on it (2)	Partially (3)	Fully (4)	
Families are fully informed about data collection procedures (e.g., when surveys are available, how to return them) (DC1f).	All families across demographic variables are informed equitably.					
State has procedures to encourage all groups to participate in the data collection process (i.e., to ensure an adequate response rate) (DC1m).	This includes differentiated procedures to reach across diverse groups.					
Procedures make it possible for all families to participate in the data collection, including those with low literacy levels, non-English speakers (DC1n).	Also including racially and ethnically diverse families and low-income families.					

REPORTING: State agency interprets, reports, and communicates information related to family experience and outcomes (RP1).

FRAMEWORK ITEM	EQUITY FOCUS	NO		Yes		Evidence: (Questions/Probes for TA providers):
		Not working on it (1)	Working on it (2)	Partially (3)	Fully (4)	
State has developed a comprehensive plan for interpreting, reporting, and communicating evidence related to family experiences and outcomes to relevant audiences, including families (RP1a).	The plan was developed with a diverse group across race/ethnicity, income, primary language, geography, etc.					
Representative stakeholders are included in the process of reviewing and interpreting family outcomes data. Interpretation reflects stakeholder input (RP1d).	This includes racial and ethnic diversity, primary language, income, literacy levels, etc.					

USING DATA: State agency makes regular use of information on family experiences and outcomes to improve programs (UD1).

FRAMEWORK ITEM	EQUITY FOCUS	NO		Yes		Evidence: (Questions/Probes for TA providers):
		Not working on it (1)	Working on it (2)	Partially (3)	Fully (4)	
State regularly implements a stakeholder process that includes families to consider the implications of family experiences and outcomes and other data (UD1a).	This includes racial and ethnic diversity, primary language, income, literacy levels, etc.					
As appropriate, state identifies some local programs for targeted support and then works with these programs to jointly develop action plans (UD1b).	Demographics are part of the analysis for identifying local programs needing support in family outcomes related to equity.					

