Forming Evaluation Questions for Your SSIP Evaluation
Objectives

To understand…….

- The components of the SSIP evaluation plan
- The role of identifying evaluation questions in forming the SSIP evaluation plan
What Is the SSIP Evaluation Plan?

- This is a written plan from the state that describes how the state will evaluate the progress and impact of its SSIP.
- Results of evaluation will be used to examine the effectiveness of the SSIP in achieving results for students with disabilities and inform possible changes to the SSIP.
- Evaluation activities within districts and local programs will be a part of this overall SSIP evaluation.
Steps in Planning an SSIP Evaluation

1. Understand the evaluation context
2. Build an evaluation team
3. Identify how important activities will lead to outputs and outcomes (i.e., a Logic Model)
4. Develop evaluation questions
5. Identify the evaluation design
6. Identify data collection strategies
7. Develop preliminary analysis plans
8. Plan for sharing and using results
9. Prepare a timeline for evaluation activities
Why Are Evaluation Questions Important?

Evaluation questions articulate what you want to learn about what you have done.

They . . .

- Define the topics the evaluation will investigate
- Guide the evaluation planning process
- Provide structure to evaluation activities
- Serve as the foundation of a successful evaluation
Criteria for Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions should be . . .

- Clear, specific, and well-defined
- Focused on a program or program component
- Measurable by the evaluation
- Aligned with your planned strategies and activities
What Are We Evaluating?

- Goal is to evaluate the implementation of improvement strategies and infrastructure development. But what does implementation really mean?

- It is both the process of putting the various strategies in place *and* the outcomes or impact of those strategies.

- Two overarching questions. . .
  1. How’s it going? (Process)
  2. What good did it do? (Outcomes/Impact)
Evaluation of Process and Outcomes

Process evaluation questions (How is it going?)
- Focus on the program or a program component
- Ask who, what, where, when, why, or how

Outcome evaluation questions (What good did it do?)
- Be direct and specific to program effectiveness and impact
- Examine changes, effects, or impacts
- Specify the outcome to be measured
Example

Improvement strategy:

- Have all program staff participate in Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-Visiting (MECSH) training

Evaluation Questions: How’s it going? (Process)

- How many staff completed the training?
- When did they complete the training?
- Did staff feel the training was valuable?
Example

Improvement strategy:

- Have all program staff participate in Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-Visiting (MECSH) training

Evaluation Questions: What good did it do? (Outcomes/Impact)

- Have the staff incorporated principles of the training into their practice?
- Has the training improved the quality of relationships that EI have with families?
- Have outcomes for children and families working with trained staff improved?
Considerations in your questions. . .

- Do the questions align with the program’s planned strategies and activities?
- Do the questions fit with the goals for the evaluation?
- What kinds of constraints (costs, time, personnel, etc.) are likely to be encountered in responding to these questions?
- What is feasible to measure?
- What data are readily available?
Need Assistance With Evaluation?

- Contact your IDC State Liaison or Tamara Nimkoff (TamaraNimkoff@westat.com) to connect you with an Evaluation TA Specialist
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