

ACTIVITY 2

Describing the Three Child Outcomes to Families

Activity Purpose: Child Outcomes can best be described as the benefits experienced as a result of the services and supports provided to a child and family. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has identified three Child Outcomes expected as a result of participating in early intervention: 1) positive social-emotional skills, 2) acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and 3) use of appropriate action to meet needs. Measuring child outcomes is one way for families, early interventionists, and programs to know if a child is progressing and if the intervention strategies are effective in supporting the child's everyday functional across a variety of settings. In order to engage families in a discussion about these three areas, professionals must first be able to describe the outcomes and the importance of each outcome to families.

Difficulty Level: Introductory Level – Awareness & Intermediate Level – Application

Estimated Time: 60-75 minutes

Materials:

- Internet
- Computer/TV
- Audio
- Handouts:
 - *Example Explanations of Three Outcomes*
 - *Child Outcomes Chart*
 - *Individual Reflection & Action Plan Section 2; Activity 2*

Activity Instructions:

Part 1 – Explaining the Three Child Outcomes

1. Now that the group has had practice thinking about and simulating a conversation with families about the COS process in general, consider the following questions to lead a discussion about the three specific outcomes:
 - a. In your interactions with families, how do you currently define or explain positive social relationships?
 - b. In your interactions with families, how do you currently define or explain acquiring and using knowledge and skills?
 - c. In your interactions with families, how do you currently define or explain taking appropriate action to meet needs?
 - d. How do families typically respond to the descriptions?
 - e. Do most providers take the time to explain these?
 - i. If not, how could you, regardless of your role on the team, ensure that parents/caregivers are given a description of each of the outcomes?

Part 2 – Three Child Outcomes & Everyday Functioning

1. Break the large group into four smaller groups. Assign each group an age range (birth-6, 7-12 months, 1-2 years & 2-3 years).
2. Provide the group with the following prompts and attached chart called, *Child Outcomes Chart*:
 - a. How would you explain what each of the outcomes (*Children have positive social relationships, Children acquire and use knowledge and skills, and Children take action to meet their needs*) “looks like” functionally in everyday life for each of the age ranges?
 - b. In other words, what are the skills you could expect to see for the various age ranges across the three outcome areas?
 - c. Why are the skills important?
 - d. What do the skills tells us?
3. Come back together as a large group and take turns sharing how each group would explain what the Child Outcomes might look like for each age range.
4. As each group is sharing, encourage everyone to fill in their charts accordingly, so everyone walks away with completed charts.

Part 3 – Different Ways of Explaining the Outcomes

1. Distribute the handout titled, *Example Explanations of Three Outcomes*, to the participants.
2. Either in small groups or one large group (depending on the size), review the example narratives. This handout has four different potential explanations of the three outcomes using family-friendly terms. Consider the following questions to guide a discussion about the examples:
 - a. Which example is more closely aligned with how you describe the three outcomes to families?
 - b. Which do you like best? Why?
 - c. Which one might you want to try out or take elements from when you describe the three outcomes to families?
 - d. Which one do you feel might not be the best description? If so, how would you improve it and why?
 - e. What is missing from explanation #1?
 - f. What do you like about explanation #2?
 - g. What’s inappropriate about explanation #3?
 - h. What stood out to you about explanation #4?
3. Next, watch this brief example of a professional explaining to a family what the COS process is all about: <http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/costeam-videolibrary.asp>
4. Compare the examples just discussed with the video example by asking:
 1. What similarities between the written examples and video example do you notice?
 2. What differences between the written examples and video example do you notice?

Part 4 – A Parent’s Perspective

1. Watch the following brief (under 3 minutes) video of a parent sharing her experience being involved in the COS process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B9hiIoegCw&feature=youtu.be>
2. After watching the brief testimonial, consider the following questions:
 - a. How does this mother feel about being involved in the COS process?
 - b. What are the benefits for this caregiver?

Part 5 – Individual Reflection & Action Plan



1. Ask the participants to individually reflect and complete the handout/action plan titled, *Individual Reflection Section 2; Activity 2*.

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Example Explanations of the Three Outcomes

Explanation 1:

“You may remember our earlier conversation about three child outcome areas highlighted in the brochure we shared. Included here in the brochure (pointing) are the three outcomes we measure along with the types of skills included in each outcome area. Through our discussions, the evaluation, and the RBI, we have learned about Emanuel’s functioning in each of these outcome areas. Today we’ll discuss and summarize Emanuel’s functioning in each of these areas.”

Explanation 2:

“Children bring together many skills to accomplish everyday tasks. One way to understand children’s development is to think about their functioning in three outcome areas. These include positive social relationships, acquiring and using knowledge and skills, and taking appropriate action to meet needs. Within each of these outcomes are many skills. Today, we’ll talk more about what we mean by each of these outcomes and discuss how Norton is using skills in each of these outcome areas.”

Explanation 3:

“We’ve done this several times in the past. Now we are going to rate Kate’s development in three areas – positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate action to meet needs. This is just something that the federal government and state require us to do. Let me know if you have any questions.”

Explanation 4:

“Today we are going to discuss the Child Outcomes Summary Process, which is not just a form, but a team process, looking at three areas -- positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate action to meet needs. This is not an assessment, but rather a process for summarizing information about your child’s participation and functioning in daily life. This is just one way to summarize information about Matthew. Positive social-emotional skills could, for instance, entail how he expresses his feelings. An example of acquisition and use of knowledge and skills might include how Matthew pulls a chair over to the counter to reach the cereal, which shows us how he solves problems and takes action to have his needs met.”

Adapted from the Child Outcomes Summary – Team Collaboration (COS-TC) Toolkit

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Child Outcomes Chart

	Birth-6 months	7-12 months	1-2 years	2-3 years
Positive Social Relationships				
Acquire & Use Knowledge & Skills				
Take Action to Meet Needs				

