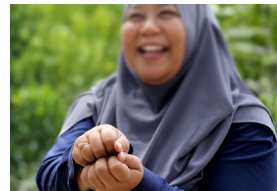# State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Advisory Group

Meeting Three

June 20, 2024

Housekeeping

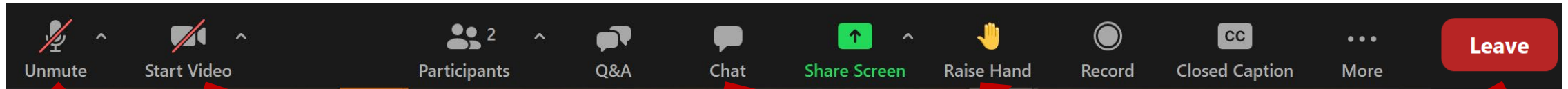- ASL interpreters have been "Spotlighted" and live closed captioning is active

- Materials are available at:
- [State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) - CA Department of Developmental Services : CA Department of Developmental Services](#)

- Submit written comment via email to: Earlystart@dds.ca.gov

Zoom Tips

Unmute mic only when it's your turn to speak

Turn your webcam on/off

All attendees can type questions/ comments in the Q&A

Chat is available here

You can raise your hand when you want to speak
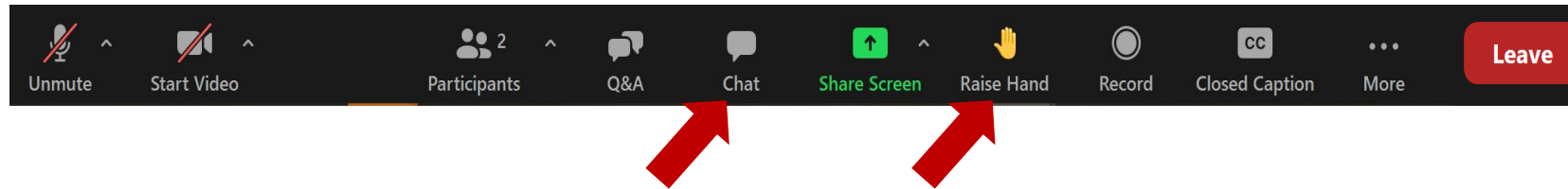
Leave the webinar at the end of the meeting

- Features will vary based on the version of Zoom and device you are using
- Some Zoom features are not available for telephone-only participants

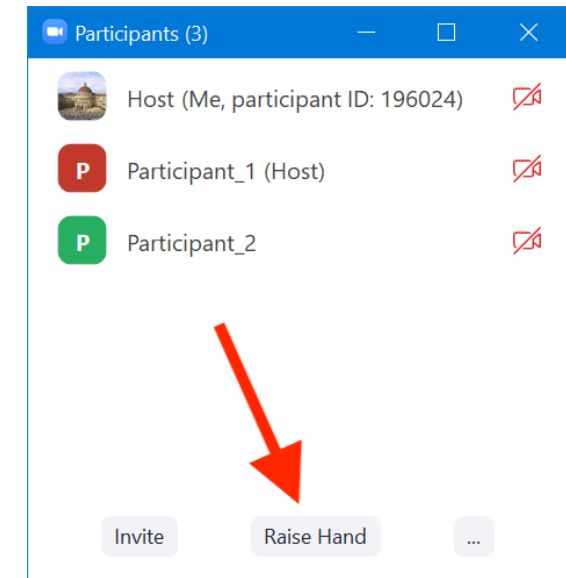CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Providing Comments

- Please use the "Chat" or "Raise Hand" to comment.

- You may need to click on "Participants" and a new window will open where you can "Raise Hand."

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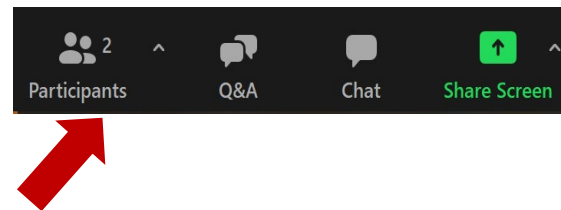
Purpose of Today

- Process:
  - Help improve child and family outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities

- Meeting:
  - Discuss the proposed focus area for improvement
  - Begin discussion of the theory of change components

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Agenda

- Share themes from previous meetings
- Present proposed focus area for SiMR
- Consider potential evidence-based practices
- Review state context
    - Agency infrastructure
    - Other related initiatives

Constituent Feedback

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Preferred Focus Area

- Preference across groups: **family outcomes**
- The top 3 outcomes are:
    - Family outcome: Help their children develop and learn
    - Child outcome: Positive social-emotional skills
    - Family outcome: Effectively communicate their children's needs

- Many desire to attend to the close connection between child and family outcomes

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Emerging Themes Related to Improving Outcomes

- Practice and support oriented:
  - Family coaching
  - Universal assessment tool(s)
  - Coordination between service providers
- Infrastructure oriented:
  - Improving the referral and intake processes
  - Improving data collection
- Other:
  - Helping families understand community opportunities
  - Addressing long-term COVID-19 impacts on social emotional health

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The SSIP in Program Context

Effective professional preparation (preservice)

Effective ongoing professional development

Practitioners have the knowledge and skills to use evidence-based practices

Working conditions support implementing evidence-based practices (e.g., leadership, case loads, shortages, etc.)

Early Start provides services in accord with state and federal requirements

Early Start practitioners use evidence-based practices to support families

Family effectively supports child in becoming an active participant

Families understand their child's strengths, abilities, and special needs
Families know their rights and advocate effectively for their children (OSEP)
Families help their children develop and learn (OSEP)
Families have support systems
Families access desired services, programs, activities in their community

Child actively participates in home and community

Children have positive social emotional skills (including social relationships)
Children acquire and use knowledge and skills (including early language/communication)
Children use appropriate behaviors to meet their needs

3. Implement strategies that have been shown to improve practitioners' ability to use those practices

2. Implement one or more practices that have been shown to improve that outcome

4. Ensure that the program infrastructure can support the plan (data, governance, etc.)

Select an Outcome

What is the proposed focus area for the SiMR?
What should the outcome be?

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Family Outcomes

Specifically: **helping families help their children develop and learn**

Measure: to be determined during evaluation planning

Reasoning: **a) in early intervention, a child's outcomes depend on family engagement and participation in the child's development**

b) providers' practices impact families first, so the measurement is closer to the intervention

c) families need support, and the SSIP focus can draw program and public attention to their needs

Identify Strategies to Improve Practice

What evidence-based practices and supports should the SSIP implement to improve family outcomes?

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Potential Models to Improve Practice

A. Family-guided routines-based intervention & caregiver coaching
   - Juliann Woods & colleagues (Florida State Univ)
B. Routines-based model for early intervention
   - Robin McWilliam & colleagues (Univ. of Alabama)
C. Family coaching in early intervention
   - Variety of researchers and practices:
      - Shelden & Rush
      - Coaching in EI, Univ of Nebraska
      - Coach2Coach, Stacy Landberg

Family-guided Routines-based Intervention & Caregiver Coaching

- Key elements:
  - Embed interventions in everyday routines
  - Ensure goals and practices are family-guided, functional, individualized, and culturally-responsive
  - Caregiver coaching is based in adult learning principles
- Approach details:
  - Has strong research base
  - Is moderately formalized; allows for variation in implementation
  - Provides support for mobile/virtual coaching techniques
  - Training varies

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Routines-based Model for EI

- Key elements:
  - Develop a deep understanding of the family's "ecology" and needs
  - Write child-level functional goals and family goals
  - Use interventions targeted toward building the family's capacity to succeed in daily routines
- Approach details:
  - Has strong research base
  - Is very formalized; does not generally allow for implementation variation
  - Requires specific training

Family Coaching

- General elements:
  - Build caregivers' capacity to support their child during everyday activities
  - Partner with parents to support child's development
  - Interventions are not child-centered
- Approach details:
  - Research base is varied
  - Is not scripted and can be adopted in variety of ways
  - Many different techniques and components to tailor to a program's needs

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Practices Discussion

1. What other evidence-based practices to support family outcomes should be considered?

2. Which of these models calls to you initially?

3. What challenges do you foresee to implementing one or more of these?

4. What supports needs to be in place to ensure a practice is successfully implemented with fidelity?

Recognize Related State Initiatives

What other projects could the SSIP augment or align with across California?

Brainstorming Related Initiatives

- Example:
  - Family Wellness Pilot: AB 2360 requires DDS to "establish a Family Wellness Pilot Program under which regional centers provide counseling and peer support group services to the families of regional center consumers"

- Others?

Strengthen Infrastructure

What do we know about the structures currently in place to support SSIP implementation? Which components require improvement?

Infrastructure Components

- Governance
- Monitoring and Accountability
- Fiscal
- Data System
- Quality Standards
- Technical Assistance
- Professional Development

Governance Structure

Governance refers to a state's **organizational structure and the placement of authority and accountability** for making program, policy, financing, and implementation decisions.

- The California EI Services Act establishes the EI service system
- The Dept of Development Services coordinates Early Start
- Family resource centers provide a secondary avenue of support to families outside the provider system
- DDS' contractual relationship to regional centers, LEAs, FRCs, and provider vendors may lack the authority to require implementation of one or more SSIP elements

Monitoring & Accountability

Under IDEA, the lead agency for EI in a state has a responsibility to implement a general supervision system to **monitor the statewide implementation of the law**, identify and correct noncompliance, and **work toward improved outcomes** for children and families.

- Compliance to IDEA and program performance varies across regional centers
- A Quality Incentive Program has been implemented to encourage compliance
- Monitoring processes do not yet include data quality accountability
- Annual determinations do not yet assess achievement toward outcome targets

Fiscal System

The fiscal component refers to the state's system for planning, forecasting, using fiscal data, securing funds and resources, allocating and disbursing funds, and monitoring **funds and resources**.

- In recent years, resources have been invested in reducing staff caseloads
- Future access to funding to support SSIP implementation is limited
  - PD funds may be available, as some were dedicated to the original SSIP
  - Partnerships may be leveraged to support the SSIP implementation
  - Contracts may present a fiscal and oversight opportunity for change

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Data and Data Systems

The state's data system includes the **hardware, software, and other applications** and processes that enable Part C programs to **collect** data about children, families, workforce, and program characteristics, and then **analyze, report, and use** those data to achieve program goals.

- The Early Start Report is the current data system for all EI services
- The data system will be replaced in a year or more
- Child outcomes are in the ESR, but data quality is an issue (multiple different data measures and incompleteness)
- Family outcome survey data are collected and stored separately
- Early Start has the capacity to collect, store, and analyze new data for SSIP implementation and evaluation

Quality Standards

Quality standards refer both to **child-level and program-level standards**. Child standards, also referred to as early learning guidelines or **early learning standards**, reflect what young children should know and be able to do. Program-level standards refer to the **legal requirements and evidenced-based expectations** for what constitutes quality in the provision of EIS.

- State guidelines revised in 2012 distinguish three core concepts related to quality standards relevant to the SSIP:
  - Family-centered care
  - Family support services
  - Family empowerment
- DDS is working to describe how quality standards at the child and program levels are currently monitored and implemented

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance refers to the **process of building capacity** for designing or improving the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the state and local EI systems and services. For purposes of the SSIP, TA can be thought of as **system building activities** whereas Professional Development is designed to build the skills of individuals in the system.

- Early Start and contracted partners provide TA to improve provider and program capacity through several mechanisms to address several topics, including service provision, data validity and quality, child outcomes, and program compliance

- These mechanisms may be leveraged to support the needs of the SSIP

Professional Development

Professional development refers to the **structures that are in place to build the knowledge and skills** of Early Start administrators and practitioners to provide EIS and supports consistent with IDEA and current knowledge of evidence-based practices.

- Early Start and contracted partners provide professional development to providers and other staff through several mechanisms on a variety of topics to improve practices and service provision
- These resources may be leveraged to support the needs of the SSIP
- Currently, no training is available specifically for family coaching

Concluding Discussion

Recommendations for implementation

What's Next?

State Leadership Team activities to address contextual framing:
- Complete the infrastructure analysis
- Outline other state initiatives related to family outcomes
- Define the theory of change
- Draft the improvement plan

Public engagement activities:
- Advisory Group Meeting #4: to be scheduled for August
- Constituency Group Meetings Part 2: to be scheduled for August
- ICC discussion: TBD

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

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