

Virginia Part C Family Survey Explanation of Results

FFY 2023/SFY 2024

(July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)

Background

In accordance with federal reporting requirements mandated by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Part C Early Intervention Lead Agencies under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must report annually on eleven (11) indicators related to early intervention services for children ages birth to three. This summary explains the results of a family survey conducted by the Commonwealth of Virginia to address Indicator 04, the percent of families participating in early intervention who report that early intervention services have helped the family:

- a) know their rights;
- b) effectively communicate their children’s needs; and
- c) help their children develop and learn.

A full analysis of the family survey data is presented in [Analysis of the Virginia Family Survey Data Addressing Part C SPP/APR Indicator 04: Final Report](#) (July 8, 2024). The report has been prepared by Randall D. Penfield, and it is available online at the [Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia](#) website. (Look for Public Reporting in the About ITCVA section.)

The Survey Instrument

The Virginia family survey includes one rating scale developed and validated by the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) and four additional questions addressing the family’s experience in early intervention. The 22-item Impact on Family Scale (IFS) measures the extent to which early intervention helped families achieve positive outcomes, including the three outcomes (a, b, c) specified in Indicator 04.

The Sample

Surveys were returned by 2,217 families who were receiving early intervention services on December 1, 2023. From these responses, a random sample of 1,575 families reflecting the distribution of race/ethnicity in the larger population was selected for data analysis.

Distribution of Child’s Race/Ethnicity in the Representative Sample		
Gender	N	Percentage
White	798	50.7%
Black or African-American	322	20.4%
Hispanic or Latino	177	11.2%
Asian	83	5.3%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	0.1%
Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native	1	0.1%
Two or More Races	193	12.3%
Total	1575	100%

Note: The distribution of race/ethnicity for the children receiving early intervention services in Virginia under Part C is: White = 50.68%; Black/African American = 20.47%; Hispanic or Latino = 11.21%; Asian = 5.27%; American Indian or Alaskan Native = 0.05%; Pacific Islander of Hawaiian Native = 0.07%; and Two or more races = 12.25%.

The following table displays the distribution of child’s gender in the representative sample.

Distribution of Child’s Gender in the Representative Sample		
Gender	N	Percentage
Male	932	59.2%
Female	605	38.4%
Missing	38	2.4%
Total	1575	100%

Based on established survey sample guidelines, a sample of 1,575 families is large enough to provide a high degree of confidence that the results of the survey accurately reflect the degree to which families have achieved the outcomes in Indicator 04.

Scoring the Survey

Each returned survey in the sample received an overall score (also called a measure) on the Impact on Family Scale based on that family’s responses to all 22 items. The score for each survey can range from 0 to 1000.

In order to report in the Annual Performance Report (APR) the *percent* of families who indicate that early intervention services helped them achieve the specific outcomes (A, B, C) in Indicator 04, it is necessary to establish a standard for each of the outcomes. The standard is set at a score (in that range of 0 – 1000) that provides a high degree of confidence that if a family’s score is at or above that standard for a given outcome, then the family has achieved the outcome. Virginia chose to apply the Part C standards recommended by a nationally representative stakeholder group convened by NCSEAM. The standards for the three outcomes in Indicator 04 were set at the following scores:

- a) know their rights, at a score of 539;
- b) effectively communicate their children’s needs, at a score of 556: and
- c) help their children develop and learn, at a score of 516.

Major Findings

- Statewide Percent on Indicators 04A, 04B and 04C

The percentage reported is the number of families at or above the standard divided by the total number of families in the sample, multiplied by 100.

Percent of Respondents Meeting or Exceeding Each of the Standards for Indicator 04			
	Indicator 04A Percent of families who report that early intervention services helped them know their rights	Indicator 04B Percent of families who report that early intervention services helped them effectively communicate their children's needs	Indicator 04C Percent of families who report that early intervention services helped them help their child develop and learn
Percentage	75.9%	72.2%	86.0%

- Agreement with Specific Items on the Impact on Family Scale (IFS)

The following table displays the percentage of families in the sample who agreed with the specific items on the IFS. Please note that the standards described above generally require that the family strongly or very strongly agree with items. In the Rasch measurement framework, the statistical method used to analyze the family survey, an “agree” response is taken into account but receives less weight than a “strongly agree” or “very strongly agree” response. [See [Analysis of the Virginia Family Survey Data Addressing Part C SPP/APR Indicator 04: Final Report](#) (July 8, 2024), available online at the [Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia](#) website, for more information about the Rasch measurement framework.]

In order to be sure a family has achieved an outcome, more than a simple “agree” is needed in order to have a high degree of confidence that the response is truly an “agree” response and not simply a reflection of not disagreeing. If a family is asked whether early intervention helped them understand their child’s needs and they respond, “Yeah ... I guess so,” this would be considered an “agree” response (since they did not disagree). However, this response does not provide a high degree of confidence that early intervention really did help that family understand their child’s needs.

Over the past year, early intervention services have helped me and/or my family...	Strongly/ very strongly agree	Agree in any category
...participate in typical activities for children and families in my community.	57%	88%
...know about services in my community.	50%	88%
...know where to go for support to meet my family's needs.	52%	88%
...keep up friendships for my child and family.	50%	85%
...know where to go for support to meet my child's needs.	59%	91%
...find information I need.	54%	92%
...improve my family's quality of life.	60%	93%
...feel that I can get the services and supports that my child and family need.	62%	92%
...feel more confident in my skills as a parent.	63%	93%
...feel that my child will be accepted and welcomed in the community.	61%	93%
...know how to make changes in family routines that will benefit my child.	62%	93%

...communicate more effectively with the people who work with my child and family.	61%	93%
...feel more confident in finding ways to meet my child's needs.	63%	93%
...understand how the Early intervention system works.	60%	93%
...feel that I can handle the challenges of parenting my child with his/her needs.	63%	94%
...understand the roles of the people who work with my child and family.	61%	94%
...figure out solutions to problems as they come up.	61%	93%
...know about my child's and family's rights concerning Early Intervention services.	56%	93%
...be able to evaluate how much progress my child is making.	63%	94%
...understand my child's needs.	67%	95%
...feel that my efforts are helping my child.	70%	95%
...do things with and for my child that are good for my child's development.	69%	95%

Note that the percent of families agreeing at any level (agree, strongly, very strongly) with the items generally decreases from the items at the bottom of the list to the items at the top of the list. This is a pattern that is very stable across families and across states and essentially provides a rank-ordered list of the items in the scale in terms of how readily families agree to each item.

The survey analysis indicates that, with a very high level of confidence, one can conclude for each of the three outcomes in Indicator 04, the majority of the responses were positive and above the stringent standards set and described in the Scoring the Survey section above. Further, the results indicate that the Virginia early intervention system is helping families to achieve many positive outcomes in addition to those specified in Indicator 04.

- Setting Measurable and Rigorous Targets

OSEP requires that states set measurable and rigorous targets for improved performance on the State Performance Plan indicators. Virginia began a new six year State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report cycle in FFY2020. Over this six year period, Virginia will establish targets to reflect a statistically significant improvement by the end of the cycle period. The target percentages for the three outcomes in Indicator 04 for FFY 2023 are as follows:

- a) know their rights = 75.0%;
- b) effectively communicate their children's needs = 71.9%; and
- c) help their children develop and learn = 85.9%.

The following table indicates the actual percentage for FFY 2023 and the target percentage for each of the three outcomes in Indicator 04:

Percent of Respondents Meeting or Exceeding Each of the Standards for Indicator 04			
	Indicator 04A Percent of families who report that early intervention services helped them know their rights	Indicator 04B Percent of families who report that early intervention services helped them effectively communicate their children’s needs	Indicator 04C Percent of families who report that early intervention services helped them help their child develop and learn
Target Percentage for FFY 2023	75.0%	71.9%	85.9%
Actual Percentage For FFY 2023	75.9%	72.2%	86.0%

The actual percentages in FFY 2023 for indicators 04A, 04B and 04C were slightly lower than those in FFY 2022. As in FFY 2022, Virginia once again exceeded its targets for Indicators 04A, 04B and 04C in FFY 2023.

- Statewide Results Related to Family Experiences in Early intervention

The table below displays the percentage of families reporting: (a) strongly or very strongly agreeing with each of the four items on the survey that address the family’s experience in early intervention; and (b) any category of agree for each of the four items. Across the four items, the percentage of families strongly or very strongly agreeing exceeded 71%, and the percentage of families agreeing in any category was at or above 94%.

Percent of Families Expressing Agreement with Items Pertaining to Experiences with Early Interventions		
Item	Strongly/ very strongly agree	Agree in any category
What I say about my child and family is understood and respected.	72%	96%
The people who work with my child and family answer our questions.	75%	96%
I can easily get in touch with my service coordinator.	73%	95%
The services provided to my child and family help reach the outcomes/goals that are important to my family.	71%	94%

Improvement Planning

As explained previously, the items in the IFS are essentially rank-ordered by how readily families agree with them. When looking at the table above that lists the specific items on the IFS, the items that are lower on the list build toward the items that are higher on the list. In other words, a family who strongly agrees with the statement that they “Feel that I can handle the challenges of

parenting my child with his/her needs” most likely strongly or very strongly agreed with the 7 items below that on the list of IFS items (i.e., understand roles, figure out solutions, know rights, able to evaluate progress, understand child’s needs, feel my efforts are helping my child, do things that are good for child’s development). Therefore, when we are looking to improve on one of the outcomes in Indicator 04, we can look to the items below the one we want to improve in order to identify possible improvement strategies. In particular, it is helpful to understand the following when using the survey results for improvement planning:

- The items lowest on the list are about the relationship between the family and their child;
- As you move up the table, the items are about the relationship between the family and their service provider(s); and
- Finally, at the top of the table, the survey items reflect the relationship between the family and their community.

In addition, while performance percentages on the outcomes in Indicator 04 are derived from the IFS, the results from the four questions pertaining to families’ experiences in early intervention provide information about where improvements may be needed in order to improve the family outcomes.