

## Virginia State Systemic Improvement Plan

**State Identified Measurable Result: Increasing the percentage of infants and toddlers who substantially increase their rate of growth in the area of positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) by the time they exit early intervention**

Broad Improvement Strategy 1: Identify and implement initial and ongoing eligibility determination and assessment for service planning practices related to social-emotional development that effectively inform eligibility decisions, the child outcome summary process, IFSP development and service delivery

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help*	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
a. Establish recommended and/or required practices for use of a social-emotional screening tool(s) as part of eligibility determination and for ongoing developmental monitoring	2022 - 2024	State staff with stakeholder group	National resources and other states' policies and practices	Practice Manual updated and available on ITCVA website	By 2026, monitoring and fidelity assessment indicate practitioners are using the recommended and/or required screening and assessment tools and practices consistently and as intended  Referrals of children experiencing or at high risk of social-emotional delays (e.g., CAPTA referrals) increase from 2022 – 2025  Annual Family Survey indicates by 2026 an increase over baseline in percent of families agreeing that their knowledge about
b. Establish recommended and/or required practices for use of a social-emotional assessment tool(s) as part of initial and ongoing child assessment and additional questions on the family assessment tool	2022 - 2024	State staff with stakeholder group	National resources and other states' policies and practices	Practice Manual updated and available on ITCVA website	
c. Develop recommended practices around including eligibility and/or assessment team members with Infant Mental Health or related expertise	2023 - 2024	State staff with stakeholder group	National resources and other states' policies and practices	Practice Manual updated and available on ITCVA website	
d. Examine inequities/bias in eligibility determination and assessment practices/tools	2023 <b>Completed</b>	State staff with stakeholder group	National resources and tools; work from other states	Practice Manual updated, as needed, and available on ITCVA website  Necessary training and resources identified	

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			DBHDS DEI Officer		<p>importance of social-emotional skills has increased</p> <p>Monitoring conducted in 2024 – 2026 indicates IFSP outcomes and services are informed by social-emotional screening and/or assessment results</p>
e. Explore screening or assessing for other factors that impact infants’ and toddlers’ social-emotional development, such as parental depression, anxiety, trauma, parent-child interaction, attachment and temperament	2023 - 2024	State staff with stakeholder group	<p>National resources and other states’ policies and practices</p> <p>Early Impact Virginia Alliance</p>	At least one resource is developed and posted to the ITCVA website to share the information gained and/or communicate new practices	
f. Develop, adopt or adapt educational resources and training in a variety of formats for families, other caregivers and referral sources – importance of positive social-emotional skills and social relationships, what is typical at each age level, and red flags	2024	State staff and New Path Family Support Director with stakeholder group	<p>Learn the Signs Act Early tools and products</p> <p>NICU Project documents</p> <p>PEATC, Center for Family Involvement</p> <p>Private agencies, independent contractors offering parent classes</p>	Resource(s) available on ITCVA website and widely disseminated to relevant groups and individuals (e.g., referral sources, families and organizations that support families)	
g. Conduct outreach with targeted referral sources (e.g., CAPTA, domestic violence and other social service organizations) to strengthen relationships and	2023 – 2024	State staff and local systems	National resources and other states’	Regional or statewide meeting notes indicate outreach to multiple	

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help*	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
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streamline referral processes and information sharing, as needed, to ensure timely referrals for children with potentially delayed or atypical social-emotional development			<p>policies and practices</p> <p>Learn the Signs Act Early team</p>	<p>targeted referral sources in all regions</p> <p>Number of referrals from CAPTA and/or other targeted referral sources within 1 year of completing targeted outreach activities</p>	
h. Once screening and assessment practices and tools are identified, develop an implementation plan including professional development activities and resources needed to support implementation	2023 - 2024	Professional development team with stakeholder input	<p>National and other states' resources</p> <p>Publisher resources</p>	Implementation steps in place and added to SSIP	
<p>i. Gather baseline data on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many children were found eligible based on only delayed or atypical social-emotional development</li> <li>• How many children were found eligible based on delayed or atypical social-emotional development combined with other areas of delay or atypical development</li> <li>• What factors or circumstances are associated with or lead to determining a child eligible based only on delayed or atypical social-emotional development</li> </ul>	2024 - 2025	Data Manager and Technical Assistance Consultants	<p>TRAC-IT</p> <p>Information from local systems</p>	Baseline data is collected and shared in a monthly ITCVA update	

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j. Consider automatic eligibility category(ies) for children at very high risk for social-emotional/infant mental health delays or disorders	2024 - 2025	State staff with stakeholder group	Information from other states  National research	Recommendations are made to VICC and State Lead Agency  State regulations and Practice Manual are updated if eligibility criteria are adjusted	
k. Develop/adapt/adopt and implement a fidelity measure and process for expected screening, eligibility and assessment practices	2024 - 2026	State staff with stakeholder group	National and other states' resources	Fidelity tool and process in place and reflected in Practice Manual	
l. Identify and implement additional professional development and/or other supports needed to sustain the use of expected screening, eligibility and assessment practices with fidelity	2025 - 2026	State staff with stakeholder group	National and other states' resources	Professional development and/or other supports are identified and the SSIP is updated to reflect additional activities, as needed	

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Broad Improvement Strategy 2: Identify and implement evidence-based service delivery practices to promote positive social-emotional development for all eligible infants and toddlers and provide effective intervention to address delays and concerns

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
a. Explore available evidence-based practices to support positive social-emotional development and social relationships (e.g., Pyramid Model, PIWI, FAN, DEC Recommended Practices) in order to identify a core practice that will be implemented statewide	2022 <b>Completed</b>	State staff with stakeholder group	National and other states' resources	✓ Core evidence-based practice is identified	By 2026, monitoring and fidelity assessment indicate practitioners are using the identified evidence-based core service delivery practices consistently and as intended
b. Understand from various communities, including those who are here as refugees and immigrants, what the concept of “social-emotional skills” means to them and what is important in their culture related to infants’ and toddlers’ skills in this area of development	2023- 2024	State staff and New Path Family Support Director	Center for Family Involvement, PEATC  National and other states’ resources	At least 4 minority, immigrant and/or refugees communities are engaged in addressing this activity  At least one resource is developed to share what is learned with planners and practitioners	By 2026, monitoring indicates an increase from 2022 in the percent of children whose IFSPs include family outcomes  By 2026, monitoring indicates an increase from 2022 in the percent of children whose IFSPs include an outcome or short-term goal supporting the child’s
c. Strengthen state practice manual language, guidance and support for documenting family outcomes on the IFSP and identifying services and supports (including less-common supports like infant massage, lactation	2023 - 2024	State staff with stakeholder group	National and other states’ resources	Practice Manual updated and available on ITCVA website	

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consultant, etc.) to meet those outcomes					social-emotional development
d. Establish and implement practices for accessing clinical-level treatment, including evidence-based dyadic treatment, when needed (e.g., when to access, who determines the need, who provides it, etc.)	2023 - 2024	State staff with stakeholder group	DBHDS Child and Family Services staff  National and other states' resources	Practice Manual updated and available on ITCVA website	Annual Family Survey indicates by 2026 an increase over baseline in percent of families agreeing that they know how to help their child develop positive social and emotional skills
e. Identify, and share statewide, strategies for using Infant or Early Childhood Mental Health endorsed practitioners, LCSWs and other mental health specialty providers effectively throughout the early intervention process to support children, families and other providers	2023 - 2024	State staff with stakeholder group	IECMH Advisory Group  National and other states' resources	At least one resource is developed to share identified strategies with planners and practitioners	
f. Strengthen the ways Virginia's early intervention system provides or helps families access parenting and family support services and group activities for families (e.g., parenting classes/programs, deaf mentors, interest or diagnosis-based family groups, playgroups, outings, etc.)	2023 - 2024	State staff and New Path Family Support Director with stakeholder group	National and other states' resources  Early Impact Virginia Alliance, PEATC, disability-specific groups	Map or directory of available parenting and family support services developed and disseminated to all local systems  Great Ideas resource developed and disseminated to local system managers sharing family group activities used in local systems across the state	

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
g. Develop, adopt or adapt general educational resources in a variety of formats for families and other caregivers about how to support the child in developing positive social-emotional skills and social relationships	2023 – 2024	State staff and New Path Family Support Director with stakeholder group	Learn the Signs Act Early tools and products  PEATC, Center for Family Involvement	Resource(s) available on ITCVA website and widely disseminated to relevant groups and individuals  At least 3 different formats are available	
h. Once an evidence-based practice is identified for statewide use, develop an implementation plan including professional development activities and resources needed to support implementation	2024	Professional development team with stakeholder input	National and other states' resources  Publisher resources	Implementation steps in place and added to SSIP	
i. Develop/adapt/adopt and implement a fidelity measure and process for expected service delivery practices	2024 - 2026	State staff with stakeholder group	National and other states' resources	Fidelity tool and process in place and reflected in Practice Manual	
j. Identify and implement additional professional development and/or other supports needed to sustain the use of expected service delivery practices with fidelity	2025 - 2026	State staff with stakeholder group	National and other states' resources	Professional development and/or other supports are identified and the SSIP is updated to reflect additional activities, as needed	

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**Broad Improvement Strategy 3:** Build a sufficient, sustainable and accessible workforce of highly effective and diverse practitioners with the core competencies necessary to implement the eligibility determination, assessment for service planning, and service planning and delivery practices identified in broad improvement strategies 1 and 2

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
<p>a. Ensure <u>all</u> practitioners know they have a role in supporting positive social-emotional development and a nurturing caregiver-child relationship and have the training and tools to do that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundational knowledge on social-emotional developmental milestones</li> <li>• Foundational knowledge about impact of birthing individuals' and other caregivers' health, including mental health, birth history and adverse childhood events on child social-emotional skills and child development more broadly. And understanding how this information informs coaching practices.</li> <li>• How to assess and talk to families about this area and about routines so it's a conversation, not an interview.</li> <li>• Importance of parent-child interaction</li> </ul>	2022 - 2026	Professional Development Team, IECMH Endorsement Coordinator, and Early Childhood Mental Health Coordinator	<p>Early Impact Virginia Alliance</p> <p>Learn the Signs Act Early Team</p> <p>ACE Interface Presenters</p> <p>DBHDS, CSB trainers and resources</p>	<p>✓ At least 2 new professional development activities, resources or tools relevant to all EI practitioners are developed per year to address these topics</p> <p>✓ Evaluations of products and learning opportunities, when available, indicate at least 75% of participants/users gained knowledge and/or skills and plan to implement at least one new thing they learned</p>	<p>Diversity of Virginia's early intervention workforce increases by 2026, as reported by local system managers</p> <p>Number and diversity of IMH-endorsed practitioners working in Virginia's early intervention system increases by 2026, based on data maintained by the IECMH Endorsement Coordinator</p> <p>Every local system reports access to at</p>



Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intervention strategies and knowing when to refer for more specialized treatment/intervention</li> </ul>					least one LCSW, IECMH-endorsed practitioner or other mental health specialty provider by 2026
b. Maintain Virginia's Infant Mental Health endorsement program, with an emphasis on increasing the diversity of endorsees; improving cost-effectiveness and accessibility; ensuring those who complete the program feel competent and confident to work in EI; and increasing the number of candidates who complete the endorsement process, maintain their endorsement and stay in Virginia's early intervention system	2022 - 2026	IECMH Endorsement Coordinator and Early Childhood Mental Health Coordinator	VAIMH  Private business partners - scholarships	✓ A written plan is in place to address the areas of emphasis  ✓ At least 1 new strategy for recruiting and retaining diverse candidates is implemented in 2022  Percent of candidates who complete endorsement within expected timelines increases by 2024	
c. Identify and implement strategies to reduce stress and support the well-being of Virginia's early intervention practitioners and leaders	2022 <b>Completed</b>	Early Childhood Mental Health Coordinator	National and other states' resources	✓ At least 2 new strategies are implemented in 2022	
d. Identify and implement strategies to increase the diversity of the early intervention workforce	2022 - 2024	Professional Development Team with stakeholder group	Early Impact Virginia Alliance  National and other states' resources	✓ At least 2 new strategies are identified and implemented	

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
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<p>e. Identify and implement strategies to recruit and retain early intervention personnel with mental health expertise as well as personnel in other fields (OT, PT, SLP, education, etc.) with the knowledge and skills to support positive social-emotional development for all children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement marketing campaign for careers in EI</li> <li>• Target specific fields/groups to recruit to EI: SW, Psychologists, mental health workers, retirees, part-time, after school hours, nurses</li> </ul>	2022 – 2023 Continue in 2024	Professional Development Team and Early Childhood Mental Health Coordinator	National and other states' resources  Va-LEND	At least 2 new strategies are identified and implemented	
<p>f. Strengthen Medicaid funding for early intervention by adding Infant or Early Childhood Mental Health endorsed candidates and others with appropriate mental health qualifications to the list of providers approved by the state Medicaid agency to deliver early intervention services and exploring options for reimbursement for services to the caregiver (based on family outcomes on the IFSP)</p>	2023 - 2024	State staff	DMAS  National and other states' resources  New expanded Medicaid benefits for adults	New provider categories are added	
<p>g. Work with the state Medicaid agency to increase early intervention reimbursement rates overall and add licensed mental health professionals to Reimbursement Category 1</p>	2023 – 2024	State staff	DMAS  Possibly funding for a rate study	Rate study is completed	

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h. Build reflective supervision capacity to support all providers, including Infant Mental Health Endorsement candidates	2023 – 2024	Professional Development Team, IECMH Endorsement Coordinator	Early Impact Virginia Alliance  National and other states' resources	The percentage of EI practitioners for whom reflective supervision is available increases as reported in written surveys and/or verbal feedback in regional meetings	
i. Explore options, including a hub or shared services approach, for increasing access to Infant or Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsed practitioners and others with this expertise for all areas of the Commonwealth	2024 - 2025	State staff with stakeholder input	Early Impact Virginia Alliance  National and other states' resources	At least one new option is piloted or implemented	

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Broad Improvement Strategy 4: Use data to understand who is and is not benefiting from our efforts to improve positive social-emotional skills and social relationships, what accounts for differences and how to promote equitable outcomes

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
a. Finalize the data model for the new statewide data system, ensuring collection of data and connections between data elements necessary to analyze child outcomes for a wide variety of subgroups	2022 <b>Completed</b>	State Lead Agency (EI and IT staff) and data system vendor with stakeholder input	Funding already allocated	✓ Data model is complete	<p>A new data system is implemented and addresses the agreed upon data collection and reporting needs</p> <p>By 2026, meeting agendas, notes, presentations, and other documentation indicate that local system managers and state staff use the new data system to correlate child outcome data with other program and demographic data in order to identify successes and to plan and evaluate improvement efforts</p> <p>Via regional and local meetings and report by Technical Assistance and Monitoring Consultants, all local system managers demonstrate by 2025 that they are able to use the new data system independently to</p>
b. Identify reports and ad hoc tools for the new statewide data system that will support easy reporting and analysis of child outcome data at the state and local data	2022 <b>Completed</b>	State Lead Agency (EI and IT staff) and data system vendor with stakeholder input	Funding already allocated	✓ Reports and ad hoc functions identified	
c. Develop and deliver training on the new statewide data system to all users to ensure consistency of data entered as well as effective use of standard reports and ad hoc reporting functions	2022 <b>Completed</b>	State Lead Agency (EI and IT staff) and data system vendor	Funding already allocated	✓ At least 3 training methods are used  ✓ Training is widely accessed by all user types	

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
				✓ Training evaluations indicate at least 75% of participants who submit the post-training evaluation learned the basic skills needed to access and use the new data system and know where to go for additional information and support	correlate child outcome data with other program and demographic data in order to identify successes and to plan and evaluate improvement efforts  Monitoring of local systems indicate they use the data system on a routine schedule to monitor timely data entry, consistent data quality and completeness (percent of exiters) for the child outcomes
d. Implement the new data system statewide	2022 <b>Phase I Completed</b>  Phase II 2023-2024 <b>Completed</b>	State Lead Agency (EI and IT staff) and data system vendor	Support may be needed to assist some local systems with integrating their local EHR with the new state data system	✓ Data system is live and accessible to all users –	
e. Develop and implement a schedule and process for state-level review and analysis of child outcome data from the new data system	2024	State TA and Monitoring Consultants and Data Manager	None	Schedule is in place and added to the Monitoring Manual	
f. Address analysis and use of local child outcomes data on increasing positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) to support data quality and program	2023-2026	State TA and Monitoring Consultants	Technology support for webinars from the VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities	Regional and statewide meeting agendas indicate child outcome data analysis and use, including data quality, are addressed with local system managers at	

Steps	Projected Timelines	Who Will Work on This	Resources Needed and others who can help *	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	
				Short-Term	Long-Term
improvement through structured support in regional meetings, statewide meetings, and/or webinars			DaSY and/or ECTA consultation on tools and data interpretation, as needed, to support State staff in helping local systems	least once a year through FFY 2025	
g. Develop and implement a cyclical monitoring approach that includes monitoring related to Indicator 3A (positive social-emotional skills, including social relationships)	Begin implementation 2024	State TA and Monitoring Consultants with input from local system managers	National and other states' tools and examples	Protocol is in place and sent to all local system managers	

\*Generally, funding is only listed in the Resources Needed if there is an anticipated need for new or additional funding.