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The Need for Evaluation

- Provides an organized way of assessing work in progress and results obtained
- Assesses the impact of an activity on the area targeted for improvement
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of the improvement activity

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Types of Evaluation

- Process evaluation
 - Evaluates the improvement process itself
- Impact evaluation
 - Evaluates the results produced by the process

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Evaluating Process

- Assesses how well the improvement activity is being implemented
- Dictates whether or not adjustments need to be made
- Necessitates a review of data on a continuous basis

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Process Evaluation Questions

- Process evaluation questions might answer
 - To what extent is the improvement activity being implemented as intended?
 - To what extent is the improvement activity reaching the target audience (i.e., children, staff, parents)?
 - Is everyone doing what they said they would do?

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Evaluating Impact

- Measures the effect the improvement activity has had on the identified area for improvement and indicator
- Indicates the extent to which the goals of the improvement activity have been met and assesses the effects of the improvement activity

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Impact Evaluation Questions

- Impact evaluation questions might include
 - Did the improvement activity accomplish what it was supposed to?
 - Which parts of the improvement activity worked well?
 - Which parts of the improvement activity did not work well?
 - Should the agency continue the improvement activity?

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Selecting Impact Measures

- Help assess the extent to which the improvement activity has caused a change in the indicator
- Impact measures should
 - Be sensitive enough to detect incremental change
 - Provide information regarding whether or not the activity is being implemented as intended

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What Do You Know About Your Improvement Activities?

- Improvement activities are aligned to the indicators including if reflected across related indicators.
- Improvement activities reflect state priorities.
- Improvement activities are actionable.
- Improvement activities are realistic.

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What Do You Know About Your Improvement Activities?

- Improvement activities include measures of performance.
- Improvement activities include time lines.
- Improvement activities identify responsibility for implementation.
- Improvement activities include technical assistance needs.

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Categorizing Your Activities

- Training and Professional Development
- Improve Data Collection
- Improve Systems Administration and Monitoring
- Improve Collaboration and Coordination
- Program Development
- Clarify/Examine/Develop Policies & Procedures
- Provide Technical Assistance
- Increase/Adjust FTE
- Evaluation

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Developing a Plan for Evaluation

- Identify the goal of the evaluation.
- Frame the evaluation questions to be answered.
- Identify evaluation methods and measurement options.
- Identify data sources.
- Determine data analysis techniques.
- Establish timelines.

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Identify the Goal of the Evaluation

- Identify the goal(s) of the evaluation
 - What is it that you want to learn as a result of this evaluation?
 - What purpose does the evaluation have?
- The goal should provide the foundation for the evaluation questions.

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Constructs for Evaluation Questions

- Planning and implementation issues
- Attainment of the goal
- Impact on participants or target audience

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Methods and Measurement

- Choose methodology that will allow the team to get the most useful information
- Needs to align with evaluation questions developed
- May need to use combination of methods

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Data Sources

- Depends on data type being gathered
- Determined by evaluation questions being asked and when information can be collected and analyzed
- Develop timeline for collection of evaluation data

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Analysis Techniques

- Refer back to original questions to organize data and focus analysis
- Develop process that looks at both short-term benchmarks and monitors ongoing process

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Evaluation Timelines

- Serve as management tool for evaluation process
- Developing realistic timeline ensures evaluation process will move along efficiently

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Evaluation Examples

- Evaluating online professional development training to address Part C Indicator 8
- Evaluating the State's provision of technical assistance to LEAs relative to Indicators 9 and 10

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State Evaluation

- Made initial decision regarding focus of evaluation
 - Do all improvement activities at once
 - Do certain categories of activities
 - Do by clusters of indicators

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State Evaluation Process

- Reviewed all activities in cluster using Improvement Activity Review Form
- Categorized activities in selected cluster of indicators
- Developed evaluation plan based on essential elements

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State Reported Challenges

- Time consuming
- Labor intensive

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State Reported Benefits

- Improvement activities are more clear and measurable
- Clear timelines and individuals responsible to ensure completion are established
- Making reporting for APR easier

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State Reported Benefits

- Data to show that the improvement activities are being implemented as intended
- Data to tell if the improvement activities are having an impact on SPP/APR indicators
- Data to tell if the money spent on contracts with vendors to implement improvement activities is making a difference

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Important Ideas in Summary

- There are essential questions that should be addressed when reporting progress made on improvement efforts.
- There are several strategies that can be used to effectively report on the process and progress of improvement efforts.
- The team should develop a plan for reporting that focuses on the identified areas of need, plans for improvement, and progress made.
