



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Indicator 7 Child Outcomes Frequently Asked Questions

This document is part of the department’s guidance on implementing Indicator 7. It provides answers to frequently asked questions regarding the reporting of outcome data for preschool children with disabilities. Please reference the Table of Contents for those questions and answers that have been updated with this version of the document.

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Overview

1. What is Indicator 7?

Indicator 7 focuses on early childhood special education outcomes; specifically the percent of preschool children with individualized education programs (IEPs) who demonstrate the following improved characteristics:

- positive social-emotional skills,
- Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and
- Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

2. Why are states measuring outcomes for programs serving young children with disabilities?

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the U.S. Department of Education developed a continuous improvement monitoring process that utilizes the State Performance Plan (SPP) and the Annual Performance Report (APR) as the primary mechanisms to hold states accountable in meeting the needs of children with disabilities. The SPP includes 17 indicators of which Indicator 7 is specific to the reporting of outcomes data for preschool children with disabilities.

3. What do the child outcomes address?

The outcomes address three areas of child functioning necessary for each child to be an active and successful participant at home, in early care and education settings, and in the community.

Positive social-emotional skills refer to how children get along with and relate to other children and adults. The outcome includes the ways the child expresses emotions and feelings and how he or she interacts with and plays with other children. These skills also include how children follow rules related to interacting with others in group situations.

The **acquisition and use of knowledge and skills** refers to the child's ability to think, reason, remember, solve problems, and use symbols and language. The outcome also encompasses the child's understanding of physical and social worlds. It includes understanding of early concepts (e.g., symbols, pictures, numbers, classification, and spatial relationships), imitation, object permanence, the acquisition of language and communication skills, and of early literacy and numeracy skills. The outcome also addresses the precursors needed so that children will experience success later in elementary school when they are taught academic subject areas (e.g., reading, mathematics).

The **use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs** refers to the actions that children employ to take care of their basic needs, including getting from place to place, using tools (e.g., fork, toothbrush), and in older children, contributing to their own health and safety. The outcome includes how children take care of themselves (e.g., dressing, feeding, hair brushing, and toileting), carry out household responsibilities, and act on the world to get what they want. This outcome addresses children's increasing capacity to become independent in interacting with the world and taking care of their needs.

4. What child outcomes information is reported to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)?

States are required to measure and report through the APR on the progress children make in each of the three child outcome areas between the time a child enters and exits early childhood special education. For the purposes of Indicator 7, early childhood special education is the special education and related services a child receives prior to kindergarten entry. Data are reported for all children who receive at least six months of special education and related services.

For each child outcome area, the state reports progress category data. Specifically, the percentage of children who:

- A. did not improve functioning,
- B. improved functioning, but not sufficiently to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers,
- C. improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers, but did not reach it,
- D. improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers, and
- E. maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers.

From these progress categories, two summary statements are computed for each outcome area:

- the percentage of children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in each outcome who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited early childhood special education, and
- the percentage of children who were functioning within age expectations in each outcome by the time they exited early childhood special education.

Through a stakeholder process, states must set targets for the summary statements for each child outcome area. States must report on progress toward the targets in its APR.

The data reported in the APR are aggregated to create a state view of the progress made by all children who received early childhood special education services. No data on an individual child are included.

The District Profile can be accessed to view a local educational agency's (LEA) data specific to the summary statements and the state targets. The District Profile is found at <https://sped.dpi.wi.gov/spedprofile>.

5. How are the child outcomes measured?

A child's current level of functioning is rated for each of the three child outcome areas when the child enters early childhood special education and again when the child exits early childhood special education. The rating process uses a seven-point scale that compares a child's current level of functioning to that of same-age, typically-developing peers.

6. What information is needed to accurately rate the child's level of functioning?

To accurately rate the child's level of functioning in each of the three child outcome areas, the child outcomes team will use information gathered from a variety of sources including the use of an age anchored assessment tool. In addition, parent input about the child's skills and behaviors must be considered as well as observations made by teachers, therapists, and any other providers familiar with the child. The use of the [Child Outcomes Decision Tree](#) will guide the child outcomes team in using the information gathered to accurately rate the child's level of functioning.

7. What is the Child Outcomes Decision Tree?

The [Child Outcomes Decision Tree](#) was developed by the [Early Childhood Technical Assistance \(ECTA\) Center](#) as a tool to assist outcome rating teams to accurately rate a child's current level of functioning. The decision tree is a series of questions about the extent to which a child exhibits age-expected skills and behaviors in each outcome area.

8. How can child outcomes be integrated into the individualized education program (IEP)?

The IEP team can integrate child outcomes data into IEP team discussions and documentation specific to:

- high-quality functional assessments,
- present levels of current functioning that address the whole child, and
- functional goals that can be carried out in multiple settings.

Application

9. What application is used to report child outcomes?

The Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application available within the [Special Education Portal](#) is used to report a child's entry and exit outcomes. The child outcomes team will use the application in real time as the team discusses a child for the purpose of rating the child's current level of functioning. Using the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application, the child outcomes team is guided through the rating process by responding to the questions on the [Child Outcomes Decision Tree](#) with the child's rating for each of the three child outcome areas generated by the application based on the responses provided.

There are two access roles for the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application: District User and Director/Designee. Both roles can create and lock child outcomes records; only the Director/Designee role can unlock, delete, and submit child outcomes records.

10. What is the Resources tab within the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application?

The Resources tab is a quick way to access the many resources created to support the reporting of child outcomes. Clicking on the dropdown arrow provides the user with a listing of these resources. Clicking on a specific resource opens that resource in a new tab.

11. UPDATED - What is the Reports tab within the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application?

The Reports tab lists two reports – the Child Outcomes Submission Report and the Progress Category Summary Report.

The Child Outcomes Submission Report is used to identify those entry or exit child outcomes records in need of completion or submission.

Predefined filters are available by clicking on the Filter dropdown arrow. These predefined filters include:

- Incomplete Entry Outcomes Records,
- Incomplete Exit Outcomes Records,
- Locked – Not Submitted Entry or Exit Outcomes Records, and
- Age 6 – No Locked or Submitted Exit Outcomes Records.

It is suggested that these predefined filters be used on a monthly basis to ensure that all child outcomes records, entry and exit, are completed and submitted timely.

The Progress Category Summary Report can be used as a tool for measuring the impact of early childhood special education in your LEA. The report is year-based and includes the entry and exit ratings as well as the progress category for those children who received at least six months of special education and related services and exited early childhood special education for the selected school year.

Reporting

12. What are the steps to create and submit an entry outcomes record using the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application?

When a child **enters** early childhood special education in the LEA:

- Use the Search function to add an outcomes record.
- Create and Save the Student Details for the child including the child's entry date.
- Create the Entry Child Outcomes record for the child.
 - Identify the persons involved in determining the entry ratings.
 - Rate the child's current level of functioning for each of the three outcome areas by responding to the Decision Tree questions and including the documentation of evidence when requested.
- Lock the Entry Child Outcomes record for the child.
- Match the child's WISEid to the record, if need be, using the Check WISEid function available on the Student Details screen. The WISEid must be matched to the Entry Child Outcomes record before it can be submitted.
- Submit the Entry Child Outcomes record for the child. The Submit button is only available to an individual with the LEA Admin role for the application.

13. What are the steps to create and submit an exit outcomes record using the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application?

When the child **exits** early childhood special education in the LEA:

- Use the Search function to locate the child's Outcomes Record.
- Update and Save the Student Details record to include the exit date.
- Create the Exit Child Outcomes record for the child.
 - For a child who received at least six months (183) days of service:
 - Identify the persons involved in determining the exit ratings.
 - Rate the child's current level of functioning for each of the three outcome areas by responding to the Decision Tree questions and including the documentation of evidence.
 - For a child who received less than six months (183 days) of service:
 - Confirm the length of service was less than six months.
- Lock the Exit Child Outcomes record for the child.
- Submit the Exit Child Outcomes record for the child. The Submit button is only available to an individual with the LEA Admin role for the application.

14. What does "lock" mean?

"Lock" means the child's entry or exit outcomes record is complete. Both the district user and director/designee role can lock child outcomes records.

The child outcomes team has the option to "lock" a child's entry outcomes record once a rating has been determined for each of the three outcome areas.

The child outcomes team has the option to "lock" a child's exit outcomes record once a rating has been determined for each of the three outcome areas or the child's length of service has been confirmed to be less than six months (183 days).

15. What does “submit” mean?

“Submit” means the child outcomes information has been reviewed in-district and is ready for use by the Department of Public Instruction. The “Submit” option is available to a user with the director/designee role once the entry or exit outcomes record has been locked and the child’s WISEid has been matched to the record.

A child’s entry or exit outcomes record should be reviewed and submitted within 30 days following the child’s record being locked or as soon thereafter as the WISEid can be successfully matched to the child’s outcomes record.

16. What is expected for the documenting of evidence?

Evidence is specific to the data gathered on the child and is used to support the child outcomes team’s responses to the [Decision Tree](#) questions. Evidence is reported as a narrative describing the child’s development from a functional perspective and across settings.

17. Can a child’s outcomes record be created without a child’s WISEid?

A child’s outcomes record can be created either by using the child’s WISEid or the child’s name. If the child’s outcomes record is created using the child’s name, the WISEid must be matched to the child’s outcomes record before it can be submitted.

To create a child’s outcomes record using the child’s WISEid, the child must have a WISEid **AND** the WISEid must have a current enrollment as sent to DPI through WISEdata reporting. Because of the child outcomes reporting timelines, there will be times where a child’s entry outcomes record needs to be created prior to an enrollment being sent to DPI. In these situations, the child outcomes record will need to be created using the child’s name with the WISEid later matched to the entry child outcomes record once enrollment has been sent.

18. Why are there no possible matches when trying to match the WISEid to the child outcomes record?

When activating the Check WISEid match within the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application, possible matches will be returned by comparing the child’s first and last name and birth date as reported in the child outcomes record to enrollment records sent by the LEA to DPI through WISEdata reporting.

To have a successful WISEid match, the child must have a WISEid **AND** there must be a current enrollment for the WISEid for the LEA. If there are no possible matches returned, staff responsible in the district for WISEdata reporting should be contacted to verify that the child has a WISEid **AND** an enrollment for the child has been sent to DPI.

Entry/Exit

19. **UPDATED** - For which children are entry outcome ratings reported?

Entry outcome ratings are reported for **ALL** children with an individualized education program (IEP) ages 3 through 5 who are in grades K3, PK, or K4 when they begin receiving special education and related services. This includes:

- all disability categories,
- children receiving services in self-contained, itinerant, and home settings,
- children enrolled in prekindergarten (grades K3, PK) or 4 year old kindergarten (grade K4,
- children attending charter schools, including independent public charter schools,
- children receiving initial special education and related services, and
- children transferring into the LEA from another LEA in which they were receiving special

education services.

Exceptions:

- Children enrolled in kindergarten (grade KG) when they begin receiving special education and related services are not reported.
- Children parentally placed in a private school receiving special education and related services through a service plan are not reported.

20. What is the definition of “entry date” for Indicator 7 Child Outcomes?

For a child receiving initial special education and related services, the entry date is the projected IEP implementation date as documented on the Determination and Notice of Placement.

For a transfer child, the entry date is the date the child enrolls in the LEA.

21. When are a child’s entry ratings reported?

For a child receiving initial special education and related services, entry outcome ratings are reported within 60 calendar days prior to the child’s projected IEP implementation date.

For a transfer child, entry outcome ratings are reported within 45 calendar days after the child enrolls in the LEA.

22. For which children are exit outcome ratings reported?

Exit ratings are reported for all children with entry outcome ratings who received at least six months (183 days) of service.

23. UPDATED - When does a child exit for child outcomes purposes?

For the 2020-21 school year, the state will begin transitioning from reporting exit outcomes when children turn age six to reporting exit outcomes at the end of the school year prior to kindergarten entry.

As the 2020-21 school year is a transition year, LEAs will continue to report exit outcomes during the school year as children turn age six. At the end of the school year, LEAs will report exit outcomes for children who will be entering kindergarten the following school year as well as for those children who will be turning age six during the summer months.

Exit outcomes will continue to be reported when, prior to age six, a child moves out of the LEA, discontinues receiving special education and related services, or enrolls in a private school.

Every child who has an entry outcomes record will have an exit outcomes record.

24. UPDATED - What is the definition of “exit date” for Indicator 7 Child Outcomes?

For the 2020-21 school year, exit date is:

- The sixth birthday for those children turning age 6 during the school year.
- The end of the school year for those children entering kindergarten the following school year or turning age 6 over the summer months.
- The last day the child received services if, prior to age six, the child (1) moves out of the LEA, (2) discontinues receiving special education and related services, or (3) enrolls in a private school.

25. When are a child’s exit ratings reported?

Exit ratings are reported within 30 calendar days following the child’s outcomes exit date.

26. What does it mean if a child’s record is highlighted in pink on the Student List?

A child’s record is highlighted in pink on the Student List if the child has turned age six and an exit outcomes record has not been submitted for the child. This is a reminder that for the 2020-21 school year, the LEA will continue to report exit outcomes for children as they turn age six during the school year.

27. What exit information is reported for a child with entry outcome ratings who received less than six months (183 days) of special education and related services?

Only the exit date is required; exit outcome ratings are not required to be determined. The exit record, however, does need to be locked and submitted to be complete.

28. How do I determine if a child received at least six months (183 days) of special education and related services prior to his/her exit date?

When determining if a child received at least six months (183 days) of special education and related services prior to his/her exit date, compare the child’s entry date to the child’s exit date. If the time between the entry date and exit date is six months or more, exit outcome ratings are required. The exception would be if the time between entry and exit includes summer months when the child did not receive services. In this situation, the summer months should be subtracted when determining if the child received at least six months (183 days) of service.

29. What exit information is reported for a child with entry outcome ratings who never received any special education and related services?

If the entry outcomes record for the child has not been submitted, an individual with the director/designee access role can delete the child’s outcomes record. The Delete function is available on the Student List.

If the entry outcomes record for the child has been submitted, the child’s exit date should be reported using the same date as the child’s entry date. This will result in the child receiving less than six months (183 days) of special education and related services; exit outcome ratings would not be required. The exit outcomes record, however, will need to be locked and submitted.

30. Why is there no entry outcomes record for a child who is now exiting?

If a child does not have an entry outcomes record on the Student List, it could be that:

- The child’s first and last names were reversed when creating the entry outcomes record. Check that the first name is not being reported as the last name or vice versa.
- The LEA failed to report the entry outcome ratings for the child. In this instance, the LEA should use whatever information it has available to create and submit an entry outcomes record for the child. This may include using the present level of performance from the IEP at the time when the child entered early childhood special education to determine the entry outcome ratings.

31. When should exit ratings be determined for a child expected to be moving over the summer months?

For a child expected to be moving over the summer months, the LEA should wait to determine the exit outcome ratings until the start of the new school year to ensure that the move actually happens. If the child does move over the summer months, the exit date will be the last day of school for the prior school year.

32. Are exit ratings required if a child unexpectedly leaves the district or discontinues receiving special education and related services?

If the child received at least six months (183 days) of special education and related services, exit ratings are required. LEAs should be engaging in ongoing assessment of the child which will allow for recent relevant information on the child's current functioning. This information will assist in completing accurate exit ratings at any time.

For a child who received less than six months (183 days) of special education and related services, exit ratings would not be required; however, the exit date must be reported when the child leaves, and the exit outcomes record must be locked and submitted.

33. When completing the exit outcome ratings, how is the new skills or behaviors question answered?

The question will be answered "YES" if the child has shown **ANY** new skill or behavior for the outcome area since entry.

The answer to the question about new skills or behaviors is not based on changes in the ratings, but on whether the child has acquired any new skills. For example, a child who receives a rating of "4" at entry and a rating of "4" at exit will show higher-level functioning at exit because to maintain a rating of "4" over time the child's functioning has to improve relative to what that child could do at entry.

A child who receives a rating of "4" at entry and "3" at exit could also receive a "yes" on the new skills or behaviors question if the child acquired any new skills or behaviors in the outcome area.

34. Can the LEA use the Birth to 3 Program exit outcome ratings as the LEA entry outcome ratings?

No. The Birth to 3 Program exit outcome ratings do not provide sufficient information for documenting evidence when using the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application. The Birth to 3 Program exit outcome ratings, however, can be used as an information source when gathering information about the child's current level of functioning.

35. For a transfer child, can the exit outcome ratings from the prior LEA be used as the entry outcome ratings?

If the LEA has been provided with the exit outcome ratings and agrees with the ratings, the LEA has the option to use the exit outcome ratings from the prior LEA as its entry outcome ratings for a child. Otherwise, the LEA will determine entry outcome ratings for the child using data gathered by the LEA.

If considering using the exit outcome ratings from the prior LEA as the entry outcome ratings for the new LEA, keep in mind the time between exit and entry and whether the exit ratings accurately reflect the child's current level of functioning for each outcome area.

If the LEA chooses to use the exit outcome ratings from the prior LEA as its entry outcome ratings, a child outcomes record will still need to be created by the LEA and the rating information provided for each outcome area, including the documentation of evidence. There is no transfer of child outcomes records between LEAs within the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application.

36. UPDATED - If a child moves out of the LEA and then returns to the LEA prior to kindergarten entry, are new entry outcome ratings required?

Yes. Entry outcomes ratings would be required to be determined if the child is continuing to receive special education and related services when re-enrolling in the LEA. The LEA would "Add" a new child outcomes record for the child reflecting the new enrollment date as the child outcomes entry date.

Team Decision-Making

37. Must the ratings be determined by a team of individuals?

Yes. Team members should include professionals who work with the child and may include family members and others familiar with the child's functioning. Individual team composition will vary between children.

Team members are reported in the application as "Persons Involved in Determining the Outcome Rating."

38. How are parents engaged in the child outcomes process?

Parents are engaged in the process in that they provide information regarding their child's current level of functioning. Information gathered from parents will be used in the child outcomes rating process to determine entry and exit ratings for the child.

39. Do parents need to be engaged specifically in rating a child for each outcome area?

No. Parents do not need to be engaged specifically in the rating of their child for each outcome area; however, some parents may want to be included.

40. What information can be provided to parents about child outcomes requirements?

Information explaining Indicator 7 Child Outcomes requirements is included in the brochure, "[An Introduction to Child Outcomes.](#)" This brochure was developed specifically for parents. A downloadable version is available on the Collaborating Partners website — <http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/>.

Assessment

41. Do programs need to assess children in all three outcome areas even if an area is not a concern?

Yes. Ratings are required for all three outcome areas even if there are no concerns about a child's development in an outcome area, or if the child has delays only in one or two outcome areas. This includes children receiving only a single service such as speech and language therapy.

Information can be gathered from parents or primary caregivers, regular educators or others with whom the child spends time. For example, if the child attends a Head Start Program, the Head Start provider could be part of the child outcomes team to provide information from a broader developmental perspective. Also information from a comprehensive assessment tool that assesses ALL developmental domains should be one of the multiple sources of information used to gather progress and exit data.

42. What is an age-anchored tool and must it be utilized when rating a child?

An age-anchored tool is a tool that provides developmental levels that are compared to age expected skills for typically developing children. An age-anchored tool is to be used in determining entry and exit outcome ratings.

43. What is the definition of ongoing assessment?

Ongoing assessment refers to continuous monitoring of a child's progress toward desired objectives and outcomes. It informs instructional decisions on a regular basis. Best practices include:

- ongoing assessment that is authentic,
- ongoing assessment that is based on multiple sources of information,
- assessment information that is anchored to a tool that facilitates interpretation of

- progress, and
- assessment that is planned and systematic.

44. Is there a list of recommended assessment tools?

Yes. The list includes recommended assessment tools that are comprehensive, aligned with the Wisconsin Assessment Principles and can be used as ongoing assessment tools that support planning and program implementation. A link to the Child Outcomes Recommended Assessment Tools can be found under the Resource Tab in the Indicator 7 Child Outcomes application. This is not an exhaustive list and other tools may match these guidelines. Assessment tool determinations are an individual LEA decision.

45. What are the definitions of “age-expected,” “immediate foundational,” and “foundational” as used in the Child Outcomes Decision Tree?

Age-Expected Skills: Skills and behaviors that are typical for children of a particular chronological age.

Immediate Foundational Skills: Skills and behaviors that occur developmentally just prior to age-expected ones.

Foundational Skills: Skills and behaviors occurring early in development that are conceptually mapped to later skills and behaviors. These skills serve as the foundation for later development.

46. Must a parent provide prior written consent for child outcomes information to be collected?

In general, if the LEA collects, uses, or maintains information about an eligible child to meet the requirements of Part B of IDEA, including reporting on child outcomes, prior written parental consent is not required. If the collection of outcomes data is used as part of the child’s initial evaluation or re-evaluation, or if such data collection requires the disclosure of personally identifiable information to a third party, prior written consent may be required.

Record Keeping

47. What child outcomes data must be kept on file within the LEA?

An electronic or paper copy of the Entry Outcomes Summary and Exit Outcomes Summary should be maintained in the child’s file. If the child moves and a records request is received from the new LEA, the Entry Outcomes Summary and Exit Outcomes Summary should be sent with the records.

The Entry Outcomes Summary Report is available within the application once an entry rating is determined for each outcome area. The Exit Outcomes Summary Report is available within the application once an exit rating is determined for each outcome area or the child’s length of service has been confirmed to be less than six months (183 days) of service.

Both the Entry and Exit Outcomes Summary Reports will be labeled ‘Draft’ until the entry or exit outcomes record has been locked. The Entry and Exit Outcomes Summary reports are available on the Child Outcomes screen within the application.

48. Is the LEA required to provide the parent with a copy of the Entry Outcome Summary or Exit Outcome Summary?

The LEA is not required to provide the parent with a copy of the Entry Outcomes Summary or Exit Outcomes Summary unless requested by the parent.

49. How does the LEA ensure that child outcomes data are reported for all children?

It is recommended that LEAs develop an internal tracking system to ensure that entry outcome records are reported for all children and that exit outcomes records are reported timely. As part of this tracking system, it is important for LEAs to identify staff who will be responsible for reporting child outcomes information and then ensuring these staff are aware of the reporting requirements. When identifying staff, keep in mind that because children exit at varying times, it may not be the same child outcomes team reporting exit outcomes records as the child outcomes team that reported entry outcomes records.

LEAs are also encouraged to work with their vendor to build reminders in their student information systems (SIS) for the reporting of child outcomes as children enter and exit early childhood special education.