



KIT

"Keeping In Touch"

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Resource Article

The article this month examines outcomes families of diverse cultures experience from their participation in early intervention. The National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS) found that Caucasian families reported greater positive outcomes and satisfaction with early intervention services compared to families from other race and ethnic groups. Similarly, the researchers of the study reported in this article "Outcomes Reported in Spanish Speaking Families in Early Intervention," found that families completing the Spanish version of the Family Outcomes Summary (FOS) reported lower outcome attainment than did respondents completing the English version. Secondary to these findings the researchers investigated four questions regarding the potential influence family primary language has on families experiences in early intervention. The following questions are explored and discussed further in the full article.

1. To what extent do families who completed the Spanish version of the FOS report attainment of family outcomes and satisfaction with services?
2. Do families who completed the FOS in Spanish report a different level or pattern of outcomes and satisfaction with services than those reported by Hispanic or non-Hispanic families who complete the scale in English?
3. Does the Spanish version of the instrument display similar psychometric properties to those found with the English version?
4. What child, family, and program variables are associated with variability in outcome attainment, and are these patterns different for English and Spanish versions of the survey?

Interestingly, descriptive statistics from the study

revealed that respondents completing the Spanish version of the FOS had lower mean ratings on each of the 15 FOS items compared to Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents completing the English version. Further, the Hispanic respondents completing the English version had lower mean ratings on 11 of the 15 FOS items compared to the non-Hispanic group completing to the English version. The overall mean ratings for these three respondent groups (i.e., those completing the Spanish edition, Hispanic respondents completing the English version, and non-Hispanic respondents completing English) were 4.7, 5.4, and 5.5 respectively.

Respondents completing the Spanish version also reported lower helpfulness of early intervention ($M=5.5$) compared to respondents completing the English version, $M=6.0$ and $M=5.9$ respectively for the Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents completing the English version of the FOS.

Study findings support that the English and Spanish versions of the FOS generate similar results in terms of high and low rated items and relationships among subscale items. Yet, the question remains about why the Spanish edition yielded lower ratings compared to the English edition. The researchers concluded that it could not be determined "whether the differences are a function of the translation or readability of the survey, the literacy levels, or true differences in outcomes experienced" (p. 53). More research is needed to understand the variations in groups of Spanish and English FOS respondents. Research is also needed on other translations of the FOS. One must also consider how intervention may be different for families whose primary language Spanish (or another language aside from English) especially if their interventionists are not fluent in the family's primary language. While interpreters can bridge the language barrier, they also bring a new dynamic to intervention. In addition, family cultural values and

expectations may not be aligned with interventionists who are of a different culture.

Continued data collection from the FOS will help to shed more light on possible variations in outcomes experienced by families participating in early intervention.

Olmstead, M.G., Bailey, D. B., Raspa, M., Nelson, R. E., Robinson, N. D., Simpson, M. E., Guillen, C. (2010). Outcomes reported by Spanish-speaking families in early intervention. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 30(1), 46-55.

On the WWW



<http://apps.mhf.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=eMag2:Cover:1951727045102617::::MONTH, YEAR:December,2010>

The website this month is the Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP). Specifically, it is the MC&FP eMagazine, which is a bimonthly online publication including information about events, programs, and activities supporting military families. The link above brings you to the December edition of MC&FP eMagazine. You can also subscribe online to receive a copy. The December edition includes articles about expanded Child Care, benefits and eligibility for the exceptional family member program, and military family resiliency.

What Do the Data Say?

What percent of families participating in Army EDIS 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?



EDIS elected to use the Family Outcomes Survey (FOS), developed by Dr. Don Bailey and others affiliated with the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Center. The survey includes 15 items that measure five different family outcomes and 3 items that specifically measure how EDIS early intervention helped the family: a) know their rights, b) effectively communicate their child's needs, and c) help their

child develop and learn (i.e., the three reporting categories stated above).

Each item on the FOS includes a 7-point Likert scale. Ratings of five or higher on the 7-point scale are considered met and those four and below are regarded as not met. The survey is given to families that have received at least six months of services. Families receive the survey at or near the time of their departure from the program.

During this reporting period, 365 families, having received services for at least 6 months, exited the program. However, only 144 complete Family Outcome Surveys were returned. While more surveys were returned, they were not included in this analysis if they were not complete. The return rate for fully completed surveys was 39.5% (40% for CONUS and 39% for OCONUS). The data presented below serves as the baseline data. It is important to note that at this time, data are not representative of all children served as EDIS is still in the early stages of implementing this outcomes measurement system. In addition, further analysis of the returned surveys is necessary to determine representativeness of families receiving services from EDIS. A major future point for next year is increasing the return rate of surveys.

The following tables illustrate family outcome data available from families who exited the program between 01 July 2009 through 30 June 2010.

All Army EDIS (n=144) Families Reporting High Attainment of Family Outcomes 01 July 2009 – 30 June 2010		
Early Intervention Helped Families...	# of Families	Percentage
...know their rights	143	99.3%
...effectively communicate their child's needs	142	98.6%
...help their child develop and learn	142	98.6%

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Consultation Corner



From September 2010 through December 2010 we are excited and honored to have Dr. Donald Bailey from the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International as the KIT consultation corner expert addressing the topic *Measuring Family Outcomes in Early intervention*.

1. *Thinking about the FOS and the three national outcomes, what are characteristics of families who a) know their rights, b) communicate their child's needs, and c) help their child develop and learn?*

Families who know their rights are familiar with the types of services offered by different providers. They know what the process is for making decisions about services. They understand that they are consumers of a service, and as consumers they have a right to expect certain things, including the right to be actively involved in decision making. They also know that if they are not satisfied that their child's needs are being met, there are specific things they can do to get a fair review. They know what those steps are and how to begin.

Families who communicate their child's needs feel comfortable talking with professionals or asking questions. They are able to participate effectively in team meetings to plan goals and services and advocate for services they feel are important. They also are able to observe their child's development and behavior in specific situations. They know their child's learning style, strengths, and needs, and use this information to serve as informed participants in decisions about what their child needs.

Families who help their child develop and learn provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for their child. They know and use styles of effective parenting, and can help the child participate in family routines and activities. When necessary they are able to use special techniques that might be effective in enhancing learning or managing special behavior problems. They modify the home environment or routines to reflect their child's learning style or needs for adaptive environments. Above all, they feel competent and confident in their ability to be a good parent, even though their child has special needs.

2. *What is the status of the grant submitted by RTI to revise the Family Outcomes Survey and study outcomes experienced by military families?*

In August, Melissa Raspa at RTI International led the submission of a grant to the Department of Defense Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program. The purpose of the proposal is to work with the EDIS program to modify the FOS so that it will be more appropriate for the military context, and then to use the revised scale to study factors associated with family outcome attainment. The application will undergo a formal peer review, where it is scored by experts. Then it will undergo a second review by the DoD to determine "fit" with the department's needs

and priorities. We will likely hear the outcome of this review in the early months of 2011.

Continuing Education for KIT Readers



The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) is offering a continuing education opportunity for KIT readers.

In line with the focus on Measuring Family Outcomes in Early Intervention, readers are invited to receive four continuing education contact hours for reading the monthly KIT publications (September 2010 through December 2010) and completing a multiple-choice exam about the content covered in these KITs.

If you are interested, take the exam online at www.edis.army.mil and upon successful completion, you will receive a certificate of non-discipline specific continuing education contact hours.

Please send your Consultation Corner questions and KIT ideas via email to ediscspd@amedd.army.mil

