



# early steps

## State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)



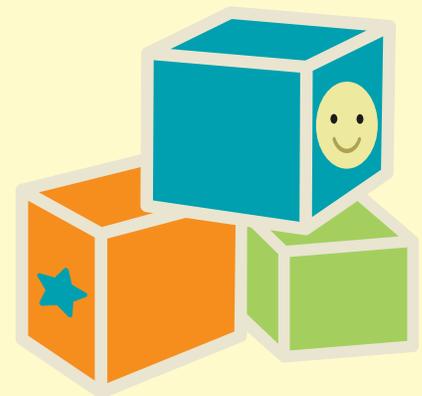
The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Program's Results Driven Accountability System requires all IDEA Part C programs nationally to develop and implement an SSIP. The SSIP is a multi-year plan designed to transform Florida's early intervention system to better meet the needs of infants and toddlers and their families. The purpose of the plan is to develop, implement and evaluate, evidence-based, sustainable policies and practices at the state and local levels to positively impact child outcomes. SSIP implementation will strengthen program infrastructure with the ultimate objective to improve the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers served by the Early Steps Program.

### Florida's SSIP Focus: Social-Emotional Development

**INDICATOR 3.A.1:** The percent of infants and toddlers who entered the Early Steps program functioning below a level compared to same-aged peers in positive social-emotional skills and substantially increased their rate of growth in positive social-emotional skills by 3 years of age or program exit.

The Early Steps State Office (ESSO) together with stakeholders, compared state and national data for fiscal year (FY) 2009-10 through FY 2013-14 and analyzed Florida's performance data. Florida's performance was significantly below the national average and more disparate than other child outcome areas. Based on the data analysis, ESSO, in partnership with stakeholders, identified Indicator 3.A.1 of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), social emotional development, as the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) for the SSIP.

Social-emotional development refers to the ability to experience and express feelings, form relationships, and explore the world. Social-emotional development is the foundation for all learning and development throughout life. This priority was identified based on the data analyzed and principles that all early childhood learning occurs within the context of social-emotional relationships, and that parents and caregivers have the most meaningful impact on child learning.



**State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR):** Florida will improve the percent of infants and toddlers who substantially increase their rate of growth in positive social-emotional skills.



## SSIP Partners

**The Early Steps State Office** is responsible for coordinating SSIP activities, supporting infrastructure to scale up and sustain activities for statewide implementation of evidence-based practices, aligning professional development to support implementation, engaging stakeholders, and assisting and overseeing LES sites.

**LESs** are responsible for ensuring staff and providers are trained and implementing evidence-based practices to directly impact children's social-emotional development, developing and sustaining a coaching infrastructure for full scale-up within the local service area. LES sites will be added incrementally, each year, until all 15 LES programs have applied the policies and practices.

**LESs** are incorporating the selected evidence-based practices as Early Steps scales system improvements statewide. With each wave of participating sites, LES staff and stakeholders learn practice skills and build capacity to support one another in professional development.

**Subject Matter Experts** from the University of Florida and Florida State University train and support the implementation sites and make recommendations for the use of evidence-based practices statewide

**SSIP Stakeholders** at all levels will be engaged to help carry out SSIP activities to achieve the desired outcomes.

**Community Providers** are responsible for participating in training workshops, coaching sessions, and regular meetings to enhance skills. Providers will participate in periodic skills checks and ongoing coaching support to ensure practices are carried out faithfully. Pyramid, FL-EPIC, and TEST Toolkit represent the new statewide standard for service delivery for all Early Steps providers.

# How Early Steps Is Helping Improve Outcomes for Children

**Adapt and revise policies and processes** to integrate performance expectations for Local Early Steps (LES) to promote positive social-emotional development.

**Implement a professional development coaching framework** to increase provider competency to promote positive social-emotional development.

**Adapt evidenced-based practices** aligned with the Division of Early Childhood's Recommended Practices and proven to promote positive social-emotional development.

**Implement a revised Individualized Family Support Plan** to facilitate development of quality functional outcomes for social-emotional development and progress tracking.

**Implement a statewide fiscal plan and secure funding** to support infrastructure improvements and to scale up and sustain implementation of evidence-based practices.

**Implement a data system** to provide access to current and reliable child outcomes and other data to facilitate data-informed decision making.

## EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES



### Embedded Practices and Intervention with Caregivers (FL-EPIC)

An early intervention provider coaching approach that supports caregivers to embed learning opportunities related to social emotional skills for infants and toddlers during every day routines and activities.



### Pyramid Model

A multi-tiered framework that organizes evidence-based environmental, interactional, and instructional practices for promoting social-emotional competence.



### Project TEST Toolkit

A 7-component model to support the successful implementation of early intervention from first contact through transition that focuses on writing outcomes to increase families' confidence and competence to support their child's social-emotional development and learning.