

## Research Issue

- \* The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has shifted from focusing their monitoring efforts on state compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requirements to add a focus on child and family outcomes, called Results-Driven Accountability.
- \* In April 2015 states were required to submitted Phase I of State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIP), with five components:
  1. Data analysis to identify child/family outcomes needing improvement and root causes behind sub-optimal performance;
  2. Infrastructure analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses;
  3. State-identified measureable result(s) (SIMR) to improve child/family outcomes;
  4. Coherent improvement strategies tying root causes and infrastructure analyses results to the SIMR; and
  5. A theory of action that integrates the other four components.
- \* In April of 2016, states will submit Phase II of the improvement plans containing activities to improve child and family outcomes and plans for evaluating the implementation and impact of the plans. These plans will be implemented and evaluated through February of 2020.
- \* This poster presents information about the first four components of states' Phase I SSIP plans.

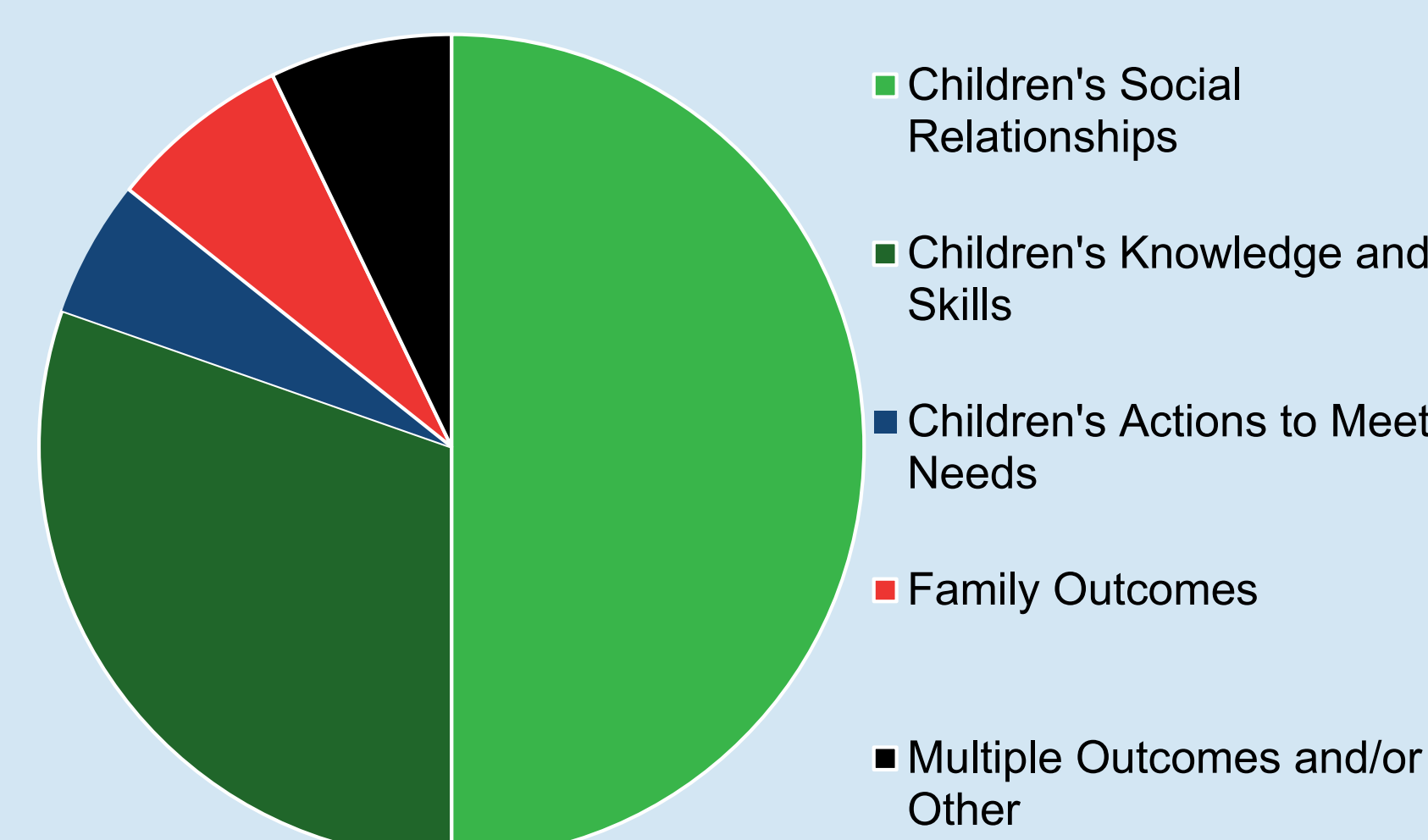
## Study Design

- \* All SSIP Phase I plans submitted by the 56 state and territory Part C Early Intervention programs (hereafter referred to as state EI programs) were coded by two reviewers.
- \* Disagreements reconciled by a third reviewer.

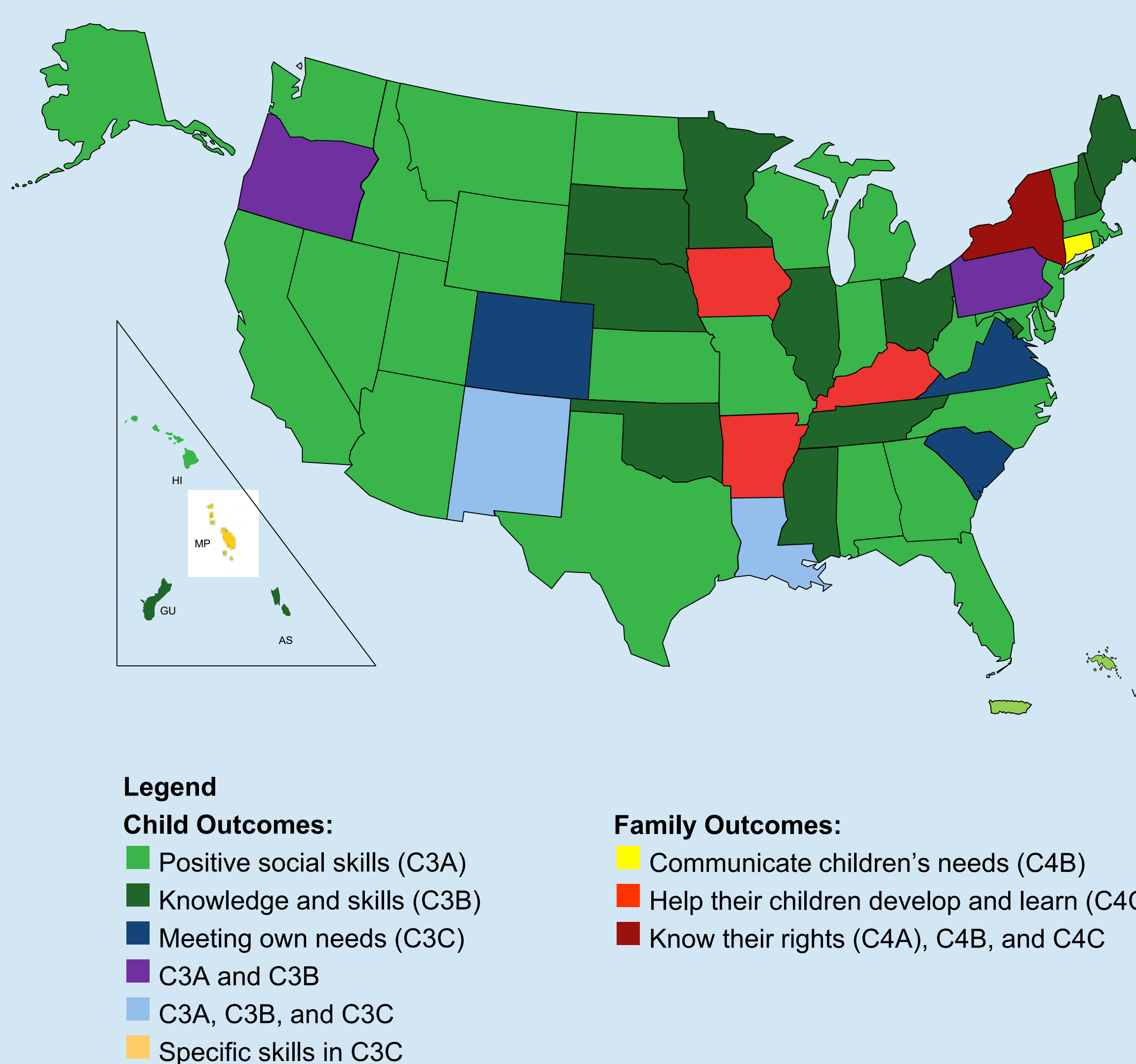
## Results – State-Identified Measurable Result(s) (SIMR) for Improvement

- \* Almost all states used their state data systems to examine trends in three child outcomes (Positive Social Skills, Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills, Taking Actions to Meet Needs) and three family outcomes (Know their Rights, Communicate their Child's Needs, Help their Children Grow and Learn) reported to OSEP.
- \* States used these trends to select their SIMR (Figures 1 and 2).

**Figure 1. Most States Chose Children's Positive Social Skills as their SIMR (N = 56)**



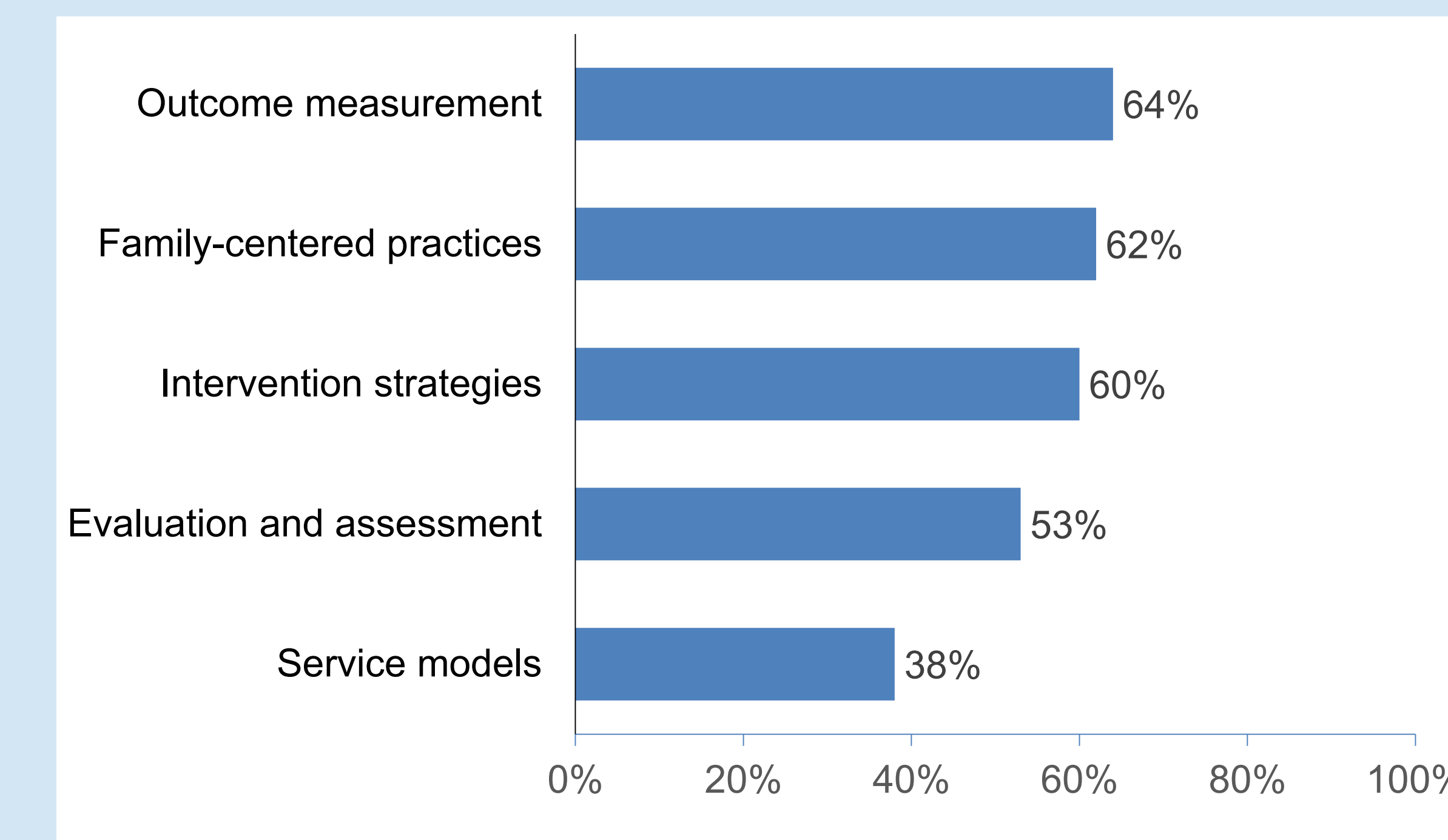
**Figure 2. State SIMRs for Federal Fiscal Year 2013 (N = 56)**



## Results – Root Causes for Sub-Optimal Performance on Child/Family Outcomes

- \* All but one state performed a root cause analysis using stakeholder discussion, data from state data systems, and/or surveys of local programs or other stakeholders.
- \* Figure 3 shows the top five areas identified as root causes for low performance. Other identified root causes included inadequate IFSP development (36%), use of natural environments (29%), teaming (22%), referral/child find (22%), eligibility (11%), and transition (5%).

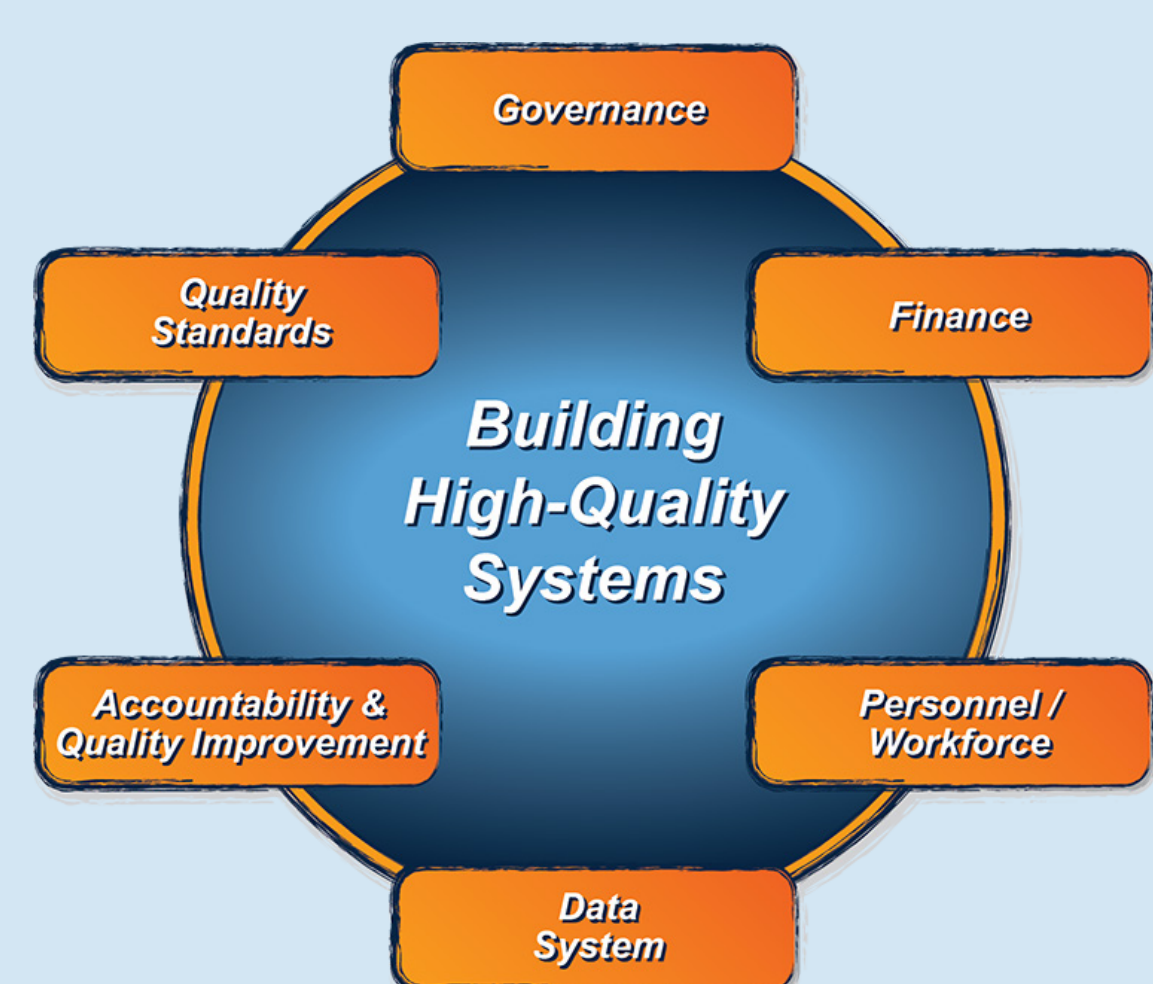
**Figure 3. Top Five Root Causes for Low Performance Related to Measuring Children's Outcomes, Identifying Children's Needs, and Working with Families (N = 55)**



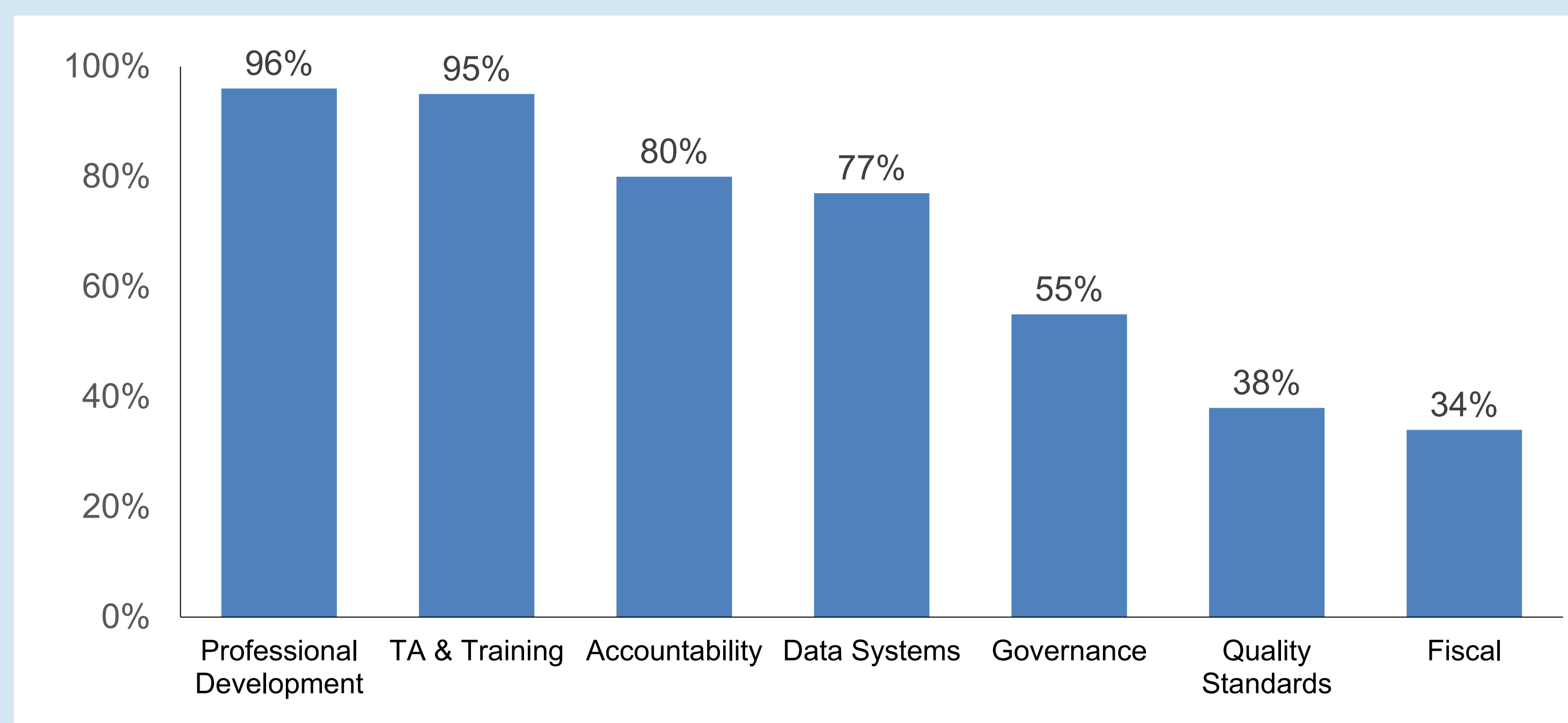
## Results – Infrastructure Analysis & Improvement Activities

- \* States analyzed their infrastructure to identify components that could be improved to affect positive results for children and families (Figure 4).
- \* Most states' improvement strategies focused on professional development, technical assistance/training, accountability, and data systems (Figure 5).
- \* Within the personnel/workforce component, areas needing improvement in addition to professional development and technical assistance/training were personnel standards (28% of 54 states), staff recruitment and retention (17% of 54), and pre-service professional development (11% of 54).

**Figure 4. Framework Components of High-Quality EI and Preschool Special Education Programs**



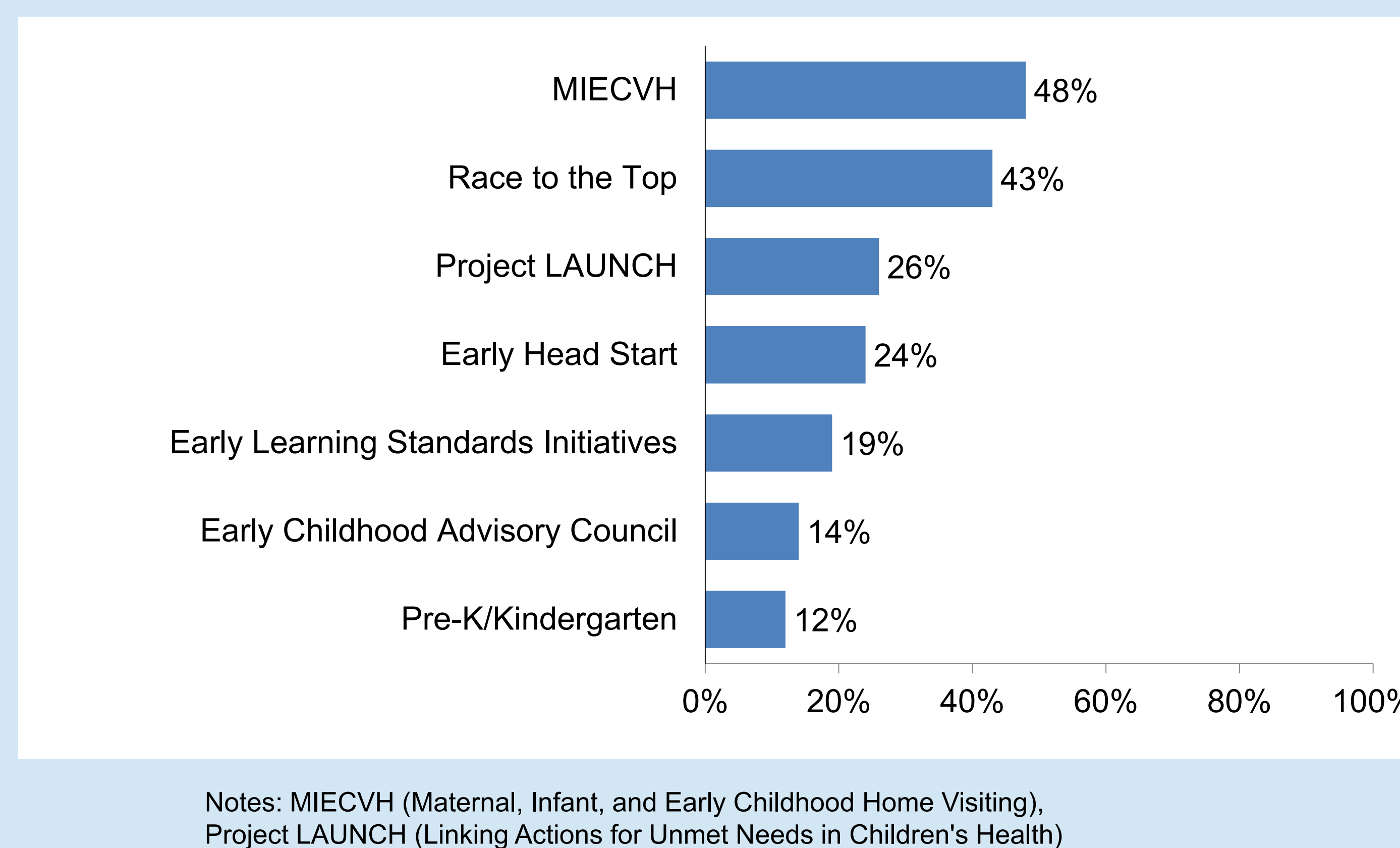
**Figure 5. States Identified Improvement Activities Related to Each of the Components of State Infrastructure (N = 56)**



## Results – Collaborative Improvement Strategies

- \* Many EI programs (N = 42) plan to partner with other early learning initiatives as improvement strategies.
- \* Figure 6 shows that the four most frequently mentioned were national initiatives.

**Figure 6. State Part C Programs are Seeking to Improve Early Childhood Cross-System Collaboration to Improve Children's Outcomes (N = 56)**



## Implications for Research

- \* Early childhood researchers can support states with their SSIP plans in:
  - Selection, training, and implementation with fidelity of evidence-based practices in early childhood;
  - Evaluating the implementation and outcomes of their plans; and
  - Developing/enhancing cross-system collaboration.

## Discussion Questions

- \* What is the role of researchers in supporting and evaluating these systems change efforts?
- \* What evaluation measures would help a state track progress on their state-identified measureable result (SIMR)?
- \* What evidence-based practices could address different SIMRs?
- \* What research and/or cross-system partnerships could help states in evaluating SSIP implementation and outcomes?

Full report on the SSIP Analysis available at:  
<https://osep.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/9033>