# **Product page**

This 2017 toolkit is intended to support decision-making for states who are planning to include IFSP data in either a system enhancement or new system build. Users can explore selected features of data systems as they relate to IFSP data collection, and see how other states have included these features and related functionalities in their systems.

# **Including IFSP Information in Your** Part C Data System: Select Features and Related Functionality

More and more, states are either incorporating Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) data in their data systems or thinking about doing so. Some states may want to develop an entire “online IFSP,” while others may want to include only certain types of IFSP data in the system. These data and related data system features benefit state and local programs by providing, for example: efficient access to and tracking of information for service coordinators and service providers; access to automated tools to help manage workflow; and improved communication with families and among service providers. The resources in this tool are intended to support decision-making for states who are looking to develop or enhance an IDEA Part C (early intervention) data system. In either case, states can benefit from learning about the data system features other states are using to collect and facilitate reporting and use of IFSP data.

## **What You’ll Find**

In this tool, you can explore features of data systems as they relate to IFSP data collection. For each feature, a comprehensive set of resources and information is provided, including: connections to the [DaSy Data System Framework](http://dasycenter.org/resources/dasy-framework/), potential data elements needed to develop the feature, a list of functionality options, design considerations, state examples\*, and related technical assistance resources.

*\*State examples are not included as exemplars and are not endorsements of a state’s data system. They are intended to show a variety of approaches for implementing each of the features or components.*

**To use this tool,** click on a topic below. We encourage you to explore each feature to gain a broader understanding of it and to see how other states have incorporated it into their data systems. Keep in mind that there are specific business requirements behind each of these features and state examples—don’t just take the information in this toolkit and try to develop the feature. First identify the needs of your state program and then use these resources to help develop and refine your business requirements. For further information on data system design and development, see the [System Design and Development](http://dasycenter.org/resources/dasy-framework/system-design/) subcomponent of the Data System Framework.

(topic/feature tiles)

We invite you to submit your own ideas for features included in this collection, as well as screenshots, publications, or video demonstrations of IFSP-related features in your data system. Please submit ideas or examples to the DaSy Center via email at [dasycenter@sri.org](mailto:dasycenter@sri.org).

If you would like assistance with using this tool or have questions about its contents, including more information about the state examples, please contact the DaSy Center using the email address provided above.

# Section 1: Delivered Services

## **Background**

Delivered services data provide information on the actual early intervention services, e.g., types and quantity, that children and families receive. These data provide valuable information that may assist Part C staff with a number of tasks/decisions, including identifying staffing needs and managing workloads, overall budget development and management, and forecasting expected and actual revenue.

**Connection to DaSy Data System Framework:**

*System Design and Development QI4:* The Part C/619 state data system has the capacity to support accountability, program improvement, and program operations, and should contain the following data elements and features.

* *Data Use QI1:* Part C/619 state staff plan for data analysis, product development, and dissemination to address the needs of the state agency and other users.

## **Potential Data Elements**

* Type of service
* Date of service
* Amount/duration (in units/minutes/hours)
* Provider name
* Setting (optional)

## **Functionality**

* User interface, navigation and data entry
* Validation checks
* Audit trail
* Billing (optional)

## **Key Considerations**

* Given the amount of data entry required for delivered services, page layout and navigation are important in order to enhance the ease and efficiency of data entry. Avoid layering this data under multiple menu levels in order to minimize the number of keystrokes it takes to enter this data.
* Validation checks can be used to minimize data entry mistakes and improve data quality. Consider validation checks using IFSP dates, planned start and end date for each planned service, logical checks for duration of service, and checks on entry of provider name based on the type of service and/or discipline of the provider.
* Sometimes local EI programs maintain a separate, local data system in addition to the state system, e.g., if local providers bill private insurance and 3rd party payers directly. As this may result in the potential for double/duplicate data entry, a state may want to consider allowing for the exporting or importing of services data.
* There are several different ways to collect duration or quantity of a service, for example in minutes, portions of an hour or in specified units, such as number of 15-minute units. Some states also calculate the duration by capturing the start time and end time for a service.
* States use delivered services data for a number of different purposes. If used for billing public and/or private insurance, additional elements will be needed. For example, if billing Medicaid, the additional information needed for a claim form would include an ICD-10 diagnosis code, procedure codes and a National Provider Identifier for the service provider.
* If using these data to identify revenue sources and develop revenue projections, additional child and family data elements may be needed to determine eligibility for programs such as Medicaid, Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
* Some states have integrated narrative and clinical information in their data systems. This allows for recording meeting or progress notes associated with services provided to the child and family.

## **State Examples**

* Tennessee – if PA, not TN
  + Screenshot
* Kentucky
  + Screenshot
* Connecticut (already have permission)
  + Screenshot (different because it’s a calendar system; simpler format)
* Pennsylvania (tentative)

## **Related Resources**

* [Critical Questions About Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education](http://dasycenter.org/resources/critical-questions/)

This document identifies a set of questions that a quality state data system for early intervention (EI) or early childhood special education (ECSE) should provide the data to answer. The questions are grouped into Child & Family, Practitioner, and Local Program/ Local Educational Agency themes.

# [Understanding and Using Fiscal Data: A Guide for Part C State Staff](http://dasycenter.sri.com/downloads/DaSy_papers/Understanding_and_Using_Fiscal%20Data_111914_final_r1_access.pdf)

# This document provides an overview of the critical role of fiscal data in state Part C systems. The information is intended to help state Part C lead agency staff better understand strategic fiscal policy questions, the fiscal data elements needed to address those questions, and the benefits of using these data.

* [Use of Data for Fiscal Management of State Part C Systems](http://dasycenter.sri.com/downloads/DaSy_papers/FY301_Fiscal%20Management_Final_20151123.pdf)

This document is designed to increase the knowledge and skills of lead agency staff regarding the use of data for appropriate fiscal management of Part C. It provides an in-depth look at the integral role of fiscal data in the development, management, and use of the state Part C budget.

# Section 2: Electronic Signatures

## **Background**

States are becoming increasingly interested in using electronic signatures for convenience purposes and to reduce paperwork burden. Parent/guardian signatures are required for procedural safeguards related to the IFSP; and both parent and staff signatures are sometimes required for other aspects of IFSP development and implementation. Both FERPA and HIPAA allow for the use of electronic signatures. They are applicable even in data systems that do not include a parent portal.

**Connection to DaSy Data System Framework:**

*Purpose and Vision QI2*: The purpose and vision include the Part C/619 state program’s intents and goals for the data system.

*System Design and Development QI4*: The Part C/619 state data system has the capacity to support accountability, program improvement, and program operations, and should contain the following data elements and features.

*Data Governance and Management QI6*: Data governance policies require the development and implementation of procedures to ensure the security of the data from breach or loss.

*Data Governance and Management QI7*: Data governance policies require the development and implementation of procedures to ensure that only authorized users gain appropriate access to the data, including reports.

## **Potential Data Elements**

* Name of the signee
* Signature
* Date signed
* Additional data elements needed for identity authentication

## **Functionality**

* Access and security controls
* Identity authentication
* Secure storage and protection of data, e.g., signature

## **Key Considerations**

* FERPA and HIPAA allow for the use of electronic signatures, as long as there are processes in place to authenticate the identity of the person signing, that is, to make sure the person is who they say they are. Resources from the Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) provide information on best practice for identity authentication.
* Other considerations are the security and protection of the signature itself, for example, through the use of encryption, and issues related to whether and how the signature and related IA data elements are stored.

## **State Examples**

* Colorado
  + Screenshot
  + Document
* Utah
  + Video demonstration
  + Document
* Iowa?

## **Related Resources**

* (Doc developed for the cohort, which refers to FERPA and IDEA regs)
* [Identity Authentication Best Practices](http://ptac.ed.gov/sites/default/files/authentication.pdf) (Privacy Technical Assistance Center, 2015)

This brief offers best practice recommendations for developing and implementing effective authentication processes to ensure that only appropriate individuals and entities have access to education records. General suggestions provided in the brief are applicable to all modes of data access, be it in person, over the phone, by mail, or electronically.

# Section 3: Parent Portal

## **Background**

IDEA encourages family involvement in early intervention services, and as such parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review early intervention records (IDEA, Section 303.405[a]). In addition to giving authorized family members easy access to IFSP record information, a parent portalis a feature of an online IFSP application or data system that can help families stay informed and engaged in their children’s early intervention program.

**Connections to DaSy Data System Framework:**

* [*Purpose and Vision*](http://dasycenter.org/resources/dasy-framework/purpose/) *QI2:* The purpose and vision include the Part C/619 state program’s intents and goals for the data system.
* [*Data Governance and Management*](http://dasycenter.org/resources/dasy-framework/data-management/) *QI8:* Data governance policies ensure that only duly authorized users gain appropriate access to the data, including reports.
* [*Data Use*](http://dasycenter.org/resources/dasy-framework/data-use/) *QI4:* Part C/619 administrators identify the users and their data needs consistent with the Part C/619 vision and purpose.

## **Potential Data Elements**

* Family member’s first and last name
* Relationship to child
* Email address
* Phone number
* Information needed for identity authentication, e.g., security question(s) and answer(s)

## **Functionality**

* Access and security control
* User interface
* User account management capabilities (e.g., update password, change contact information)
* Options for document library, calendar, electronic messaging, and other chosen features

## **Key Considerations**

* Ensure appropriate individuals have access to a child’s record by implementing various forms of authentication to establish the identity of the parent portal user. The choice of the specific identity authentication method often varies depending on the level of sensitivity of the data that are being disclosed through the portal. Therefore, after determining what information is shared via the portal, determine the appropriate level of identity authentication assurance.
* Establish a protocol for when and how to disable access, including procedures for re-activating accounts and recovering login information when a parent/user forgets his/her username and password. System administrators would follow the protocol for disabling access under a variety of circumstances, such as when a child exits the program or when a parent does not access the system for a certain period of time.
* Consider developing security audits and related policies and procedures which can help track who accessed the portal (e.g., IP address, user ID, etc.) and what was accessed. As with identity authentication, the sensitivity of the data that are accessed via the portal will drive the audit trail requirements.

## **State Examples**

* Utah (Baby and Toddler Online Tracking System, BTOTS)
  + [YouTube demonstration video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yipLgOtdH2M&feature=youtu.be) (view 23:30-27:40)
  + [Secure Child Forms Delivered to Parents through Parent Portal](http://www.utahbabywatch.org/docs/foreiproviders/btots/BTOTS-Web-Parent-Portal-Parent-Perspective-July2013.pdf)
    - This document provides an overview of how the BTOTS parent portal is used to deliver printed forms to parents securely.
  + General [BTOTS online resources](http://www.utahbabywatch.org/foreiproviders/btots.htm), including information about security and access
    - Kentucky (Technology-Assisted Observation and Teaming Support System, TOTS)
  + TOTS Information for Parent Access
    - This handout for families provides instructions for registering for a parent portal account, as well as details about what information is included on each screen once the parent is in the system.
  + Step-by-Step Instructions for TOTS Parent Access
    - This guidance document walks Service Coordinators through the process for setting families up with a parent portal account, including suggestions for how to introduce families to the purpose of the portal and its benefits.
  + TOTS Parent Portal Acceptable Use and Safety Policy
    - This document shares information about the parent portal’s purpose and expectations for users, as well as technical system requirements for using it.
  + Parent Agreement for TOTS Access via Internet
    - This document is signed by parents and a staff representative to acknowledge the family’s understanding of and agreement with program expectations associated with using the parent portal.

## **Related Resources**

* [Identity Authentication Best Practices](http://ptac.ed.gov/sites/default/files/authentication.pdf) (Privacy Technical Assistance Center, 2015)

This brief offers best practice recommendations for developing and implementing effective authentication processes to ensure that only appropriate individuals and entities have access to education records. General suggestions provided in the brief are applicable to all modes of data access, be it in person, over the phone, by mail, or electronically.

* [Data Sharing Through Parent Portals: An Exploration of Parental Motivation, Data Use, and the Promise of Prolonged Parent Involvement](http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/data-sharing-through-parent-portals-an-exploration-of-parental-motivation-data-use-and-the-promise-of-prolonged-parent-involvement) (Harvard Family Research Project, 2013)

This article discusses a study on how and why parents used a Student Information System (SIS) portal. It provides a brief overview of what a SIS is and recommendations for using the parent portal for engaging in children’s learning.

# Section 4: IFSP Transfers

## **Background**

When the family of a child receiving Part C services moves or relocates to a different part of a state and wants to continue receiving services, it may become necessary for the child’s Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) to transfer to a new local program/site. An online IFSP can have the ability to allow for secure electronic transfer of IFSP information, including the types and amount of IFSP data that can be transferred, as well as limiting and controlling access to that data.

**Connections to DaSy Data System Framework:**

* *Data Governance and ManagementDG6*
* *Data Governance and Management DG8*
* *System Design and Development SD4*

## **Potential Data Elements**

* Child ID
* IFSP Date
* IFSP Type (Initial, Update, Annual, etc.)
* IFSP Fields (field names will vary by state)
* Current Site Name/ID
* Transfer Site Name/ID
* Current Service Coordinator
* New/Transfer Service Coordinator

## **Functionality**

* IFSP Transfer Interface
* Permissions/access
* Audit trail

## **Key Considerations**

* The program will need to decide if the sending site can restrict the type/amount of information that is transferred. For example, the site can send all IFSPs in the child’s record, only the current IFSP, or maybe only certain fields or parts of the IFSP.
* It may be important to limit the staff/roles that will have access/permission to transfer a record. The program should decide who has permissions to initiate the transfer from the sending site, and who is allowed to accept or approve the transfer at the receiving site.
* The ability to communicate about the transfer between the sites is important so that both sites are working together on the transfer:
  + Determine whether the receiving site has the ability to approve/deny the transfer in the data system. If a transfer is denied, a process should be in place to communicate the reason why.
  + Both the sending site and receiving site should decide on the period of time in which the transfer must be "completed.” This will help to ensure that the most recent data are included in the transfer.
  + A mechanism should exist, either within the data system or outside the data system, to verify the child’s identity at both the sending and receiving sites/programs.
* The program will need to decide if the sending site has continued access to the child’s records after the transfer, and if so, how long that access remains.
* The system should have the capability to create an audit trail so that IFSP transfers can be tracked, including which users participated in the transfer.

## **State Examples**

* Kansas
* <http://www.ksits.org/download/Transfer_Process_Database_Portal_Guidance.docx>

[**http://www.ksits.org/download/Transfer\_Process\_Recommended\_Practices.docx**](http://www.ksits.org/download/Transfer_Process_Recommended_Practices.docx)

* (Tentative) Tennessee
  + Screenshots (Gary or Pam will contact OEC Data Manager is Dave Williams, [Dave.Williams@tn.gov](mailto:Dave.Williams@tn.gov))
* Colorado
  + [Video Demonstration](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgfYphAgkaY&feature=youtu.be)
    - Start at 1:30 (“How to transfer” slide with 5 steps) and watch through the rest of the demonstration (to 5:23)

## **Related Resources**

* Resources with descriptions and links/downloads

# Section 5: Integrated IFSP/Child Outcomes Summary (COS)

## **Background**

The Child Outcome Summary (COS) is a team process for summarizing information on a child’s functioning in each of the three child outcome areas:

1. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);

2. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication [and early literacy]); and

3. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Collecting data on child outcomes can be complex, therefore states are looking at ways to make these process a part of IFSP development and implementation. This can assist the IFSP team in reporting this measurement, as well as improve the quality of their data and provide value for clinical/programmatic decisions.

**Connection to DaSy Data System Framework:**

*Purpose and Vision QI2*: The purpose and vision include the Part C/619 state program’s intents and goals for the data system.

*Data Use QI4*: Part C/619 state and local staff or their representatives disseminate data products to users to meet their needs.

## **Potential Data Elements**

* COS ratings (entry, exit, and interim [optional]) for each outcome
* Progress questions (yes/no) at exit and interim (optional), and rationale for answer
* Notes/documentation for COS ratings

## **Functionality**

* User Interface
* Summary Reports
* Validation Checks
* IFSP Interface

## **Key Considerations**

* The state’s purpose for integrating the IFSP and COS
* Validation check for COS entrance and exit rating in accordance with state’s timeline
* Validation check for impossible ratings (e.g., progress question cannot be “no” if child receives a COS rating of 3 and entry and 4 at exit)
* Reports for displaying and sharing COS data for federal reporting and other purposes
* Determine whether a numerical COS rating or descriptor statement will be displayed in the IFSP (Note: If displaying descriptor statements, the data system would still need to capture the numerical rating for reporting purposes.)
* Determine whether to connect COS/global child outcomes with child-and family-specific IFSP outcomes

## **State Examples**

* Kansas (tentative)
  + Check manual for screenshots
* Washington
  + Training guide: <https://del.wa.gov/sites/default/files/imported/publications/esit/docs/ESIT%20Training%20Guide.pdf>
    - Refer to Chapter 5, Entry COS and Initial IFSP (page 43) and Chapter 7, Exit COS and Transition (page 64)
* Maryland
  + Video demonstration (have Bill record a demo w/ MD’s permission)
  + Online IFSP User Manual - <https://www.online-iep.com/MD_IFSP/Help/Documents/IFSP_Manual.pdf>
    - Refer to page 75, Integration of the COS Data Entry Process into the Strengths and Needs

## **Related Resources**

* [ECTA Center Website—Outcomes Measurement: IFSP-IEP-Outcomes Integration](http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/integration.asp)
* Add the resource that the Integrated Outcomes CoP TA providers developed on state approaches (shared with the IFSP cohort).

# Section 6: Dashboards

## **Background**

Dashboards are designed to help providers and administrators manage their work; they can cover broad or specific aspects of your program. As used in Part C data systems, they often make available simple reports that display key metrics or performance indicators, usually in real time. Dashboards may also include a notification or alert (tickler) system to notify users of tasks coming due to help with planning their work. The following information pertains to the use of dashboards with IFSP-related content, but they are equally applicable to other aspects of the service system, e.g., referral or eligibility determination.

**Connection to DaSy Data System Framework:**

* *System Design and Development QI4*: The Part C/619 state data system has the capacity to support [accountability](http://dasycenter.org/glossary/accountability/), program improvement, and program operations, and should contain the following [data elements](http://dasycenter.org/glossary/data-elements/) and features.

## **Potential Data Elements**

By way of example, the data elements below could be included in a notification of tasks related to IFSP development and implementation:

* Type of IFSP, e.g., initial, annual, 6-month review
* IFSP due date
* Referral date
* Actual date of meeting/review
* Actual date signed by parent/guardian

## **Functionality**

## User Interface

## Summary reports

## Lists of tasks due

## Notifications/alerts

## Calendaring system

## **Key Considerations**

* The types of reports often used in a data system dashboard include summary or aggregate reports, or lists of tasks or activities (by child) that must be completed. An example of a summary report is a summary of a service coordinator’s caseload, with a count of the number of children in various phases of service, e.g., in referral status, eligibility determination, or needing an initial IFSP or annual IFSP review. Such a report might also display the list of children in each of these status categories, or the list might form the basis of the report with a summary count included.
* Notification or “tickler” systems are used to send alerts to users that various tasks are coming due. For example, alerts could indicate that a child must have an initial IFSP developed by a certain date (to meet the 45-day timeline). Whereas the list of alerts and the list of child-level tasks (mentioned above) may share the same content, the latter is simply a passive list that could become more useful when coupled with an alert or notification function.
  + Alerts can be system-generated and/or user-generated. System-generated alerts are automatically generated by the data system based on a known or standard set of timelines, e.g., an initial IFSP alert based on the date of referral, or a transition conference alert based on the age of the child. Some systems also make use of user-generated alerts, which allow users to add individually-specific alerts or reminders, e.g., for the service coordinator to contact a pediatrician (with consent) to let her know that the child is eligible for Part C services and has an IFSP.

## All functionality, including any reports or alert/notification systems, should be developed for specific user roles, e.g., service coordinator, administrator, as their needs will often be different. For example, service coordinators are more likely to need child-level information whereas administrators may want aggregate information.

* Consider adding dynamic, interactive capabilities to the user interface, for example, allowing users to sort and/or filter alerts, tasks due, etc.

## When developing any types of reports or alert systems it is important to take into account the complexities that result from children transferring from one local program to another and the resulting impact on timelines, IFSP follow-up dates, etc.

* Dashboards may also include calendaring systems or message systems, e.g., messages from the data system administrator that the system will be down for maintenance on a specific date.

## **State Examples**

* Colorado – may not use
* Washington
* Utah
* Kentucky

## **Related Resource**

* [A Guide to Creating Dashboards People Love to Use](http://www.cpoc.org/assets/Data/guide_to_dashboard_design1.pdf)

Though not specific to early intervention, this three-part guide provides concepts and best practices to create a high-impact dashboard that people will love to use.

* [Data Visualization Toolkit: Dashboards](http://dasycenter.org/data-visualization-toolkit/dashboards/)

The DaSy Center’s 2016 toolkit is a compilation of resources for creating engaging data displays, as well as tips for effective use. This section of the toolkit provides helpful information on how to incorporate data visualization in the design of dashboards.