

Vermont's Early Childhood Outcomes: A Guide for Professionals

Introduction

All Vermont children and their families are diverse in culture, language, geography, causes, beliefs, and circumstances. To support individual growth, development, and continuous learning over their lifetime, the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) is committed to fully including each and every child in a continuum of high quality, evidence-based early learning experiences, from birth through grade three.

Measuring Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) for children with disabilities helps to ensure that Vermont is making a difference in realizing the promise of each and every child and their family. Vermonters agree that each and every child deserves a strong start and the opportunity to reach their maximum potential. Early Childhood Special Education services (ECSE) enable young children with disabilities to access and fully participate in everyday routines and activities across a variety of settings (e.g., in their homes, with their families, in childcare, preschool or school programs, and in the community).

ECO Importance and Purpose

The overarching goal for each and every child is to be an active and successful participant in their own learning and development. Vermont ECSE measures three ECO as defined and reported to the Office Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the State Performance Plan (SPP) and the Annual Performance Report (APR). The purpose of the ECSE ECO measurement is to collect and analyze high-quality ECO data to meet federal reporting requirements as well as to inform state and local program improvement efforts, including:

1. Improving policies, procedures, and practices;
2. Informing focused monitoring, and quality assurance;
3. Informing professional learning opportunities;
4. Informing research and funding and
5. Gathering philanthropic and political support for ECSE.

The three ECO are the result of the work of the Early Childhood Outcomes Center; now part of the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA). For more information, visit the [ECTA website](#).

Defining the Three ECO Areas

What are Functional Outcomes?

Functional outcomes describe a child's mastery and appropriate application of behaviors, knowledge, and skills in an intentional and meaningful way across daily routines, activities, and settings. Functional outcomes look at the integration of behaviors across domains that children need to participate in developmentally appropriate routines and activities. The three ECO focus on functioning rather than traditional domains. To have complete understanding of the three ECO and how to effectively measure them, it is expected that, as professionals, each team member should know and understand typical child development and progression of age-expected development. The [Vermont Early Learning Standards \(VELS\)](#) is a recommended document useful in understanding and informing child development.

Outcome A: Positive Social and Emotional Skills and Relationships:

Examples of functional skills may include:

1. Expressing emotions and feelings
2. Relating to adults
3. Showing interest in and initiating interactions with peers
4. Seeking assistance when needed
5. Acting in response to others
6. Imitating behaviors of others
7. Using play skills to build relationships
8. Demonstrating positive self- concept and self – control
9. Following conventional rules of conversation

Outcome B: Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills

Examples of functional skills may include:

1. Showing curiosity and initiative
2. Exploring multiple environments
3. Imitating others
4. Showing persistence
5. Following through with plans
6. Problem-solving in a variety of ways
7. Communicating to express ideas and thoughts
8. Reasoning
9. Demonstrating age appropriate concept development
10. Exploring materials, representing ideas and stories through pictures and play
11. Building and using vocabulary

Outcome C: Taking Appropriate Action to Meet Needs:

Examples of functional skills may include:

1. Taking care of basic needs
2. Getting from place to place
3. Using objects as tools to make things happen
4. Increasing contributing to their own health and safety;
5. Developing awareness of immediate environment/ surroundings
6. Demonstrate self confidence
7. Communicating need sin a variety of ways (e.g., using physical movements, gestures, sounds or words to express and wants and needs
8. Discriminating environmental stimuli and adjusting responses.

Resources

Please check the following links for updates and resources supporting early childhood learning.

- [Vermont's Early Childhood Outcomes Practices and Procedures](#)
- [ECSE Services](#)
- [VELS](#)
- [ECTA](#)

Questions?

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