Component 4:

Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies

4(a) How Improvement Strategies were Selected

The following root causes for Utah's lower Summary Statement 1 (SS1) data in child outcome 1a (social-emotional skills and social relationships) for children from diverse cultural backgrounds were identified through the broad and in-depth data analysis that occurred from April 2014 through March 2015:

The SSIP Core Work Team invited each EIS program in a root cause analysis to address the identified SiMR. The chosen method of root cause analysis was a Fishbone Diagram. Training on how to conduct a Fishbone Analysis was presented at an EIS provider meeting. Six of the fifteen local EIS programs chose to participate in the Fishbone Diagram activity, and included representation from both large and small programs within the state. Upon completion of the Fishbone analysis process, common causes and contributing factors for the SiMR were concluded (Table 1). The common identified causes were: 1) culture; 2) SES status; 3) education level of the family; 4) staff training; and 5) evaluation tool. Next, the programs outlined contributing factors for each of the five identified causal areas.

1. *Culture*: Language barriers, traditions, role identities, religious differences, limited networking opportunities, relationship building/trust, and decreased acceptance and tolerance from family and/or providers.
2. *SES Status*: Poverty, high stress, transportation issues and distance from services, unstable housing, and access to fewer resources (i.e. daycare, toys, food, etc.).
3. *Education Level of the Family*: Low motivation, fewer opportunities, limited financial resources, literacy barriers, lack of follow through with activities, and decreased parental understanding.
4. S*taff*: Cultural experiences, biases, extent of training on the evaluation tool, and flexibility in schedule to meet family's needs.
5. *Assessment Tool*: Parent vs. provider report, variation of tools, evaluator personalities during the initial vs. exit COSF, culturally and language inappropriateness, over vs. under reporting, and subjectivity of assessment tool.

The SSIP Core Work Team then brainstormed barriers that could be changed by BWEIP and EIS providers to address the root causes.

The minimal use of a sensitive assessment tool to identify social-emotional concerns, including language, and culture barriers could cause the following:

- Limited writing of functional Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) outcomes for social-emotional concerns for children from diverse backgrounds
- Insufficient training and use of evidence-based practices
- Communication issues between provider and family
- Need for increased parent involvement during assessments
- Inconsistent team knowledge of typical social-emotional development
- Need for culturally competent staff and services
- Knowledge and access to inclusive community resources
- Insufficient understanding of the Child Outcome Summary (COSF) rating process

During a Core Work Team call in March 2015, the root causes analysis was reviewed and the group began to think about general improvement strategies. Current improvement strategies and ongoing initiatives and their potential impact on social emotional development for children from diverse cultures were reviewed. The team was asked to continue to brainstorm and send back to the group additional strategies based on the trends from the root cause analysis and the strengths in the infrastructure analysis. BWEIP staff subsequently added elements to the list of improvement strategies that incorporated where appropriate the DEC recommended practices.

Through phone calls and email the SSIP Core Work Team generated some specific improvement strategies that were organized under the following categories:

1. **Assessment**
   Identify and establish the use of valid, reliable, culturally sensitive assessment measure and methods that ensure an accurate assessment of social emotional skills needs of children ages birth to three.

2. **Professional Development and Qualified Personnel**
   Strive to retain and educate early intervention staff by redesigning and enhancing the CSPD system to support the creation of high quality, functional IFSP outcomes and strategies related to social emotional skills and relationships, and implementation of evidence based practices that address family centered routines based early intervention services, and family engagement including cultural competence training in the Four Areas of Resiliency.

3. **Family Engagement**
   Develop a role/job description for "cultural guides" who work in conjunction with the EI team during assessment and intervention.

4. **Collaboration**
   Identify agencies at the state and local levels that already provide support and information for diverse cultures in Utah, sharing resources with Early Head Start (EHS), evidenced-based home visiting.

These broad improvement strategies generated by the SSIP Core Work Team were presented to the SSIP Broad Stakeholders Group in March, 2015. The implementation of these strategies will lead to the following: 1) BWEIP enhancing infrastructure to support EIS's, then 2) EIS's supporting and supervising personnel to provide appropriate assessments, evidence-based services, family supports, then 3) providers implementing, appropriate assessments evidence-based services and culturally appropriate supports for all children and families, then 4) all families increasing their capacity to support their children's social-emotional development, resulting in 5) improved social-emotional outcomes for all children regardless of cultural background.

4(b) How Improvement Strategies are Sound, Logical and Aligned

The improvement strategies are sound and logical because they were created based on the root cause and infrastructure analyses. The SSIP Core Work Team with the guidance of technical assistance, spent time developing solid strategies that should lead to improvement of children's social-emotional development regardless of culture.

The strategies are aligned because each strategy interrelates with all the others. The fidelity of implementation will be supported through a redesigned and enhanced system of professional development. Joining with other state initiatives that support social-emotional development will help BWEIP leverage resources for training and the preparation of qualified personnel. Through these qualified personnel, assessment processes will be improved, evidence-based practices will be implemented, families will receive culturally appropriate supports and accountability measures focusing on a well-qualified workforce, improved results will be strengthened. Individual strategies will not be carried out in isolation.

In addition, stakeholders identified current state and local initiatives that address children's social-emotional and cultural diversity concerns. Partnering with existing initiatives was identified as an improvement strategy.

During the infrastructure analysis, stakeholders identified existing state and local initiatives that could support SSIP efforts. Also, during an ICC meeting in November 2014, members identified additional initiatives. State initiatives and programs that include infant and toddler's social-emotional development and cultural sensitivity include the following:

- Home visiting
  - Parents as Teachers
  - Nurse Family Partnerships
- Early Head Start
- Head Start
- Infant Mental Health
- Autism Screening/ URLEND
- Early Childhood Utah
- Help Me Grow
- Universal Developmental Screening efforts

- Utah – Governor's Success Initiative

Representatives from a number of these initiatives have been invited and have agreed to participate in Phase II SSIP activities.

4(c) Strategies that Address Root Causes and Build Capacity

1. Assessments were chosen as an improvement strategy because there were a number of concerns about assessment practices identified through the root cause and infrastructure analyses.

The following are the root causes that this strategy addresses:

- Minimal use of a sensitive assessment tool to identify social-emotional concerns
- Lack of culturally sensitive assessment tools
- Insufficient understanding of the COSF rating process
- Need for increased parent involvement during assessment

In addition, the infrastructure analysis identified the following needs in this area:

- Concerns about accuracy and consistency of COSF ratings
- Limitations of tools used for assessment of social-emotional development
- Limitations of culturally sensitive assessment tools
  Cultural competency

2. Professional Development was chosen as an improvement strategy because it was identified in both the root cause and infrastructure analyses that more training is needed in a variety of topics.

The specific root causes this strategy addresses are:

- Cultural competency
- COSF rating process
- Need for culturally competent staff and service

In addition, the infrastructure analysis identified the following training needs:
- Limited writing of functional IFSP outcomes for social emotional concerns
- Typical social-emotional development of children
- Desire for statewide mentorship program
- Inconsistent team knowledge of typical social-emotional development
- Insufficient knowledge and use of evidence based practices

3. Family Engagement was selected as a strategy because.

The specific root causes this strategy addresses are provider and family:

- Understanding and communication
- Scheduling flexibility
- Trust

- Motivation and follow through
- Role identities and traditions
- Literacy and language

In addition, the infrastructure analysis identified the following needs in this area:

- Fee structure
- Expectations

4. Collaboration was identified as a strategy because, as indicated in section 4(b), there are a number of state and local initiatives that align with the SSIP efforts toward improvement. By partnering with existing initiatives, BWEIP will be able to utilize these resources to work toward improved child outcomes.

4(d) Strategies Based on Data and Infrastructure Analyses

As reflected in section 4(a), through the data and infrastructure analyses, root causes were identified which informed the selection of improvement strategies.

For example, one theme that emerged from both the root cause and infrastructure analyses was the need for an enhanced CSPD system and more training. The following topics were identified:

1. Assessments for social-emotional development

2. Well qualified, stable workforce through orientation, mentoring, and training

3. Cultural competency

4. Family engagement

5. Writing functional outcomes specific to social-emotional development

6. Evidence-based practices that address social-emotional concerns

7. COSF rating process

8. Community collaboration

As a result, these topics are embedded in the broad improvement strategies.