

Initial Efficacy Trial of Florida Embedded Practices and Intervention with Caregivers

Purpose: We are proposing a rigorous randomized initial efficacy trial of Florida Embedded Practices and Intervention with Caregivers (FL-EPIC), which is a fully-developed, content-ready caregiver-implemented intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities (i.e., children and families receiving IDEA Part C services) on caregiver and child outcomes within community-based early intervention (EI) programs during a critical period of early development. Data from a rigorous initial efficacy trial are needed to a) test whether positive effects of the FLEPIC intervention on caregiver and child outcomes are attained when compared to a business-as-usual waitlist comparison group with an appropriately powered, community-based sample of EI providers and caregivers/child dyads; b) demonstrate that the FL-EPIC intervention can be delivered with fidelity by community-based Part C EI providers (i.e., indigenous EI providers) under the supported conditions of an initial efficacy trial; c) examine the relationship between EI providers' use of caregiver coaching practices and caregiver/child outcomes; and d) determine whether the FL-EPIC intervention has an impact on caregiver and child outcomes across developmental domains.

Project activities: One-hundred eight EI providers within Florida's Early Steps program will be trained to implement the FL-EPIC intervention with children and families in three sites across three cohorts. Within each program and cohort, we will randomize 12 EI providers (6 FL-EPIC and 6 business-as-usual [BAU] waitlist control). FL-EPIC includes implementation supports provided to EI providers including an intervention manual, professional development workshops, and ongoing practice-based coaching. The EI providers will conduct weekly home visits with the families on their existing caseload in which they use caregiver coaching practices to help support caregivers to provide embedded learning opportunities with their child during everyday routines and activities. We will measure differences in EI provider self-efficacy, caregiver delivery of embedded learning opportunities and self-efficacy, and child developmental and learning outcomes. After six-months of receiving the intervention, we will compare results across the FL-EPIC and BAU group using generalized linear mixed models.

Products: The fully developed FL-EPIC intervention will be used in this initial efficacy trial. At the conclusion of the trial, we will develop scientific articles, multiple presentations, and practitioner articles for dissemination of the results of the initial efficacy trial of FL-EPIC.