



Integrating Evaluation Policy and Practice: Utilizing Organizational Self Study for Learning and Change

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Goals

- Recognize potential for the utilization of self-study to:
 - Combat negative view of evaluation (Patton, 2008)
 - Foster critical self-reflection
 - Facilitate organizational learning and focus change efforts (Cherin & Meezan, 1998; Dodd & Meezan, 2009; Fetterman, Kaftarian & Wandersman, 1996; Patton, 2008).



Self-Study Purpose

Organizational self-study on particular critical concept areas allow an agency to:

- Assess readiness for training and technical assistance (T/TA)
- Actively reflect on current practice
- Facilitates the targeting of T/TA
- Helps to prioritize next steps
- Identifies barriers to practice and change



Self-Study Format

- The self-studies are formatted like a survey with open-ended and closed-ended questions
- There are also task-centered questions asking for particular policies and documents to be identified and reviewed
- Questions ask about organizational capacity, norms, and practices related to core competencies for the specific practice area



Self-Studies Currently Available

- Family Engagement –
http://www.nrcpfc.org/fewpt/self_study.htm
- Placement Stability –
http://www.nrcpfc.org/pst/self_study.htm
- Concurrent Planning -
<http://www.nrcpfc.org/cpt/assessment.htm>
- Educational Stability – <http://www.nrcpfc.org>
- Parent-Child and Sibling Visits –
<http://www.nrcpfc.org>



- Examples of self assessment tools

Organizational Self Study on Concurrent Planning

This self study assessment tool can be used to review concurrent planning policies and practices. The tool is designed to review overall administrative policies, strengths and challenges in implementing concurrent planning and identify training and technical assistance needs.

ADMINISTRATIVE: POLICY/STRUCTURE

Does your agency have a definition of concurrent planning? __ Yes __ No

If yes, how is it defined?

Does your agency have written policy on concurrent planning? ___ Yes __ No

If yes, what is it?

Has it been communicated to agency staff ___ Yes __ No

If yes, in what ways has staff been informed of the policy?

To what extent has administration placed a clear priority on concurrent planning?

Very clear priority

Clear priority

Vague priority

Unclear priority

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

How many children came into care during the last fiscal year? _____

How many of these children are sibling groups? _____

What percentage of these children are reunified with their families?

_____ 76-100%



- Examples of self assessment tools

Setting Clear Time Lines for Permanency Decisions:

Does practice include firm timelines for permanency decision making?
__Yes __No

Do services focus on parent's ability and willingness to make changes to undertake caretaking responsibilities? __Yes __No

Transparent Written Agreements and Documentation:

In your current case review practice, how do you focus on treatment plans and visitation?

What are the requirements for written documentation in concurrent planning cases?

Collaboration:

Rate you current relationship with the following collaborators in working on concurrent case practice:

	Very Strong					Very Weak
	5	4	3	2	1	
Court	5	4	3	2	1	
Attorney	5	4	3	2	1	
CASA Volunteer	5	4	3	2	1	
Mental Health Professional	5	4	3	2	1	
Alcohol and Drug Treatment	5	4	3	2	1	

Specific Recruitment, Training, and Retention of Resource Families

How will the agency recruit families who are interested in participating in a concurrent planning program?



Benefits

- Increases feelings of autonomy in the self study process, which creates investment in both the evaluation and T/TA process
- Decreases sense of “being judged”
- Creates baseline information
- Informs and helps target T/TA
- Informs policy and practice decision-making



Successes

- Has fostered organizational learning by
 - Generating realistic assessment of specific T/TA needs, especially helpful to guide initial conversation
 - Facilitating identification of strengths to build on and barriers to address
 - Facilitating prioritization of next steps



SUCCESSSES

- Has fostered organizational learning by:
 - Increasing engagement in the T/TA process (understanding their own strengths and needs through a competencies lens increases understanding of and motivation for engaging in the T/TA process)
 - Fostering ownership of the evaluation and change process



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