

**PII-TTAP**

PERMANENCY INNOVATIONS  
INITIATIVE

Training & Technical  
Assistance Project

# GUIDE TO DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND ASSESSING AN INNOVATION

## Volume 3: Installation



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# Installation

The Installation stage is often overlooked as agencies move from selection of feasible and effective innovations to serving the target population. But this stage is crucial for successful implementation. It sets a solid foundation to ensure that the structural and functional changes to support implementation are in place. This stage includes developing protocols for staff selection, training, coaching, and establishing systems for continuous monitoring of adherence to the innovation.

The *Guide to Developing, Implementing, and Assessing an Innovation* (the Guide) focuses on two steps that comprise the Installation stage.

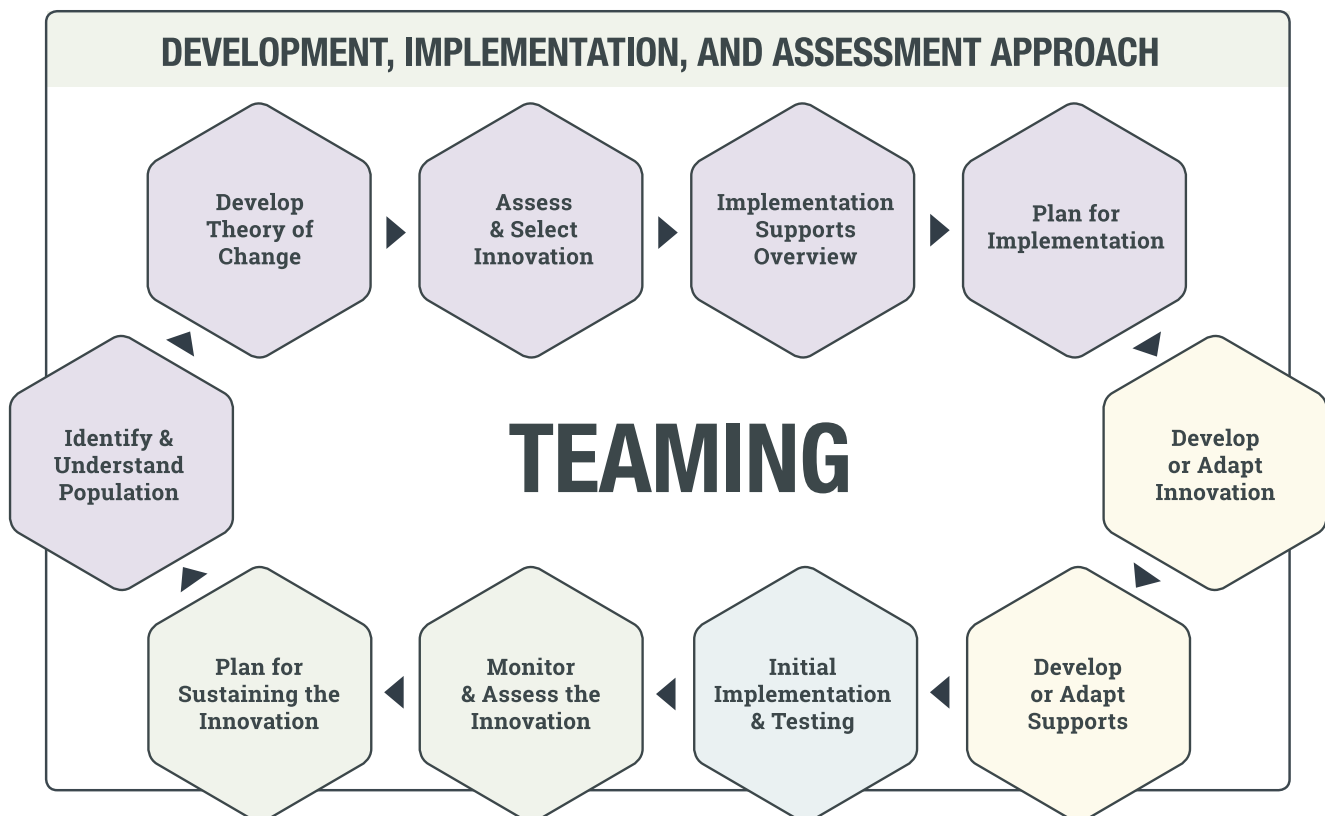
**Develop or Adapt the Innovation:** In this step, teams outline the essential functions and core activities that are needed to deliver the innovation as intended.

**Develop or Adapt Implementation Supports:** Teams identify the existing resources and system supports that would facilitate implementation of the selected innovation(s) and those that would need bolstering or adjustment. The goal is to develop the infrastructure to improve and sustain practitioner competence and confidence.



## Getting Started With Installation

If an implementation team is starting with the Installation stage based on answers to the quiz in the Introduction section of the Guide, reviewing the questions below will help determine which corresponding chapter of Volume 3 is the most appropriate starting place. An answer of “no” to any of the questions below most likely indicates the initiative is currently in that step of the implementation process, and that section is where to begin using the Guide. Because implementation is not a linear process, it may be wise to



review previous steps included in the Exploration stage (Volume 2 of the Guide).

### **Section 6: Develop or Adapt the Innovation**

- Is your innovation clearly operationalized? (Chapter 6.1)
- Are you clear about the activities practitioners will implement when working with the target population? (Chapter 6.1)
- Are the behaviors practitioners are expected to demonstrate clearly defined? (Chapter 6.2)
- If you are implementing a research-informed or evidence-based innovation with a different population than prior implementation, has it been operationalized for use with this different population? (Chapter 6.2)

### **Section 7: Develop or Adapt Implementation Supports**

- If you are implementing a research-informed or evidence-based innovation, have the implementation supports been adapted for use in your jurisdiction and context? (Chapter 7.1)
- Are you clear about how to recruit and select staff for this new way of work? (Chapter 7.2)
- Have you developed training curricula and a coaching plan? (Chapters 7.3 and 7.4)
- Have you developed fidelity measures and protocols to assess if practitioners are implementing the innovation as intended? (Chapters 7.5 and 7.6)
- Do you have a data system in place to collect key metrics? (Chapter 7.7)



# Develop or Adapt the Innovation

This section provides guidance for operationalizing an innovation. Its two chapters focus on using a practice profile, a document that describes how the innovation works in everyday practice by articulating the essential functions of the innovation and the activities of the practitioners. The practice profiles provide a framework for developing the supports necessary for successful implementation. This section includes a quiz to test understanding of the concepts and the Practice Profile Development Tool to assist in the development of a practice profile.



# Purpose and Elements



## Overview

After defining a theory of change and selecting an innovation that seems most likely to achieve desired outcomes, the next step in the implementation process is to create a practice profile that operationalizes the innovation to be implemented. This chapter (the first of two in this section) focuses on the key concepts related to practice profiles.<sup>1</sup>

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter explains

- What a practice profile is
- The purpose of a practice profile
- How to identify and explain elements of a practice profile

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives will build foundational knowledge to develop practice profiles.



## Key Terms

**Essential functions** – “[F]eatures that must be present to say that a program exists in a given unit... sometimes called core intervention components, active ingredients, or practice elements”<sup>2</sup>

**Operationalize** – To define a concept so it can be measured or assessed quantitatively through observation

**Practice indicators** – A description of exactly what the practitioner is expected to do and say throughout the innovation. These indicators should be behaviorally based. They are used to guide training and coaching and eventually the development of a fidelity assessment.

**Practice profile** – A description of “the core activities that allow a program to be teachable, learnable, and doable in typical human service settings [and promote] consistency across practitioners at the level of actual service delivery.”<sup>3</sup>



## Operationalizing the Innovation

Before an innovation can be implemented, it needs to be clearly operationalized. That is, it needs to be defined in a way that can be measured or assessed quantitatively through observation. Operationalizing an intervention should include:

- What practitioners need to do
- How they should do it
- How to determine if they are doing it as intended by the innovation developers

This can be accomplished by creating a practice profile.

<sup>1</sup> Material in this chapter is adapted from the work of the National Implementation Research Network.

<sup>2</sup> “Innovations Defined.” <http://nimn.fpg.unc.edu/learn-implementation/innovations-defined>.

<sup>3</sup> Metz, A., Bartley, L., Blase, K. & Fixsen, D. (2011). *A guide for creating practice profiles*. Chapel Hill, NC: National Implementation Research Network, FPG, Child Development Institute, UNC.

## What Is a Practice Profile?

A practice profile is a document that describes how an innovation works in everyday practice. Practice profiles make it possible for core activities or practices to be taught and practitioner performance measured. This is necessary so that individuals who will implement the core practices will know what to do and how to do it and can be trained or coached to do it consistently well.

## Why Is a Practice Profile Necessary?

The practice profile provides a framework for developing the implementation supports (e.g., a training curriculum, a coaching service delivery plan, and a fidelity assessment process). Developing these implementation supports help to ensure that the innovation is delivered as intended (with fidelity to the original design). Using this framework makes it possible to assess the results of an innovation and determine whether it is having the desired impact on child and family outcomes.

## Elements of a Practice Profile

A practice profile consists of five elements:

- The **essential functions** of the innovation
- An **operationalized definition** for each essential function

- **Core activities** associated with each essential function
- **Behaviorally based practice indicators** that explain how to do the core activities
- **Practice criteria** that describe the levels of performance for the core activities

## What Are Essential Functions?

Essential functions are the activities or strategies that a practitioner engages in to address the identified problem. They are based on research evidence and are used to guide what practitioners do and how they do it. The essential functions make an innovation what it is and are what set it apart from business as usual.

## Identifying Essential Functions

For some innovations, the essential functions are best expressed broadly, such as “cultural competence” or “engagement.” For others, the essential functions can be more narrowly defined. For example, if an innovation is to incorporate intensive child-focused, adoptive-parent recruitment, one of the essential functions may be for practitioners to establish a solid relationship with the child. Another may be for practitioners to learn more about the child by studying his or her case file.

Essential Function (strategies or activities that practitioners will engage in to address the identified problem):			
Research Informed Operationalized Definition:			
Associated Core Activities:			
Behavioral Indicator	Expected	Developmental	Unacceptable



## Operationalized Definition

In a practice profile, each essential function is described in an operationalized definition. The operationalized definition must be based on the same research that supports the theory of change. The operationalized definition should also clearly describe the connection to the underlying values, principles, and philosophy of the innovation.

The following examples explain how a hypothetical county agency (Diamond County) identified an essential function and developed an operationalized definition for it.



### Essential Function and Operationalized Definition Example

The Diamond County implementation team determined that one of the essential functions of their innovation consists of creating a list of possible placement options for children who have been in foster care for more than 6 months. To do this, practitioners needed to develop and use investigation skills. The implementation team listed their first essential function as “Investigate.”

The operationalized definition for “Investigate” was based on the underlying values, principles, and philosophy of the innovation. For Diamond County, these were:

- Child safety comes first.
- Family engagement and involvement is paramount in all aspects of practice.
- Assessment and intervention practices will focus on family strengths while addressing the underlying conditions and contributing factors that impact child safety.
- Creative solutions, including formal and informal supports, will be used to ensure child safety.

When investigating the problem of providing permanent placement for foster children, the Diamond County team found research indicating that relatives

and close family friends can often provide stable, permanent homes for children who are no longer able to live with their birth parents. They articulated the operationalized definition for “Investigate” as: “Explores family relationships and community resources to find and learn about other family members and supportive relationships for children and youth.”

## Associated Core Activities

In addition to an operationalized definition, each essential function has associated core activities. Associated core activities are the observable actions that practitioners will perform. They help to further define and clarify what the function entails in practice. Research should be used to define and support the associated activities, and the activities should support the underlying values, principles, and philosophy of the innovation.

**Essential Function:** Investigate

**Research-Informed Operationalized Definition:**

Explores family relationship and community resources to find and learn about other family members and supportive relationships for children and youth



### Associated Core Activities Example

When the Diamond County team discussed what a practitioner would need to do to perform the essential function of “Investigate,” they agreed that they wanted practitioners to actively listen to and talk with both parents (if available), family members, and other professionals. They also wanted practitioners to actively follow up on placement leads and provide support to help family members stay connected with the child.

For the essential function “Investigate,” the team listed these four associated core activities:

- Listens actively
- Encourages honest dialogue
- Explores possible solutions
- Actively locates resources

**Associated Core Activities:** Listens actively, encourages honest dialogue, explores possible solutions, actively locates resources

## Behaviorally Based Practice Indicators

Behaviorally based practice indicators should be supported by the research used to define the essential function. They describe exactly how the practitioner will perform the core activities during implementation. They are based on the observable behavior of the practitioners and are measurable, so an observer can tell if the practitioner is performing the activity successfully. Because they are measurable, the indicators can be used to guide training and coaching of practitioners. Each function should have no more than 10 indicators.

Behaviorally based practice indicators have two parts:

- The description of the action (indicator) that will be observed
- The observable behaviors that will indicate if the practitioner is successfully performing the action

### Behavioral Indicator

Uses reflective listening techniques  
Asks relevant questions



### Indicators Example

For the core activities associated with the essential function “Investigate,” the Diamond County team began by identifying two indicators:

- Uses reflective listening techniques
- Asks relevant questions

## Describing Performance

Next, the team needed to describe the best way to perform the indicator. The description of the indicator must be both observable and measurable. The practice profile includes three levels of practice criteria:



- **“Expected”** includes activities that exemplify practitioners who are able to apply required skills and abilities to a wide range of settings and contexts; use these skills consistently and independently; and sustain these skills over time while continuing to grow and improve in their positions.
- **“Developmental”** includes activities that exemplify practitioners who are able to implement required skills and abilities but in a more limited range of contexts and settings; use these skills inconsistently or need supervisor/coach consultation to complete or successfully apply skills; and benefit from a coaching agenda that targets particular skills for improvement to move practitioners into the “expected/proficient” category.
- **“Unacceptable”** includes activities that exemplify practitioners who are not yet able to implement required skills or abilities in any context.

Using three levels of practice criteria helps guide practitioners' activities and support coaching to improve abilities. These indicators will prove useful when drafting the fidelity assessment in the next section of the Guide.



### Practice Criteria Example

For the indicator, “Uses reflective listening techniques,” the Diamond County team describes the three types of practice behavior as:

**Expected:** Consistently takes advantage of appropriate opportunities to reflect back to others what they are sharing

**Developmental:** Takes advantage of appropriate opportunities to reflect back to others what they are sharing about half the time

**Unacceptable:** Rarely reflects back to others what they are sharing



### Practice Profile Example

The following matrix includes all the elements of the practice profile. As a whole, this represents the essential function of “Investigate” for the Diamond County innovation. The tool at the end of Chapter 6.2 is useful for operationalizing essential functions by completing matrices that can be combined into one chart. The appendix at the end of this volume includes practice profile examples from two child welfare agencies.

Essential Function: Investigate			
Research-Informed Operationalized Definition: Explores family relationship and community resources to find and learn about other family members and supportive relationships for children and youth			
Associated Core Activities: Listens actively, encourages honest dialogue, explores possible solutions, actively locates resources			
Behavioral Indicator	Expected	Developmental	Unacceptable
<b>Uses reflective listening techniques</b> <b>Asks relevant questions</b>	Consistently takes advantage of appropriate opportunities to reflect back to others what they are sharing	Takes advantage of appropriate opportunities to reflect back to others what they are sharing about half the time	Rarely reflects back to others what they are sharing

# Assemble a Task Group and Write the Practice Profile



## Overview

Chapter 6.1 explained the elements that comprise a practice profile. This chapter outlines the steps required to complete a practice profile. It emphasizes that the work of creating a practice profile is best accomplished by a group of individuals or a team that is familiar with the agency, the population to be served, and the innovation or the research informing the innovation. Members of the group work together to draft the practice profile, review the work, share with the larger implementation team, and finalize the profile. The Practice Profile Development Tool, included at the end of this chapter, assists in the development of a practice profile.<sup>4</sup>

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter provides understanding to

- Create a practice profile task group
- Prepare the task group for practice profile work
- Create and finalize a practice profile

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives builds knowledge to

- Develop practice profiles
- Adapt an existing innovation to meet the unique needs of the target population
- Establish and lead an effective team

The key steps to drafting a practice profile are described below.

## Assemble a Task Group

Developing a practice profile requires an understanding of and/or an ability to research the behaviorally

specific elements of the innovation. This work is best accomplished by a group of people with clear knowledge of the innovation. The task group should comprise members of the implementation team but should also include other members of the organization, stakeholders, and the innovation developer(s), if applicable. The following considerations are important when creating the practice profile task group.

- Include people who have a basic understanding of the innovation. This could include but is not limited to:
  - Innovation developer (if applicable)
  - People responsible for developing the theory of change
- Include people who have an understanding of the behaviorally specific elements of the innovation, such as those who are knowledgeable about the prerequisites that must be mastered for the essential functions and elements of the innovation to be delivered as intended. This could include:
  - Innovation developer (if applicable)
  - Practitioners and supervisors responsible for delivering the innovation
  - Training director
- If useful, include community members or stakeholders who can provide the perspective of the target population.
- Since innovations operate in the context of a larger organization, representative(s) from the organization contribute the macro perspective and create buy-in and approval at the leadership level. They also provide a training and policy perspective. Representatives could include:

<sup>4</sup> Material in this chapter is adapted from the work of the National Implementation Research Network.



- Agency leadership
- Practitioners and supervisors who will be responsible for delivering the innovation
- Representatives from the training division and/or policy department

Developing a practice profile requires research and multiple rounds of revisions and, as a result, is a labor-intensive process. All members of the group should be able to devote time for practice profile development tasks.

## Choose a Leader

The task group will need a leader or co-leaders who have the ability and can dedicate time to the creation of the practice profile. Ideally, leaders who represent various levels or different stakeholder groups, such as state and local governments or agency supervisors and practitioners, should be chosen.

## Prepare the Task Group

The task group should review the target population and the barriers or root causes of the problem identified from the work completed in Section 1: Identify the Problem and Understand the Target Population. The task group should also review the theory of change articulated in the work completed in Section 2: Develop a Theory of Change.

## Review Before Starting

Before beginning the practice profile, it is important for the philosophy, values, and principles of the innovation to be clearly stated. If such statements do not exist in writing, the task team should assemble and develop them. These statements should align with the values and philosophy of the implementing agency or organization. Clearly articulating and sharing these items among members of the task group before beginning work provides consistency and a foundation on which to build.



## List Essential Functions as a Group

As covered in the previous chapter, a practice profile is made up of the essential functions of an innovation. Reviewing initial research about the innovation helps to identify and prioritize these essential functions. One group member should be designated to draft the essential functions as they are identified and discussed. The team should be clear about which functions are the most and least important.

As the essential functions of the innovation are determined, the team should check for overlap to minimize redundancy. If adapting an existing innovation, reviewing the existing practice profile with the developer before making adaptations is important.

## Draft Components of One Essential Function as a Group

Together, the group should draft one of the essential functions. This group experience facilitates an awareness of how the development process works and ensures that all members of the task group

understand each of the elements of a practice profile. This process is an intensive undertaking that establishes the groundwork for drafting the rest of the essential functions. It will provide a practical example of how to develop research-informed, behaviorally based, measurable indicators and demonstrate the process of determining whether an indicator is a priority for that function.

## Divide Into Small Teams or Pairs

After the group has drafted one essential function and understands how the development process works, the group should divide into small teams or pairs that will develop one or more of the essential functions.

## Draft Complete Essential Functions

Each of the drafted essential functions must be complete with an operationalized definition, core activities, and behavioral indicators that include practice criteria. The indicators must align with the guiding values, principles, and philosophy of the innovation, and they must be behavioral, observable, and measurable. Teams must allow enough time to complete the work and incorporate multiple rounds of revisions. In prior experience, the work required to complete each essential function has taken up to 2 full days, which excludes the time required for the original research on the essential functions.

## Review

Drafts should be circulated several times among the larger task group, allowing everyone to review and comment. Attention should be paid to ensure the indicators are behaviorally based, measurable, and observable, and aligned with the guiding values, principles, and philosophy of the innovation. Reviewers should consider whether all indicators are aligned with the most appropriate functions and if the indicators are a priority for that function.

## Refine and Revise the Practice Profile

The draft practice profile, with all of the completed essential functions, should be shared with the larger implementation team. The implementation team should check for alignment with the theory of change to ensure the vision of the innovation is reflected in the behavioral indicators and activities. Questions, concerns, and resolutions should be discussed among members of the team.

## Develop Supports for Implementation

After the practice profile is complete, the team can begin to develop supports for implementation, including selection criteria for practitioners, training and coaching systems, and a fidelity assessment process. Writing the practice profile is not a one-time event. It may need to be refined and revised during implementation or after initial testing.

## Practice Profile Development Tool



The Practice Profile Development Tool on the following pages helps to apply the concepts discussed in this chapter to an actual innovation. It is designed to assist in building a practice profile by identifying the essential functions, associated core activities, and behavioral indicators of an innovation.

# PRACTICE PROFILE DEVELOPMENT TOOL

FROM THE *GUIDE TO DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND ASSESSING AN INNOVATION, VOLUME 3*

The two chapters in Section 6 discuss the development of a practice profile. A practice profile is a document that describes how an innovation works in everyday practice, makes it possible for core activities or practices to be taught and practitioner performance measured, and provides a framework for developing the implementation supports an innovation needs.

As discussed in Section 6, elements of the practice profile include:

- The essential functions of the innovation
- An operationalized definition of the essential function
- Core activities associated with each essential function
- Behaviorally based practice indicators that explain how to do the core activities
- Practice criteria that describe the levels of performance for the core activities

The first step in drafting a practice profile is outlining each of the essential functions of the innovation. Each essential function needs to be operationalized, that is, defined in a way that it can be measured or assessed quantitatively through observation. The operationalized definition for each essential function should be based on the underlying values, principles, and philosophy of the innovation. Each essential function needs associated core activities and behavioral indicators. Additionally, practice criteria that describe varying levels of performance should be developed for each behavioral indicator. For more information about each of the elements of a practice profile, see the descriptions provided in the green boxes in the tool below. Three blank templates are provided for your use.

It may be helpful to refer back to the tools you completed for Section 1 and Section 2 to review your problem, target population, outcome(s) of interest, and theory of change.

*This tool may be used in two ways:*

- 1. Print the following pages and use them as a discussion guide with your team. Write your answers in the space provided.*
- 2. Type your information into the space provided and save to your computer. This will allow you to print the completed document or e-mail it to your team members.*

## PRACTICE PROFILE

Note that you should create as many essential functions and associated indicators as you need. Don't be limited by the number of templates listed here.

<b>Essential Function:</b> (Enter the activities or strategies that practitioners will engage in to address the identified problem.)			
Research Informed Operationalized Definition:			
Associated Core Activities:			
<b>Behavioral Indicator</b>  Enter the measurable and observable behaviors that describe how to perform core activities of the intervention.	<b>Expected</b>  Describe what the innovation will look like when it is delivered as intended.	<b>Developmental</b>  Describe what the innovation looks like when it is being newly practiced and has room for improvement.	<b>Unacceptable</b>  Describe a level of performance where significant improvement is needed.



<b>Essential Function:</b>			
Research Informed Operationalized Definition:			
Associated Core Activities:			
<b>Behavioral Indicator</b>  Enter the measurable and observable behaviors that describe how to perform core activities of the intervention.	<b>Expected</b>  Describe what the innovation will look like when it is delivered as intended.	<b>Developmental</b>  Describe what the innovation looks like when it is being newly practiced and has room for improvement.	<b>Unacceptable</b>  Describe a level of performance where significant improvement is needed.

<b>Essential Function:</b>			
Research Informed Operationalized Definition:			
Associated Core Activities:			
<b>Behavioral Indicator</b>  Enter the measurable and observable behaviors that describe how to perform core activities of the intervention.	<b>Expected</b>  Describe what the innovation will look like when it is delivered as intended.	<b>Developmental</b>  Describe what the innovation looks like when it is being newly practiced and has room for improvement.	<b>Unacceptable</b>  Describe a level of performance where significant improvement is needed.

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## Test Your Understanding

The following questions will help test understanding of the concepts in Section 6. An answer key is provided at the end of this volume.

1. An example of a clearly operationalized innovation is one that:
  - a. Contains loose guiding principles about how the innovation operates
  - b. Requires the implementing organization to further define the essential functions
  - c. Specifically describes how a practitioner should interact with a client during their first meeting
  - d. Promises to address all of the problems identified by the organization
2. A practice profile describes which of the following:
  - a. The data that needs to be collected from the agency leadership
  - b. How an innovation works in everyday practice
  - c. When children in out of home care should be reunified
  - d. How the innovation should be evaluated
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ are strategies the practitioner engages in to address the problem, while \_\_\_\_\_ are the actual observable actions the practitioner will perform.
  - a. Essential functions, core activities
  - b. Essential functions, practice indicators
  - c. Core activities, expected activities
  - d. Developmental indicators, essential functions
4. The element of the practice profile that is measurable and can help guide training and coaching of practitioners is known as what?
  - a. A fidelity assessment
  - b. A coaching service delivery plan
  - c. An essential function
  - d. A behaviorally based practice indicator
5. The statement “Is able to ask appropriate questions that require more than a yes/no response about half the time” is a good example of developmental practice criteria. Why is it important to outline the different levels of practice criteria?
  - a. Because it streamlines data collection methods
  - b. Because it helps to guide practitioners’ activities and support coaching to improve abilities
  - c. To further define the theory of change
  - d. To better understand the theory of change

**6.** Before writing the practice profile, the team should have outlined and reviewed which of the following:

- a. Theory of change and target population
- b. Training manual
- c. Fidelity assessment
- d. Data collection plan

Refer to part of a sample practice profile below to answer questions 7 and 8.

Essential Function: Advocating			
Operationalized Definition: Recognizing individual or group needs, providing intervention on behalf of a client or a client group, communicating with decision makers, and initiating actions to secure or enhance a needed service, resource, or entitlement			
Core Activities:			
Behavioral Indicator	Expected	Developmental	Unacceptable
Seeks fair and respectful treatment of families by public and private service providers (e.g., landlords, schools, and government entities)			

**7.** Which of the choices below best describes the core activities for the essential function of advocating?

- a. Engagement
- b. Practitioner listens actively, encourages honest dialogue, explores possible solutions.
- c. Practitioner identifies and reports organizational and systemic barriers for families obtaining needed services.
- d. Practitioner meets monthly with family and child.

**8.** Which of the following would be a good choice for the developmental indicator?

- a. Inconsistently requests, encourages, and/or influences service providers, schools, government entities, landlords, and courts to treat families fairly and respectfully
- b. Consistently requests, encourages, and/or influences service providers, schools, government entities, landlords, and courts to treat families fairly and respectfully
- c. Does not request, encourage, and/or influence service providers, schools, government entities, landlords, and courts to treat families fairly and respectfully
- d. Accompanies children to and from school each day and is always present whenever the family needs to meet with their landlord or any other government agency



9. A task group is being formed to adapt a practice profile for an innovation being implemented in an organization in collaboration with elementary schools within agency jurisdiction. The innovation involves a change to the way front line practitioners interact with families that come to the attention of the agency and have an elementary school-aged child. The first thing to do is to decide on group membership. Of the following groups of people, which represents essential task group members?
- a. Front line worker, innovation developer, or expert and representative from the elementary school
  - b. CQI team member, organization director, and supervisor
  - c. A task group should consist entirely of front line workers because they will be responsible for carrying out the innovation.
  - d. Supervisor, representative from elementary school, and a representative from juvenile court
10. Practice profile drafts should be circulated multiple times in both the smaller team and the larger team. This ensures:
- a. Alignment with the philosophy of the innovation and larger organization
  - b. Indicators are behaviorally based
  - c. Removal of redundancy
  - d. All of the above
11. A completed practice profile is needed for developing implementation supports. Which is an example of an implementation support that the practice profile addresses?
- a. Fidelity assessment
  - b. Theory of change
  - c. Problem statement
  - d. Sustainability plan

# Develop or Adapt Implementation Supports

The seven chapters in this section provide a detailed look at best practices related to recruiting, selecting training, and coaching practitioners; ensuring fidelity for implementing an innovation; and using data for making the best possible decisions. Introduced in Section 4 of the Development, Implementation, and Assessment Toolkit, these supports are key to developing or adapting evidence-supported innovations. This section focuses on critical activities to help build each of these important supports. It includes a quiz to test understanding of the concepts. The Fidelity Assessment Tool and Fidelity Assessment Protocol Tools are provided to help develop fidelity assessments and protocols.



# Leadership and Stakeholder Supports



## Overview

The six implementation supports discussed in the Guide are commonly

thought of as a continuum and are understood as key to developing innovations or adapting evidence-supported innovations. Together, the chapters in this section provide guidance to plan for critical activities necessary for building each of these important supports.

This chapter identifies the roles and responsibilities of leaders and stakeholders and offers strategies for their engagement in the implementation process.

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter demonstrates how to

- Identify roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and leaders
- Identify activities or strategies for engaging leadership and stakeholders

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives builds foundational knowledge to develop and execute effective strategies for engaging leadership and stakeholder support.

## Importance of Organizational and System Supports

Organizational and system supports create a hospitable environment for implementation.

- Organizational supports such as policies, procedures, structures, culture, and climate influence the success of an innovation or systems change. Evidence shows that when supports are functioning well, organizations are better able to implement innovations.
- System supports such as courts, advocates, sister or partner agencies, contract agencies, and

communities reflect the alignment of the child welfare system to support practitioners who are implementing the innovation.

## Innovation

Practitioners' interactions with the target population are at the center of any successful innovation. Leadership and stakeholders need to ensure that organizational policies, procedures, structures, culture, and climate align with the needs of practitioners so they are successful.

## Developing the Vision

Formal leaders within the agency, particularly those responsible for the operations of the organization, play a critical role in supporting the innovation. These leaders develop and communicate the vision for the innovation and regularly connect the innovation to the agency's mission, vision, and values.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Innovation Implementation Team

The implementation team must guide the innovation and attend to key functions. They should:

- Formulate the big picture by connecting the innovation to the agency's values and culture
- Assess organizational readiness for change and determine the implementation supports and resources to facilitate the change process
- Assist others in overcoming resistance to change by demonstrating empathy and support; involve them in developing strategies for change
- Build and encourage internal champions of the innovation to garner support and mitigate resistance
- Manage the day to day planning and implementation of the innovation and act as a spokesperson for the

innovation within the agency and throughout the community

- Serve as the liaison between the agency leadership and the various teams and ensure a communication feedback loop
- Recognize successes and acknowledge those internal and external to the innovation who contribute to and support the innovation
- Plan for sustainability, including embedding innovation policies and practices for sustainability if the agency leadership changes



## Formal Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

When implementing an innovation, leadership facilitates processes that are important in fostering implementation, including commitment to a supportive work climate, positive employee work attitudes, and productive organizational change. Leadership plays a role at multiple levels and must align the activities across these levels. This alignment reinforces and supports the role of other levels. For example, leadership at the front line (i.e., supervisors) directly supports practitioners implementing the innovation, while mid-level and executive-level leadership support the front-line

leaders (Aarons et. al., 2015). Executive leadership continually aligns the new initiative with daily operations and other priorities within the organization.

Formal leaders within the organization need to:

- Develop and refine the vision ideally in partnership with stakeholders and communicate the vision through a shared language and strategic action plan
- Connect the innovation to the agency's values and culture, and integrate the innovation's guiding principles into the agency's policies, practices, and procedures
- Assess organizational readiness for change and determine the implementation supports and resources needed to facilitate the change process
- Engage and support staff at all levels of the organization, modeling the desired behavior and fostering leadership at all levels of the innovation
- Engage staff by identifying how their areas of responsibility fit within the vision
- Eliminate organizational barriers, such as siloed divisions or inadequate resource allocation, to redesign the workflow in support of the innovation implementation<sup>5</sup>
- Build relationships with other agencies and stakeholders within the community and connect with disparate groups and organizations
- Work with the implementation team to assess the implementation status and determine if and how to restructure implementation teams
- Focus on how the agency will maintain the practice, resources, and supports necessary to achieve the benefits of the service or program and who will continuously monitor practice, resources, and supports to make adjustments as needed
- Manage competing priorities by balancing implementation of the innovation with other issues needing attention

<sup>5</sup> Torrey, W.C., Bond, G.R., McHugo, G.J., and Swain, K. (2012). Evidence-based practice implementation in community mental health settings: the relative importance of key domains of implementation activity. *Admin Policy Mental Health*, 39(5), 353-64.



- Cultivate an organizational environment that promotes continuous quality improvement, open discussion, and effective problem-solving. This requires a demonstrated commitment to collecting, analyzing, sharing, and using data for decision-making.
- Demonstrate commitment to sustaining the innovation and the implementation capacity that was built by being actively involved and visible in all stages of implementation. To produce positive outcomes, executive-level support for the innovation is needed throughout the ongoing implementation efforts.<sup>6</sup> For example, executive leadership can demonstrate commitment by visibly recognizing, rewarding, and appreciating the team.

## Strategies for Engaging Leadership

Because of leadership's role in fostering implementation, implementation teams should consider how best to engage leaders in the implementation process in a way that gains their buy-in and support. The following strategies can be useful for engaging leaders, while also providing a means for leadership to convey the importance of the implementation efforts:<sup>7</sup>

- **Encourage leaders to use feedback processes to share fidelity data information.** Organizational leaders can include fidelity measures in executive team meeting discussions and thereby send the message that they are serious about efforts to improve the implementation process.
- **Include a message from leadership in the agency newsletter** as a means of sharing their enthusiasm for the benefits of the particular intervention. They can also share success stories to recognize exemplary work and inspire staff.

- **Invite leaders to attend training sessions with their employees.** In addition to providing leaders the opportunity to experience the training and become more knowledgeable about the intervention, this also has the symbolic effect of demonstrating the importance of training.
- **Encourage leaders to participate in the coaching process.** In some organizations, leaders may have their own clients. Some opportunities for teaching and coaching will occur naturally as staff approach leaders with questions; however, allocating time for leaders to specifically discuss implementation with staff who are delivering the innovation can be a powerful tool to promote engagement and buy-in at all levels of the organization.
- **Urge leaders to share their experiences in delivering the innovation.** Sharing experiences, including challenges, with service delivery allows leaders to serve as a direct role model.



## Roles of Stakeholders

Successful innovations need buy-in from critical stakeholders, including community leadership, organizational staff, and families who receive services.

<sup>6</sup> Panzano, P. C., Seffrin, B., Chaney-Jones, S., Roth, D., Crane-Ross, D., Massatti, R., et al. (2004). The innovation diffusion and adoption research project (IDARP). In D. Roth & W. Lutz (Eds.), *New Research in Mental Health*, 16, 78-89. Columbus, OH: Ohio Department of Mental Health Office of Program Evaluation and Research.

<sup>7</sup> Aarons, G. A., Faraheen, L. R., Ehrhart, M. G., & Sklar, M. (2014). Aligning leadership across systems and organizations to develop strategic climate for evidence-based practice implementation. *Annual review of public health*, 35, 255. Retrieved from (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4348088/>).

Stakeholders:

- Raise important concerns that bring different perspectives to the innovation and provide a more complete view of the problem. These perspectives also strengthen planning for implementation by identifying potential barriers.
  - Identify ways their organization, community, or group can assist in the effort to create a hospitable environment. Stakeholders participate in reviews of and discussions about relevant innovations and implementation data, and participate in action planning to strengthen the implementation of the innovation. They provide valuable input on how the innovation and relevant messages are received.
- Demonstrate how the innovation aligns with the agency's broader mission and the values of the community and system.
  - Use champions to advocate on behalf of the innovation.
  - Ensure stakeholders have meaningful implementation work and reinforce the value of their contribution with active feedback loops.

## Strategies for Engaging Stakeholder Support

Innovations can be viewed less favorably when they are not responsive to the community. The following strategies for engaging stakeholders should be considered and adopted by implementation teams:

- Provide information about the need and identified problem, demonstrating the rationale for the innovation as well as the benefit to the target population.



# Recruiting and Selecting a Competent and Confident Staff



## Overview

Staff recruitment and selection, training, and coaching are the core components that ensure a competent and confident staff. This chapter provides an overview of the steps required to recruit and select a competent workforce.

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter provides information about

- Implementation best practices to ensure a process for recruiting and selecting a competent and confident staff
- The necessary steps to recruit and select staff members who will be responsible for implementing the innovation

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives will build foundational knowledge to develop and execute effective strategies for staff recruitment.

## Staff Recruitment

Staff recruitment and selection is the first critical step in the process of building a competent child welfare workforce, one that has the passion, knowledge, skills, and abilities to implement an innovation as intended to benefit the target population. Research demonstrates that clearly defined competencies, position expectations, and realistic behavioral exercises during the recruitment and selection process can reduce staff turnover, which has been shown to negatively affect child outcomes (Zlotnik, Strand, & Anderson, 2009; Faller et al., 2009).<sup>8</sup> High-performing organizations generally abide by six common principles for recruiting and selecting staff.

## 1: Identify Team Responsible for Recruitment and Selection

The key people and team that will be responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff should comprise individuals who understand:

- The desired outcomes of the innovation
- Staff values, beliefs, and competencies that will be needed
- The organization's training and coaching infrastructure that will support the innovation
- The organization's continuous quality improvement infrastructure

A team approach that takes advantage of strengths across the organization will help to ensure a quality process and, ultimately, the creation of a well-qualified workforce.

## Key Responsibilities of the Recruitment and Selection Team

The team will need the authority to make decisions and be held accountable for the development and implementation of the staff recruitment and selection processes. Some of the key responsibilities of this team include:

- Ensuring that the processes are timely and occurring with a high level of quality and satisfaction
- Identifying the values, skills, and abilities that are needed for delivering the innovation
- Preparing materials that define the job, such as descriptions, announcements, and other published materials

<sup>8</sup> Zlotnik, J. L., Strand, V. C., and Anderson, G. R. (2009). Introduction: achieving positive outcomes for children and families: recruiting and retaining a competent child welfare workforce. *Child Welfare*, 88 (5), 7 – 21. Faller, K. C., Masternak, M., Grinnell-Davis, C., Grabarek, M., Siefert, J., and Bernatovicz, F. (2009). Realistic job previews in child welfare: state of innovation and practice. *Child Welfare*, 88 (5), 23 – 47.

- Ensuring that job descriptions explain the accountability and expectations for the innovation
- Asking candidates to participate in an interview process, even when employees internal to the organization will be interviewed and selected for delivering the innovation
- Ensuring the use of a standardized interview protocol and selection criteria to select staff for identified positions
- Using data regularly to evaluate and improve efforts of the recruitment and selection team

## 2: Articulate Recruitment Strategy

A recruitment strategy can build in opportunities for candidates to apply for or express an interest in certain positions or job opportunities.

### Realistic Job Description Helps With Selection

Based on the description, candidates should be able to assess whether they are interested in the job and if the position would be a good fit for them. This description is important when recruiting candidates, regardless of whether all staff will be involved in the innovation. If an organization is unionized, engaging union leadership at this juncture may be necessary to ensure that the recruitment and selection process is open and seen as fair and equitable to everyone involved.

## 3: Create a Supportive Environment

Organizations that are able to consistently hire the right staff have taken steps to create a supportive and hospitable environment for the innovation. These organizations understand the systemic internal and external barriers that exist and address them as a means to create an improved work environment. These barriers may be related to issues such as human resources, communication, or funding.

To create a supportive and hospitable environment, it is important to identify the unique system barriers that

exist within an organization and effectively address them. Focus groups, surveys, and exit interviews with staff, as well as feedback from the target population, effectively identify system barriers.

### Possible Barriers to Recruiting Top Candidates

Data might indicate that more funding is necessary to support the implementation of an innovation. Or it might indicate that an organization is using antiquated policies and guidelines that are limiting the pool of potential candidates. It might be time to reassess how to bring the overall values of the organization to life in the everyday work environment.

Data might also indicate that a higher, more competitive salary structure for the position is needed to attract top candidates. Whatever the case, gathering data to identify the systemic barriers and address these barriers helps to recruit and select a competent and confident staff for the innovation.

## 4: Establish Clear Selection Criteria

Clear selection criteria should be based on qualities that can be linked to innovation success and used consistently in selecting staff. Clearly defined expectations related to academic qualifications, experience, and other prerequisites help when evaluating and selecting the right staff members.

Successful organizations study the qualities of practitioners who achieve desired results and use what they learn to establish relevant selection criteria. These data may not be available initially, but as implementation of the innovation progresses, implementation teams should continuously collect and use data to improve recruitment strategies and selection criteria.

### Select for Less Tangible Characteristics

It is also advisable to select for the less tangible, more inherent characteristics that are required to do the

innovation well and as intended. These characteristics are based on the underlying values and beliefs associated with the theory of change.

Less tangible staff selection criteria may include some of the following:

- Appreciation of family involvement
- A demonstrated commitment to social justice
- A willingness to intervene
- A willingness to learn and develop
- Common sense
- Demonstrated resiliency
- Belief in his or her ability to succeed
- Belief in the broader mission of the organization
- A healthy and positive way of living

## 5: Use a Well-Defined Interview Protocol

Use a well-defined interview protocol to help ensure mutual selection, full disclosure, and interaction during the interview process. A well-defined interview protocol can also help ensure that critical components of an interview process are in place and that criteria for selection can best be assessed.

Components of an interview protocol include:

- The individuals responsible for conducting interviews understand the skills and abilities that are needed and are able to accurately assess candidates.
- Interviewers effectively explain what the new job will entail and recognize that the reality of the job must match the information candidates are given about the job.
- Interviews are structured to enable interviewers to assess the skills of a candidate through some type of direct observation.
- Candidates are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate how they might practice the

innovation, respond to feedback, and change their behavior. This might happen, for example, through role plays or behavioral vignettes.

- Candidates from within the organization are allowed to opt out of the interview process and return to their previous positions without reprisal.

The appendix at the end of this volume includes examples of interview questions and role playing scenarios from a child welfare agency.

## 6: Use Data To Continuously Improve Recruitment Strategy

Multiple data sources can be used to analyze the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection processes and inform improvement efforts. Data sources might include immediate feedback from training and longer-term feedback from fidelity assessments and exit interviews. Some organizations may have data regarding staff turnover. The opinions of administrators, coaches, and other stakeholders can also be used to inform this process. Examples of how to use data to inform recruitment efforts include:

- Using data to understand where candidates are most needed
- Gathering data on practitioners who are effective and whose efforts can be linked to improved outcomes to develop criteria for selection

## Considerations for Evaluation

If an innovation is under evaluation or scheduled for evaluation in the near future, modifications to staff recruitment and selection processes may be necessary. For example, some evaluation designs will use a random assignment process to understand the experiences of the target population in a control group compared to those in a treatment group. If this is the case, limitations related to selection of staff who will be responsible for the implementation of an innovation may result. Early and ongoing engagement with identified evaluator(s) will help facilitate the evaluation process.



# Training to Build Knowledge and Skills



## Overview

For agencies that have already recruited and selected staff or are just getting

started, this chapter provides an overview of the specific activities and steps related to training staff who will be responsible for implementing the innovation.

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter explains

- The value of training in the implementation of an innovation
- The focus and major goals of staff training
- The components of effective training
- The data that will be collected to inform and improve training

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives will build foundational knowledge to develop and execute effective training strategies.

## Strategies for Preparing for a New Way of Work

Introducing a way of work that requires learning new skills may stretch practitioners in challenging ways. Without careful attention to how they learn new skills and transfer them consistently in their work with children and families, practitioners may slip back into old ways of practice. The environment in which this new way of work takes place is as important as the quality of the training and coaching that helps practitioners acquire and use new skills. Some strategies for preparing practitioners for this new way of work include:

- Assurance from agency leadership and the implementation team that the new way of work is essential to achieving agency goals

- Clear, concise messages explaining why and how the innovation is beneficial not only to children and families, but to practitioners as well
- Opportunities for internal and external innovation champions to communicate early successes. Practitioners who were trained early in the process are particularly effective, as are external stakeholders who have experienced the success.

## Training and Coaching

Training is designed to help practitioners change their behavior by introducing them to a new set of skills. After practitioners have been introduced to the new skills, they need opportunities to apply and practice them. These opportunities are most effectively accomplished with the help of a coach (see the next chapter in this section, Coaching to Build Knowledge and Skills, for more information). Training and coaching must be provided as a continuous set of activities, because one without the other is not as effective in the transfer of learning. The table on the next page, from a meta-analysis of training and coaching data, shows that even very good training that included demonstration, practice, and feedback resulted in only 5% of teachers using the new skills in the classroom.<sup>9</sup>

## Goals of Staff Training

The four goals of training are:

- Impart knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the innovation.
- Convey information about the history, theory, philosophy, and rationales for the innovation components and practices.

<sup>9</sup> Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (2002). Designing training and peer coaching: our needs for learning. In B. Joyce & B. Showers. *Student Achievement Through Staff Development*, 3rd Edition. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

**Table: Meta-Analysis of Training and Coaching Data**

	<b>OUTCOMES</b> % of Participants Who Acquire New Knowledge, Demonstrate New Skills in a Training Setting, and Use New Skills in the Classroom		
<b>Training Components</b>	Knowledge	Skill Demonstration in Training	Use in the Classroom Setting
<b>Theory and Discussion</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>...+Demonstration in Training</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>...+Practice &amp; Feedback in Training</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>...+Coaching in Classroom</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>

Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (2002).

- Provide demonstrations of essential functions and practices.
- Provide opportunities for practitioners to practice new skills and receive feedback on performance.

## Design and Delivery of Training

The design and delivery of training and coaching depend on the decision to either implement an existing innovation or develop a new one. For an existing innovation, a training curriculum and coaching plan likely exist. The developer of the innovation or an expert in the innovation can help make necessary adjustments to the design and delivery of the training and coaching based on adaptations being made to the innovation. When developing an innovation rather than adapting one that already exists, drafting a practice profile to guide the training is the first step. (See Section 6: Develop or Adapt the Innovation for more information on drafting a practice profile.)

Whether implementing an evidence-supported innovation or a developmental practice, staff will need to learn new ways of work. They must be able to learn the skills and capacities of the essential functions of the innovation, as well as when, where, how, and with whom to use (and not to use) practice skills and innovation techniques.

The training of staff may be provided by an expert in, or developer of, the innovation if one is available.

If developing an innovation, training and preparation should be provided by trainers who are knowledgeable about the innovation.

The following three implementation best practices should be included in an approach to staff training.

### One: Training Should Be Knowledge- and Skill-Based

Training introduces the essential functions of the practice; provides a rationale for implementing a new practice; and conveys the history, theory of change, philosophical underpinnings, and the mission and values of the practice.

Effective training will:

- Teach necessary innovation or practice skills
- Use demonstrations of innovation-related skills
- Allow practitioners opportunities to develop and practice new skills through practice exercises and to receive feedback on performance
- Occur in an environment of structure, support, and accountability



#### Example: Role Play

Practitioners may participate in role plays where they demonstrate a skill required for the innovation, such as engagement or motivational

interviewing. This role play may be recorded, enabling the trainer to provide feedback on the practitioner's strengths and cite specific observations from the exercise. Feedback might include highlighting the body language the practitioner uses to encourage engagement or provide an opportunity to ask a clarifying question about what he or she missed.

## Two: Train Supervisors First

Supervisors should receive training first, before practitioners, so they can be active participants in the training of their staff and encourage them to develop the required skills and perform effectively. Agency leadership, the implementation team, and the supervisor should clearly communicate to staff the expectations for their participation in training and coaching. This should include clarifying how the knowledge and skills practitioners learn in training are expected to be used in their work with children and families and acknowledging the support and reinforcement practitioners will receive from supervisors and leadership.



### Supervisor Involvement: Washoe County Example

One of the PII Grantees, Washoe County Department of Social Services, contracted with two expert consultants to develop training curricula, training materials, protocols, and manuals for pre- and in-service training for staff and community service providers. Training sessions were scheduled prior to the implementation of the innovation, with supervisors receiving training first so they could become active participants and experts in the training of staff. During the training sessions, when staff was instructed to demonstrate a skill in a role play, the supervisors observed and provided feedback on skill mastery. Supervisors also received training to develop the skills and capacity to provide case consultation and coaching related to practice and decision-making.

## Three: Use Data for Continuous Improvement

Learning objectives and competencies of the training should be directly connected to fidelity assessments and fidelity criteria (see Fidelity Assessment Chapters 5 and 6 in this section for more information). Competency exams or pre- and-post tests of knowledge and skill provide data regarding areas of strength and areas that need improvement. This information can be shared with trainers, coaches, and supervisors to target coaching and supervision activities and can also be used to continually improve training methods such as the training schedule, content, training processes and qualifications of the trainer. Training evaluations will provide information on the participants' satisfaction and perception of training effectiveness in preparing them for delivering the innovation as intended.

## Questions to Consider

In addition to the three training best practices, the following questions are considerations when deciding how to approach training staff to deliver the innovation.

- Who will develop the training, for example, innovation developers or agency training staff?
- What are the training methodologies that will be used, for example, self-directed videos or readings; or group-based session via web, in person, or conference calls?
- What training materials will need to be developed, purchased, or adapted?
- How many staff will need to be trained to deliver the innovation?
- How will staff be prepared to approach training with the intent to learn skills and transfer them to their work with children and families?
- Who will serve as trainers? Are they the innovation developers or is a Training of Trainers (TOT) needed?
- Who will be responsible for developing the training schedule and arranging training space?

- How will attendance be tracked?
- How will training be evaluated?
- How will transfer of learning be evaluated?
- What data will be used to inform and plan adjustments for training?

## Collecting Training-Related Data

Training is about shaping the behavior the practitioner exhibits on the job. Effective training should translate to improved quality of work, higher productivity, reduction in turnover, better use of resources, improved quality of work life, higher worker morale, greater job satisfaction, and improved outcomes for the target population. This transfer of learning is dependent on training and workplace factors. Positive results of a training program (such as those mentioned above) may not be evident immediately, but continuously collecting training-related data is important to show progress over time. Common areas of data collection include:

- Number of people trained – For budgeting and logistical purposes, it is important to capture the number of people trained, either in traditional in-person settings or in virtual or online self-directed learning, such as computer-based training and webinars. Capturing the number of sessions held is necessary to understand the effort required to train the workforce.
- Training location, dates, and times – Data on location, dates, and times of training determine the logistical convenience for participants in relation to their home or office, work schedule, and travel costs associated with training, including travel reimbursement, meals, and lodging.
- Duration of training – Data on the duration of training should be collected to determine the amount of time training takes from the employee's job duties.
- Continuing education credits – Frequently, child welfare professionals face employer expectations or licensure requirements to participate in training to earn Continuing Education Credits and/or training hours. If these are available as a result of the training program, collecting this data is recommended.
- Staff messaging – Training is one piece in the process of improving performance and achieving outcomes, so what happens before and after training is as important as the training itself. Messaging this to the staff before the training begins sets expectations that the training will be relevant and useful to their work and that they are expected to apply the knowledge and skills on the job after the training ends. Therefore, collecting data that informs how this process is occurring and whether there are gaps that need to be addressed is critical to understanding the effectiveness of training.
- Trainer evaluations – Evaluations provide data about the quality of the training and the capacity of the trainer to deliver the material in a satisfactory and consistent manner.
- Training evaluations – Training evaluations completed at the end of the session generally capture reactions to the training, as well as practitioner attitudes and levels of motivation to apply the training on the job. Evaluations generally measure whether the training included activities that are useful to the practitioner, and if the training design and methodology resulted in the practitioner's enhanced capacity to engage in behaviors that achieve the desired results.
- Participant evaluations/pre- and post-tests – Data regarding whether the participants learned the desired knowledge and skills identified in the learning objectives and competencies should also be collected. This level of information may be embedded in the training itself, requiring participants to demonstrate skills measured through competency exams such as pre- and post-tests.

# Coaching to Build Knowledge and Skills



## Overview<sup>10</sup>

This chapter focuses on coaching components, coaching methods, considerations for developing a coaching plan, and questions about coaching to consider when implementing an innovation. Training and coaching are most effective when coaching is used to reinforce in practice what practitioners were trained to do.

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter describes

- The focus and major goals of coaching when implementing an innovation
- The value of coaching when implementing an innovation
- Coaching strategies for increasing competence of staff delivering the innovation
- Coaching strategies for building confidence of staff delivering the innovation
- The criteria for providing feedback through coaching
- The focus and methods that will make up the coaching service delivery plan
- The data that will be collected to inform and improve coaching

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives will build foundational knowledge to develop and execute effective coaching strategies.



## Key Terms

**Coaching** – “A structured process in which a coach uses specific strategies to help learners improve their performance on the job and

to contribute to improved agency practice and outcomes”<sup>11</sup>

**Coaching service delivery plan** – A strategy to operationalize the essential functions of the coach and to detail the mutual responsibilities of the coach and the practitioner as partners in a quality improvement effort to strengthen coaching outcomes

## Coaching for Competence

Why coaching for competence matters:

- Research and experience show that training and/or dissemination of information by itself is insufficient to achieve effective implementation.
- At the time of hire, practitioners do not always have the skills and abilities needed to deliver the innovation as intended.
- Policies, procedures, and guidelines alone are insufficient to achieve effective implementation.

## Goals of Staff Coaching

The three goals of coaching for competence are to:

- Increase competence by ensuring that practitioners learn skills and competencies.
- Build confidence in the practitioners’ professional judgment and conceptual understanding of their roles in the delivery of the innovation.
- Provide feedback to identify, articulate, and resolve challenges experienced by practitioners as the skills and competencies are developing.

<sup>10</sup> Some of the content in this chapter is based on the work of the National Implementation Research Network.

<sup>11</sup> National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement. (2012, Summer). Coaching in child welfare. *Child Welfare Matters*. Retrieved from <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/rcpdfs/cwmatters12.pdf>



## Components of Coaching

Innovation developers often outline the role of and approach to coaching in their innovation manuals. If a coaching plan is not already developed, or if a new innovation is being developed, three common coaching components include:

- Supporting the development of innovation competencies
- Encouraging collaborative problem solving among group or unit members to improve and expand innovation knowledge and skills
- Helping participants reflect on the thinking and behavior related to their innovation role and functions

## Coaching Models

Two different coaching models may be used:

- Supervisors provide coaching to their staff through regularly scheduled supervision; or
- Dedicated practice coaches provide coaching to the practitioner and then communicate with the practitioner and his or her supervisor regarding progress toward competency and mastery of the essential functions of the innovation.

## Coaching Activities

Coaching activities typically include:

- Case reviews
- Review of data and documentation (regarding, for example, fidelity or stakeholder feedback )

- Direct observation
- Individual and group reflective coaching

## Considerations for Developing a Coaching Model

Coaching may take place on a scheduled and/or as-needed basis and generally consists of focused support to clarify and achieve well-defined activities and tasks within the practitioner's role. Decisions include whether coaching will be done one-on-one, in groups, or both, and who will provide the coaching. When implementing existing innovations, the developer may initially coach the supervisor, building the capacity of the supervisor until he or she can assume coaching responsibilities with staff.

### Individual Coaching

Individual coaching provides deliberate support to help staff assimilate training, integrate new skills, and improve practice. If supervisors are providing the coaching, they should spend time specifically dedicated to individual coaching, in addition to their regular supervisory tasks.

### Group Coaching

Group coaching should be interactive and reflective, emphasizing clarity and synthesis of putting into practice material from training. In group-based coaching, the coach facilitates group agreement regarding confidentiality and creating a safe culture for working together, peer-to-peer feedback, and practitioner identification of issues.

**Table:** Coaching Model Benefits and Challenges

Benefits		Challenges
Supervisors as Coaches	Are aware of practitioners' caseloads and schedules and can determine when coaching should be scheduled and which cases are most appropriate	Must balance coaching with required administrative supervision
Dedicated Practice Coaches	Have expertise with the innovation and time allotted to the coaching function	Present potential role confusion among practitioner, coach, and supervisor regarding case decision-making



## Strategies to Increase Competence

Coaches in group-based and individual coaching sessions build knowledge and understanding for each practitioner. Strategies they might use include:

- Recognizing contributions and learning points made by practitioners
- Accessing past successes experienced by practitioners
- Connecting practitioners' strengths with challenges
- Providing feedback
- Instilling hope
- Accessing resilience
- Assessing whether an individual builds confidence internally or externally, then applying strategies to match that individual's preference

### Feedback

Coaches should model desired behavior, then allow the practitioner to practice; they provide written and verbal feedback to maintain focus during the coaching session.

### Using Coaching Data

Coaching data and feedback loops inform and improve implementation supports and can be used to:

- Identify, report, and resolve systemic challenges to implementation

- Individualize and tailor coaching sessions with staff to ensure adherence to the innovation and assist with ongoing skill development and performance enhancement
- Produce a more supportive environment for implementation

### Criteria for Providing Effective Feedback

Coaches provide both positive and developmental feedback. Positive feedback involves telling practitioners what they did well and why it was effective. Providing positive feedback encourages practitioners to repeat good performance. This is most effective when the coach's feedback is:

- **Specific** – Feedback must reflect what was accomplished in terms that are precise and measurable.
- **Timely** – Praise for the practitioner's action (and positive results) is given as soon as possible after it happens. Timely feedback seems the most sincere, as if the action were so impressive the coach had to tell the practitioner right away.
- **Balanced** – Over time, coaches should balance positive feedback with developmental feedback. If all the feedback is positive, coaches will miss opportunities to help the practitioner strive for higher goals.

Developmental feedback involves letting practitioners know when they could have done something differently. Effective developmental feedback should include an alternative action plan (what the practitioner might have said or done instead) and the expected, enhanced result (why the alternative action might be more effective).

## Coaching Service Delivery Plan

Developing a coaching service delivery plan allows the implementation team to:

- Define how coaching will take place in relation to training and fidelity assessment.

- Operationalize the essential functions of the coach to help improve coaching outcomes such as fidelity, competence, and confidence that will promote staff retention and sustainability of the innovation.
- Detail the mutual responsibilities of the coach and the practitioner to partner in a quality improvement effort.
- Specify the coaching elements that will promote quality service delivery, support for the practitioner, and serve as the basis for further professional development.

The appendix at the end of this volume includes examples of coaching service delivery plans from child welfare agencies.

## Questions for Developing a Coaching Service Delivery Plan

The following questions are intended to assist in developing a coaching service delivery plan that is feasible for implementation of an innovation. When developing the coaching service delivery plan consider:

### Coaching Model

- Who will be accountable for developing a structure and processes for coaches?
- Does the coaching position have a description that includes coaching roles and responsibilities?
- Do coaches have adequate knowledge and skills with the innovation to help practitioners develop confidence and competence in delivering the innovation's essential functions?

## Supports for Coaches

- If developing an innovation, has a plan been developed for supporting novice coaches, especially around innovation knowledge?
- Does the existing innovation include qualified coaches?

If so, is it preferable to develop the organization's coaching capacity?

Is there a plan to develop this capacity?

- What supports are in place to develop skills and abilities of coaches?
- Is the coaching position a dedicated position(s) based on an optimal ratio of coaches to practitioners?
- Is clearly identified funding available for the position(s)?

## Coaches and Supervisors

- If coaching is provided by someone other than the supervisor, how do coaches and supervisors communicate?
- Who coaches the supervisors?

## Feedback

- Do coaches use multiple sources of information for feedback to those being coached? This includes direct observation (e.g., in person, video, or audio), written (e.g., case notes, record reviews), and other service delivery data.
- Is it possible to look at fidelity by practitioner and therefore by coach?

# Fidelity Assessment–Measure Development



## Overview<sup>12</sup>

After practitioners have been trained and coaching is in place, teams can begin an important part of implementing an innovation, which is to verify that practitioners are delivering the innovation consistently and as intended (i.e., with fidelity to the original design). This chapter explains how to create a process to assess the fidelity of an innovation and provides a tool to assist implementation teams in the development of a fidelity assessment.

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter describes

- What a fidelity assessment is
- How to create a fidelity assessment
- How to identify fidelity measures to assess
- How to identify data sources of the fidelity measures

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives will build foundational knowledge to develop fidelity measures, instruments, and processes for measuring fidelity.



## Key Terms

**Adherence** – Measures the extent to which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered

**Competence** – Measures the quality with which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered

## Why Create a Fidelity Assessment?

A fidelity assessment is designed to measure whether practitioners are performing the innovation as intended.

It helps to improve implementation of the innovation by identifying areas in which practitioners need additional support (such as coaching or training). A fidelity assessment should be viewed as a helpful tool for organizational and implementation support improvement, not as a way to punish a practitioner. A fidelity assessment is also used to link the implementation of the innovation with future outcomes. Without a fidelity assessment, an implementation team cannot determine whether the innovation was effective, or if it was even implemented.

## Does a Fidelity Assessment Already Exist?

For an innovation with an existing evidence base, a usable fidelity assessment may have already been created. Using an existing fidelity assessment, however, may require adjustments to make it a better fit for the innovation. If developing a new innovation, a fidelity assessment process will need to be created.

## Assessment Provides Feedback About Practitioners Progress

The fidelity assessment is designed to assess the use of skills that are taught in training and reinforced and expanded during coaching. This assessment provides information to the implementation team regarding how well practitioner training, coaching, recruitment, and selection are progressing. These data can also help to identify common strengths and challenges across practitioners that may point to areas for adjustment within the implementation support structure, including the organization as a whole. For example, if results

<sup>12</sup> Material in this chapter is adapted from the work of the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN).

from the fidelity assessment indicate that the majority of practitioners are experiencing trouble with a certain area of the innovation, the organization might consider scheduling an extra training to address the trouble area.

## Guiding Principles

Four guiding principles should be emphasized when creating a fidelity assessment:

- A well-defined innovation must include a practice profile or some other means of outlining the essential functions. The fidelity assessment is created from the practice profile.
- An assessment must be easily administered and maintained in an organizational setting.
- The purpose of the fidelity assessment is to assess whether the innovation is being delivered as intended.
- The results of the fidelity assessment should be used to strengthen implementation supports that improve practice.

## A Fidelity Assessment Takes Time To Develop

It takes time to develop a fidelity assessment that accurately and efficiently measures the presence of the innovation's essential functions and provides useful information for improving implementation supports. A fidelity assessment builds on the practice profile (see Section 6: Develop or Adapt the Innovation) and should be developed by a team familiar with the innovation. Multiple rounds of revisions and testing are invaluable for creating a solid fidelity assessment draft.

## Adherence and Competence

A fidelity assessment measures two types of information: 1) the presence of the essential functions of the innovation as outlined in the practice profile; and 2) how well the essential functions are being delivered. These two concepts are known as adherence and

competence. **Adherence** measures the extent to which the essential functions are delivered. Without measuring the presence of the essential functions, there is no way to know if the innovation was delivered as intended. **Competence** measures the quality, or how well, the essential functions were delivered.

## Fidelity Assessments Link to Outcomes

While fidelity assessments are essential for implementation, they are also crucial for evaluation considerations. The information gathered through fidelity assessments can help identify the “active ingredients” of the innovation, as well as their relationship to outcomes. If outcomes are improving and the fidelity assessment indicates that the innovation is being delivered as intended, the team can assume a link between the innovation and improved outcomes for the target population. If the assessment shows that the innovation is not being delivered as intended, implementation teams cannot determine whether outcomes are a result of ineffective implementation or an ineffective innovation.

## A Fidelity Assessment Is Created From a Practice Profile

Because the fidelity assessment is created from the practice profile, it is important for the practice profile to be well-defined and complete before the fidelity assessment is developed. The practice profile should go through multiple rounds of revisions before it is used as the basis of the assessment.

An innovation may comprise more than one practice profile, if multiple types of practitioners are engaged in the innovation. Regardless of the number of practice profiles, the innovation requires all types of practitioners to function as a whole. Therefore, the fidelity assessment must assess for all the essential functions of the innovation, regardless of who is responsible for delivering them. This may result in the development of multiple fidelity assessments.



Essential Function (strategies or activities that practitioners will engage in to address the identified problem):			
Research Informed Operationalized Definition:			
Associated Core Activities:			
Behavioral Indicator	Expected	Developmental	Unacceptable

### Base on Expected Behavioral Indicator

The fidelity assessment is crafted initially by using the “Expected” column of the practice profile (see table above). This column outlines the specific behavioral indicators for each of the essential functions. The Fidelity Assessment Tool at the end of this chapter includes a blank matrix to assist in drafting a fidelity measure.

### Collect Measurement Data

A small group or team brainstorms possible measures that show whether an activity is being conducted (adherence) and identifies a potential data source for evidence of adherence. Possible data sources include:

- Observation
- A document or case review
- Surveys
- Checklists

After identifying ways to tell that the activity is being performed, the same group brainstorms ways to show the activity is being done well (competence) and ways to determine a potential data source for evidence of competence.

Creating a fidelity assessment using the Fidelity Assessment Tool at the end of this chapter involves identifying both adherence and competence measures.



### Fidelity Assessment Example

The example below documents an essential function that includes a caseworker notifying a family in advance of visits. By engaging in this activity, the caseworker would provide the family with a schedule of visits. A data source in this instance would be the case notes indicating that the family was given this schedule. A measure that this activity was happening well would be a discussion between the caseworker and the family about the best time to schedule a visit. The case notes of the conversation and a client engagement survey could serve as data sources.

Creating a practice profile matrix is the first step in building a fidelity assessment. Further guidance

Essential Function: Effectively joins with family and community to establish common goals concerning child safety, wellbeing, and permanency				
	FIDELITY ASSESSMENT			
Expected Implementation	Measure that activity is happening	Potential Data Source	Measure that activity is happening well (Competence)	Potential Data Source
Notifies family in advance of visits. Drop-in visits are used sparingly and only with specific purpose that is clearly documented in the case record.	Documentation of scheduling visits	Case notes Schedule	Family is included in the scheduling of visits at times that work for them	Case notes Client engagement survey

on how to turn this list of indicators into a fidelity assessment will be covered in Chapter 7.6: Fidelity Assessment–Process Development. The appendix at the end of this volume provides an example of a child welfare agency fidelity assessment.

## Assess the Most Important Indicators

Adherence and competence measures may or may not be necessary for every indicator within each essential function, but the goal is to identify at least one or two of the most important and relevant indicators for each essential function. The theory of change and relevant research help to determine which indicators to include. It is useful to include measures that assess the delivery of the innovation as well as the receipt of these services.

Measures for delivery of services might include number of home visits, duration of visits, and the completion of certain practitioner-initiated engagement activities.

Measures for receipt of services might include family attends meeting, family signs service agreement, family reports caseworker was respectful and empathic with family members.

## Review Drafted Measures

Reviewing the drafted measures and making sure they are relevant, operational, and represent the essential functions of the innovation helps to ensure the selection of appropriate measures. Referring to the theory of change helps to identify the most relevant measures, and using research gathered while creating the practice profile guides decisions.

## Create a Process for Using the Assessment and Collecting Results

The next step is to circulate the measures for review. Those who created the measures as well as others familiar with the innovation should provide final feedback or approval. Also including people not involved in the process of identifying and developing the measures brings a “fresh eye” to the review. After everyone is satisfied with the measures, it is time to create a process for using the fidelity assessment and collecting the resulting data.



Outlining a uniform approach to the fidelity assessment process ensures that it is done in a similar manner across practitioners, and everyone involved knows what is happening and why they are participating in the process. An important step in this process is making sure both the fidelity assessment

and developed systems of rules and procedures (also known as protocols) are feasible to implement and carry out in the organization. This topic is covered in more detail in Chapter 7.6: Fidelity Assessment-Process Development.



## Fidelity Assessment Tool

The Fidelity Assessment Tool on the following pages assists in building a fidelity assessment using the essential functions outlined in the practice profile. Guidance and tools for developing a fidelity assessment protocol can be found in Chapter 7.6.

# FIDELITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

FROM THE GUIDE TO DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND ASSESSING AN INNOVATION, VOLUME 3

The tool below will help you begin to create your fidelity assessment. A fidelity assessment is designed to measure whether the practitioners are performing the innovation as intended. It is created from the innovation's practice profile and should be developed by people who are familiar with the innovation. The assessment should assess for all of the innovation's essential functions and is based on the Expected column of the practice profile. Basic steps to follow in creating a fidelity assessment are listed below.

In the top row, fill in each of the essential functions for your innovation (as developed in your practice profile). If your innovation has more essential functions than space allows below, continue the process in another document. Enter the expected behaviors for the essential function in the first column.

Brainstorm possible measures for adherence and a potential data source for evidence of adherence for each of the expected behaviors.

Brainstorm possible measures for competence and a potential data source for evidence of competence for each of the expected behaviors.

As an implementation team, assess and decide which of behavioral indicators are most important for that essential function.

Review drafted measures and circulate to a larger team familiar with the innovation.

Keep in mind that it may take multiple rounds of revisions to create the assessment. After completing this tool, please move to Chapter 7.6: Fidelity Assessment-Process Development to finish developing the fidelity assessment and to create protocols for administering it.

*This tool may be used in two ways:*

- 1. Print the following pages and use them as a discussion guide with your team. Write your answers in the space provided.*
- 2. Type your information into the space provided and save to your computer. This will allow you to print the completed document or e-mail it to your team members.*

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTION #1

Essential Function:				
Expected Implementation Fill in the behaviors below from the practice profile work completed in Section 6.	Adherence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening. Measures the extent to which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential adherence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.	Competence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening well. Measures the quality with which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential competence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.
Expected behavioral indicator #1				
Expected behavioral indicator #2				
Expected behavioral indicator #3				
Expected behavioral indicator #4				



## ESSENTIAL FUNCTION #2

Essential Function:				
Expected Implementation Fill in the behaviors below from the practice profile work completed in Section 6.	Adherence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening. Measures the extent to which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential adherence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.	Competence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening well. Measures the quality with which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential competence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.
Expected behavioral indicator #1				
Expected behavioral indicator #2				
Expected behavioral indicator #3				
Expected behavioral indicator #4				

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTION #3

Essential Function:				
Expected Implementation Fill in the behaviors below from the practice profile work completed in Section 6.	Adherence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening. Measures the extent to which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential adherence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.	Competence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening well. Measures the quality with which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential competence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.
Expected behavioral indicator #1				
Expected behavioral indicator #2				
Expected behavioral indicator #3				
Expected behavioral indicator #4				

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTION #4

Essential Function:				
Expected Implementation Fill in the behaviors below from the practice profile work completed in Section 6.	Adherence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening. Measures the extent to which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential adherence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.	Competence Indicator—A measure that the activity is happening well. Measures the quality with which the essential functions of the innovation are delivered.	Potential competence data source Identifying a data source means figuring out how you will tell that the activity is happening. Some possibilities include observation, a document or a case review, surveys, checklists, etc.
Expected behavioral indicator #1				
Expected behavioral indicator #2				
Expected behavioral indicator #3				
Expected behavioral indicator #4				

This edited tool was developed initially by the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN). Copyright permission has been granted for use by PI-TTAP.

# Fidelity Assessment–Process Development



## Overview

The previous chapters discussed how to develop a well-defined practice profile

(Chapters 6.1 and 6.2), how to create measures showing that behavioral indicators are being performed, and how to identify a data source for each of these measures (Chapter 7.5). This chapter focuses on developing protocols for administering the fidelity assessment.

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter provides information about developing the necessary rules and procedures for conducting a fidelity assessment. They include

- Using and sharing results
- Frequency of conducting assessments
- Scoring assessments
- Gathering and maintaining fidelity data
- Training fidelity raters

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives builds foundational knowledge to develop fidelity measures, instruments, and processes for measuring fidelity.



## Key Terms

**Inter-rater reliability** – The degree to which two or more trained raters give consistent

assessments of the same interaction or event

## Developing Protocols

A number of considerations should be addressed when developing the rules, procedures, or protocols that will be followed for conducting assessments and collecting data. These include:

- How to use and share the results of the fidelity assessment

- How to determine the frequency of the fidelity assessment
- How to score the fidelity assessment
- How to gather and maintain the fidelity assessment data
- How to train raters

The appendix at the end of this volume includes an example of a fidelity assessment plan, which describes the process for creating the fidelity assessment and the protocols for using the fidelity instrument.

## Using and Sharing Fidelity Assessment Results

Determining how the results of the fidelity assessment will be used and shared is the first step when developing fidelity assessment processes. Because fidelity assessments provide useful feedback regarding implementation supports (e.g., training, coaching, organizational policies or procedures) and allow for interpretation of program outcomes, they are useful to a variety of stakeholders. Therefore, it is important to determine who needs the resulting information, for what purpose, and how to interpret and present the results in a way that reflects and supports the use of these data.

## Frequency of Fidelity Assessment Requires Balance

While the literature provides no set guidance about how often fidelity assessments should occur, the proper frequency balances the need for information and the burden that assessment completion can place on practitioners and the entire agency. However, during initial implementation of the innovation, fidelity

assessments may be completed more frequently to provide immediate feedback and promote fidelity to the innovation, thereby preventing or reducing program drift. The implementation team and those familiar with the innovation and the fidelity assessment should work together to determine the appropriate frequency based on the resources available to do the assessments.

## Ask Questions to Determine Frequency of Fidelity Assessment

When determining how frequently to assess for fidelity, the following questions should be considered:

- During initial implementation, is it important to assess fidelity more frequently to provide immediate feedback and promote fidelity to the innovation?
- Are all interactions important to assess? Are some more important than others? Are certain windows of time more important than others?
- Would a random assessment of interactions be useful?
- Does the method of assessment (self-report vs. observation) impact the frequency?

## Rating Methods

In partnership with staff and stakeholders who are familiar with the innovation and the team that created the fidelity assessment, key leadership and the implementation team should determine how the measures will be assessed. Three common rating methods are used with fidelity assessments:

**Occurrence** – Measures are rated regarding whether they occurred. Yes/No is often used for this item. For example, did the practitioners introduce themselves to all members at the team meeting? (Yes/No)

**Frequency** – Measures are rated on how often they occurred. This is usually accomplished by counting the number of times a specific activity occurred during a set period of time. For example, how often did the practitioner

use culturally appropriate language during the team meeting? (Count the number of times.)

**Scale** – Measures are rated with a Likert scale that has a range of possible answers. This method can be used for both adherence and competence measures. Examples include:

- On a scale of 0 to 5, a “0” may indicate poor adherence to the model while a “5” would indicate exceptional adherence to the model. In terms of competence, a “0” could indicate that the item was conducted poorly, and “5” could indicate that it was conducted very well.
- For the question, “Did the practitioner talk with the family in a way they could relate to?” the practitioner might be rated a “5” based on observations that he or she didn’t use acronyms or agency jargon, or a “3” if the practitioner occasionally used these terms, and the family didn’t understand.

Each measure should be considered individually for decisions about which rating method provides the most appropriate rating. Some measures are rated most logically with a Yes/No rating, while others lend themselves to a scale item. A fidelity assessment can make use of multiple rating methods. Research recommends rating *adherence* and *competence* separately to more easily translate findings at a later date.

## Scoring a Fidelity Assessment

After all measures have been assigned a rating method, the next step is deciding how to score the assessment. Two common ways to score assessments are:

**Composite Scores** – Some research indicates that creating a single composite score for each practitioner every time the assessment is administered is useful. This compiles ratings from all of the essential functions and all of the measures into one score, with the goal of determining if the practitioner is delivering the innovation with fidelity.



**Score for Each Essential Function** – On the other hand, some research also recommends against assigning a single composite score for the entire fidelity assessment for each practitioner. A single score blends the scores of all of the essential functions and makes it difficult to distinguish scoring trends by individual essential functions. A useful alternative is to group together the measures for each of the essential functions and arrive at a score for each essential function every time the assessment is administered. Seeing the results of the assessment across the different essential functions over time for different practitioners and different locations (if the practice occurs in different sites) enables more targeted improvement for training, coaching, and selection criteria.

Whether to assign one composite score for each practitioner should be decided by those familiar with the innovation, the implementation team, and agency leadership. But if the decision is made to develop a method for arriving at one composite score, it is still important to examine the scores for each of the essential functions.

## Set Threshold

It may be useful to set a threshold to determine whether the innovation was delivered in an acceptable manner or whether efforts to improve practice via implementation supports are necessary.<sup>13</sup> Setting a threshold may be challenging due to an absence of evidence to inform if an aspect of the innovation is less than full implementation but represents what may be considered as being delivered in an acceptable manner. Depending on the maturity of the innovation, setting a threshold may be based on the opinions of the innovation developer, or there may be some implementation data available to inform the process. Given the challenging nature of setting a threshold, opportunities to adjust and revise fidelity

measures and thresholds should be built into the process as empirical evidence of implementation is developed.<sup>14</sup>

## Uses of Threshold

Setting a threshold for a *single composite score* can help to identify the number of practitioners who are delivering the innovation as intended. Setting a threshold for the *essential functions* can help to identify the number of practitioners who are delivering the innovation as intended, which essential functions are proving difficult for a significant portion of the workforce, and how much difficulty is being experienced. The ability to identify practitioners who are having difficulty and the specific *areas* of difficulty can signal the need for increased supports in the way of training and coaching. It may also prompt the implementation team to examine whether organizational barriers need to be removed to improve fidelity assessment results and delivery of the innovation.

## Threshold Guidelines

There are multiple ways to set a threshold, but two simple guidelines should be followed, regardless of whether the team elects to use one composite score for the entire assessment or a score for each of the essential functions.

1. Include each essential function when setting a threshold;
2. Use research and theory of change to guide decisions about which measures to include.

The types of measures included in the assessment (occurrence, frequency, scale) can help determine which way to set a threshold. Examples include:

- If the measures are scored on the basis of whether they occurred, setting a threshold requiring 80%

<sup>13</sup> For more information about thresholds in the context of fidelity measures, please see: Knoche, L. L., Sheridan, S. M., Edwards, C. P., & Osborn, A. Q. (2010). Implementation of a relationship-based school readiness intervention: A multidimensional approach to fidelity measurement for early childhood. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 25(3), 299- 313. Retrieved from: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=cyrfsacpub>.

Lorentson, J., Oh, Y.J., and LaBanza, F. (2015). STEM21 Digital Academy Fidelity of Implementation: Valuation and Assessment of Program Components and Implementation. In C. Meyers & W. C. Brant (Eds.) *Implementation Fidelity in Education Research: Designer and Evaluator Considerations* (pp. 184-185). New York, NY: Routledge Press, Taylor & Francis Group. <https://books.google.com/books?id=prybBAAQBAJ&pg=PT79&lpg=PT79&dq=stem21+digital+academy+fidelity+of+implementation&source=bl&ots=WkYRR2GwZF&sig=hNV2Wml6i8EtIOvzCrYSzRSbwY&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewi58Zr8tKnJAhWJOyYKHa3wB6MQ6AEIKDAC#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

<sup>14</sup> Goodson, B., Price, C., & Darrow, C. (2015). Measuring fidelity: The present and future. In C. Meyers & W. C. Brant (Eds.) *Implementation Fidelity in Education Research: Designer and Evaluator Considerations* (pp. 184-185). New York, NY: Routledge Press, Taylor & Francis Group.

of the measures to indicate “Yes, they occurred” may show that the practitioner was delivering the innovation as intended.

- If using frequency to rate the measures or a tally, each measure must have been completed an average of two times to conclude that the innovation was delivered as intended. Additionally, none of the measures could have a tally of zero.
- If the measures are scored using a scale, the scores can all be added and divided by the number of measures. This results in an average score for all included measures. For example, an average of 3.5 out of 5 may be enough to conclude that the practitioner was conducting the innovation as intended.

## Sharing Data

Being clear about who will see the results and for what purpose they will be used is important when making decisions about how to present the data generated from fidelity assessments. Data being used solely as a way to tell if practitioners are doing the innovation as intended might be presented differently than data being used for improving implementation supports.

For example, data being used for improvement should be presented and shared in a way that clarifies areas in which certain workers, certain regions, or the agency as a whole are experiencing difficulty. This allows for more targeted brainstorming around ways to strengthen implementation supports and, as a result, improves fidelity to the innovation. (See Section 9: Monitor and Assess the Innovation and Implementation Supports for more information on sharing data.)

## Determining Who Will Conduct the Assessment

The gold standard for conducting assessments is using multiple, independent observers to complete them. Independent observers who are not involved with providing or receiving services are more likely to be

unbiased and to provide accurate assessments of what the fidelity instruments are measuring. However, in an organizational setting, directly observing interactions with a child or family may not always be feasible, as observation is usually expensive and time consuming.

## Who Is Best Qualified to Assess the Innovation?

People who have been trained and are knowledgeable about the innovation should conduct the fidelity assessment. This could include continuous quality improvement staff, other practitioners, program managers, supervisors, community members, and other stakeholders. The implementation team and leadership should determine who among these groups is best qualified to assess the innovation, based on the developed fidelity assessment and the feasibility of the individuals most able to serve in this capacity.

If supervisors are deemed most appropriate to conduct the assessment, they should not conduct assessments on practitioners they directly supervise. Similarly, practitioners should not conduct assessments on other practitioners in their same units. Both of these situations introduce an inherent bias that might be reflected in the rating.

## Raters Need Training

Training should include familiarizing raters with the essential functions of the innovation as well as the expectations of the practitioner to deliver the innovation. A system should also be in place to ensure continued quality assurance of the raters. Just as practitioners need continued coaching and fidelity assessment to ensure they are not straying from delivering the innovation as intended, raters need periodic monitoring to ensure they are able to consistently rate the fidelity assessment in the same way. This can take the form of periodic training sessions in which all participants rate the same sessions and determine how closely aligned their ratings are. This is known as inter-rater reliability.

## Data Collection Methods

Determining how to collect the fidelity assessment data is often dependent on the context in which the data are gathered. The tips for data collection options provided in the table below will be useful when filling out the Fidelity Assessment Protocols Tool at the end of this chapter.

Research indicates that using multiple data sources and multiple methods of data collection for a fidelity assessment is better than relying on a single source or one data collection method. Multiple data sources include participants, practitioners, and/or independent raters. Multiple methods of data collection may be self-reports, supervisor reports, case reviews, and/or observations.

## Aggregating and Protecting Data

All of the data should be centrally stored. Establishing where to house the data, how to enter it, who will maintain it, and who will have access to it should be finalized before beginning the assessment process. A plan should be in place to ensure the data are secure and well protected. The plan should limit data access to those individuals that need access. A plan for the eventual destruction of the child and family-level identification data (e.g., video recordings) should also be designed and implemented.

## Usability Testing

An essential next step in the process of creating a fidelity assessment is to test the assessment through usability testing. Usability testing is a process of administering the assessment with a small group of practitioners to see how it works and whether to make changes.

Feedback from usability testing can be used to revise the assessment instrument and to improve the overall assessment procedures. Making sure the assessment works increases the likelihood the assessment will be used and adhered to throughout the life of the innovation. See Section 8: Initial Implementation and Testing for more information on the usability testing process.

## Fidelity Assessment Protocol Tool



The Fidelity Assessment Protocol Tool on the following pages helps to start the process of outlining fidelity assessment protocols. This tool outlines the key questions for the team to discuss when developing the processes for administering the fidelity assessment.

**Table:** Data Collection Options

Gathering Method	Recording Method	Pros and Cons
Observation: real-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen and paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has to be entered into the computer later</li> </ul>
Observation: watch or listen to a recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen and paper</li> <li>• Computer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be entered into the computer immediately</li> </ul>
Practitioner self-assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen and paper</li> <li>• Computer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be biased</li> </ul>
Participant survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen and paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Useful for receipt of services</li> <li>• Less useful for delivery of essential functions</li> </ul>
Case record review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen and paper</li> <li>• Computer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relies on documentation completed by practitioner</li> </ul>

# FIDELITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL TOOL

FROM THE *GUIDE TO DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND ASSESSING AN INNOVATION, VOLUME 3*

Now that you have developed the Fidelity Assessment for your innovation, the next step is to develop a protocol for scoring and administering it. It is important to have a uniform approach every time the fidelity assessment is administered. The following questions about sharing and using the results of the Fidelity Assessment will help you to develop a preliminary plan for implementing and administering it within your agency.

*This tool may be used in two ways:*

- 1. Print the following pages and use them as a discussion guide with your team. Write your answers in the space provided.*
- 2. Type your information into the space provided and save to your computer. This will allow you to print the completed document or e-mail it to your team members.*

<b>Who needs the Fidelity Assessment data?</b> This could be a person or a team of people.	<b>For what purpose do they need the data?</b> Possible reasons for needing the data include improving training, coaching, etc.	<b>What information should be included when displaying/sharing the Fidelity Assessment data?</b> Consider including Assessment scores by unit, across certain parts of the assessment, practitioners who completed the assessment and on what timetable, etc.
1.		
2.		
3.		



**What is the frequency of the Fidelity Assessment?**

When deciding, think about the following questions:

- During initial implementation, is it important to assess fidelity more frequently to provide immediate feedback and promote fidelity to the innovation?
- Are all interactions important to assess? Are some more important than others? Are certain windows of time more important?
- Would a random assessment of interactions be useful?
- Does the method of assessment (self-report vs. observational) affect the frequency?

**How will the assessment be scored?**

Three common types of rating methods for scoring a fidelity assessment include occurrence (measures are rated regarding *whether* they occurred–Y/N); frequency (measures are rated on *how often* they occurred); and scale (measures are rated with a Likert scale that has a range of possible answers). *Check all that apply:*

- ☐ Occurrence
- ☐ Frequency
- ☐ Scale

**Who will conduct the fidelity assessment?**

Those who have been trained and are knowledgeable and familiar with the innovation should conduct the fidelity assessment. This could include continuous quality improvement staff, other practitioners, program managers, supervisors, community members, and other stakeholders. Enter either position titles or names:

**How will these data be gathered?**

See the module summary for more information on the pros and cons for each of the following data collection methods. *Check all that apply:*

- ☐ Real-time observation
- ☐ Watching or listening to a recording
- ☐ Practitioner self-assessment
- ☐ Participant survey
- ☐ Case record review
- ☐ Other (please specify):

**Write a few sentences that outline how the data will be maintained.**

Your outline should include the type of database available to house the data, who will enter and maintain the data, and how it will be stored in a secure manner.

# Identifying and Using Data for Decision–Making in Support of Innovation Implementation



## Overview

Identifying and using data on a continuous basis to support an innovation's implementation can increase the likelihood that the innovation will successfully produce desired outcomes for the target population. The ongoing use of data drives leadership and stakeholder confidence that innovations are being implemented as intended. Using data also allows leadership, stakeholders, and others to make needed adjustments and improvements to the innovation and implementation supports. This chapter focuses on the critical activities required to use data for decision-making to support implementation of an innovation.

**Learning Objectives:** This chapter provides information to

- Better understand the questions that need to be asked to support implementation
- Identify the existing and needed data sources to answer identified questions
- Understand how to use the data that have been gathered
- Understand how decision-support data system (DSDS) activities differ from evaluation activities

**Competencies:** Meeting the learning objectives will build foundational knowledge to:

- Define questions the agency would like to answer as an innovation is put in place
- Use data to improve implementation and practice



## Key Terms

**Decision-support data system (DSDS)** –

The ongoing availability, integration, and use of live performance data to support and improve the implementation of an innovation

## What Is a DSDS That Supports Implementation?

Identifying and integrating key implementation and innovation data elements is a core activity within a DSDS. Data elements should reflect:

- Child and family outcomes related to the target population's experience of the innovation
- The organization's implementation processes for supporting delivery of the innovation as intended
- The organization's capacity and infrastructure to actively support high-quality implementation processes

## Decision-Support Data Systems and Information Technology Systems

A DSDS effectively supports the implementation of innovations through the collection, organization, and analysis of data related to innovation implementation and child and family outcomes.

Implementation science best practices emphasize that a DSDS is not focused on the particulars of an IT system, though the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) or other data or IT sys-

tems may be helpful in collecting, analyzing, and reporting data. A DSDS represents the ongoing availability, integration, and use of live performance data to support and improve the implementation of an innovation.

## Plan for Capturing Information

Before beginning the process of gathering and organizing data, the implementation team should develop a plan or rationale to answer the what, why, and how of the information being captured. Using the theory of change (see Section 2: Develop a Theory of Change) to guide the approach to these initial questions can ensure the DSDS stays relevant to the innovation and identified problem. The theory of change can also guide the collection and distribution of data.

When implementing an innovation, the implementation team should determine what information it wants to know about outcomes related to the target population's experience with the innovation, the implementation processes for supporting delivery of the innovation, and the organization's capacity and infrastructure. What information do the broader organization and leadership want to know? What information do the larger stakeholder and community groups want to know?

## Three Categories of Information

The information needed and the questions to ask can fall in three broad categories: outcomes, fidelity, and implementation supports data.

### Outcome Data: Answering Questions About Short- and Long-Term Outcomes

The DSDS can be used to answer questions about short- and long-term child and family outcomes. Before developing new outcome indicators, the implementation team should determine what information is being collected in the organization's IT system and whether these indicators and outcome measures are applicable to the innovation's theory of change.

The implementation team may also choose to verify the representative nature of short- and long-term child and family outcomes by ensuring that numerators and denominators accurately measure and sample sizes are sufficient to reliably depict the desired outcome.



### Short- and Long-Term Outcome Examples

If the innovation is a new program for increasing the number of foster parents in an organization, long-term outcome measures may be:

- An increase in the number of foster parents who are licensed by the agency
- An increase in the number of foster parents renewing their licenses

Short-term outcome measures might be:

- An increase in the number of inquiries about becoming foster parents
- An increased enrollment in foster parent training classes



## Fidelity Data

Fidelity data provides information about the degree to which the innovation has been or is being delivered as intended. One consideration is whether the implementation of the innovation has stayed true to its design. (For more information about fidelity assessments, see Chapters 7.5 and 7.6.)

## Implementation Supports Data

Implementation supports data is the least likely to be currently captured in a child welfare organization's IT system, but they are just as critical as outcome and fidelity data. These data provide information about how well the organization and the system as a whole are supporting practitioners in implementing the innovation.

Three important questions to ask are:

1. Have the right practitioners, trainers, and coaches been selected?
2. Have the practitioners, trainers, and coaches been equipped with the right knowledge and skills?
3. Have the practitioners, trainers, and coaches been supported to appropriately apply the knowledge and skills during interactions with the target population?

Gathering information on leadership structures for implementation is helpful. Executive leadership and implementation team functioning intrinsically impact the innovation. Therefore, it is important to examine if the leadership team has the authority to make policy and procedural changes, and whether a sufficient number of people are able to handle the responsibilities.

Important questions also need to be asked about the overall implementation readiness, capacity, and infrastructure development within the organization and system. Considerations to address include:

- Committed and aligned teaming structures and personnel supports
- Resources

- Selection, training, coaching, and fidelity assessment processes
- A decision-support data system

## Finding Data Sources

A primary data source for the DSDS is the organization's IT system. Other information sources include:

- Human resource data
- Fidelity assessments
- Assessments of the strength of the implementation supports
- Organizational readiness or capacity surveys and assessments
- General surveys on organization culture and willingness to change
- Focus groups or interviews with key personnel
- Outside data from other agencies or universities

## Does the Information Being Collected Provide Answers to Identified Questions?

It is critical to ensure the information being collected answers the questions being asked. Consistent and quality data entry is a must as are standardized protocols for gathering and documenting data. Teams that are using existing data sources should make sure the data used are reliable and that the calculations in the reports are accurate.

## Create a Team to Align Data Activities

A data team is responsible for organizing and aligning the various data activities, including collection and analysis. The team should have a solid understanding of the desired outcomes, essential functions, training and coaching infrastructure, leadership and team performance best practices for implementation of an innovation, and organizational development mea-

sures and benchmarks for implementation capacity and infrastructure. In addition, the team should have an understanding of the existing IT system and the organization's continuous quality improvement infrastructure.

## Using the Data

For successful implementation of the innovation, the right data must get to the *right people* at the *right time*. Continuously collecting, organizing, analyzing, and distributing this information will strengthen leadership's ability to plan and make decisions to keep the innovation on track. The implementation team should identify the people who need to receive the reports, the data that needs to be reported, and how often the reports need to be distributed.

## Considerations for Sharing Data

Consider the following when thinking about the appropriate frequency with which various types of data should be shared:

- How often is the information collected?
- How long does it take the data team to organize and analyze the data?
- How long does it take the team to translate the data into understandable findings for the audience?
- What's feasible in terms of sharing data in the agency?
- Do external partners and stakeholders also need the data?
- Are there limitations on what can be shared internally within the agency or externally with partners and stakeholders?

## Formatting Data Into Reports

Data reports should be provided to a variety of people, including practitioners, stakeholders and community, and executive leadership. However, the various audience needs for frequency and details are not the

same. For example, the implementation team and executive leadership will require the most frequent and detailed data reports, as they are responsible not only for the innovation's implementation and success, but also for making decisions and changes in policies and procedures to keep implementation on track. Practitioners, trainers, and coaches will need information to create transparency and enable a supportive context for implementation. Stakeholders need less technical detail in the data reports they receive, but their engagement in the innovation data is critical for buy-in and advancing the implementation.

## Considerations for Evaluation

If the innovation will undergo a rigorous evaluation, implications may arise for access to outcome data, a key category of data in a DSDS. The need for internal review board (IRB) approval and the availability and use of data during implementation and evaluation should be discussed with the evaluator as early as possible. An additional factor to be considered is that outcome data may not be readily available, and the evaluation team may need to figure out how to track or access the data. Partnering with external stakeholders and partners (e.g., early education organizations, mental health agencies, and Tribes,) who possess needed data can be helpful but may require a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).





## Test Your Understanding

The following questions will help test understanding of the concepts in Section 7. An answer key is provided at the end of this volume.

### Leadership and Stakeholder Supports

1. All of the following are roles and responsibilities of leadership with the exception of:
  - a. Conduct each of the fidelity assessments.
  - b. Manage competing priorities.
  - c. Assess organizational readiness for change.
  - d. Engage and support staff at all levels by modeling the desired behavior.
2. Properly implementing an innovation within a child welfare organization often requires the buy-in and support from community partners, stakeholders, organizational staff, and families. Which of the following are examples of the ways that the community and other stakeholders can contribute to implementation efforts? Check all that apply.
  - a. A community member informs the implementation team about regularly scheduled community meetings that include the target population.
  - b. After reviewing the practice profile, a community member gives the implementation team recommendations for ways to modify the language used in the practice profile.
  - c. The implementation team invites community members to participate in the meetings used to identify the target problem and choose an innovation.
  - d. All of the above
3. When implementing an innovation in an organization, the implementation team is responsible for a wide variety of things. They are responsible for:
  1. Assessing organizational readiness for change
  2. Serving as a liaison between agency leadership and all involved teams
  3. Managing day-to-day planning and implementation efforts

However, the implementation team is not responsible for which of the following items?

- a. Engaging leadership and stakeholders
  - b. Connecting the innovation to the agency's values and culture
  - c. Making all decisions related to implementation
  - d. Building and encouraging internal champions
4. Why is it important to engage and develop organizational and system supports such as leadership and stakeholders throughout implementation?
  - a. Together they create a hospitable environment for implementation.
  - b. Together they are in charge of leading the development of the practice profile.
  - c. It isn't. Engagement of leadership and stakeholders is only helpful during the exploration phase.
  - d. Together they can address all negative practitioner feedback.

### **Recruiting and Selecting a Competent and Confident Staff**

5. Team members responsible for recruiting and selecting staff have multiple responsibilities. To select a high quality work force, the implementation team should:
  - a. Have to check with leadership when making decisions about the job description
  - b. Have the authority to make decisions and be responsible for development of a recruitment and selection process
  - c. Operate independently from Human Resources
  - d. Rarely use data to aid in improving the hiring process
6. Of the six common principles for recruiting and selecting staff, one is using a well-defined interview protocol. This helps to ensure mutual selection and full disclosure and to accurately assess selection criteria. It can also:
  - a. Ensure the candidate always has advance notice of what will be asked during the interview.
  - b. Help promote candidate and interviewer interaction.
  - c. Enable the interviewer to conduct the interview without any knowledge of the innovation.
  - d. Enable the entire interview to be administered by a computer, if needed.
7. A team is interviewing front line workers for a new innovation. One identified best practice is to pay careful attention to less tangible practitioner characteristics. All of the following are examples of less tangible characteristics except:
  - a. Enjoys learning new things
  - b. Has a certificate in counseling
  - c. Believes all children deserve a family
  - d. Believes families should be involved in planning and decision-making

### **Training to Build Knowledge and Skills**

8. Informing practitioners about the history and theory of the innovation, the skills, and abilities required to do the innovation, and providing demonstrations and the opportunity to practice what they have learned is:
  - a. An approach for getting leadership and stakeholder buy-in
  - b. One of the ways to conduct a fidelity assessment
  - c. The goal of training
  - d. A coaching plan
9. Three components of effective training were discussed in Section 7. Creating role playing opportunities for practitioners to demonstrate a required innovation skill is an example of which component of effective training?
  - a. Training supervisors first
  - b. Using data for continuous improvement
  - c. Knowledge and skill-based training
  - d. Having a well-defined interview protocol

- 10.** Regularly collecting data and using it to improve and refine training is an important part of implementing an innovation. Which of the following are ways to collect the needed data? Check all that apply.
- a. Pre- and post-tests
  - b. Trainer evaluation forms
  - c. Participant satisfaction surveys
  - d. All of the above

### **Coaching to Build Knowledge and Skills**

- 11.** A hypothetical agency structure involves multiple supervisors, and each supervisor oversees a group of frontline workers. A proposed innovation requires the agency to implement a model whereby front line workers attend a one-time training and are then periodically coached on the new innovation. To put this innovation in place, what could be done to support the implementation of the innovation? Check all that apply.
- a. Supervisors serve as coaches for the front line staff they oversee.
  - b. Both supervisors and front line workers attend the training.
  - c. The agency director acts as a coach for groups of front line workers.
  - d. Front line workers are immediately trained in the new innovation.
- 12.** Coaching practitioners trained in the new innovation is an important part of implementation because research shows that training by itself is not enough to achieve effective implementation. All of the following are goals of coaching except:
- a. Build confidence.
  - b. Increase competence.
  - c. Provide feedback.
  - d. Conduct annual organization-wide performance review.
- 13.** To ensure a uniform approach to coaching throughout the organization, it is helpful to create a coaching service delivery plan. Which of the following is not an example of something that might found in an organization's coaching service delivery plan?
- a. Those being coached will complete a written assessment every other week. The results will be placed in their personnel file.
  - b. After the introductory training, group coaching sessions will be held once a month for the next year. Individual sessions will be held once a month as well. Attendance by those being coached is expected.
  - c. Coaches must provide feedback on the observed sessions directly following each session.
  - d. Coaches are responsible for attending quarterly training sessions to further develop their coaching skills in relation to the implemented innovation.



## Fidelity Assessment

14. A fidelity assessment is designed to assess (check all that apply):
  - a. Whether the practitioners are performing the innovation as intended
  - b. The use of skills taught in training and reinforced through coaching
  - c. Whether there needs to be a change to the target population
  - d. Whether the outcomes are achieved
15. Which of the following principles are important to attend to when creating a fidelity assessment process?
  - a. There should be a clearly operationalized innovation with a practice profile.
  - b. The organization should have a plan for using the results of the fidelity assessment to improve practice.
  - c. The process to administer the assessment needs to be easily administered in an organizational setting.
  - d. All of the above
16. Multiple methods are available for assessing whether an activity is occurring as intended (also known as “adherence”). Which of the following is an example of a method to assess adherence?
  - a. Examining data on client improvement
  - b. Attending an organization-wide staff meeting
  - c. Viewing an interaction between a practitioner and a client
  - d. Training practitioners on the innovation
17. The data collected from the administration of fidelity assessments can also be used to:
  - a. Further refine the target population.
  - b. Identify the active ingredients of an innovation and their link to outcomes.
  - c. Build a theory of change.
  - d. Select an innovation.
18. Which of the following is the best example of how often a fidelity assessment should be conducted?
  - a. Once a month
  - b. The frequency of a fidelity assessment requires balance between the need for information and the burden that it can place on practitioners.
  - c. Every other month in the year following the initial training and every six months thereafter
  - d. After training, and a mini fidelity assessment should be done during every coaching session
19. If possible, the fidelity assessment should be conducted by more than one independent observer who is trained and knowledgeable about the innovation. Given this criteria, who among the following list of people could conduct the assessment?
  - a. Community members
  - b. Supervisors
  - c. Practitioners
  - d. All of the above

- 20.** Fidelity assessment results can help improve innovation training. When presenting the results to the training team, what might be the best way to present those results?
- a. By topic, showing the areas in which the organization as a whole scored the lowest
  - b. By individual, showing how each individual practitioner did on their most recent fidelity assessment
  - c. By supervisor, showing how each team, organized by supervisor, has scored on its past five fidelity assessments
  - d. It doesn't really matter; any of the above ways would be useful when trying to improve innovation training.

### **Identifying and Using Data for Decision-Making in Support of Innovation Implementation**

- 21.** A Decision-Support Data System (DSDS) is useful because it:
- a. Helps the organization figure out which innovation to choose
  - b. Is a way to automatically administer and analyze fidelity assessments
  - c. Supports the implementation of the innovation through data collection, organization and analysis, and reporting
  - d. Enables practitioners and clients to stay in touch and collaborate on case-related decision-making
- 22.** “Does the organization have the ability to provide regular coaching to all the practitioners?” is an example of a question to ask to learn more about:
- a. Long term outcomes
  - b. Implementation supports
  - c. Fidelity data
  - d. Short term outcomes

As an example of the identification and use of data, questions 23-26 are about the gathering and use of data collected in relation to innovation training.

- 23.** “Is the training delivering the content the practitioners need to effectively deliver the innovation?” is an example of a question to learn more about:
- a. Implementation supports
  - b. Long-term outcomes
  - c. Fidelity data
  - d. Short-term outcomes
- 24.** The data to figure out whether the training is delivering the content practitioners need to effectively deliver the innovation could potentially be found in:
- a. Human resource data
  - b. Surveys on organizational willingness to change
  - c. Stakeholder focus groups
  - d. Practitioner surveys and fidelity data

- 25.** Forwarding the results of training pre- and post-tests to the members of the implementation team and the team in charge of training is an example of:
- a. A feedback loop
  - b. Making revisions to the implementation plan
  - c. Usability testing
  - d. Using data to develop the practice profile
- 26.** Now that the data have been gathered and the correct teams have the results, which of the following is a possible next step for the teams?
- a. Print the data and place it in the storage room.
  - b. Wait until after improvement in long term outcomes have been documented to review the data.
  - c. Review the data to see if there are ways to improve training.
  - d. Decide to change the target population.

## VOLUME 3: TEST YOUR UNDERSTANDING ANSWER KEY

### Section 6

1. c
2. b
3. a
4. d
5. b
6. a
7. c
8. a
9. a
10. d
11. a

### Section 7

1. a
2. d
3. c
4. a
5. b
6. b
7. b
8. c
9. c
10. d
11. a,b
12. d
13. a
14. a,b
15. d
16. c
17. b
18. b
19. d
20. a
21. c
22. b
23. a
24. d
25. a
26. c



# **Volume 3: Appendix**



## Example Practice Profile for a Safety Focused Child Welfare Intervention

A practice profile is a document that describes how an innovation works in everyday practice. Practice profiles make it possible for core activities or practices to be taught and practitioner performance measured. This is necessary so that individuals who will implement the core practices will know what to do and how to do it and can be trained or coached to do it consistently well. Below are charts for three essentials functions, which serve as an example of a practice profile for a safety focused child welfare intervention.

<b>Essential Function:</b>	Assesses supportive relationships		
<b>Research Informed Operationalized Definition:</b>	Explores family relationship and community resources to find and learn about other family members and supportive relationships for family and youth.		
<b>Associated Core Activities:</b>	Listens actively, encourages honest dialogue, explores possible solutions, actively locates resources.		
<b>Behavioral Indicator</b>	<b>Expected</b>	<b>Developmental</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
<b>Uses reflective listening techniques</b>	Consistently takes advantage of appropriate opportunities to reflect back to others what they are sharing	Takes advantage of appropriate opportunities to reflect back to others what they are sharing about half the time	Rarely reflects back to others what they are sharing
<b>Asks relevant questions</b>	Questions are almost always a logical extension of the current conversation	Questions are a logical extension of the current conversation about half the time, but sometimes lead to a different topic	Questions are rarely relevant to the discussion at hand and often lead to a different topic

<b>Essential Function:</b>	Assesses safety and threats of imminent and impending danger		
<b>Research Informed Operationalized Definition:</b>	Seeks to understand the current situation of the family's protective capacities and child's vulnerabilities, ensures child is in a safe environment by exploring ways in which the family has sought and can continue to seek to provide a safe, nurturing family environment.		
<b>Associated Core Activities:</b>	Ensures a safety plan is in place, asks non-judgmental questions to encourage honesty, emphasizes the importance of safety for the family and child.		
<b>Behavioral Indicator</b>	<b>Expected</b>	<b>Developmental</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
Develops safety plan with family	Schedules a time with the family and their support network to develop the safety plan together	Develops safety plan and seeks family input about half the time	Develops safety plan without seeking the input of the family
Assesses for family understanding and buy-in for developed safety plan	Reviews entire completed safety plan with family and asks family open-ended questions to ensure understanding	Reviews parts of safety plan with family and asks yes/no questions to determine understanding	Hands plan to family without engaging or asking questions to ensure understanding



<b>Essential Function:</b>	Connect to services		
<b>Research Informed Operationalized Definition:</b>	Thoroughly explores family safety needs and uses agency and community resources to find appropriate and culturally relevant services for that specific family.		
<b>Associated Core Activities:</b>	Explores what type of services would be most useful to enhance the family's existing informal support network, assesses for existence of other services to avoid duplication, takes into account logistical barriers such as transportation and work schedules.		
<b>Behavioral Indicator</b>	<b>Expected</b>	<b>Developmental</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
Assesses for culturally specific service needs	Engages family in a conversation about cultural beliefs. Tailors services to the specific cultural needs of the family	Makes an attempt to ask family about cultural beliefs. Succeeds in tailoring some services to family's cultural needs	Does not ask family about cultural beliefs. Assigns family to the "standard" service
Connects family to services that are offered at a convenient time	Family is able to access and attend the majority of the services	Family is only able to attend services about half the time due to conflict with work/school/other services	Family is unable to attend services due to conflict with work/school/other services

## CARE Team Practice Profile

CARE Team			
Guiding Principles			
Family Centered Culturally Competent Strengths-Based Team Oriented		Creative in Solution-Seeking Proactive with a Sense of Urgency Youth Driven Truthful	
Essential Functions	Essential Functions: 1) Participating in team meetings and the assessment, preparation, planning, and decision-making processes. 2) Communicating and sharing information. 3) Coordinating preparation activities and action steps. 4) Collaborating in decision-making. 5) Ensuring that all team members are accountable to the process and adhere to the guiding principles.		
	Activities		
	<i>Expected Implementation</i>	<i>Developmental Implementation</i>	<i>Unacceptable Implementation</i>
1) Participation: Team members actively participating in Team meetings, being open to exploring multiple perspectives and solutions to barriers, verbalizing both concerns and agreements to plans, being responsive to the scheduling of meetings.	Participate in an initial CARE team meeting, face to face with all participants (Care Coordinator, Youth Advocate, CPS Specialist) within 15 business days of the YP’s referral.	Holding initial meeting between 15 -20 days of the YP’s referral; holding the meeting with a stand-in representative for one of the team members who cannot attend.	Holding initial team meeting on days or at times when only some of the team members can meet; holding initial meeting more than 4 weeks after YP’s referral; holding initial meeting as a conference call instead of a face-to-face.
	At initial and subsequent meetings, follow an agenda that always includes: 1) a review of the guiding principles to be followed; 2) discovery and engagement update by Care Coordinator; 3) child readiness update by Youth Advocate; 4) youth update by CPS Specialist; 5) discussion and planning; 6) action steps before next meeting; 7) date and time for next meeting; and 8) determining the manner of the YP’s involvement in the next meeting; 9) determining whether any other individual from the YP’s life should be involved in the next meeting; 10) determining appropriate frequency and manner of contact of subsequent meeting (at least monthly).	Following only some of the agenda items. Allowing schedule to be altered by usual challenges in order to determine the manner and frequency of subsequent meetings.	Not following the prescribed agenda. Not scheduling and coordinating subsequent meetings as agreed upon; not soliciting the YP’s involvement or participation by appropriate others in the meetings.

	<i>Expected Implementation</i>	<i>Developmental Implementation</i>	<i>Unacceptable Implementation</i>
2) Communication: Sharing any and all information pertinent to the YP, the potential asset, supportive, and permanent people. Ensuring that all members of the team are apprised of all relevant information by following the communication plan.	Create a communication plan as to the manner and frequency of communications for the team.	Partially specifying the manner and/or frequency of team communications; creating a plan that is disagreeable to some team members.	Not creating a communication plan; creating an unrealistic plan that cannot be followed by team members.
	Clearly and consistently communicate with all the team members regarding updates about the YP and the potential asset, supportive, and/or permanent people. Including information about the YP's emotional, social, academic, and physical well-being, the YP's case plan, placement, participation in services, and his/her readiness for permanence; and the potential permanent people's ability and willingness to provide the youth a permanent home and/or engage with him/her in a permanent connection.	Fragmented communication within the team.	Communicating ineffectively with team; not updating or apprising the team of new leads or the status of rapport building with potential permanent people and/or the readiness of the youth.
3) Synchronized Preparation and Action: Coordinating efforts of all Team members toward the establishment and maintenance of healthy relationships. Ensuring that any and all leads toward potential asset people are followed and all necessary steps to engage those leads are undertaken. Planning for the permanency process.	The Team follows up with the progress of individual team members in accomplishing their action steps assigned at previous meetings.	Team members follow-up inconsistently on some but not all action steps/team members.	No follow-up occurs as to progress team members have made on action steps.
	Team members communicate the results of their action steps during meetings or as needed via phone/e-mail.	Team members inconsistently communicate progress or do not provide sufficiently detailed information or delay communication of relevant information.	Team members operate in information silos.
	Each team member's activities should occur in synch with the team so that action steps take place in concert with steps being undertaken by other team members.	Proceeding on action steps with partial or inconsistent team member knowledge or support.	Team members make decisions about engagement and relationships without the knowledge or support of the other team members.

	<i>Expected Implementation</i>	<i>Developmental Implementation</i>	<i>Unacceptable Implementation</i>
<p>4) Decision-making and Collaboration: The CARE Team members make recommendations about the engagement of potential supportive people, the YP's readiness to engage in and maintain relationships, and the potential supportive people's readiness to engage and maintain a relationship with the YP. Provides support to the family in their decision-making process regarding planning for the YP's future. Provides recommendations to the CPSS regarding permanent homes and permanent connections.</p>	<p>Ensure that the YP is an empowered participator in decisions regarding permanent connections and permanent homes (when that is age appropriate).</p>	<p>Including YP's input as an afterthought; persuading YP toward decisions they are opposed to pursuing.</p>	<p>Not including YP at all; informing YP of decisions after they are made.</p>
	<p>Based on information regarding both the potential supportive people and the YP's readiness to engage, plan for the initial communication, the debrief of that communication with both the YP and the potential supportive person, the on-going communication and visits, the assessment of the health of the relationship, and the maintenance of the relationship.</p>	<p>Doing little planning with respect to decision-making. Skipping steps in the relationship engagement phase between the YP and potential supportive people, moving directly to decisions about permanency without the YP and potential permanent person being ready for that step or having a relational foundation upon which to build.</p>	<p>Not planning prior to decision-making. Once any potential permanent person passes a home study moving the YP regardless of the strength and healthiness of the relationship between the YP and potential permanent person.</p>
	<p>Use a balanced perspective in assessing the movement of the YP to potential permanent homes. Plan for minimal losses and disruptions of existing relationships, meaningful activities, and academic progress. Use a balanced perspective in prioritizing the engagement in new potential supportive relationships with the maintenance of current relationships (e.g. not sacrificing sibling visits in order to have visits with a potential supportive person).</p>	<p>Allowing the needs of systems to circumvent the needs of the YP in making recommendations about moves to potential permanent homes. Focusing too narrowly on engagement in new relationships while not supporting current relationships and/or activities that bolster the YP's well-being.</p>	<p>Valuing movement to any potential permanent home over all the YP's other needs such as the maintenance of other relationships. Discontinuing involvement with potential permanent people if they are unable or unwilling to provide a permanent home. Valuing any new relationship over all existing relationships.</p>
	<p>If multiple potential permanent homes arise, plan for processes to identify the home that would best meet the needs of the YP while allowing the other supportive and/or permanent people to support the YP in that home, utilizing processes such as TDM to engage families and allow them power in decision-making.</p>	<p>The CARE Team deciding where the YP will be placed without utilizing proven approaches such as TDM, if those approaches would be applicable to the family.</p>	<p>Not involving family members who want to play a role in supporting the YP in decisions about which home the YP will be placed.</p>

	<i>Expected Implementation</i>	<i>Developmental Implementation</i>	<i>Unacceptable Implementation</i>
	Based on the YP's readiness and the Potential Permanent Person's readiness, plan for permanent relationships in the YP's life and for the inclusion of the YP in the family of the permanent home. Plan for how the YP will remain a member of other family systems, if that is important to him/her.	Making decisions about permanence without enough information about the readiness of the YP or potential permanent people. Not planning for how the YP can remain connected to others and be included in other family systems.	Not regarding the YP's readiness in decisions regarding permanence. Not planning for how the YP can remain in other family systems important to him/her and/or remain connected to important others.
5) Accountability and Adherence to Guiding Principles: Ensuring that each member shares a responsibility in applying the guiding principles in all team interactions.	All interactions during Team meetings need to follow the guiding principles. When interactions do not follow the guiding principles, individual team members are responsible for acknowledging to the Team the aberration in a respectful manner and attempting to refocus team efforts.	Overlooking some of the guiding principles; inconsistently refocusing efforts of Team members toward respectful communication.	Wholesale dismissal of guiding principles; no attempt to redirect Team members' efforts toward respectful communication.
	If the team persists in negative interactions that violate the guiding principles, and it is hindering the process of furthering efforts to find the YP healthy relationships, CARE team members have a responsibility to elevate their concern to the grant manager.	Letting interactions degenerate for too long a period before elevating the concern to the grant manager.	Not addressing the violation of the guiding principles and allowing it to interfere with the goals of the project.

### **Interview Questions – Implementation Team Member**

1. What is your experience in terms of Data collection, Interpretation and Analysis of Data? What is your experience with creating data reports and communicating your findings?

Areas to observe:    Technical Experience with Data  
                                 Experience with Evaluation  
                                 Reporting of Data

2. Share with us with an example of how you have utilized data or information (written or spoken) to improve your practice/services provided to client(s)/family (ies)? What was the data/information and how did you go about making that improvement. Please include any services/ supports that you may have sought out or received. How did you know whether or not the changes made were making a difference?

Areas to observe:    Utilization of Data/Information for Skill Development  
                                 Identification of Supports and Advocacy  
                                 Ability to seek feedback or create Feedback Loops

3. Share an example of how you have used data or information to improve a process that involved a group of co-workers/staff or other stakeholders? What were your first steps? What barriers did you encounter or identify?

Areas to observe:    Problem solving/Solution focus  
                                 Exploration  
                                 Communication  
                                 Identification of Adaptive Issues

4. What are some approaches you would utilize to communicate, support and teach a peer something new? What about with a Manager or Director?

Areas to observe:    Communication skills  
                                 Transfer of skills across classifications  
                                 Coaching/Supervision Skills  
                                 Exploration & Engagement  
                                 Leadership

5. Teaming and Engagement are key elements to the Child & Family Practice Model and also with the role of this position to provide Implementation Support Functions. Can you share any examples of when you had to engage and work with a diverse group of people that may have included (but not specifically) various stakeholders, staff, supervisors, managers, executive leaders and former families involved in our system?



Areas to observe:    Teaming & Engagement  
                             Leadership  
                             Facilitation

6.        Describe a work experience where you had to exhibit humility when working with fellow co-worker(s), staff in a lower classification or when working with a group or family?

Areas to observe:    Humility  
                             Open to Feedback/Coachable  
                             Leadership  
                             Self-reflection

Role Play:

The Scene: You are an Implementation Team Member who has asked if you could attend a Bureau Meeting that includes the Bureau Manager and Supervisors.

Players:

- One panelist will be the Bureau Manager. The other two will be Supervisors of the Continuing Units. All three will be able to communicate what issues are standing in the way.
- Interviewee will play the role of the Social Work Coordinator II/Implementation Team Member

The Situation:

The Fidelity Assessments are a process by which a DFCS Supervisor and a Community Partner observe a meeting between a social worker and a family on their case to see if the social worker is utilizing the Practice Model which they were recently trained. The Fidelity Assessments are a brand new process that has been introduced to DFCS and continues to be developed. Up to this point, there has been no process by which a Supervisor, let alone, a Community Partner have observed any live/real-time interactions between a Social Worker and a family. The aggregate data from the Fidelity Assessments help to determine if we are effectively and consistently implementing the Child & Family Practice Model.

You are meeting with the Bureau to discuss the lack of completion of Fidelity Assessments by the Continuing Social Workers in this Bureau. Approximately Six months ago, you along with your manager provided a Training/Orientation to the Fidelity Assessment Process to all of the Supervisors and Social Workers of this Bureau. However, of the 12 Fidelity Assessments that were supposed to be completed within 90 days of the Orientation, only 2 have been completed. You have consistently sent emails and lists to the Bureau Manager and Supervisors requesting that their social workers schedule these meetings. You are only equipped with some sample Fidelity Assessment Data from other Social Workers that actually highlight that very good work is being observed between Social Workers and Families.

Areas to observe: Leadership  
Facilitation Skills  
Engagement  
Exploration  
Teaming to solve a problem(s)  
Leaning in to the problems impacting staff  
Identification of Barriers  
Effective Communication  
Comfort level

7. If selected for this position, what do you think you uniquely bring to this team?

Areas to observe: Communication skills  
Leadership  
Teaming Approach

8. Is there anything else that you would like to add that you haven't already touched upon?

9. How was this process for you??? Are there any areas you see where we as an interview panel can improve???

### Role Play for Implementation Team Member

**The Scene:** You are an Implementation Team Member who has asked if you could attend a Bureau Meeting that includes the Bureau Manager and 5 Supervisors (2 from Continuing Services, 2 from Dependency Intake & 1 from Emergency Response).

**Players:**

- One panelist will be the Bureau Manager.
- The other two panelists will be Supervisors of the 2 Continuing Units.
- Interviewee will play the role of the Social Work Coordinator II/Implementation Team Member

**The Situation:**

A Family Survey is a brand new developmental process that is being implemented in DFCS. The objective of the Survey is to gather data to determine if the practice intervention utilized by Social Workers is being experienced by the Children and Families receiving Continuing Services. The survey is also an evaluation deliverable connected to a Federal Grant. Up to this point, there has never been an evaluation process designed to engage and capture Child Welfare family's voices regarding their experiences. Aggregate data from the survey can help determine if we are consistently and effectively implementing the practice model. Completion of the Survey is voluntary by the families and both the social worker and family's identity is not documented on the survey and kept anonymous. In terms of distribution, it has been identified that the least impact on staff workload would be for Social Workers to hand deliver the surveys to each family during a home visit or contact. The survey would only be distributed once every six months.

Approximately Six months ago, you along with your manager provided a Training/Orientation to the Survey Process to all of the Supervisors and Social Workers of this Bureau. However, of the 12 Social Workers in this Bureau, only 2 Social Workers have distributed the surveys to all of their families. You have consistently sent emails and lists to the Bureau Manager and Supervisors detailing which social workers have not completed their distribution. You are equipped with Data from completed surveys that actually highlight support that the families are experiencing positive interactions with their social worker that is in alignment with the practice intervention.

Please spend the next 15 minutes playing the role of the Implementation Team Member. You are meeting with the Bureau Manager and to discuss the lack of distribution of the surveys by the Continuing Social Workers in this Bureau. Take into account your complete audience when being responsive.

# 1. KIPP Coaching Policy and Procedures<sup>1</sup>

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

1. Define the role of the KIPP coach in relation to the KIPP supervisor, KIPP therapist and the individuals, children, or families served by the provision of KIPP and PMTO.
2. Outline the *Coaching Service Delivery Plan*.
3. Describe the training, supervision and evaluation of the coach.
4. Operationalize the integrated role of the coaching functions in all implementation support systems, i.e., Implementation Drivers such as selection, training, fidelity assessments, and facilitative administration.

## Policy

To facilitate high-quality services to families and children, it is the policy of KIPP that:

1. Coaching ensures the well-being of children and families receiving the PMTO intervention therefore all KIPP therapists participate in regular coaching.
2. Regular coaching is provided for KIPP therapists as an integral part of the PMTO model.
3. Coaching activities facilitate KIPP therapists' acquisition of skills, identification of position-specific training needs, and development of general personal and professional skills and attributes.
4. Coaching is a teaching tool to build confidence, promote competence, and ensure adherence to PMTO methods and strategies.
5. Coaching is provided individually and in teams, by the KIPP supervisor, and other Certified PMTO Specialists who have received additional training and supervision to become qualified to coach.

## Values and Principles

Coaching is a function and not a position. PMTO coaching is based on a peer coaching model. This means that qualified coaches provide coaching to any therapist in the KIPP program regardless of their supervisory relationship. The PMTO model embraces a “support, support, support, teach” approach to working with families and as such coaches embrace this same approach to working with coachees. A core feature of PMTO is that the PMTO principles are enacted at every level. This means that supervisors, coaches, therapists, trainers, and fidelity raters exemplify the PMTO principles at every level. For example, coaches model and use many

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgment: This document was modeled from a template provided by the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN). The authors are Drs. Karen Blase and Allison Metz of NIRN, who gave permission for the non-commercial use of the template. Blase, K.A. & Metz, A. (2009), *Coaching Policy and Procedures Outline and Coaching Service Delivery Plan Template*

active teaching skills in their interactions with KIPP therapists that the KIPP therapists use with their families.

These values are supported by a variety of principles which include:

- Coaching is based on direct observation of a therapy session
- FIMP<sup>2</sup> dimensions for fidelity form the basis for feedback
- Problem solving strategies address questions specified by the coachee
- Active teaching deepens the knowledge of therapists

### ***Roles and Responsibilities of the KIPP Coach***

#### ***A. Primary Responsibility***

##### *Coaching to Improve Skillful Use of PMTO by KIPP therapists*

KIPP coaches provide coaching for KIPP therapists in training, therapists invited to certify, and certified therapists. Coaching is provided by a qualified KIPP coach. The following coaching responsibilities and formats are explained in more detail under the *Coaching Service Delivery Plan* section.

- Coaches provide strength-based, developmental FIMP feedback to KIPP therapists.
- KIPP coaches engage in the following types of coaching:
  - Group coaching in Workshops, Coaching Seminars, and team meetings with
    - Written feedback to coachee, and
    - Documentation in the Kansas Session Portal
  - Individual coaching with
    - Written feedback and/or
    - Verbal feedback (phone, video-conference, in-person), and
    - Documentation in the Kansas Session Portal

#### ***B. Additional Responsibilities***

##### *Actively Participate in the Development of Coaching Skills and Abilities*

KIPP coaches engage in continuous learning and support the development of other coaches by:

- Participating in coaching activities including those set by the Lead Coach to further skills and strengthen the KIPP coaching base.
- Receiving coaching (minimum of once per month) of their own PMTO work with families.
- Seeking out and responding to feedback from Lead Coach, ISII mentor, and/or peer coaches.

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<sup>2</sup> Fidelity of Implementation Rating System

*Record, Document, and Communicate Coaching Sessions and Feedback*

KIPP coaches and supervisors facilitate learning and communication by:

- Video recording and uploading group and one-on-one coaching sessions on the Kansas Session Portal to facilitate coaching feedback.
- Uploading written feedback to the KIPP therapist's session for which the coach has provided coaching.
- Responding to any inquiries or follow-up from a KIPP therapist based on coaching that has been provided. Communication is further facilitated by copying (cc) all of the following when responding to inquiries or providing follow up:
  - Supervisor of the KIPP therapist being coached
  - Lead Coach
  - Lead Trainer
  - ISII Mentor/Trainer
  - Relevant KIT Member based on agency affiliation
- Communicating any serious concerns (e.g., a growing misunderstanding of the technical details related to the model) observed in coaching to all of the following:
  - Supervisor of the KIPP therapist being coached
  - Lead Coach
  - Lead Trainer
  - ISII Mentor/Trainer
  - Relevant KIT Member based on agency affiliation
- Communicating any concerns that may impact training or indicate a need to further develop training material and experiences (e.g., you have noticed a pattern of misunderstanding of material in sessions you are coaching on the same topic) to the following:
  - Lead Coach
  - Lead Trainer
  - ISII Mentor/Trainer
  - Relevant KIT Member based on agency affiliation

### ***Qualifications for the Coach***

Coach candidates are selected by the KIT member for each agency. The following criteria must be met:

1. Be a certified PMTO Specialist or have submitted videos for certification
2. Carrying a full caseload of KIPP treatment cases
3. Recommended by the supervisor and approved by the agency's KIT member



### ***Training for the Coach***

- Coach candidates participate in 3 days of coach training.
- Coaches also participate in peer learning activities such as quarterly coaching practice days.

### ***Coaching for the Coach***

KIPP uses a peer coaching model; therefore, the coach is coached by other KIPP coaches. Coaches receive coaching feedback on minimum of 25% of coaching sessions.

#### **COACHING OF COACH**

- Types of support provided by the supervisor (e.g., ongoing training, modeling, written feedback, personal and emotional support, planning, problem-solving, direct observation of coaching sessions)
- When this support will be provided or available the coach
- How often this support will be provided
- Service provision and documentation review and feedback (e.g. is the coach meeting the service delivery plan goals; quality of written feedback)
- How often will the coaching service delivery plans and feedback documentation be reviewed?
- What feedback reports are provided to the coach by the coach's supervisor?....how often?  
....written or verbal?

### ***Evaluation of the Coach***

#### **EVALUATION OF COACH**

- When and how often evaluations will occur
- Who will contribute to these evaluations
- What will be evaluated
- What tool or method will be used to conduct the evaluation
- What is the certification process for coaches?
- How will ISII be involved ongoingly?
- NIRN has a 'coaching satisfaction survey' if you want to see that. Sites typically administer that annually.

## 2. KIPP Coaching Service Delivery Plan

### ***Coaching Frequency***

- Pre-certification: Minimum of twice a month, and total coaching sessions should be  $\geq 12$  by the time the therapist is invited to certify
- New or difficult situations: As needed/requested by therapist
- Post-certification: Minimum of once per month

### ***Coach to Practitioner Ratio***

#### COACH TO PRACTITIONER RATIO

- Number of [the position] that each coach is responsible for
- Number of hours the coach is expected to spend on the above roles and responsibilities per week (e.g., full-time, half-time)

### ***Coaching Formats and Procedures***

Coaching is delivered through four required and routinized processes, listed below:

- 1) Training for therapists
  - a) Workshops 3-5
  - b) Coaching Seminars (Seminar I after Workshop 3; Seminar II after Workshop 4)
  - c) Booster Sessions
- 2) Regularly scheduled team meetings (minimum of one per month)
- 3) Individual requests made for coaching to the therapist's Supervisor
- 4) Assignments made by KU in conjunction with the Lead Coach to ensure coaching on required PMTO content

While coaching may be delivered through any one of the processes above, it may occur in one of two formats: individual or group. Below are the procedures for each format.

#### **1. Group Coaching**

- *Group coaching* occurs at Workshops, Coaching Seminars, and in team meetings.
- Coaches provide feedback based on video recorded sessions that KIPP therapists have uploaded to the Kansas Session Portal. The session segments are reviewed in a group format using a reflective team that is made up of fellow KIPP therapists or trainees. The appendix describes the Group Coaching Process in more detail.

## 2. Individual Coaching

- Individual coaching may be delivered via written feedback or verbal feedback. This includes in-person sessions, phone calls, and video conferences.
- Below is a table that outlines the procedures for receiving individual coaching via written or verbal feedback.

<i><b>Who</b></i>	<i><b>Does What</b></i>	<i><b>When</b></i>
Therapist	Uploads all session videos to Kansas Session Portal (add definition for uploading)	Within 48 hours of completing session
Therapist	Completes session form on Kansas Session Portal; Identifies areas for feedback by completing session form	Within 48 hours of uploading video
Therapist	Emails request for additional coaching to Supervisor	As needed
Supervisor	Determines need for local versus rotation coaching; Emails request for rotation coaching to Coach Lead and cc KU	Within 48 hours of receiving coaching request
KU	Identifies coach and emails coach with cc to Supervisor of therapist, Supervisor of Coach, and Coach Lead	Within 24 hours of receiving coaching request
Coach	Views video and provides: 1) <i>Written feedback</i> on the Kansas Session Portal <i>or</i> 2) <i>Verbal feedback</i> (in person, phone call, video conference). The occurrence of verbal feedback is also documented on the Kansas Session Portal.	Written feedback within 7 calendar days of receiving the assignment from a KU email; <i>or</i> Contact the coachee within 72 hours to schedule verbal feedback. The verbal feedback should occur within 7 calendar days of receiving the assignment.

### *Note on Documentation:*

Although not every coaching session requires the coach to provide written feedback to the coachee, the coach is always required to document the occurrence of the coaching session in the Kansas Session Portal.

### COACHING ON REQUIRED PMTO CONTENT

- Do we need to explain how coaching is determined and assigned for required content?

## RISE Fidelity Assessment Tool

	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>SOME- WHAT</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1	The youth is participating in an average of 3 CCT meetings per month.	1	2	3	
2	At least one natural support is participating in an average of 3 CCT meetings per month since the start of Phase 2 of services.	1	2	3	
3	The Facilitator incorporated the youth's strengths in the strategies listed in the Plan of Care (POC).	1	2	3	
4	The Facilitator incorporated the natural supports' strengths in the strategies listed in the POC.	1	2	3	
5	The Facilitator incorporated the natural supports' culture, values and beliefs in the strategies listed in the POC.	1	2	3	
6	The Facilitator identified the youth's LGBTQ-related needs in the POC.	1	2	3	

	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>SOME- WHAT</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
7	The Facilitator identified the youth's permanency needs in the POC.	1	2	3	
8	The Facilitator involved the youth in developing the POC.	1	2	3	
9	The Facilitator involved the natural supports in creating the POC.	1	2	3	

### Scoring Guide

Measure	Yes (3) If ALL criteria listed met	Somewhat (2) If ANY criteria listed met	No (1) If ANY criteria listed met
1. The youth is participating in an average of 3 CCT meetings per month.	Ok if the total is reached commutatively – i.e., if Phase 2 of services started on May 1, and fidelity assessment is happening July 1, and the youth participated in 2 meetings in May and in 4 meetings in June, the practitioner would score a '3.'	The youth has participated in less than 3 CCT meetings per month, on average.	The youth has never participated in a CCT meeting.

Measure	Yes (3) If ALL criteria listed met	Somewhat (2) If ANY criteria listed met	No (1) If ANY criteria listed met
2. At least one natural support is participating in an average of 3 CCT meetings per month since the start of Phase 2 of services.	Ok if the total is reached commutatively – i.e., if Phase 2 of services started on May 1, and fidelity assessment is happening July 1, and the youth participated in 2 meetings in May and in 4 meetings in June, the practitioner would score a '3.'  Does not have to be the same natural support	Natural supports have participated in less than 3 CCT meetings per month, on average.	A natural support has never participated in a CCT meeting.
3. The Facilitator incorporated the youth's strengths in the strategies listed in the POC.	Completed within 30 days of the first CCT meeting or Youth Specialist meeting (whichever came first)  Updated every 3 months after initial completion.  Specific information about youth strengths are incorporated into the POC strategies.	Vague information about youth's strengths are incorporated into the POC strategies.	POC never completed  Vague information about youth's strengths are incorporated into the POC strategies.
4. The Facilitator incorporated the natural supports' strengths in the strategies listed in the POC.	Completed within 30 days of the first CCT meeting or Youth Specialist meeting (whichever came first)  Updated every 3 months after initial completion  Specific information about natural supports' strengths in the meeting minutes and case notes is incorporated into the POC.	Vague information about youth's strengths are incorporated into the POC strategies.	POC never completed  No information about youth's strengths are incorporated into the POC strategies.
5. The Facilitator incorporated the natural supports' culture, values and/or beliefs in the strategies listed in the POC.	Completed within 30 days of the first CCT meeting or Youth Specialist meeting (whichever came first)  Updated every 3 months after initial completion  Specific information about the natural supports' culture, values and beliefs is incorporated into the POC.	Vague information about the natural supports' culture, values and beliefs is incorporated into the POC.	POC never completed  No information about the natural supports' culture, values and beliefs is incorporated into the POC.



Measure	Yes (3) If ALL criteria listed met	Somewhat (2) If ANY criteria listed met	No (1) If ANY criteria listed met
6. The Facilitator identified the youth's LGBTQ-related needs in the POC.	<p>Completed within 30 days of the first CCT meeting or Youth Specialist meeting (whichever came first)</p> <p>Updated every 3 months after initial completion</p> <p>Specific information about the youth's LGBTQ-related needs is incorporated in the POC.</p>	Vague information about the youth's LGBTQ-related needs is incorporated into the POC.	<p>POC never completed</p> <p>No information about the youth's LGBTQ-related needs is incorporated into the POC.</p>
7. The Facilitator identified the youth's permanency needs in the POC.	<p>Completed within 30 days of the first CCT meeting or Youth Specialist meeting (whichever came first)</p> <p>Updated every 3 months after initial completion</p> <p>Specific information about the youth's permanency needs is incorporated into the POC.</p>	Vague information about the youth's permanency needs is incorporated into the POC.	<p>POC never completed</p> <p>No information about the youth's permanency needs is incorporated into the POC.</p>
8. The Facilitator involved the youth in developing the POC.	<p>Completed within 30 days of the first CCT meeting or Youth Specialist meeting (whichever came first)</p> <p>Updated every 3 months after initial completion</p> <p>CCT meeting minutes reflect that the youth provided specific inputs into the creation of the POC during CCT meetings.</p> <p>Inputs provided by the youth at CCT meetings are reflected in the POC.</p>	<p>CCT meeting minutes reflect that the youth provided vague inputs into the creation of the POC during CCT meetings</p> <p>Very few of inputs provided by the youth are reflected in the POC.</p>	<p>POC never completed</p> <p>The youth never provided inputs into the development of the POC at CCT meetings.</p> <p>The youth did provide inputs at CCT meetings, but none of the youth's inputs are reflected in the POC.</p>

Measure	Yes (3) If ALL criteria listed met	Somewhat (2) If ANY criteria listed met	No (1) If ANY criteria listed met
9. The Facilitator involved the natural supports in creating the POC.	<p>Completed within 30 days of the first CCT meeting or Youth Specialist meeting (whichever came first)</p> <p>Updated every 3 months after initial completion</p> <p>CCT meeting minutes reflect that the natural supports' provided specific inputs into the creation of the POC during CCT meetings.</p> <p>Inputs provided by the natural supports' at CCT meetings are reflected in the POC.</p>	<p>CCT meeting minutes reflect that the natural supports' provided vague inputs into the creation of the POC during CCT meetings.</p> <p>Very few of inputs provided by the natural supports' are reflected in the POC.</p>	<p>POC never completed</p> <p>The natural supports' never provided inputs into the development of the POC at CCT meetings.</p> <p>The natural supports' did provide inputs at CCT meetings, but none of the natural supports' inputs are reflected in the POC</p>

## **Examples of Using Data to Understand and Improve Implementation**

Best practices in implementation remind us that the ongoing use of “on the ground” data is critical to support the use of innovations and for achieving outcomes. When organization and systems stakeholders regularly review and use data and other information to continuously improve the implementation of innovations, they are taking strong steps to ensure that innovations are sustainable and ultimately successful in producing expected benefits for children and families. The examples below illustrate various ways of using “on the ground” data to improve implementation efforts. For the purposes of this example, the innovation being implemented is a statewide practice model that is being rolled out by county.

### **How can we start?**

Trying to figure out what data needs to be gathered and why can be a daunting task. Knowing where to start – what questions you may have, where to find information to answer those questions – is not always easy. Sometimes it can help to view these data questions in a different way. It may help to reframe how you think about it.

### **What do we want to know?**

Instead of trying to draft a series of specific questions, think about the implementation of the practice model in different counties, each with its own child welfare agency and community partners. Think about what might be useful to know if you wanted to try to improve implementation of that practice model.

- What do people involved with the implementation process want to know?
- What might be useful for the implementation team in each county to know?
- What do administrators want to know?
- What do stakeholders want to know?

Different people may want to know different things, so explore this from multiple perspectives. Figuring out what you want to know can lead to finding that information and then looking at it in different ways to explore what you want to know.

The following pages take a closer look at generating interest in using data. They begin with Training, Coaching, and Fidelity. You will find some sample questions, scenarios, and data sources to explore what you might want to know. You will also find some guidance and items to consider when trying to organize, present, and distribute the data. Additionally, it will be important to explore what the data may be saying and the resulting next steps and additional questions. The overarching goal is for you to feel empowered to come up with your own situations and questions to explore.

Curiosity about data starts with a few questions. Upon seeing the utility of using data, you can expand and embed this ability within the organization for ongoing quality improvement.

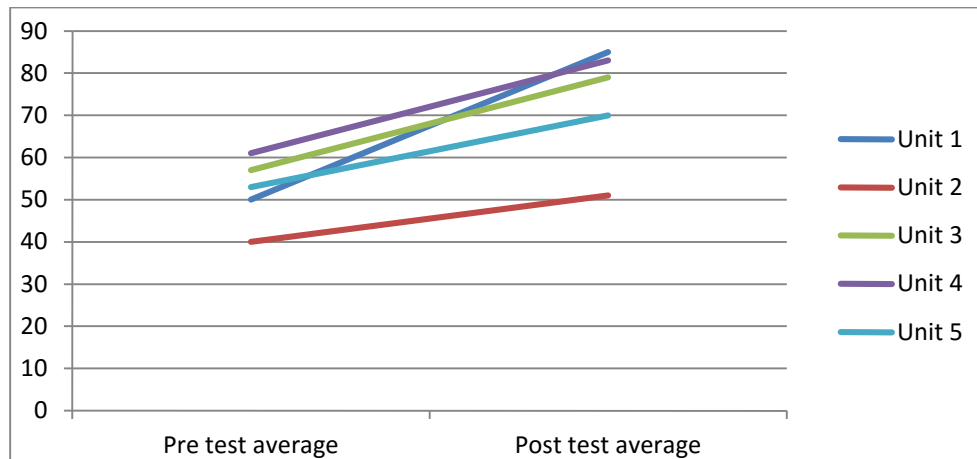
## Sample Scenarios and Questions

Training	Coaching	Fidelity
<i>Training helps practitioners learn when, where, how, why, and with whom to use new approaches and new skills. It helps them practice and gain confidence.</i>	<i>Coaching provides practitioners with practical information along with advice, encouragement, and opportunities to practice and use skills specific to the innovation.</i>	<i>A fidelity assessment is designed to assess the use of the skills that are reflected in the selection criteria, taught in training, and reinforced and expanded in coaching processes.</i>
<b>SAMPLE SCENARIO:</b> Over the past few years, the county has implemented a new practice model. It was not feasible to train everyone at once, so multiple trainings were held. There is continuous turnover in the field, so the county holds regular trainings to familiarize the new hires with the new practice model. In total, the county has held six different training sessions, with pre/post tests to measure knowledge.	<b>SAMPLE SCENARIO:</b> All of the units that participated in training also participate in bi-weekly coaching with the practitioner's supervisor. The supervisor keeps a log of the practice model areas in which the practitioner needs coaching and how often each topic is covered. They regularly report this information to the implementation team. The Implementation Team has decided to hold a booster session and needs to determine in which area to focus the booster session.	<b>SAMPLE SCENARIO:</b> The units that participated in training and coaching have all completed their first Fidelity Assessment (FA) and some have moved on to their second, depending on when they were originally trained. The practice model calls for all practitioners to undergo their first FA approximately 3 months (about 90 days) after training. The Implementation team wants to look across units and assess where each unit is in relation to that goal.
<b><i>What do we want to know?</i></b> <i>E.g., How are knowledge/competencies about the innovation changing after training?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul>	<b><i>What do we want to know?</i></b> <i>E.g., How are coaching sessions addressing key components of the innovation? Among whom?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul>	<b><i>What do we want to know?</i></b> <i>E.g., When are fidelity assessments happening, among whom?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> <li>■</li> </ul>

## Training – SAMPLE ILLUSTRATION

Implementation best practices indicate that good training includes opportunities to practice and demonstrate skills. Data collected about knowledge and skills are “fed forward” so that ongoing coaching can focus on strengths and areas for improvement. Organizations make use of these data to continue to improve training methods and to inform other recruiting and hiring processes.

### “We Want to Know: How Knowledge Changes as a Result of Training”



### What may these Training data be saying?

- What is the overarching message?
  - For example, practitioners' knowledge improves upon completing the training. All cohorts improved their scores and most have similar trajectories.
- How can this be useful? (e.g., investigate lower scores for Unit 2)
  - Training for Unit 2 was held the second week in December. Many workers left early. Other trainings were held during less busy times of the year.
  - Lesson learned: The weeks preceding holidays might not be a good time to schedule training as practitioners could be distracted.
- What other information would be helpful?
  - It might be helpful to know more about the characteristics of the practitioners in each of the Units. Did some have more or less experience? More or less education? Was it the same trainer or different trainers doing the training?

### Next Steps

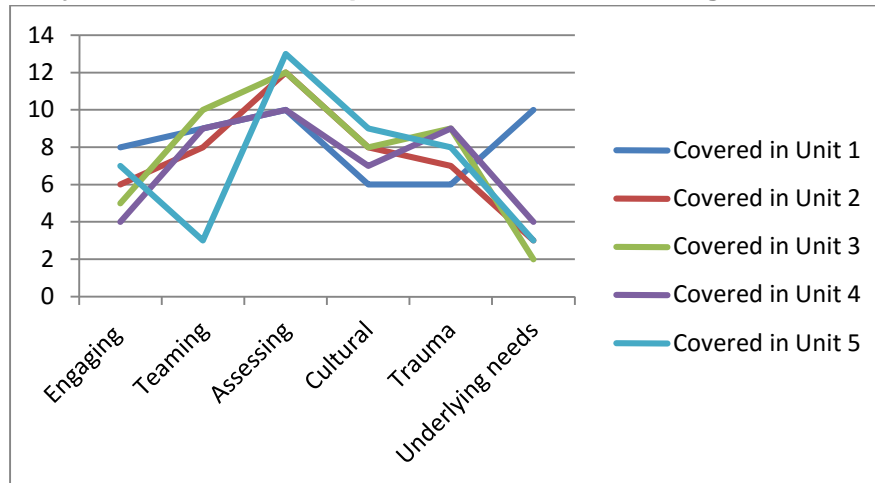
Data can provide lots of clues for understanding and improving implementation supports. Explore these additional questions and possible sources of data and add more of your own.

What do you want to know?	How are you going to know it? (data source)
How many practitioners have been trained?	The number of practitioners who completed a post-test
Were practitioners happy with training?	The results of the training satisfaction survey
Is there any particular area that needs a follow-up training session?	Analyze results of post tests for trends
OTHER:	OTHER:

## Coaching – SAMPLE ILLUSTRATION

Implementation best practices indicate that coaching is essential because the skills needed by successful practitioners that are assessed during selection and introduced in training are often learned on the job with the help of a coach. Organizations make use of the data from coaching sessions and fidelity assessments to improve coaching methods.

**“What we want to know:  
Frequency with which main topics are coached to during sessions by unit”**



### What may these Coaching data be saying?

- What is the overarching message?
  - Assessing is a topic that is covered in many practitioners coaching sessions
  - Most of the units cover each of the topics with a similar frequency
- How can this be useful?
  - Assessing might be a good topic for the next booster session
  - It might also be useful to do more digging to investigate:
    - Why has Unit 5 not had much coaching around Teaming?
    - Why is Unit 1 covering underlying needs so often?
- What other information would be helpful?
  - When did each unit participate in training?
  - Who was their trainer?
  - What is the background of the supervisors/coaches?

### Next Steps

Data can provide lots of clues for understanding and improving implementation supports. Explore these additional questions and possible sources of data and add more of your own.

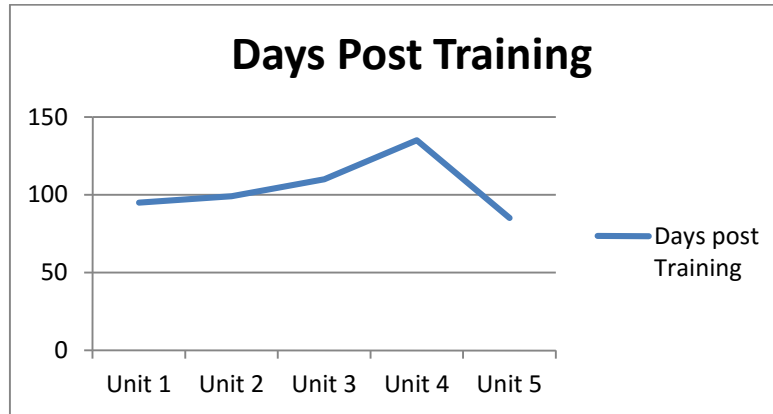
What do you want to know?	How are you going to know it? (data source)
How many practitioners have participated in coaching?	# of coaching sessions as submitted by the supervisor and/or coach on the coaching tracking sheet
What is the focus of coaching as provided?	Subjects as documented on the coaching tracking sheet
Were practitioners happy with coaching?	The results of the coaching satisfaction survey
Is a particular topic being covered more often in coaching?	By looking at the coaching tracking sheets and analyzing which subjects appear most frequently
OTHER:	OTHER:



## Fidelity – SAMPLE ILLUSTRATION

Assessments of practitioner fidelity provide feedback useful to key implementation staff (interviewers, trainers, coaches, program managers) regarding the progress of implementation efforts and the usefulness of selection, training, and coaching methods. Organizations make use of these data to continue to improve fidelity assessment methods.

**“We Want to Know: The Number of days between training and first fidelity assessment”**



### What may these Fidelity Assessment data be saying?

- What is the overarching message?
  - On average, most of the units completed their "FA's" in a reasonable amount of time
  - On average, Unit 4 is over a month late in completing their FA's
- How can this be useful?
  - Good way to track the progress of all the units in the completion of FA's
  - Prompt the setting of an acceptable time period for completion
  - Prompt a follow-up with Unit 4 and ask
    - Are there any issues impacting their ability to complete the FA's?
    - How can you help facilitate completion of the FA's for their unit?
- What other information would be helpful?
  - The scores of the practitioners in relation to the timing of the assessment

### Next Steps

Data can provide lots of clues for understanding and improving implementation supports. Explore these additional questions and possible sources of data and add more of your own.

What do you want to know?	How are you going to know it? (data source)
How many fidelity assessments are done?	# of practitioners with a fidelity score in the database
How often are assessments being done?	The dates/range of fidelity assessments (in database)
How long (on average) after training are fidelity assessment occurring?	The date the fidelity assessment was done in relation to the date the training post test was completed
Are practitioners implementing the model as intended?	The score achieved on the fidelity assessment (in relation to established threshold score or definition)
OTHER:	OTHER: