



*Head Start A to Z, 2.0*  
**Leadership and Governance**  
The Foundation for Successful  
Head Start Programs



**NATIONAL CENTER ON**  
Program Management and Fiscal Operations

# Six Guiding Principles for A to Z Trainings

1

Successful programs are learning organizations.

2

The effective delivery of services grows out of strong systems.

3

Sound decision-making is informed by quality data.

4

Relationship-building is at the heart of transformational leadership.

5

School readiness for all is our driving goal.

6

Culturally and linguistically diverse organizations rely on intentional, specific, and coordinated approaches.

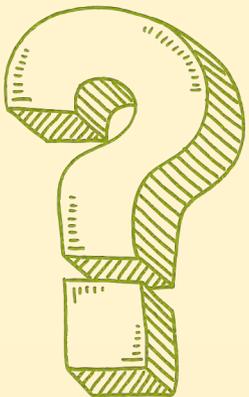
# Introductory Activity



What is currently working well within your program's leadership and governance structure?



What challenges are you experiencing?



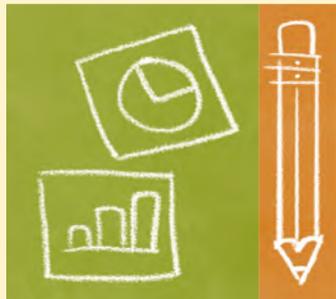
What do you hope to learn about building on your strengths and addressing your challenges?

# Learning Objectives

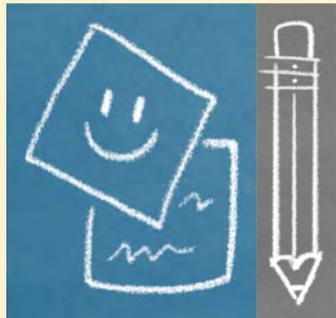
**As a result of this session, participants will:**



- Learn the foundational elements of systems and systems thinking
- Recognize how Head Start management systems support leadership and governance

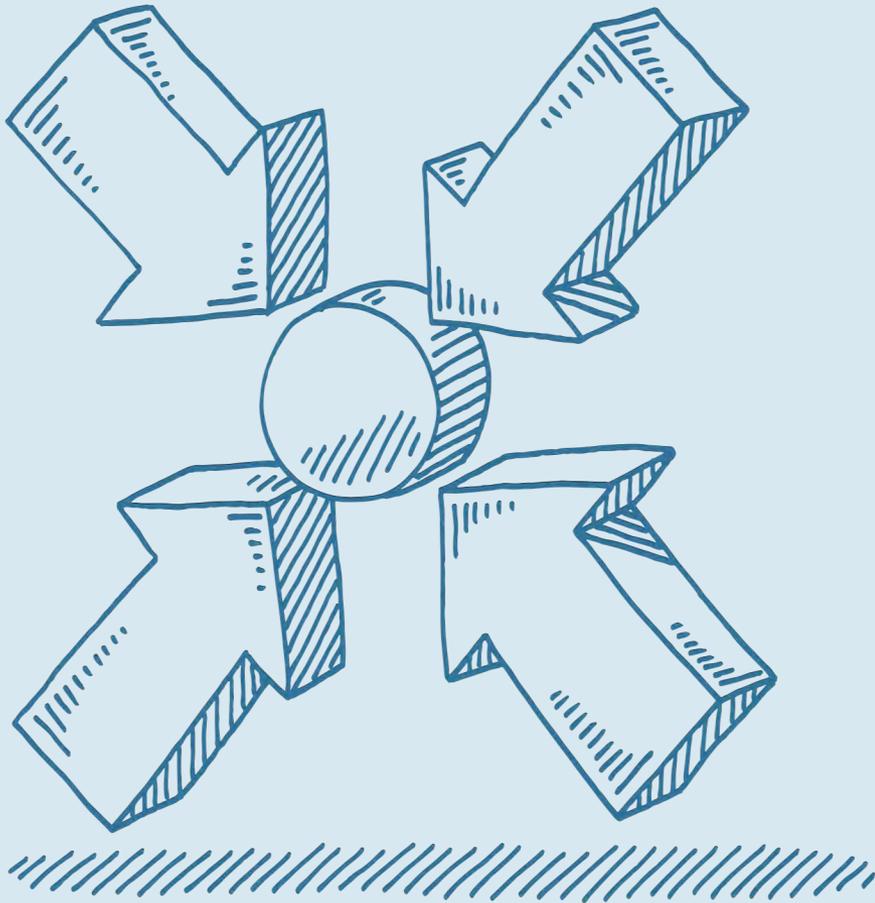


- Explore Head Start leadership and governance through the lenses of structure, processes, and relationships



- Identify strategies and resources for strengthening leadership and governance capacity

# Leadership and Governance



- Set program direction
- Exercise fiscal and legal oversight
- Create a balanced representation of voices that ensure stakeholder input, diversity, and accountability to the community

# A system is...



"...a group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent parts that form a complex and unified whole with a specific purpose."

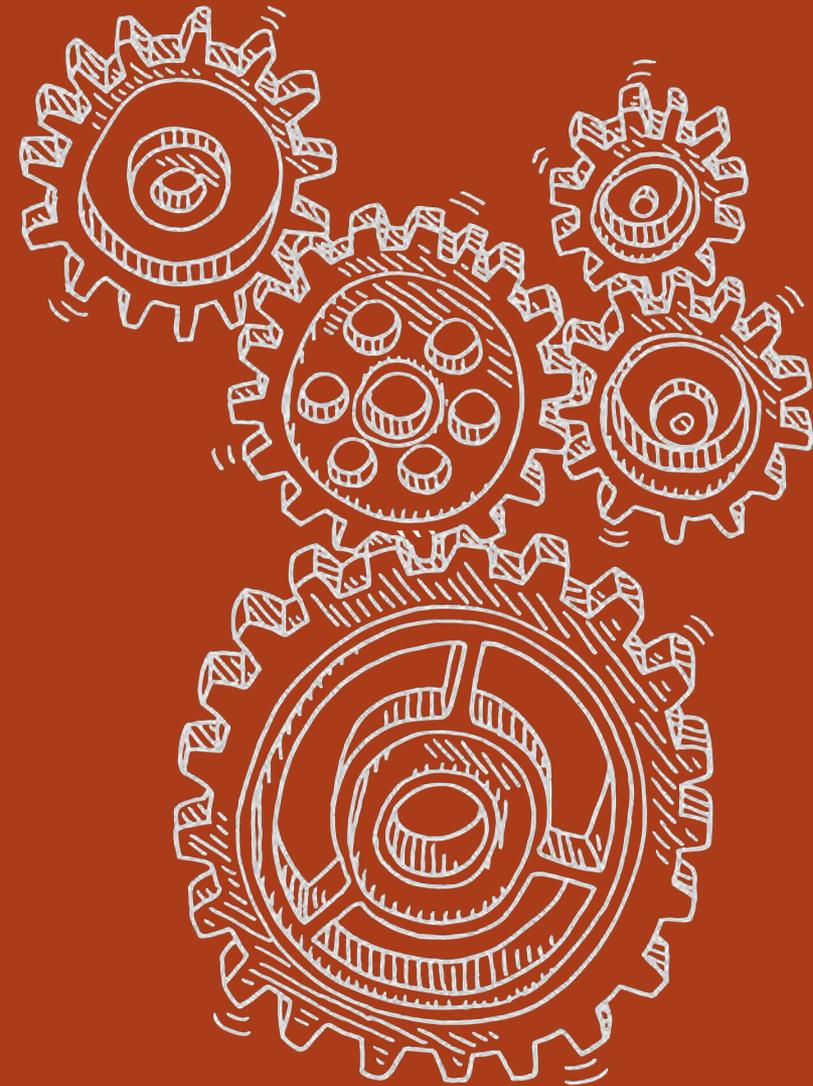
Source: Daniel H. Kim, *Introduction to Systems Thinking*.  
Westford, MA: Pegasus Communications, Inc., 1999.

# Characteristics of Systems

- Interrelated parts
- Form complex whole
- Specific purpose



# Core Concepts of Systems Thinking



- **Explores** how various elements within a system influence one another
- **Studies** relationships between interacting parts over time
- **Looks** for patterns and seeks root causes of problems

# Head Start Management Systems Wheel

Five-Year  
Project Period



# Inclusive Leadership: Head Start Perspective

## Inclusive Leadership

Management staff's day-to-day activities and operating reports inform decisions made by the Policy Council and governing body or Tribal Council.

The Policy Council determines program direction.

The governing body or Tribal Council's legal and fiscal oversight builds on the management staff and Policy Council's unique insight and perspectives.

The three entities of Head Start leadership—management staff, Policy Council, and governing body or Tribal Council—work together to support grantees on their five-year journeys, particularly around program planning.

# Keep in Mind



While Head Start program leadership is an inclusive process, the ultimate responsibility lies with the governing body or Tribal Council.

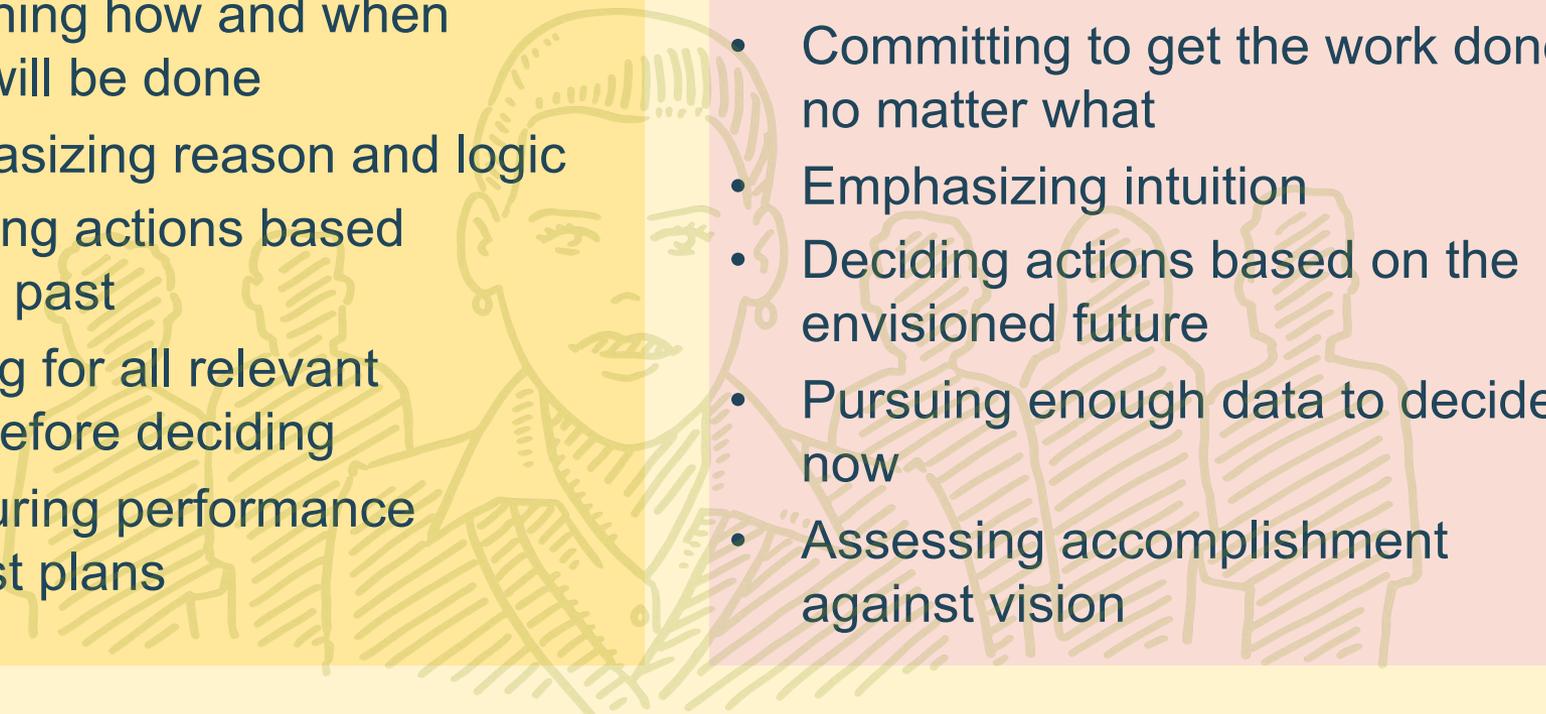
# Management vs. Leadership

## Management

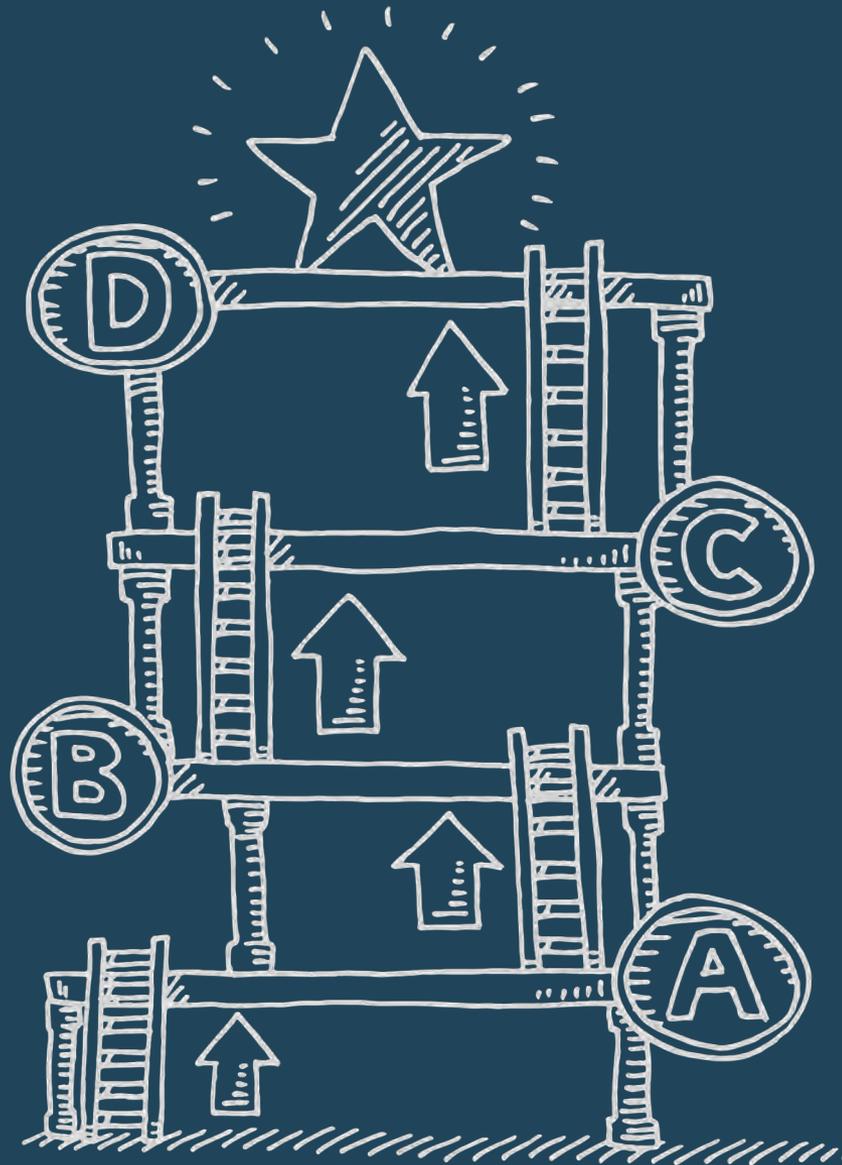
- Working within boundaries
- Controlling resources
- Planning to reach goals
- Designing how and when work will be done
- Emphasizing reason and logic
- Deciding actions based on the past
- Waiting for all relevant data before deciding
- Measuring performance against plans

## Leadership

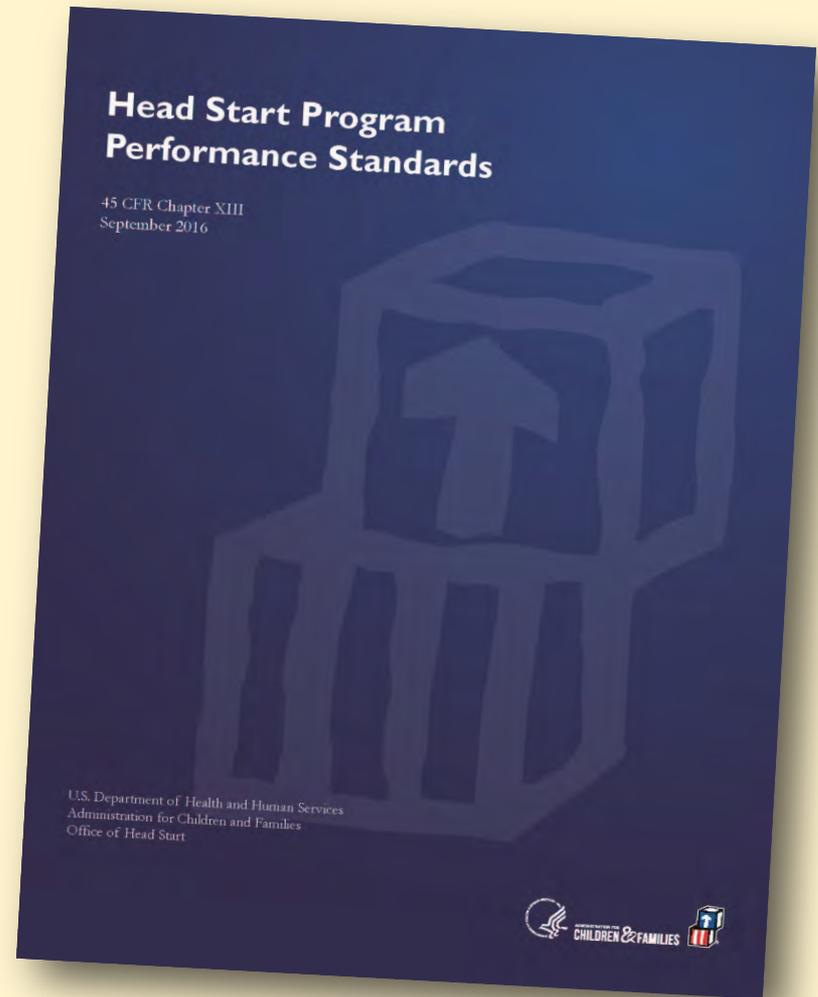
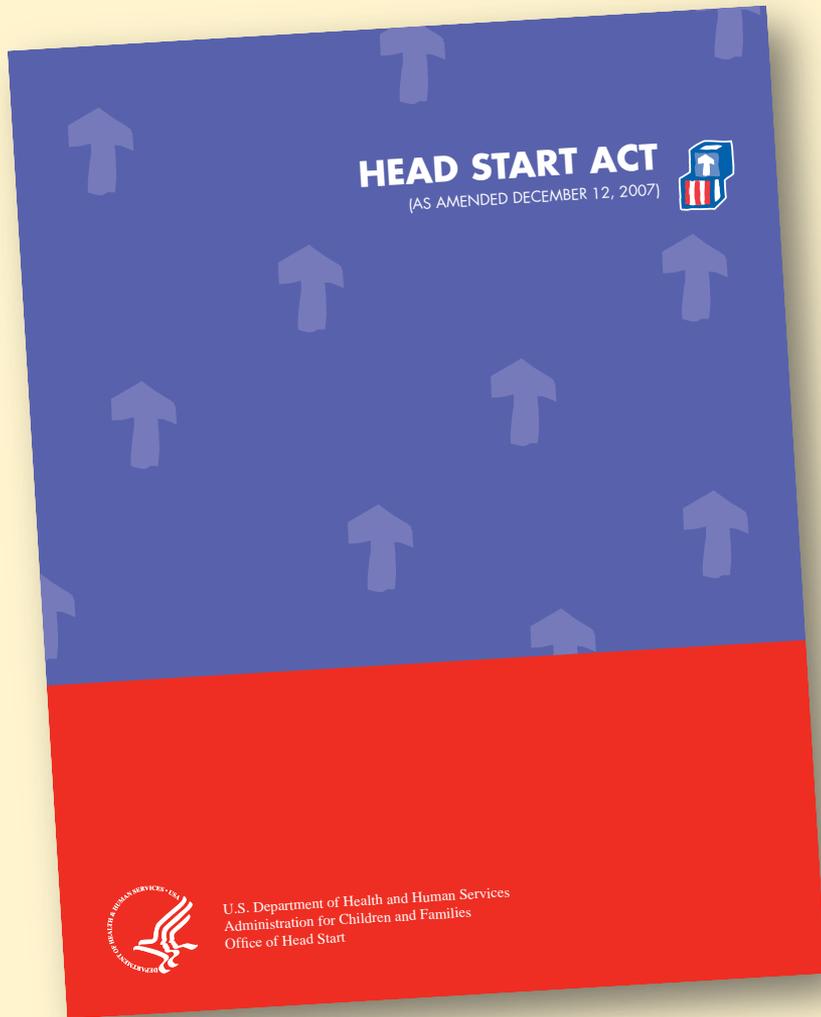
- Expanding boundaries
- Influencing others
- Creating a vision of a possible future
- Committing to get the work done no matter what
- Emphasizing intuition
- Deciding actions based on the envisioned future
- Pursuing enough data to decide now
- Assessing accomplishment against vision



# Leadership and Governance: Structure

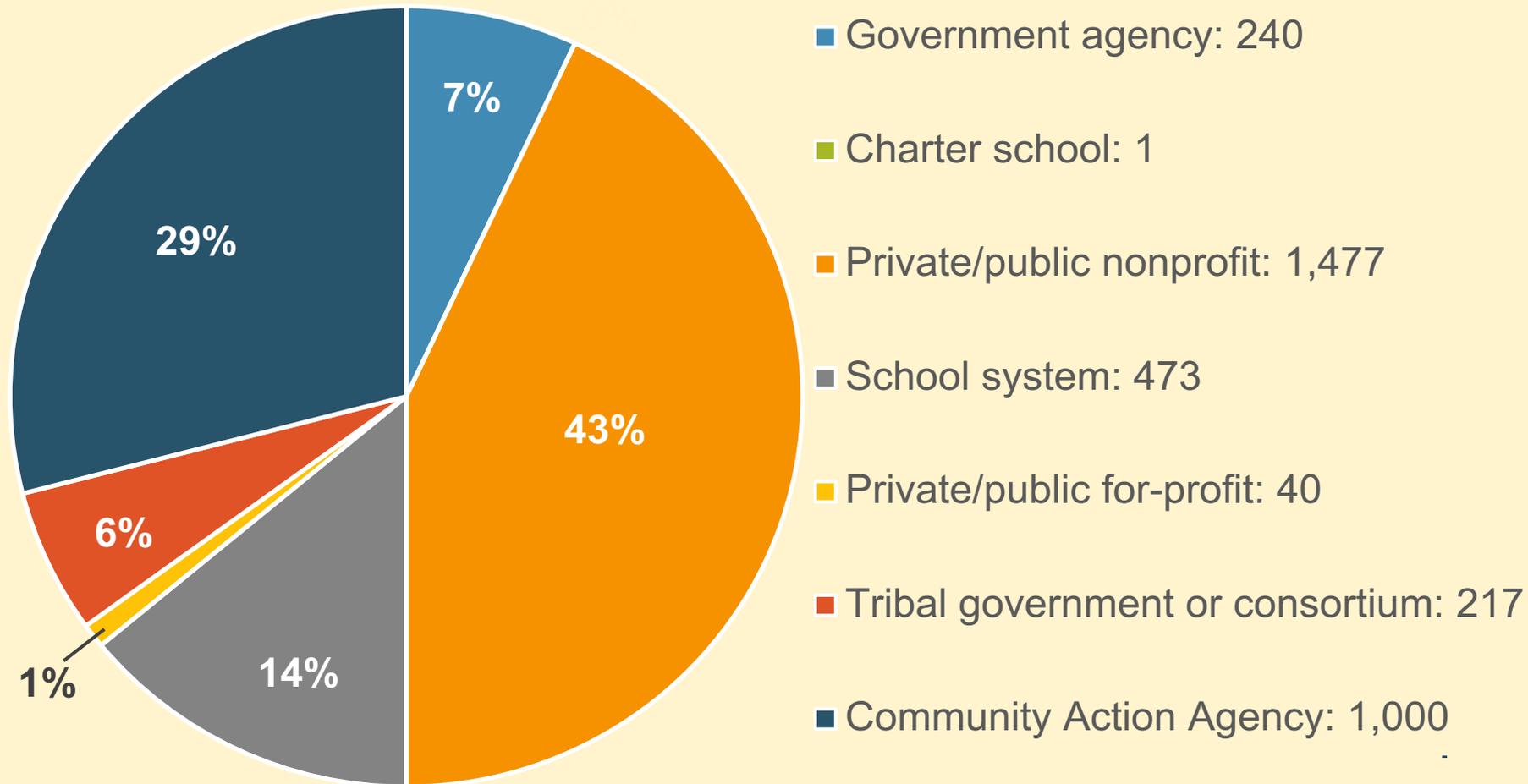


# Head Start Act and HSPPS Requirements



# Auspices (Organizational Hosts)

## Head Start Programs by Type of Auspice (*n*=3,448)



# Head Start Leadership and Governance



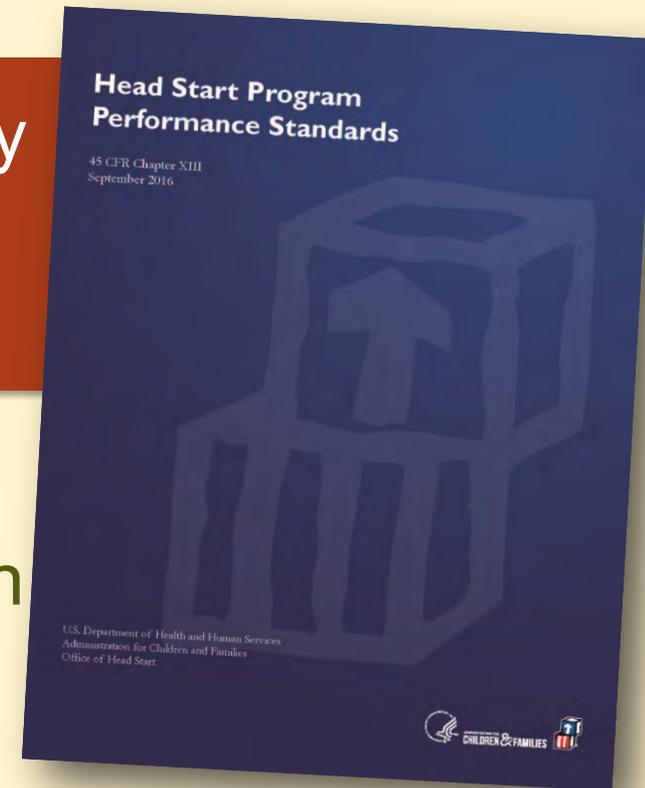
# Leadership and Governance Composition



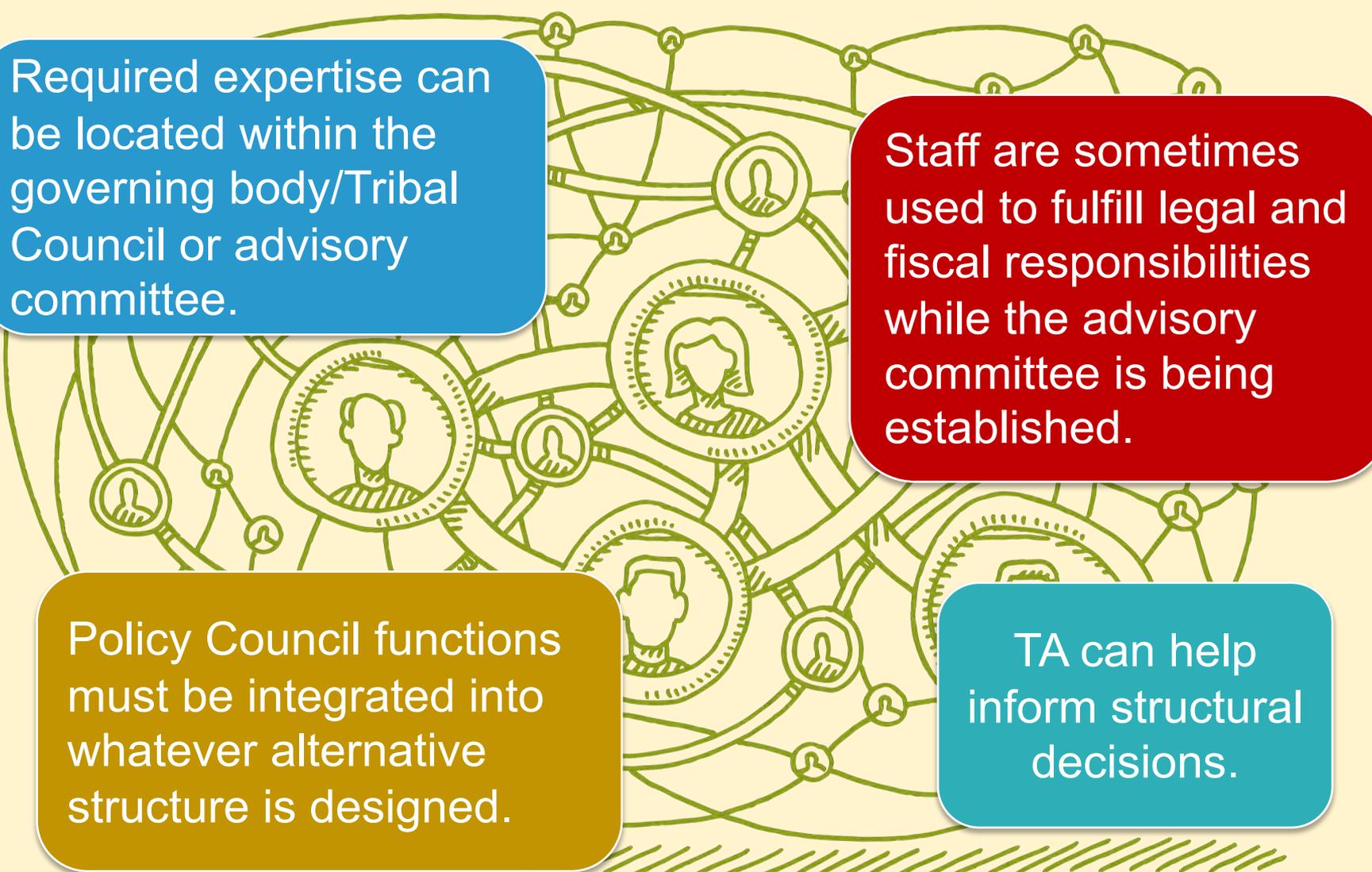
# Use of Advisory Committees

If a governing body uses an advisory committee to oversee its program governance responsibilities, it must:

- Establish the structure, communication, and oversight in such a way that the governing body/Tribal Council maintains its legal and fiscal responsibility
- Notify the responsible HHS official of its intent to establish such a committee



# Lessons



Required expertise can be located within the governing body/Tribal Council or advisory committee.

Staff are sometimes used to fulfill legal and fiscal responsibilities while the advisory committee is being established.

Policy Council functions must be integrated into whatever alternative structure is designed.

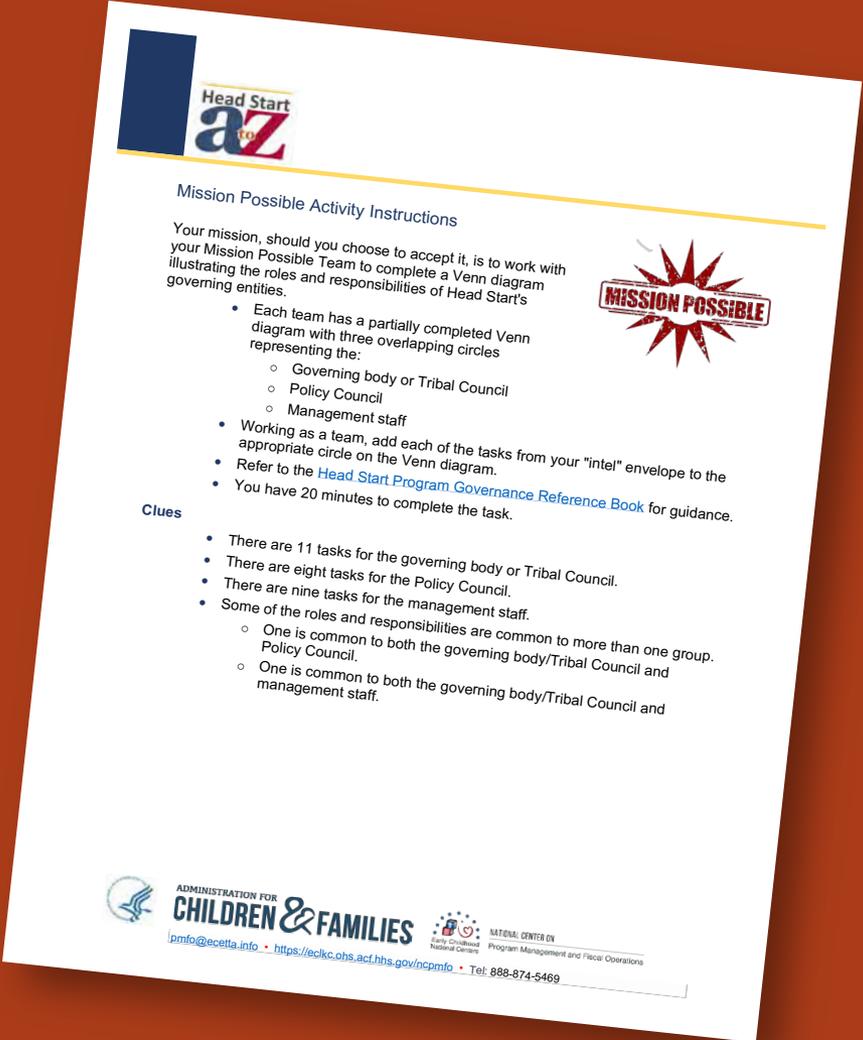
TA can help inform structural decisions.

# Leadership and Governance: Processes



# Mission Possible Activity

- Draw tasks from your envelope one at a time
- Place them where they go on the handout
- Use *Head Start Program Governance Reference Book* for guidance
- Take 20 minutes



The handout features the Head Start AZ logo at the top left. The title 'Mission Possible Activity Instructions' is centered. Below it, a paragraph explains the activity's purpose. A 'MISSION POSSIBLE' starburst graphic is on the right. The instructions are followed by a bulleted list of steps. A 'Clues' section provides additional information. At the bottom, logos for the Administration for Children & Families and the National Center on Early Childhood Program Management and Fiscal Operations are displayed, along with contact information.

**Head Start AZ**

### Mission Possible Activity Instructions

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to work with your Mission Possible Team to complete a Venn diagram illustrating the roles and responsibilities of Head Start's governing entities.



- Each team has a partially completed Venn diagram with three overlapping circles representing the:
  - Governing body or Tribal Council
  - Policy Council
  - Management staff
- Working as a team, add each of the tasks from your "in/en" envelope to the appropriate circle on the Venn diagram.
- Refer to the [Head Start Program Governance Reference Book](#) for guidance.
- You have 20 minutes to complete the task.

#### Clues

- There are 11 tasks for the governing body or Tribal Council.
- There are eight tasks for the Policy Council.
- There are nine tasks for the management staff.
- Some of the roles and responsibilities are common to more than one group.
  - One is common to both the governing body/Tribal Council and Policy Council.
  - One is common to both the governing body/Tribal Council and management staff.

 ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

 NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood  
Program Management and Fiscal Operations

[pmfo@ecetta.info](mailto:pmfo@ecetta.info) • <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/nccpmfo> • Tel: 888-874-5469

# Key Activities: Developing Bylaws

Activity	Management Team	Policy Council/Committee	Governing Body/Tribal Council
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>			
<b>Developing Bylaws</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft governing body/Tribal Council and Policy Council bylaws and amendments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit decisions regarding Policy Council bylaws to governing body/Tribal Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt bylaws and amendments for governing body/Tribal Council and Policy Council</li> </ul>
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# Key Activities: Monitoring Program Performance

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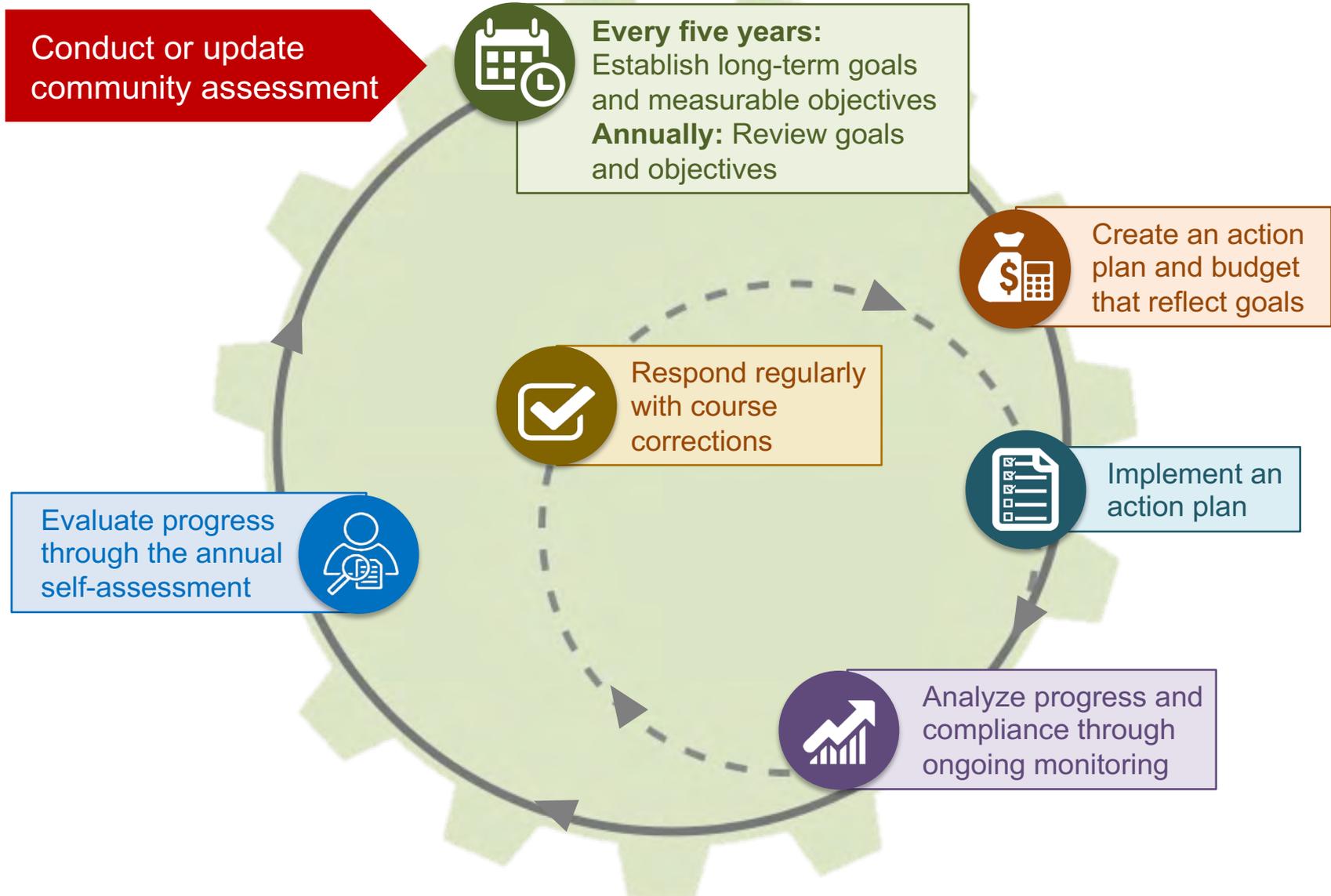
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# Head Start Leadership and Governance



# Program Planning for Continuous Improvement



# Risk Assessment: Key Considerations

- Fiscal policies and procedures
- Financial audits
- Reporting and disclosure
- Board composition

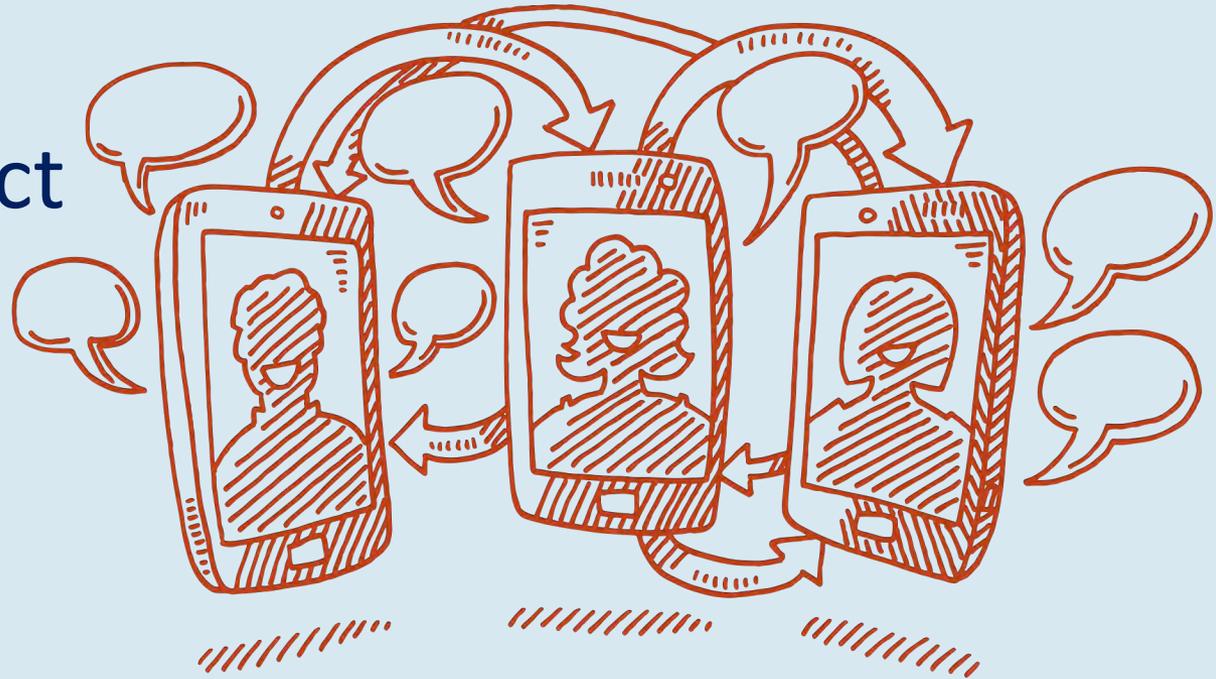


# Leadership and Governance: Relationships



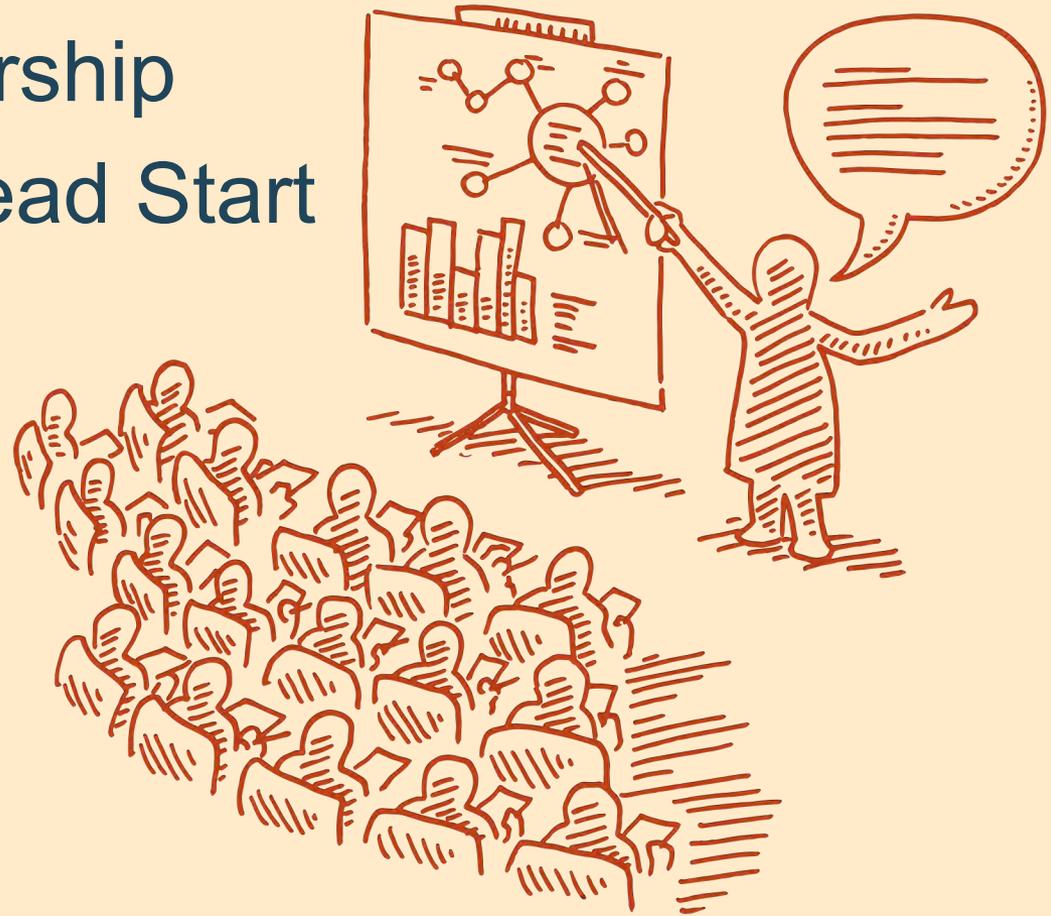
# Foundation of Effective Partnerships

- Good communication across and within organizations
- Mutual respect
- Feeling that each is a full partner
- Ability to call one another when needed



# Factors in Effective Communication

- Committed leadership
- Trust between Head Start director and fiscal officer
- A common vision and goal
- Joint training sessions for staff
- A plan for ongoing communication



# Leadership and Governance Communication



# Assessing Your Readiness

- Structural
- Fiduciary
- Strategic direction
- Leadership
- Community relations
- Decision-making



# Head Start Leadership and Governance Training

The screenshot displays the website for Head Start Leadership and Governance Training. At the top left, the text reads "HEAD START LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE". At the top right, there are links for "HOME | RESOURCES". A "Navigation Tips" callout box is visible. The main content area features a vertical list of six dark blue buttons with white text: "Head Start Vision, Values, and Mission", "Head Start Law and Regulations", "Your Team", "Your Tools", "Be a Leader", and "Final Assessment". Below these buttons is a legend with three items: a dark blue circle labeled "Available", a yellow circle with a clock icon labeled "Started", and a green circle with a checkmark icon labeled "Finished". On the right side of the page, there is a photograph of a smiling woman with curly hair, wearing a grey blazer, with her arms crossed.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/organizational-leadership/learning-module/head-start-leadership-governance-training>

# Key Messages

Individuals in leadership and governance roles must view their work through a systems lens.

Head Start management systems support leadership and governance functions.



Head Start leadership and governance rely on effective structures, processes, and relationships.

Leaders should proactively work to strengthen leadership and governance capacity.

# Closing Reflections

What have I learned?

What will I do with what I've learned?

What excites or concerns me about what I learned?



Adapted from Professional Development Guides for Implementing PFCE

# Related ECLKC Resources



## About Us

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/office-head-start-ohs>



## Head Start Programs

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/article/head-start-programs>



## Head Start Act

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/head-start-act>



## Contact PMFO

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