Self-Assessment: Your Annual Journey

Text Version

Overview

Hop on board for a course that will let you explore ways to make this year's Self-Assessment process your best ever.

Best practices for Self-Assessment are not unlike those for a successful road trip:

- You plan,
- You pack, and
- You pick your travel companions with care.

See what an impact you can have when you:

- Focus on your strengths
- Use data in a smart way
- Incorporate fresh perspectives, and
- Have meaningful dialogue

Avoid unnecessary detours and obstacles that could sap your time and energy and discover how Self-Assessment can be an **energizing** process, one that propels you to greater accomplishments and a stronger program.

This course will help you embrace the way the process helps you reflect on what you've accomplished over the year and pushes you to keep dreaming bigger for the future.
Come along for the ride.

Start your engine!

Welcome to Your Journey

You are embarking on a virtual journey through an online learning module that will help you learn about best practices for conducting your annual Self-Assessment.

Self-Assessment helps you check the progress you're making on your goals and objectives, identify systemic issues, and consider new innovations. It is also an important way to examine quality, and work to continually improve your program. Self-Assessment is a key part of the Program Planning Cycle.

Remember, you must include the results of your annual Self-Assessment in your five-year grant application.

Download the Program Planning Cycle from the Resources web page.

This module will take about an hour to complete. It is structured around five phases. You can complete this module sequentially, or you can select just those activities that meet your needs.

We hope you enjoy your journey!

Five Phases of Self-Assessment

There are five phases of the Self-Assessment process. This training module addresses each of the five phases.

In addition, before the actual Self-Assessment process begins, there is a preparation time in which data from ongoing monitoring is reviewed and summarized to provide focus to the Self-Assessment process.

After Self-Assessment, the Self-Assessment (SA) report helps guide program planning. Both the preparation phase and the post-Self-Assessment phase are also addressed in this module.

Phases of the Self-Assessment Process

This training is divided into seven sections.

1. PRE
2. Phase 1: Design the Process
3. Phase 2: Engage the Team
4. Phase 3: Analyze and Dialogue
5. Phase 4: Recommend
6. Phase 5: Prepare Report
7. POST

PRE

Director and Management Team

- Ask important questions about the data they have collected thus far
- Prioritize areas for investigation
- Create summaries of the data related to areas of focus

Phase 1: Design the Process

Director

- Develop plan for Self-Assessment
- Identify and invite internal and external team members
- Consult with Policy Council and governing body or Tribal Council, and seek approval of Self-Assessment plan

Phase 2: Engage the Team

Director and Management Team

- Orient Self-Assessment team members
- Share the Self-Assessment plan
- Share ongoing monitoring data, last year's Self-Assessment report, and other data

SA Team

- Form teams and begin the process
- Identify other team members, as needed

Phase 3: Analyze and Dialogue

SA Team or subgroups

- Explore systemic issues
- Review and analyze data and seek additional data, as needed
- Engage in dialogue using probing questions
- Examine progress on goals and objectives
- Formulate discoveries

Phase 4: Recommend

SA Team

- Consolidate discoveries across teams
- Prepare final recommendations to inform program planning
- Provide feedback on the Self-Assessment process for next year's Self-Assessment

Phase 5: Prepare Report

Director

- Prepare Self-Assessment report
- Submit report to Policy Council and governing body or Tribal Council for approval
- Submit approved report to Regional Office

POST

Program Leadership

- Review feedback from this year's Self-Assessment team to help plan for next year
- Use Self-Assessment report recommendations to confirm or revise program goals and objectives
- Add to or revise annual action plans, as necessary
- Communicate Self-Assessment insights to staff and other stakeholders

Let's Start the Trip

Moving Forward Head Start will now embark on its annual trip through Self-Assessment!

This module plays out the Self-Assessment process for a Head Start grantee that has been in operation since 1965. Moving Forward Head Start is a mid-sized, single purpose agency operating Head Start and Early Head Start through center-based, home-based, and family child care options. The program has a site in a small city as well as in several rural communities. Many of its classrooms are in local public schools. The program has strong ties to its local communities.

Best Practices for Self-Assessment

Having enough fuel for your journey is essential and is a “best practice” of a successful road trip. (A best practice is a method that has been shown to give high-quality results.)

So, what are the best practices for Self-Assessment? In this interaction, you will explore some best practices that make the Self-Assessment run smoothly, just like a sufficiently tuned-up vehicle!

Some of these answers may surprise you, as they may differ from what you are currently doing—it’s like learning to operate an electric vehicle when you’ve been driving a gas-powered car.

Read each approach for conducting the Self-Assessment process. Then select the better one. For each correct answer, you will add fuel to your gas tank!

Best Practices, question 1

1. Just like ongoing monitoring, Self-Assessment is ongoing. It is not a one-time annual event.
2. Self-Assessment occurs once annually. It has a clear beginning and end.

If you selected response one: Not Quite
Self-Assessment does have a beginning and an end, unlike the ongoing monitoring process which is … well … ongoing. The annual Self-Assessment process begins with preparing results from ongoing monitoring, moves through the five phases, and ends with a final report.

If you selected response two: Yes
Self-Assessment occurs once annually. It differs from ongoing monitoring which is … well … ongoing. Self-Assessment has five phases. In addition, before the five phases, there is a time of preparation, which links ongoing monitoring to Self-Assessment. After Self-Assessment, the Self-Assessment report helps guide program planning.

Best Practices, question 2

1. The best time to begin the Self-Assessment is when you feel you have enough data. If this happens in the middle of your program year, go for it!
2. The best time to begin the Self-Assessment is when you have a full set of program-year data, including, for example, child outcome and attendance data. It is best practice to wait until near the end of a program year.

If you selected response one: Not Quite
While you might have some data neatly packaged and ready to share with others for their thoughts, the middle of a program year is not the best time for Self-Assessment.

The best time for Self-Assessment is near the end of a program year. This allows maximum participation from parents, governing body or Tribal Council members, and program staff. In addition, at the end of a program year you have complete data sets available to analyze and to use in making recommendations.

Migrant or seasonal programs with shorter program lengths should consider their optimal time for Self-Assessment, which will depend on their data-collection schedule and the availability of both internal and external members.

If you selected response two: Yes
Self-Assessment best occurs near the end of a program year. This allows maximum participation from parents, governing body or Tribal Council members, and program staff. In addition, at the end of a program year, you have complete data sets available to analyze and use in making recommendations.

Migrant or seasonal programs with shorter program lengths should consider their optimal time for Self-Assessment, which will depend on their data-collection schedule and the availability of both internal and external members.

Best Practices, question 3

1. Self-Assessment teams are composed of staff members. These people are the most knowledgeable about the program and have a vested interest in having a strong Self-Assessment process that leads to continuous improvement.
2. Self-Assessment teams are made up of management and staff, with a good mix of outside members.

If you selected response one: Not Quite
The key to success in forming a Self-Assessment team lies in inviting perspectives beyond those of the management team and others who know your program very well. That's what promotes fresh thinking and new ideas. A good mix of outside members can include the Policy Council, current parents, members of the governing body or Tribal Council, and other advisory groups, such as your health and school readiness advisory groups. Community members, such as civic and business leaders, also bring fresh perspectives to the team.

Key team members will participate in your journey. The Self-Assessment team is made up a variety of members, which you will learn more about throughout this module. At times, Self-Assessment teams break up into sub-groups. These sub-groups are each able to focus deeply on an issue.

If you selected response two: Yes
Inviting perspectives beyond those of the management team promotes fresh thinking and new ideas. A good mix of outside members can include the Policy Council, current parents, members of the governing body or Tribal Council, and other advisory groups, such as your health and school readiness advisory groups. Community members, such as civic and business leaders, also bring fresh perspectives to the team.

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Best Practices, question 4

1. Team members will be asked to use inquiry skills, group processing skills, data analysis techniques, and, at times, facilitation skills.
2. Team members will be required to use data collection skills.

If you selected response one: Yes
Teams with data analysis knowledge and inquiry skills are able to form a true picture of the whole program, instead of focusing on isolated examples of positive and negative practices. For Self-Assessment, success hinges on the team's ability to have a robust dialogue about the already-collected data.

If you selected response two: Not Quite
Team members will rely on inquiry skills and knowledge of data analysis techniques, not skills around data collection. Teams with data analysis and inquiry skills are able to form a true picture of the whole program, instead of focusing on isolated examples of positive and negative practices. For Self-Assessment, success hinges on the team's ability to have a robust dialogue about the already-collected data.

Best Practices, question 5

1. The Self-Assessment team analyzes ongoing monitoring results and reviews multi-year data.
2. The Self-Assessment team collects new data through observation, record review, and interviews.

If you selected response one: Yes
Use your time more wisely by focusing on existing data. Request additional existing data only as needed.

If you selected response two: Not Quite
The Self-Assessment team will focus on using existing program data. Occasionally, the team may need to request additional existing data, but collecting new data should not be necessary.

Best Practices, question 6

1. Recommendations from your Self-Assessment should address the question, "What's wrong at this site?" They often result in extensive changes to the structure of the Head Start Program.
2. Recommendations from your Self-Assessment should address the question, "How can we get even better at what we do?" They often result in changes that relate to progress on existing goals and objectives, and improved quality in the program.

If you selected response one: Not Quite
Self-Assessment isn't about dramatically shifting gears. It's about making steady progress toward your long-term program goals and SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely) objectives. Your resulting recommendations should fine-tune and focus your planning process

If you selected response two: Yes
You can feel confident that you're on the right path when your resulting recommendations fine-tune and focus your planning process, rather than causing you to re-think it. Self-Assessment is about making steady progress toward your long-term program goals and SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely) objectives.

Best Practices, question 7

1. Self-Assessment should always look at two important areas: (1) health and safety, and (2) school readiness, in addition to focus areas based on current data.
2. Self-Assessment need not focus on health and safety, nor on school readiness, as these are addressed in ongoing monitoring.

If you selected response one: Yes.
It's best practice to take a thorough look at health and safety and to review your child outcomes data and track progress toward school readiness every year.

If you selected response two: Not quite.
It's best practice to include these two key areas in Self-Assessment every year.

Best Practices Conclusion

How did you do on the previous seven questions?

If you got at least three correct: Nice Work.
You have demonstrated your awareness of best practices for Self-Assessment. Looks like you're fueled up and ready to hit the road.

If you got fewer than three correct: Still Running Low on Fuel
Looks like your tank is a little low! You got two or fewer answers correct. You may want to back up and try this activity again.

Best Practices for Self-Assessment

A best practice is a method that has been shown to give high-quality results. These best practices can help you design and conduct an effective Self-Assessment process. Keep these best practices in mind during your journey through Self-Assessment:

- Self-Assessment occurs **once annually**.
- The best time to begin Self-Assessment is when **you have a full set of program-year data**.
- Self-Assessment teams are **made up of management and staff members with a good mix of outside members.**
- Self-Assessment team members will need **inquiry skills, group processing skills, data analysis techniques, and, at times, facilitation skills**.
- The Self-Assessment team analyzes ongoing monitoring results and **reviews multi-year data**.
- Self-Assessment should include a focus on **health and safety**, and on **school readiness** every year.
- Recommendations from your Self-Assessment process should help you answer the question, "**How can we get even better at what we do**?"

PRE: From Ongoing Monitoring to Self-Assessment

What Happens in this Section?

Even before you begin planning your trip, you have to take stock of your resources and think about possible destinations. In PRE Self-Assessment you take stock of your yearly data and look for broad areas that you will ask the Self-Assessment team to investigate.

Another way to look at this is that you are moving from ongoing monitoring to Self-Assessment. This occurs when end-of-program-year data has been collected and compiled. In ongoing monitoring, programs consider “Are we doing things right?” In Self-Assessment, programs pause to examine and dialogue about “Are we doing the right things?”

Using the Right Maps

On any journey, having access to the right maps and routes is key to a successful trip!

These two forms may help serve as road maps to move from ongoing monitoring into your annual Self-Assessment. They help show where you’ve been, and help steady your compass toward the direction you want to head.

Summary of Ongoing Monitoring Results
This is a sample form that can be used to capture data to share with your Self-Assessment team. The form can be completed every quarter and then rolled up into an annual summary to identify areas of strength, concerns, and issues that may need further evaluation by the SA team. The format mirrors the events in the Aligned Monitoring System.

Progress on Goals and Objectives: Quarterly and Annual Summary
During the annual Self-Assessment, you want to track progress toward your goals and objectives. A form such as Progress on Goals and Objectives is useful for summarizing your progress and identifying big-picture questions and unresolved issues that you want the Self-Assessment team to consider.

Download the forms (Summary of Ongoing Monitoring Results, and Progress on Goals and Objectives) from the Resources web page to learn more, and to save for your own use!

Prioritize Your Ideas—Are Issues Systemic?

As you prepare for Self-Assessment, you are likely to have notes and data you collected throughout the program year. It’s important to narrow the focus for your Self-Assessment team. You can prioritize your issues using a two-step process.

First, ask, “Is the issue **systemic**?” Second, consider other thought-provoking questions that will be presented throughout this section. These two steps will help you determine which issues will make the final cut.

Systemic
Systemic issues are deeply rooted in one or more of the Head Start systems. They are typically at the heart of your program and are focused on the big picture.

Prioritize Your Ideas

Read each example to learn more about the criteria for systemic issues. (The examples here relate to preparing your car for a road trip, but the same principles apply to prioritizing issues identified in your program.)

Prioritize Your Ideas: Examples

Your temperature gauge indicates that your engine is about to overheat.

- Pull over as soon as possible in a safe place. Continuing to drive could result in major engine damage. You could have avoided this problem if you regularly monitored things in your car, such as the coolant and oil levels, the tire pressure, etc. This indicates a systemic issue with your approach to car maintenance.
- Systemic: Yes

You have a flat tire.

- You ran over a nail and have a flat tire. This is urgent. You have to deal with it so you can drive the car. Fix it and move on. (Just don't hit any more nails.)
- Systemic: No

Your headlight has been broken for three months.

- Safety issues should always be dealt with immediately, so the fact that the headlight has been broken for so long probably indicates that you have a systemic issue related to car maintenance and repair. (Remember, lack of systemic car maintenance already resulted in your car almost overheating.)
- Systemic: Yes

Your check engine light goes on.

- The check engine light indicates that you have a systemic issue with your car's fuel injection or emission control systems. This is not a quick fix, and requires time to analyze the sources of the problem. Ignoring this issue could result in a costly repair down the road.
- Systemic: Yes

What did we learn?

With many systemic issues with your car maintenance (your engine temperature is high, your headlight is broken), you might want to ask yourself what could have been fixed or prevented with a better system for monitoring and maintaining your car.

A strong ongoing monitoring system will take care of these issues. But you might want to ask yourself, "Why is it taking so long for us to take our car in for the maintenance and repairs it requires?" and "How can we better plan for safe and efficient vehicle maintenance moving forward?"

This car example helps you identify systemic issues. Self-Assessment in Head Start is similar. You want to focus on the big picture, and what can be done to help systems run more smoothly. Let's shift gears and review some examples of what the director and management team would consider when advancing to Self-Assessment.

Broad Goals: Scenario Overview

Moving Forward has three broad goals for its five-year project period:

- Goal 1: Increase child attendance and decrease absenteeism and tardiness so that all children develop the habit of attending school regularly, leading to success in kindergarten and ultimately opening doors to college.
- Goal 2: Enhance education services to improve the vocabularies of enrolled children to maximize their potential to enter kindergarten with a solid foundation for reading success.
- Goal 3: Partner with families and work with community partners to support families' progress toward improved well-being and financial stability.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics

Questions to Ask
The following questions may help you to prioritize each issue that emerges:

- Does it relate to a bigger theme?
- Is it systemic?
- Is it an issue that wasn't resolved through ongoing monitoring?
- Does it relate to our program goals?
- Would it benefit from a fresh perspective?
- Does it affect our ability to do everything we can to ensure the best outcomes for our families and children?
- Does it represent a strength that could be applied in other areas?

Remember that Self-Assessment should always include a focus on health and safety and school readiness, and contribute to continuous quality improvement.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics: Issue 1

Child outcomes for language and literacy are the lowest they have been in three years.
Should this issue be brought to Self-Assessment?
(Use the Questions to help you decide.)

- No
- Yes

For Self-Assessment: Yes
This is related to progress on your program goals and is something you'd want to advance to Self-Assessment. Your Self- Assessment team can help you answer the question "How can we do more to support children's language and literacy development?" A good way to look at your progress over time is to have your Self-Assessment team review child outcomes data specific to literacy for the past three years. Your SA team may also want to look at the child outcomes data in relation to other data, such as child attendance and data related to family literacy.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics: Issue 2

The program has no extra supply of safety plugs for outlets.
Should this issue be brought to Self-Assessment?
(Use the Questions to help you decide.)

- No
- Yes

For Self-Assessment: No
The issue is not systemic. It can be resolved quickly during ongoing monitoring.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics: Issue 3

Several new staff were hired after a pre-service training on health and safety was completed; the new hires did not receive the necessary training in this area.
Should this issue be brought to Self-Assessment?
(Use the Questions to help you decide.)

- No
- Yes

For Self-Assessment: Yes
Your SA team can help you answer the question, “How can we ensure that our orientation and onboarding processes cover all necessary training and information new staff need?” This is a systemic issue involving human resources, communication, and ongoing monitoring. You will want to share data about training plans, dates of hire, and supervisory records related to orientation and onboarding.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics: Issue 4

More than half the centers report not having enough Band-Aids in their first aid kits.
Should this issue be brought to Self-Assessment?
(Use the Questions to help you decide.)

- No
- Yes

For Self-Assessment: No
This is an issue that can be handled through ongoing monitoring. A simple adjustment to the amount of Band-Aids ordered, along with a system to check that each kit is fully stocked, can remedy this problem.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics: Issue 5

Average daily attendance has been declining and has dropped below the 85 percent requirement for the past three months.
Should this issue be brought to Self-Assessment?
(Use the Questions to help you decide.)

- No
- Yes

For Self-Assessment: Yes
This is related to a program goal. You want your Self-Assessment team to help you answer the question, “What factors are contributing to decreased attendance?” The team may review not only attendance records of children, but also staff attendance records, busing data, and child health reports. Two other interesting data sources might be community assessment data related to availability of public transportation and the public school calendar.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics: Issue 6

Families' attendance has increased in several financial planning courses offered through our community partners.
Should this issue be brought to Self-Assessment?
(Use the Questions to help you decide.)

- No
- Yes

For Self-Assessment: Yes
This is a strength and can help the Self-Assessment team answer the question, "How can we use what is working regarding family participation in financial planning to support all of our parent engagement efforts?" You will want to share data regarding attendance at parenting events along with relevant focus group or parent survey data.

Additional Questions to Prioritize Topics: Issue 7

One of the busses is consistently 10–15 minutes late dropping off the children.
Should this issue be brought to Self-Assessment?
(Use the Questions to help you decide.)

- No
- Yes

For Self-Assessment: No
While this could be urgent if parents are waiting and worried, or children are missing valuable school time due to late arrival, it is not systemic, and should be handled during ongoing monitoring.

Conclusion

Here's the list of topics MFHS decided to bring to Self-Assessment:

- Child outcomes for language and literacy
- New hires not receiving necessary training in health and safety
- Declining average daily attendance
- Growth in family attendance for financial planning courses

The prioritization process helps you form "sub-groups" made up of team members who have content-area expertise and who can lend their help working through specific areas.

Summary: What Ground Was Covered?

We moved through PRE: From Ongoing Monitoring to Self-Assessment with the help of the director and management team members who did the following:

- Asked important questions about the data they have collected thus far
- Prioritized areas for investigation
- Created summaries of the data related to areas of focus

Phase 1: Design the Process

What Happens in This Phase?

A successful trip begins with good planning. In this phase of Self-Assessment, you complete some foundational planning so that your Self-Assessment will yield useful information about progress toward your goals and will support continuous improvement.

Identifying your time line, building your team, and obtaining approval for your plan from your governing body/Tribal Council and your Policy Council will have you all set for your journey. In other words, map out your trip, get the right travelers on board, be sure your license and registration are current and that you have the okay to proceed.

Activity Introduction: Get the Right Members on Board

In the Self-Assessment process, you delegate a big part of the analysis to a diverse team of both internal and external members. It's important to pick a good variety of internal staff members for the team, as well as members who represent your community, have expertise and an interest in what you do, and have the time to participate.

Based on the issues that it wants to focus on during this year's Self-Assessment, Moving Forward Head Start has formed four Self-Assessment subgroups:

- Staff and Child Attendance
- Vocabulary, Literacy, and Language
- Family Well-being and Financial Stability
- Child Safety

In this activity, you'll help select team members to take on this important job. You'll see how each individual's unique perspective can bring strength to the team.

You need to add core team member until you have at least one individual from the following categories.

- Head Start director
- Policy Council member
- Governing body/Tribal Council member
- Management team members and other staff representatives
- Community partners and other community members
- Parents of currently enrolled children

Get the Right Members on Board #1

"Hello, I'm Imin Charge! I am the director of ABC Child Care, located across town. I'm pretty busy, but I'm passionate about having quality programs in the community. I bring knowledge of what works for our center and families, ideas to encourage attendance, and troubleshooting tips."

How will you respond? Will you ask her to, "Join the team!" or say, "Maybe next time."

Feedback:

If you asked her to join the team, you will see a check in the “Community partners and other community members” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #2

“Hello, I’m Juan Swazir! I am a parent of a twelfth-grader and a tenth-grader at the local high school. My children were in this Head Start program a long time ago. My world is everything related to high school at this point, but I guess if you need my help, I could participate.

How will you respond? Will you ask him to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked him to join the team, this might not be the best choice. Parents make excellent Self-Assessment team members. But unless there is a specific reason you selected this parent, it is best to stick with current parents or other family members in your program. They are more in tune with your day-to-day operations and more invested in the outcomes of processes like these that foster continual program improvement.

Get the Right Members on Board, #3

“Hello, I’m Alotta Gripes! I’ve been a Head Start teacher in this program for one year. I find the paperwork overwhelming and have repeatedly complained to my supervisor about it. Self-Assessment is just one more requirement. I have some things to say about cutting down all this work!”
How will you respond? Will you ask her to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked her to join the team, this might not be the best choice. While Head Start requirements may feel overwhelming at times, they are essential for the success of the program. It’s fine for a team member to have a differing opinion. But having a positive attitude is essential to teamwork. (In fact, this might alert the Education Manager to observe in this classroom to make sure this teacher’s negative feelings aren’t affecting her work with the children!)

Get the Right Members on Board, #4

“Hello, I’m Heddy Honcho! I have been the director of this Head Start Program for four years. I will help ensure that our management team members will be active contributors as well as active listeners during the Self-Assessment process. We all need to be open to hearing fresh perspectives from non-staff members.”

How will you respond? Will you ask her to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked her to join the team, you will see a check in the “Head Start director” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #5

“Hello, I’m Ben Caring! I’m a father in this Head Start Program. My son is four years old, and I have been his primary guardian since he was two. I work at the local grocery store while my son is at Head Start, and my sister watches him after school until I get home from work. I try to make as many Head Start events as I can, and am an active member of the Father Engagement group.”

How will you respond? Will you ask her to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked her to join the team, you will see a check in the “Parent of currently enrolled children” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #6

“Hello, I’m Safir Swinger! I am a playground inspector. I also serve as a validator for the National Association for the Education of Young Children. I work with several early childhood programs and I am well versed in their operations. I was a state licensor for 12 years, and I have ideas about practices that keep all children safe.”

How will you respond? Will you ask him to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked him to join the team, you will see a check in the “Community partners and other community members” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #7

“Hello, I’m Tae Careof! I am a public health nurse and member of Moving Forward’s Health Services Advisory Committee. Some families I support need help finding quality child care. We often connect them with Head Start, and may also connect them with housing, education, and mental health and dental services.”
How will you respond? Will you ask her to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked her to join the team, you will see a check in the “Community partners and other community members” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #8

“Hello, I’m Penny Scout! I am the fiscal officer for our Head Start Program and a member of the management team. I approach data in different ways, looking for trends and patterns to maximize our funding. My kids attended an early childhood program, and I was on their board of directors for three years. That program used some innovative practices that are worth discussing with the team.”

How will you respond? Will you ask her to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked her to join the team, you will see a check in the “Management team members and other staff representatives” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #9

“Hello, I’m Amil Giver! I am a governing body member and director of a private nonprofit agency that provides Meals on Wheels in the same area as the Head Start program. I joined the board to make a difference for those who need access to services. My background is in business administration, and I’m passionate about outdoor activities.”

How will you respond? Will you ask him to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked him to join the team, you will see a check in the “Governing Body/Tribal Council member” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #10

“Hello, I’m Bebee Luver! I am an infant/toddler specialist with the local child care resource and referral agency. I believe that high-quality infant and toddler programs provide a foundation for school readiness. As part of my job, I help connect parents with early care and education programs that meet their needs.”

How will you respond? Will you ask her to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked her to join the team, you will see a check in the “Community partners and other community members” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #11

“Hello, I’m Busy Lee Der! I am the local elementary school principal. I am interested in participating, but must admit that I have many responsibilities within my own job and also within the community. I could try to fit in time for this team. But I’ll be honest: It may take a backseat to many of my other duties.

How will you respond? Will you ask him to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked him to join the team, this might not be the best choice. This member sounds like he has the experience you’d want on the team, but he is already overbooked. He openly admitted this role would take a backseat to other duties. So you might consider a team member with similar insights but more time to devote.

Get the Right Members on Board, #12

“Hello, I’m Will Being! I am the health coordinator for this program. I lead the Health Services Advisory Committee and am responsible for establishing partnerships with local health agencies. I know there are health and safety issues in our program that need attention, and I am eager for this year’s team to dig into some data and good discussion on those topics.”

How will you respond? Will you ask him to, “Join the team!” or say, “Maybe next time.”

Feedback:
If you asked him to join the team, you will see a check in the “Management team members and other staff representatives” box.

Get the Right Members on Board, #13

"Hello, I'm Mynar Young! I am an Early Head Start parent of a newborn and of a toddler with special needs. My child has an IFSP and receives services through several local agencies. I'm also a policy council member."

How will you respond? Will you ask him to, "Join the team!" or say, "Maybe next time."

Feedback:
If you asked her to join the team, you will see a check in the "Policy Council member" box and in the "Parents of currently enrolled children" box.

Core Members of the Team

The exact make-up of each team will be unique, but these core members should be part of every Self-Assessment team:

- Director
- Policy Council member(s)
- Governing body/Tribal Council member(s)
- Management team members and other staff representatives
- Community partners and other community members
- Parents of currently enrolled children

In addition to the core members, consider:

- Advisory committee members, such as Health Services or School Readiness
- Civic or business leaders
- Content-area experts
- Others whom you feel would add value and fresh perspective

Activity Introduction: Recruit Members

Once you have selected your dream team for Self-Assessment, it is time to plan how you will approach each member and what you will say. Typically, you would schedule a time to meet with each person so you could present your invitation and address questions in as much detail as needed. But that's not always how it works. People are busy, and sometimes you have limited time to have this discussion.

In fact, on the way out of town, you bump into a potential Self-Assessment team member at a scenic outlook. You say hello as you wait in line for the elevator to the top of the observation tower, and you explain that you were going to call her to schedule a time to talk. But since you just happened to bump into her … what a great opportunity to try out your elevator speech now!

Your elevator speech should contain three main sections:

- A brief description of the process and purpose of Self-Assessment
- Personalization (Why would you like this individual to join the team?)
- Clear next steps delivered with enthusiasm

Recruit Members, Part 1: Provide Clear Overview of the Process

What would you say? Read the three examples and choose the best one.

1. Our Self-Assessment process is about to start, and we'd love for you to join. The process follows five phases, and you would be involved in almost every one. It may be a lot of work, but it's worth it! It involves several meetings over a few months, looking at a lot of data, asking a lot of questions, having some pretty intense discussions, and eventually making recommendations.
2. We're starting this process called Self-Assessment, and we'd love to have you join our team.
3. Our Head Start program is beginning our annual Self-Assessment. We conduct one every year to help us check the progress we're making on our goals and objectives, identify systemic issues, and consider new innovations. It would involve a few meetings, fruitful discussions, and good use of everyone's ideas to make our Head Start program the best it can be.

If you selected response one: the person thinks, "Sounds pretty time-consuming. I'm too busy." There is too little detail, and no description of the purpose of SA. Try again.

If you selected response two: the person thinks, "I'm not sure what this entails, and I have other opportunities to choose from, with clear overviews of the process." There is too little detail, and no description of the purpose of SA. Try again.

If you selected response three: the person thinks, "What a great way to strengthen the local Head Start Program. I like what I hear so far!" This is just enough detail for a first discussion, and explains the purpose of SA. Way to GO!

Recruit Members, Part 2: Personalize Your Request

What would you say? Read the three examples and choose the best one.

1. Since you know a lot about playgrounds, we think you'd really help us.
2. One of our Self-Assessment subgroups will be focused on child health and safety. I know you have many years of experience working in this area with playground inspection. You could share insights and ideas that would help us make important adjustments to how we get children ready for school!
3. You'd be great for this team!

If you selected response one: the person thinks, "Why? What do playgrounds have to do with this team they keep talking about?" This is somewhat personalized, but not detailed enough to make the potential team member feel needed and valued. Try again.

If you selected response two: the person thinks, "Wow! They know a lot about me, and it does sound like I'd be able to contribute to this Self-Assessment process." This is both personalized and detailed, and is likely to make the potential team member feel needed and valued. Way to GO!

If you selected response three: the person thinks, "I'm not convinced. They don't even seem to know anything about me or what I do." This is neither personalized nor detailed, and is not likely to make the potential team member feel needed or values. Try again.

Recruit Members, Part 3: Offer Clear Next Steps

What would you say? Read the three examples and choose the best one.

1. I'm really excited about the possibility of having you join our team. We would all benefit from your expertise, and I think you'll enjoy the process, as well. Let's set up a time next week to talk more. What works for you?
2. Let's talk again soon.
3. I'll call you next Monday, and you can tell me your decision then.

If you selected response one: the person thinks, "They seem to really want me for this and, from what I've heard, I think it sounds interesting and beneficial for me and their program!" Way to GO! You shared clear next steps, and delivered them with enthusiasm!

If you selected response two: the person thinks, "When? About what? Did they just invite me to join this team? I'm not sure I know what they're talking about!" Try again. The next steps are unclear, and your statement lacks enthusiasm.

If you selected response three: the person thinks, "Hmm … I'm not feeling like they're too excited about this. Other projects on my to-do list sound much more beneficial." Close, but not quite. The next steps are clear, but your enthusiasm could use a boost. Try again.

Conclusion

You have to be thoughtful about how you will get members to commit to serving on your Self-Assessment team.

Focus your short invitation on three key pieces:
1. Provide an overview of the Self-Assessment process.
2. Add a personalized touch that makes it clear you recognize the value this person would add to the team and the reason you think he or she can help Head Start with this process.
3. Offer clear next steps.

Download a sample elevator speech from the Resources web page.

Summary: What Ground Was Covered?

We moved through Phase 1: Design the Process with the help of the director, who did the following:

- Developed a plan for Self-Assessment
- Identified and invited internal and external team members
- Consulted with the Policy Council and the governing body/Tribal Council and sought approval of SA plan

Phase 2: Engage the Team

What Happens in This Phase?

And we're off.
In this phase of Self-Assessment Head Start directors and managers orient the Self-Assessment team members. They present the overall Self-Assessment plan, prepare and deliver an overview of the program—including current goals, objectives, and expected outcomes—and share ongoing monitoring results.

They also let the team know about areas that require further exploration during the Self-Assessment process. Team members may form sub-groups to look at particular topics and explore whether additional data may be needed to help them with their assignment. An additional part of this orientation is helping managers understand their role as Self-Assessment team members. A good orientation assures that participants are clear about their roles and the tasks ahead of them.

You have the right folks in the car, the snacks are packed, and everyone knows where they are headed.

Orienting a Self-Assessment Team

In this phase of Self-Assessment, Head Start directors and managers orient the Self-Assessment team members to the overall plan. They share a summary of ongoing monitoring results, last year's Self-Assessment report, and other critical data, and let the team know about areas of focus for this year's process.

A good orientation ensures that participants are clear about their roles and tasks. You may find the **Orientation PowerPoint** helpful as a tool that you can customize for your own program and use to train the newly selected Self-Assessment team!

Download the **Orientation PowerPoint** from the Resources web page.

Keep Self-Assessment Teams on the Right Path Activity Introduction

Once the course is set for Self-Assessment and your passengers are on board, it is up to the facilitator to drive. The facilitator's actions and words provide support and can help the team stay on course.

This activity will give you a chance to practice techniques for keeping a team on the right path. Your trusty travel companion, Spot, can't hide his feelings! He'll let you know if your choices guide and support the team appropriately.

Keep things moving ahead by guiding the team appropriately along the journey!

Let's meet Will Being and Penny Scount. They are serving as sub-group leaders for MFHS's SA Process. Help them choose the best response to keep their team on the right path.

Keep Self-Assessment Teams on the Right Path #1

Read each item, then select the more effective approach to **start with strengths**.

1. Will Being: “We have examined the strengths of the program and have made progress in understanding what the data mean. We are on track with our assignment to help the program grow and thrive!”
2. Penny Scount: “We have a long way to go and some issues to discuss. With your help, we can get through some of our difficulties and figure out why things are so bad!”

If you selected response one: Spot On!
Lead the Self-Assessment process with a focus on strengths and successes. A positive approach encourages teams to focus on what is going well and to use those successes to help guide other projects.

If you selected response two: There’s a better path to consider.
Lead the Self-Assessment process with a focus on strengths and successes. A positive approach encourages teams to focus on what is going well and to use those successes to help guide other projects.

Keep Self-Assessment Teams on the Right Path #2

Select the more effective approach to **guide (instead of control) the process.**
1. Will Being: “I don’t think the team needs to know about this. I’m working on this problem already, and I don’t want them getting bogged down in it. Instead of bringing it up here, I will just take care of things myself.”
2. Penny Scount: “I would like to share with the group an example from my work that illustrates what we are talking about.”

If you selected response one: There’s a better path to consider.
Keeping concerns to yourself inhibits team dialogue and insight that might be gained from an outside perspective. Engage the team by being honest and open about concerns that need attention.

If you selected response two: Spot on!
Welcoming input from the team encourages dialogue and brings new insight garnered from an outside perspective. Engage the team by being honest and open about concerns that require attention.

Keep Self-Assessment Teams on the Right Path #3

Select the more effective approach to **include all team members**.
1. Will Being: “Let’s do a round robin to make sure we hear from all team members.”
2. Penny Scount: “We’ve heard from almost everyone here. Let’s move on.”

If you selected response one: Spot on!
Use facilitation techniques such as a round robin—where everyone on the team takes a minute to weigh in—or ask for written feedback. These techniques may help all team members feel valued and included.

If you selected response two: There’s a better path to consider.
Some team members may not be as comfortable speaking out in a group setting. Use facilitation techniques such as a round robin—where everyone on the team takes a minute to weigh in—or ask for written feedback. These techniques may help all team members feel valued and included.

Keep Self-Assessment Teams on the Right Path #4

Select the more effective approach **using multiple strategies to engage all members**.

1. Will Being: “Feel free to join in the conversation whenever you have something to add!”
2. Penny Scount: “Let’s break into smaller groups for a bit.”

If you selected response one: There’s a better path to consider.
Try different groupings, like “pair shares” or breaking into small groups. A large-group discussion may be intimidating for some team members, while a smaller setting may bring out more creative thoughts and ideas.

If you selected response two: Spot on!
You’ve got it. Try different groupings, like “pair shares” or breaking into small groups. A large-group discussion may be intimidating for some team members, while a smaller setting may bring out more creative thoughts and ideas.

Keep Self-Assessment Teams on the Right Path #5

Select the more effective approach while **keeping the dialogue flowing**.

1. Will Being: “That’s interesting. I wonder if you can talk more about that idea.”
2. Penny Scount: “That’s interesting. Who else has an idea?”

If you selected response one: Spot on!
That’s right. An effective facilitator keeps the dialogue flowing by encouraging follow-up on good ideas.

If you selected response two: There’s a better path to consider.
Stay on a new idea for a bit to really flesh it out. Moving too quickly from one idea to the next may not allow thorough exploration of a possible innovation. An effective facilitator keeps the dialogue flowing by encouraging follow-up on good ideas.

Keep Self-Assessment Teams on the Right Path #6

Select the more effective approach while **focusing on big-picture versus details**.

1. Will Being: “What patterns do we notice about staff turnover from a review of the quarterly reports and annual summary?”
2. Penny Scount: “Why do you think Mrs. Hubert left our program?”

If you selected response one: Spot on!
Stay focused on the overarching patterns and trends you notice as you ask questions and review the data.

If you selected response two: There’s a better path to consider.
Discussing smaller details of the overall picture can distract the team from focusing on the Self-Assessment to consider progress on goals, identify systemic issues, and dream up possible innovations!

Conclusion

You have practiced some ways to keep the team on the right path. Keep in mind such practices as:

- Start with strengths

- Guide (instead of control) the process
- Include all team members
- Use multiple strategies to engage all members
- Keep the dialogue flowing
- Focus on big picture versus details

Download Being an Effective Team Facilitator and other resources from the Resources web page.

Summary: What Ground Was Covered?

We moved through Phase 2: Engage the Team with the help of these team members who did the following:

Director and management team

- Oriented SA team members
- Shared the SA plan
- Shared ongoing monitoring data, last year's SA report, and other data

Self-Assessment team

- Formed team(s) and began process
- Identified other team members, as needed

Phase 3: Analyze and Dialogue

What Happens in This Phase?

Rich discussion is at the heart of this phase of Self-Assessment. You are reviewing and analyzing current and previous data to uncover trends and patterns. You also are asking curious questions to help explore systemic issues and understand how your program is making progress toward its goals and objectives.

Dialogue leads to discovery, which ultimately supports innovation and quality improvement. You are rolling down the road, everyone is talking, and you are learning about the sights along the way.

See All Possible Paths

To see all possible paths, you will have to ask thought-provoking questions and have open dialogue with your team, including:

- Breaking data into smaller pieces (disaggregating) to uncover key details that might be hidden in a bigger set of data
- Looking at data over time to discover trends
- Examining data from multiple sources to make connections

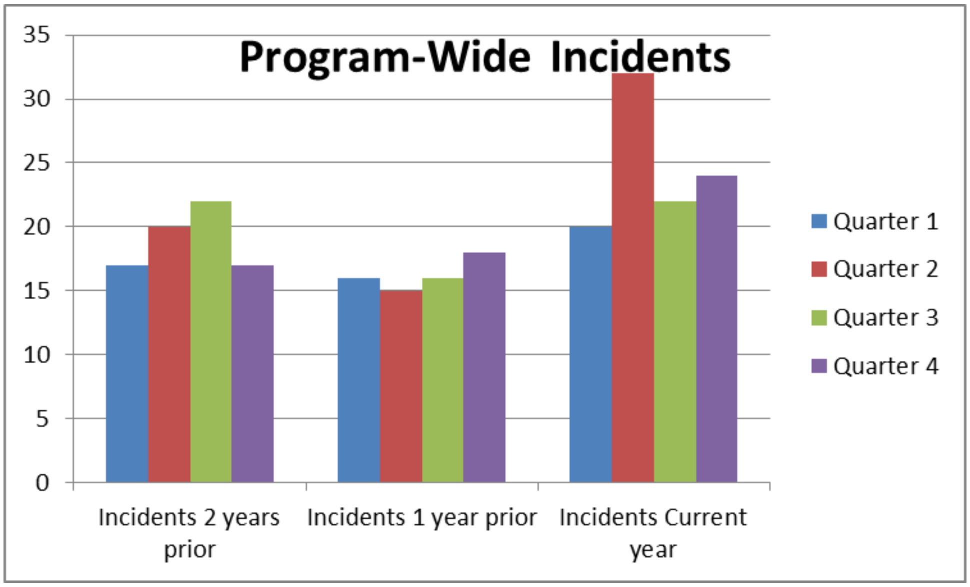
All of these pieces will help your discoveries take shape. Discoveries are the findings—both strengths and areas of need—that your Self-Assessment team identifies through their analysis of data.

Discoveries help light the path toward the Self-Assessment team forming recommendations!

Activity Intro: Lighting the Path

In this activity, you will interact with team members to get to the real issue. Choose statements that will keep the discussion flowing, and select data sources that will point you in the right direction.

On the following page, you'll see the graph that was the starting point for the team's discussion.



At first glance, the team was interested in the current year Quarter 2 data. But on closer examination, they realized the number of incidents in the current year was the same or higher in every quarter than in years past. They wondered … What's going on?

Lighting the Path # 1: Question

Read each speaker's statement, and the possible responses. Choose the response that keeps the dialogue flowing. For each correct answer, you will light the path for your journey!

How would you build the dialogue?
There has been an increase in the rate of incident reports filed program-wide over last year. The incidents were not serious, but the frequency raised concerns about playground supervision.

1. This looks like a lot of incidents. It must mean we don't have enough staff to watch the kids.
2. This is interesting information. Let's disaggregate, or pull apart, the data to find out if these incidents are happening at all of our centers or only at specific centers.
3. I think we need more staff in each classroom so we have fewer incidents.

If you selected response one: Not Quite
Attempting to explain the data, especially at the beginning of the dialogue, does not help your group light the path to a deeper analysis. Making early assumptions about aggregated data (i.e. "This looks like a lot or a little") could also lead you down the wrong path, as there may be hidden information that you will only see as you begin to break that data apart or "disaggregate" it.

If you selected response two: Yes
By breaking the data apart, or disaggregating it, you can begin to dig deeper into the meaning of the information. This will be a good first step as you begin to light the path around safety and supervision at MFHS.

If you selected response three: Not Quite

Jumping to solutions before you have taken the time to look deeply at the data will keep your conversation from progressing, and will keep you from moving down the right path. Remember that it is the job of the team to make discoveries that will give a broad base of support to recommendations.

Lighting the Path # 2: Question

Select the response that best supports the team in looking for deeper discoveries. For each correct answer, you will light the path for your journey!

So, you're trying to figure out if the increase in incident reports is happening at all centers or at only at a few specific centers. Which data source will give you that kind of disaggregated information?

1. Rate of incidents by center
2. Incident reports over the last three years
3. Classroom safety check data

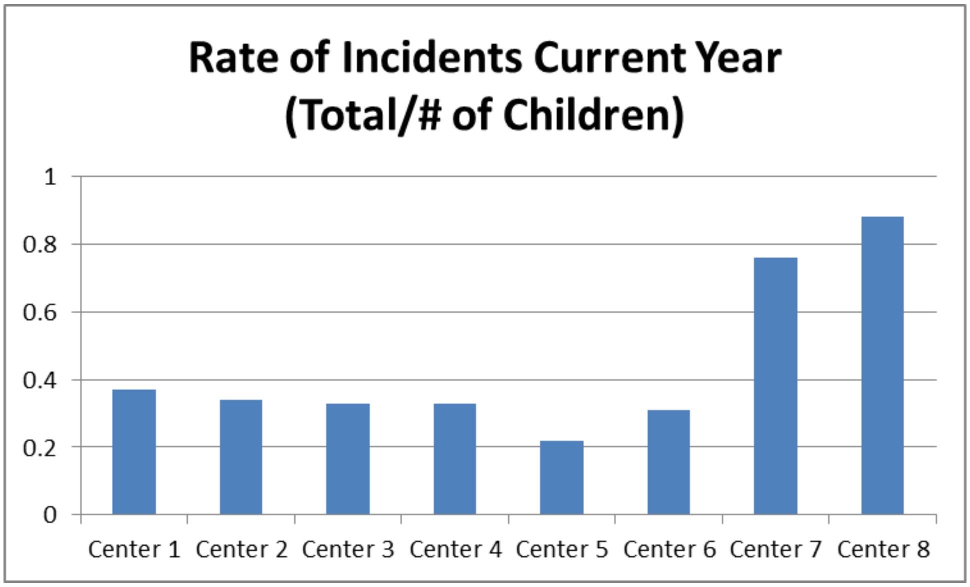
If you selected response one: Yes!
Looking at the rate of incidents by center will let you see if there are any patterns as to where the incidents are occurring.

If you selected response two**:** There's a better path to consider
Try again. Looking at data over time is a way to dig deeper for discoveries. In this case it will not help you answer the question, "In which centers are the incidents occurring?"

If you selected response three**:** There's a better path to consider
Choose again. Reviewing data about classroom safety checks is a good way to investigate some safety concerns. At this point, though, it will pull you off the path of looking for incident patterns by center.

Lighting the Path # 3: Data

Continue on the path to see how this disaggregated data helps your discussion continue to build and flow.



Why is Rate Used?
Rate is a ratio that compares two quantities of different units.

In this case, we calculated the rate of injury/incident per child based on the total number of incidents divided by the total number of children in the center. Using “rate” rather than “number,” which is often used in looking at incident data, enables us to have a consistent measure across centers regardless of the number of children at each center.

This allows us to compare data across centers to look for trends and patterns.

Lighting the Path # 4: Question

Read each speaker's statement, and the possible responses. Choose the response that keeps the dialogue flowing. For each correct answer, you will light the path for your journey!

How would you build the dialogue?
Wow! When we disaggregate the data by center, we can see that two of your centers have more than twice the rate of incidents as your other centers.

1. I think those centers had the most new staff. That must have something to do with it.
2. Those centers have all the tough kids.
3. I wonder if these centers always have more incidents, or if this was just something that happened this year. I’d like to see data from the past few years.

If you selected response one: Not Quite
Hold onto that thought. Having information about staffing could be helpful, but there is a better choice at this point in the path.

If you selected response two: Not Quite
Making generalized assumptions will not lead you to data-based discoveries. Let’s look more deeply at the data as we try to light your path.

If you selected response three: Yes!
Good data-sleuthing technique. You are asking if what we see is a real pattern over time or if this information is perhaps an outlier—an occurrence outside the norm. Looking at data over time can help strengthen your discoveries.

Lighting the Path # 5: Question

Select the response that best supports the team in looking for deeper discoveries. For each correct answer, you will light the path for your journey!
You know that two centers have more than twice the rate of incidents as your other centers, but you don't know if this is a real pattern over time. Which data source would help you look at data over time to see if this is an ongoing issue?

1. Program-wide incident report data for the last three years
2. Documentation of regular classroom and playground safety checks
3. Rate of incidents, by center, for the last three years

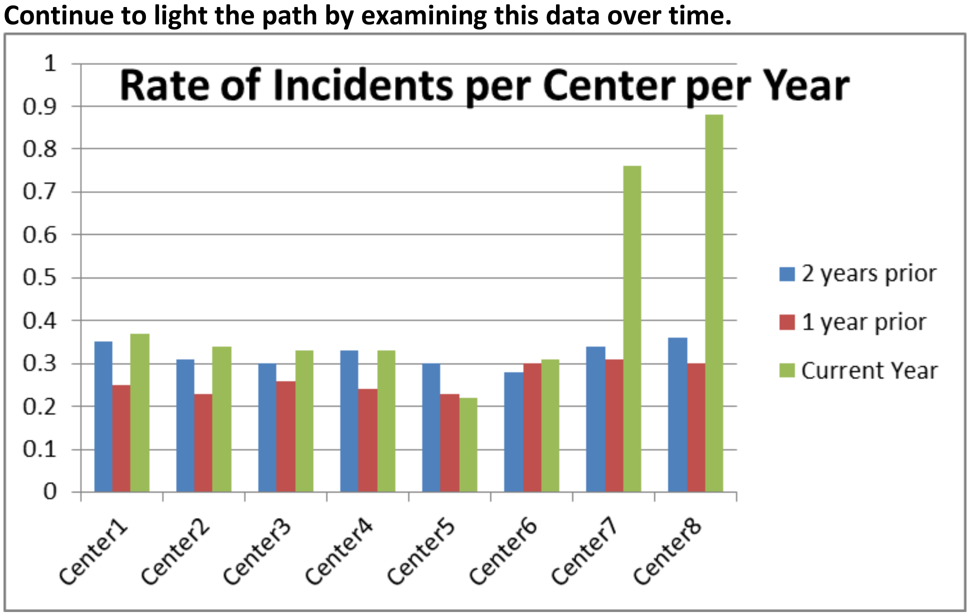
If you selected response one: There's a better path to consider
There's a better choice. Remember that we are now looking at data at the center level. Program-wide data will not give you information about the centers you are concerned about.

If you selected response two: There's a better path to consider
Try again. This data could certainly relate to safety, but it is not the best choice at this point along the path.

If you selected response three: Yes!
Yes! Looking at center-wide data over time will help you see if the centers in question have regularly had higher incident rates, or if this is something new this year. Your path is getting brighter!

Lighting the Path # 6: Data

Continue to light the path by examining this data over time.



How would you build the dialogue?

Those two centers didn't previously have higher rates of incident reports. Hmmm ... Something this year contributed to the safety concerns. Someone mentioned that many of the staff in those centers were new hires.

1. I knew it! Those new young teachers just can't keep control of the children in their groups.
2. Research shows that ongoing training and follow-up is necessary to retain and apply knowledge. How can we find out about staff tenure? And what do we know about staff training related to safety and supervision?
3. Everyone loved the old center director at one of those centers. I wonder if the new center director has trouble getting people to do their jobs?

Read each speaker's statement, and the possible responses. Choose the response that keeps the dialogue flowing. For each correct answer, you will light the path for your journey!

If you selected response one**:** Not Quite
This response comes to a conclusion and places blame, which isn't an effective way of talking about concerns.

If you selected response two**:** Yes!
Now you are on to something. Looking at multiple sources of data can help you make connections that lead to real discovery. This will keep your conversation going and keep you moving down a lighted path.

If you selected response three: Not Quite
It can be easy to let emotions guide your assumptions. Emotional responses can sometimes shut down our conversation. There is a better choice that will help you shed some real light on this situation.

Lighting the Path # 7: Question

Select the response that best supports the team in looking for deeper discoveries. For each correct answer, you will light the path for your journey!

You've discovered that something happened this year to contribute to the safety concerns in those two centers AND there are many new staff members this year. Which data source would allow you to look at "multiple sources of data" to see if there is any connection between these two facts?

1. Child Attendance Records and Staff Attendance Records
2. Staff Immunization Records and Field Trip Planning Forms
3. Safety and Supervision Training Schedule And Percentage Attendance at Pre-Service

If you selected response one**:** There's a better path to consider
Not quite. There might be some conclusions to draw here regarding staff attendance, but this is not the strongest choice. Try again.

If you selected response two: There's a better path to consider
Try another choice. These data sources would not supply you with a deeper level of information about what might be contributing to higher incident rates.

If you selected response three: Yes!

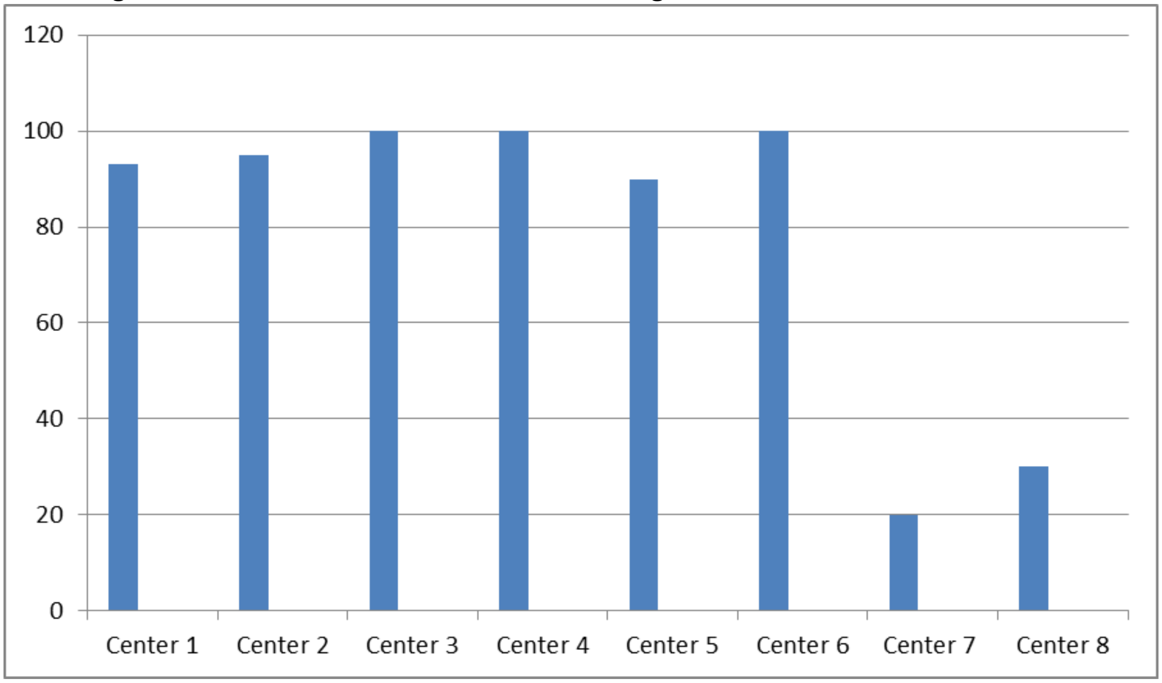
You got it! This information might actually support a discovery about a possible connection between staffing and higher rates of incidents.

Lighting the Path # 8: Data

Safety and Supervision Training Schedule

Date of Training	Title of Training	Hours
August 12	Using Systems to Support Safety	2
August 14	Active Supervision: Set up the Environment, Position Staff, Scan and Count	2
August 14	Active Supervision: Listen, Anticipate Children's Behavior, Engage and Redirect	2
August 20	NCQTL In-service Suites: "Classroom Transitions" and "Schedules and Routines"	2
August 20	NCQTL In-service Suites: "Designing the Environment" and "Stating Behavioral Expectations"	2
August 22	NCQTL In-service Suites: "Redirecting Behavior" and "Zoning to Maximize Learning"	2
August 22	Policies and Procedures (assuring safe indoor and outdoor learning environments)	1
September 7	Action Planning for Classroom and Playground Safety	3
October 12	Completing Safety Checks Indoors and Out	1
January 3	Active Supervision Review	2
March 5	NCQTL In-service Suites: "Creating Classroom Rules" and "Problem Solving in the Moment"	2
March 5	Active Supervision Review	1
May 14	Day Care Licensing Requirements for Playground Surfacing and Proper equipment—Webinar	1
June 3	First Aid Kit—Procedures for requisitioning supplies.	1
TOTAL HOURS: 24		

Percentage of Staff Attendance at Pre-Service Training



The path to enlightenment continues as you look at multiple sources of data. But something is still missing …

Lighting the Path # 9

Read each speaker's statement, and the possible responses. Choose the response that keeps the dialogue flowing. For each correct answer, you will light the path for your journey!

What final data source sheds light on staff attendance at safety trainings?

Hmmm … Most of our safety training was done at pre-service. AND, the majority of staff from the two centers with the most incidents were not at pre-service! We need one more piece of the puzzle!

1. Staff job satisfaction surveys
2. Staff hire dates
3. Staff performance reviews

If you selected response one**:** Not Quite
You would want more information about how long staff has been with you. Try again.

If you selected response two**:** Yes!
Yes! Let’s take a look at when staff were hired; perhaps this is the reason pre-service attendance from staff at Centers 7 and 8 was so low?

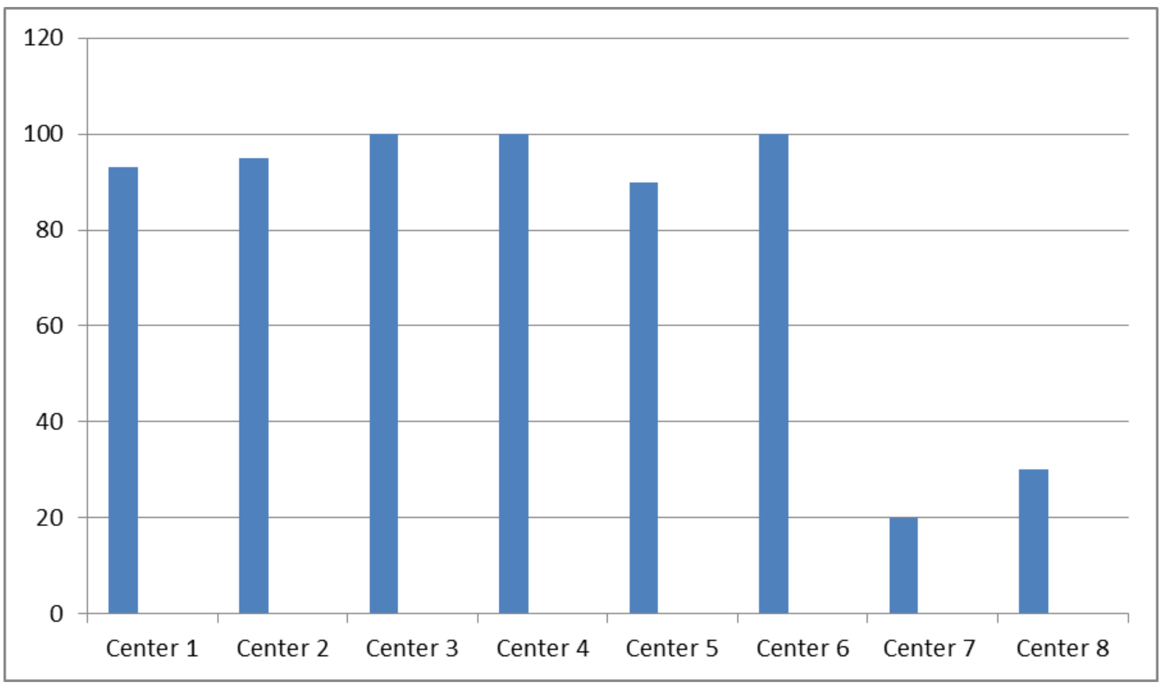
If you selected response three: Not Quite
You would want more information about how long staff has been with you. Try again.

Lighting the Path # 10: Data

MFHS: Teaching Staff Hire Date (Excerpt)

Center	Staff Role	Date of Hire
Center 1	Teacher	8-2-1985
Center 1	Teacher	8-6-2010
Center 2	Teacher	10-2-2011
Center 2	Teacher	8-7-1994
Center 3	Teacher	8-23-2011
Center 4	Teacher	3-8-1991
Center 5	Teacher	8-1-2011
Center 5	Teacher	9-9-2008
Center 6	Teacher	8-10-2013
Center 7	Teacher	10-4-20XX (current year)
Center 7	Teacher	9-22-20XX
Center 8	Teacher	9-2-20XX
Center 8	Teacher	10-2-20XX

Percentage of Staff Attendance at Pre-Service Training



Staff at Centers 7 and 8 were hired after pre-service. In the future, we must make sure ALL staff receive the necessary safety trainings! This will be important information as we start to create recommendations.

Conclusion

Through your exploration of incident reporting at Moving Forward Head Start, you have been able to practice looking at data in different ways. You have seen how the kinds of questions you ask can really influence the quality of the dialogue.

Some questions serve only to shut down the flow of conversation, while others prompt further exploration and deep inquiry. Understanding the data in disaggregated pieces, over time, and across multiple sources supports your analysis of program effectiveness.

You have made some important **discoveries.** These discoveries will help the Self-Assessment team form recommendations.

Summary: What Ground Was Covered?

We moved through Phase 3: Analyze and Dialogue with the help of these team members who did the following:

SA team or sub-groups

- Explore systemic issues
- Review and analyze data and seek additional data, as needed
- Engage in dialogue using probing questions
- Examine progress on goals and objectives
- Formulate discoveries

Phase 4: Recommend

What Happens in This Phase?

Your Self-Assessment sub-groups have looked deeply at data and made discoveries through that analysis. Now, in this phase of Self-Assessment, all of that work is summarized and prioritized into recommendations that the management team will use as they review the program goals and plan for continuous quality improvement.

In this phase you will also review this year's Self-Assessment process and make recommendations that will inform next year's process. For our road trip participants, this is where you take time to write in your travel journal… What did you learn from this trip? What might you do again next trip, and what might you want to change?

A Discovery About Training

You have made an interesting **discovery** about centers with teachers who missed child safety training. It's time to look at ALL of your discoveries and determine your final recommendations.

A helpful way to organize your discoveries is to:

1. Sort them into meaningful **themes** to provide organization and focus
2. Categorizing them further by the **reason why** you are recommending them
   - **Progress on goals and objectives**: They reflect progress toward an established goal.
   - **Systemic issues**: They are related to the "big picture" of how your program operates, or they have program-wide implications.
   - **Innovations**: They are existing, cutting-edge practices or new avenues that will benefit your program.

Activity Introduction: Organize Your Discoveries

In this activity, you will sort out a few of the discoveries in an Affinity Diagram. An Affinity Diagram is a graphic tool that is used to organize loose, unstructured ideas. You group related ideas into meaningful themes. One efficient way to do this is to put each idea on a small sheet of paper or sticky note so that you can easily move the ideas around and sort them. You may have discoveries that stand alone; these are also important.

Grouping Discoveries

Grouping discoveries into themes makes it easier to make recommendations that are cohesive and comprehensive. You may have discoveries that stand alone; these are also important.

Before you take a turn at organizing some of the discoveries, this example shows how some ideas can be naturally grouped together.

Step 1: Organize discoveries in natural groupings.

The following three discoveries were grouped together.

- Parent participation in family literacy activities was the highest in three years.

- Families are becoming more financially stable; there is an increase in the number of families reporting bank accounts and full-time employment. Eighty-five percent of the families in your program who qualify for earned income tax credit are receiving it.
- Sixty-eight percent of parents report making progress on the goals set with their family service worker for this past year. This is up 20 percent from three years ago.

Step 2: Label your theme.
The group was labeled, "Family Progress."

Organize Your Discoveries Activity: Step 1

The team has begun sorting discoveries into group. Two groups have been created. Each group has been assigned one discovery.

Group 1	Group 2
There has been a 66 percent increase in the number of incidents reported program-wide this year over last year.	In classrooms with the most incidents, teachers had not participated in pre-service training around child safety.

Determine which group each of the following discoveries should be assigned to.

a. Most of the safety concerns were identified in two of the centers.
b. Supervisors are not regularly following up to see that staff trainings are up to date.
c. New teachers are not matched with seasoned teachers who could mentor them and help support child safety.

Feedback
The logical groupings for the discoveries is shown in the following table.

Group 1	Group 2
There has been a 66 percent increase in the number of incidents reported program-wide this year over last year.	In classrooms with the most incidents, teachers had not participated in pre-service training around child safety.
a. Most of the safety concerns were identified in two of the centers.	b. Supervisors are not regularly following up to see that staff trainings are up to date.
	c. New teachers are not matched with seasoned teachers who could mentor them and help support child safety.

Organize Your Discoveries Activity: Step 2

Choose a theme for each group and use that as the group's label.

Feedback
Hopefully you chose something like …

- "Child Safety"
- "Staff Training and Orientation"

Child Safety	Staff Training and Orientation
There has been a 66 percent increase in the number of incidents reported program-wide this year over last year.	In classrooms with the most incidents, teachers had not participated in pre-service training around child safety.
Most of the safety concerns were identified in two of the centers.	Supervisors are not regularly following up to see that staff trainings are up to date.
	New teachers are not matched with seasoned teachers who could mentor them and help support child safety.

Activity Introduction: Sort Recommendations

You just identified systemic themes as you grouped together your discoveries. Next, you will see a list of some of the recommendations the Self-Assessment team created based on that process.

Sorting recommendations based on what you are trying to accomplish is important because you can confirm that you have covered all aspects of the Self-Assessment process and that you are capturing information from these categories to put in your Self-Assessment report:

- Progress on goals and objectives
- Systemic issues
- Innovations

Moving Forward's Program Goals

In this activity, you will sort the Self-Assessment team's recommendations into three categories.

Recommendations can fall into more than one category.

To help you prepare to sort recommendations, review the program goals.

Moving Forward has three broad goals for its five-year project period:

- Goal 1: Increase child attendance and decrease absenteeism and tardiness so that all children will develop the habit of attending school regularly, leading to success in kindergarten and opening doors to college.
- Goal 2: Enhance education services to improve the vocabularies of enrolled children to maximize their potential to enter kindergarten with a solid foundation for reading success.
- Goal 3: Partner with families and work with community partners to support families' progress toward improved well-being and financial stability.

Read each recommendation and indicate into which category or categories it falls

Recommendation	Progress Towards Goal	Systemic Issue	Innovation
Create a new program goal to support a program culture of health and safety for children and staff.	☐	☐	☐

Recommendation	Progress Towards Goal	Systemic Issue	Innovation
Revisit orientation and staff training protocols and procedures to ensure that all staff, especially those hired after pre-service, receive all necessary training and ongoing support.	☐	☐	☐
Contract with a playground safety inspector to assess several playgrounds with a high number of incident reports.	☐	☐	☐
Capitalize on the interest families have shown in literacy by partnering with the local library and other community programs that promote literacy goals. Introduce a "read aloud to your children nightly" initiative.	☐	☐	☐
Develop an initiative to recognize the community partnerships that make a significant contribution to our goals related to family literacy and family financial stability.	☐	☐	☐

Feedback

Recommendation	Progress Towards Goal	Systemic Issue	Innovation
Create a new program goal to support a program culture of health and safety for children and staff.	☐	☒	☐
Revisit orientation and staff training protocols and procedures to ensure that all staff, especially those hired after pre-service, receive all necessary training and on-going support.	☐	☒	☐
Contract with a playground safety inspector to assess several playgrounds with a high number of incident reports.	☐	☒	☐
Capitalize on the interest families have shown in literacy by partnering with the local library and other community programs that promote literacy goals. Introduce a "read aloud to your children nightly" initiative.	☒	☐	☒
Develop an initiative to recognize the community partnerships that make a significant contribution to our goals related to family literacy and family financial stability.	☒	☐	☒

Conclusion

In this phase, you began with many sub-group discoveries, and ended with excellent recommendations.

The Self-Assessment team:

- Compiled **discoveries**
- Sorted discoveries into **themes** across subgroups
- Used key insights to form **recommendations**
- **Categorized** recommendations into one or more of the following:
  - **Progress on goals and objectives**
  - **Systemic issues**
  - **Innovations**

Now it is time for Head Start leaders to move to the next phase: Prepare Report.

Summary: What Ground Was Covered?

We moved through Phase 4: Recommend with the help of these team members who did the following:

SA Team

- Consolidated discoveries across teams
- Prepared final recommendations to inform program planning
- Provided feedback on the SA process for next year's SA

Phase 5: Prepare the Report

What Happens in This Phase?

Here is where you take all of the great work the Self-Assessment team did and gather it into a report that will be shared with the governing body/Tribal Council and Policy Council. After approval from both of these groups, your report will be submitted to the Regional Office.

You share the report with stakeholders and program staff, and use recommendations from the report throughout the year to support Program Planning.

Let's take a look at parts of a completed report.

Activity Introduction: Prepare Report

In this activity, you will help the Moving Forward Head Start program to organize its report into these four sections:

- Introduction
- Methodology
- Key Insights
- Recommendations

Read each statement from the Program's Self-Assessment report. Then select to indicate where in the report those details would best be shared.

Prepare Report, part 1

Statement
The management team developed a Self-Assessment plan with tasks and timelines. Both the Policy Council and the governing body/Tribal Council approved the plan. The Self-Assessment team included four subgroups:

- Staff and Child Attendance
- Vocabulary, Literacy, and Language
- Family Well-being and Financial Stability
- Child Safety

Correct section: Methodology
The Methodology section includes a description of the design of your Self-Assessment process, the internal and external team members, time frame, and the data tools that you used. This provides an overview of the program to bring all reviewers up to speed on your process and partners in Self-Assessment.

Prepare Report, part 2

Statement
The team looked at many sources of data, including child outcomes data, staff training schedules, and safety data.

Correct section: Methodology
A list of the data sources that your team reviewed is part of methodology. Knowing what data sources were used to inform the final report is the basis of data-informed decision-making! It helps your outside audiences understand the basis for your decisions and recommendations.

Prepare Report, part 3

Statement
Moving Forward Head Start program is a long-standing, mid-sized, single-source agency that operates center-based, family child care, and home-based options.

Correct section: Introduction
The description of your program goes right up front in the Introduction. The Introduction is where you provide a context for your Self-Assessment process and share information about your unique program.

Prepare Report, part 4

Statement
Progress on Goals: We made progress on our goal regarding child outcomes and literacy and have reached the 10 percent increase we were hoping for.

Correct section: Key Insights
This information belongs in the Key Insights section, which describes strengths, systemic issues, and the progress your program has made toward its goals and objectives.

Prepare Report, part 5

Statement
Innovation: Develop a Ready to Read Initiative to bring more books into homes; partner with a local library system.

Correct section: Recommendation
The Self-Assessment team made this recommendation based on various discoveries about families' surge in excitement about literacy.

Conclusion

Once the Self-Assessment report is approved by the Policy Council and governing body/Tribal Council, you submit it to your Regional Office. The report is one of the most important tools you will use to guide future program planning.

Download a sample report or a Self-Assessment report template from the Resources web page.

Summary: What Ground Was Covered?

We moved through Phase 5: Prepare the Report with the help of this team member who did the following:

Director

- Prepared Self-Assessment report

- Submitted report to the Policy Council and governing body/Tribal Council for approval
- Submitted approved report to the Regional Office

POST Self-Assessment: Moving into Program Planning

What Happens in This Section?

Submitting your report to your Regional Office does not mean all of the work of Self-Assessment is done. After Self-Assessment, the recommendations and the Self-Assessment report inform your annual program planning.

This is where you move from Self-Assessment into Program Planning. Along with your Community Assessment, your Self-Assessment fuels the work ahead of you. Quality improvement continues to be a daily focus of your program practices. Your tank is topped off and you are ready to drive into the next year knowing that what you have learned along this journey will make the path ahead even brighter.

Program Planning Cycle

There are seven steps in the Program Planning Cycle.

Step 1. **Conduct or Update Community Assessment**
During its community assessment, MFHS learned about a new organization that provides classes on adult basic literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Staff invited the director of this organization join the Self-Assessment team.

Step 2. **Every 5 Years: Decide on Broad Goals and Initial Short-Term Objectives. Annually: Review Goals and Revise if Necessary, Generate Objectives and Expected Outcomes**
Self-Assessment confirmed that, for the third year, MFHS was making progress on its broad literacy goal. Staff wrote new short term measurable objectives to support progress through the next year.

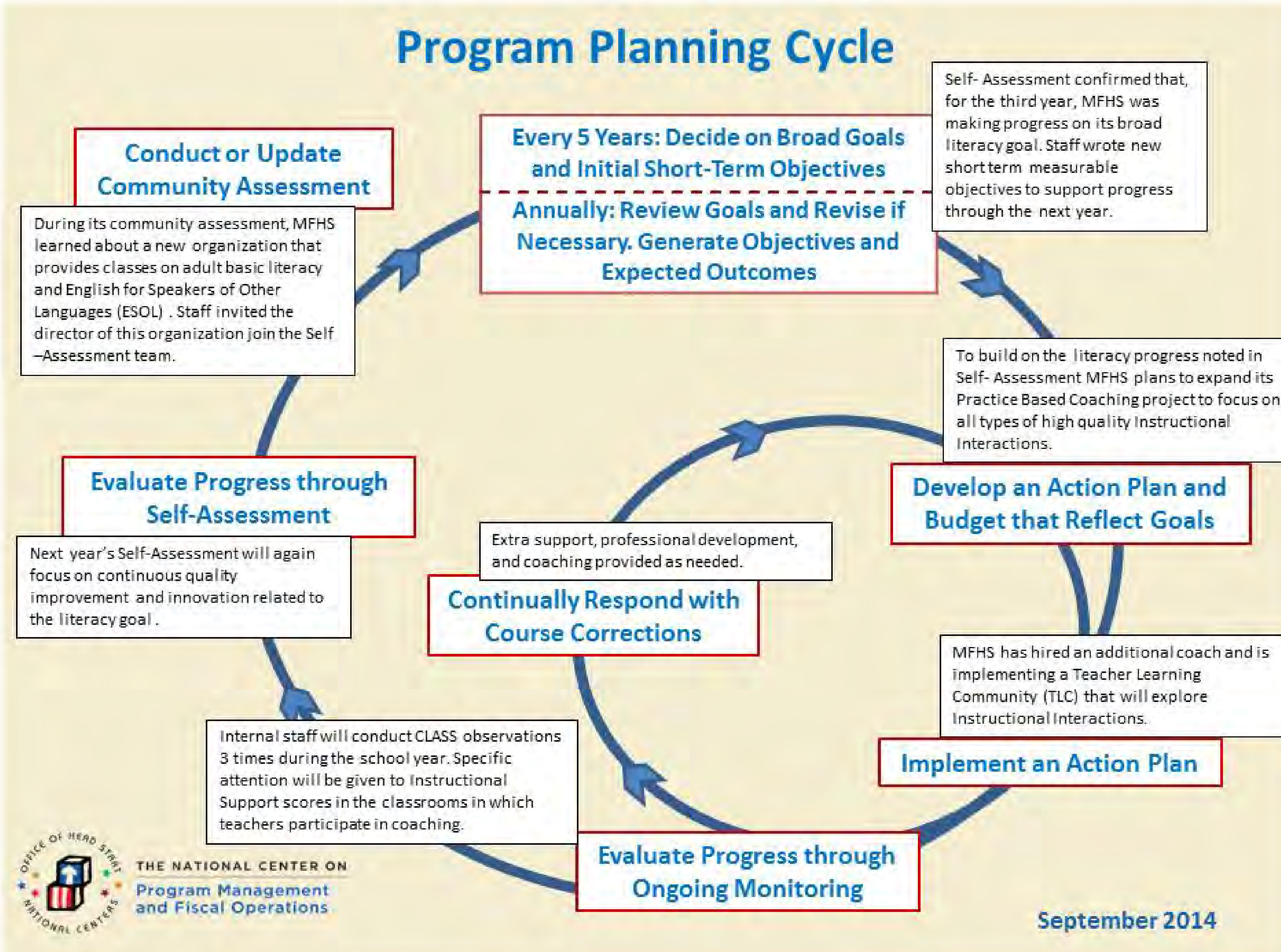
Step 3. **Develop Action Plan and Budget that Reflect Goals**
To build on the literacy progress noted in Self-Assessment, MFHS plans to expand its Practice-Based Coaching project to focus on all types of high quality instructional interactions.

Step 4. **Implement an Action Plan**
MFHS has hired an additional coach and is implementing a Teacher Learning Community (TLC) that will explore instructional interactions.

Step 5. **Evaluate Progress through Ongoing Monitoring**
Internal staff will conduct CLASS™ observations three times during the school year. Specific attention will be given to Instructional Support scores in the classrooms in which teachers participate in coaching.

Step 6. **Continually Respond with Course Corrections**
Extra support, professional development, and coaching provided as needed. This step leads back to Step 4 indicating a small, ongoing cycle of Steps 4, 5, and 6.

Step 7. **Evaluate Progress through Self-Assessment**
This leads back to Step 1 and the entire process begins again.
Next year's Self-Assessment will again focus on continuous quality improvement and innovation related to the literacy goal.


Program Planning Cycle
Conduct or Update Community Assessment
During its community assessment, MFHS learned about a new organization that provides classes on adult basic literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) . Staff invited the director of this organization join the Self –Assessment team.
Every 5 Years: Decide on Broad Goals and Initial Short-Term Objectives
Annually: Review Goals and Revise if Necessary. Generate Objectives and Expected Outcomes
Self- Assessment confirmed that, for the third year, MFHS was making progress on its broad literacy goal. Staff wrote new short term measurable objectives to support progress through the next year.
To build on the literacy progress noted in Self- Assessment MFHS plans to expand its Practice Based Coaching project to focus on all types of high quality Instructional Interactions.
Develop an Action Plan and Budget that Reflect Goals
MFHS has hired an additional coach and is implementing a Teacher Learning Community (TLC) that will explore Instructional Interactions.
Implement an Action Plan
Evaluate Progress through Ongoing Monitoring
Internal staff will conduct CLASS observations 3 times during the school year. Specific attention will be given to Instructional Support scores in the classrooms in which teachers participate in coaching.
Extra support, professional development, and coaching provided as needed.
Continually Respond with Course Corrections
Evaluate Progress through Self-Assessment
Next year's Self-Assessment will again focus on continuous quality improvement and innovation related to the literacy goal .
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Program Management and Fiscal Operations
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Download Keeping Self-Assessment in Mind throughout Program Planning from the Resources web page.

Conclusion: Linking Self-Assessment to Program Planning

Moving Forward Head Start has made it through its annual Self-Assessment. For our road trip participants, this is where you take time to review your travel journal. What did the Self-Assessment team tell you went well? What did they think could improve in future Self-Assessments? What observations or insight did you have or did you gain from the management team? Use these suggestions to shape next year's Self-Assessment process and plans.

Before you put the car in park and enjoy your destination, there is one final consideration: How will the Self-Assessment journey link to Program Planning?

At this point in the process, the work of the Self-Assessment team merges with the planning work of the Program Leadership. The program leadership team will have to carry the Self-Assessment results forward to inform goals, ensure compliance, and delve into exciting innovations.

Summary: What Ground Was Covered?

We moved through POST: From Self-Assessment to Program Planning with the help of these team members who did the following:

Program Leadership

- Reviewed feedback from this year's SA team to help plan for next year
- Used SA report recommendations to confirm or revise program goals and objectives
- Added to or revised annual action plans

Wrap-up: Use Self-Assessment for Program Planning

You've arrived!

Our trip through Self-Assessment began with an overview, and you traveled through the PRE stage, where you moved from ongoing monitoring into the Self-Assessment process. Then you traveled through the five phases of the process:

- Design the Process
- Engage the Team
- Analyze and Dialogue
- Recommend
- Prepare a Report

You ended up at the POST, when you moved into program planning. We hope you learned a lot and enjoyed your journey!

Download print resources and key content for this course.