



Intensive Technical Assistance

Assessment Tool

Community
Systems
Edition



NATIONAL TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE CENTER



Smart Start's National Technical Assistance Center

Smart Start's National Technical Assistance Center (NTAC) provides assistance to states and communities that are working to ensure every child arrives at school healthy and ready to succeed. Our expertise is based upon more than a decade of hands-on experience in the development of the nationally-recognized, award-winning Smart Start initiative.

Since 2001, NTAC has shared Smart Start's expertise with individuals and organizations from a wide array of states and communities. Our assistance is based on the philosophy that:

- Every child should receive the developmental opportunities they need to arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.
- States and communities should develop an early childhood system that best fits the needs, resources, and cultural realities of their region.
- A comprehensive approach that includes high quality early care and education, health, and family support is essential.
- The most effective approach includes active participation from both state and community level organizations.

Among the services offered through NTAC are conferences, speakers, resource materials, customized training, and consultation. In addition, we offer an intensive technical assistance program for states and communities working to develop a comprehensive, community-based early childhood system. Under this program, participating states and communities receive a customized technical assistance plan. The intensive technical assistance provides participants with a myriad of resources, including access to an on-call coach and a customized package of resources.

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Efforts to develop the original Intensive Technical Assistance Tool were coordinated by CK Kroll & Associates, Inc.

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Assessment Tool

The Intensive Technical Assistance Assessment Tool was originally developed for use in states and communities participating in Smart Start’s National Technical Assistance Center’s intensive technical assistance program. It is designed to identify specific areas where technical assistance will be of benefit. Assessment results are used to develop individualized technical assistance plans. Previous studies have shown that the tool is indeed effective in determining technical assistance needs. Moreover, the assessment process in and of itself increased participants’ knowledge of systems development; strengthened collaborative relationships; and spurred immediate action.

Key Assessment Tool Terms

Comprehensive early childhood systems: embrace a broad view of the entire network of services and supports necessary for ensuring children arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.

Sub-systems or components of the system: refer to the individual systems of *early care and education, health, mental health, and family support* that comprise the overarching comprehensive system.

Young children and those who care for them: refers to families, early childhood educators, home visitors, health care providers, etc.

Instructions

Unless otherwise instructed, for each question please check the circle or box next to the item that most closely corresponds to your response. The choices for those questions that require only one response are indicated with a circle ; the choices for those questions that ask for all responses that apply are indicated with a box .

There are no right or wrong answers in the Assessment Tool – it is intended to help determine what areas might benefit from intensive technical assistance. It is important to bear in mind that not one state or community has accomplished or defined every systems-building component listed in the Assessment Tool. Rather, the assessment is intended to facilitate a discussion about issues that are critical to the successful development of a comprehensive, community-based early childhood system.

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Site: _____

Your Name: _____

Affiliation (e.g., state or local agency, parent, business, etc.) _____

Name of Coach: _____

Today's Date: _____

Section 1: Leadership

In order to develop and implement a comprehensive, community-based early childhood system, leadership is necessary from both top level officials and a broad grassroots constituency. The purpose of this section is to learn:

- ✓ If a key champion or group of champions exists
- ✓ What types of leadership have been demonstrated from various constituent groups
- ✓ About the vision and commitment to the vision

Key Champion

1. Do you have a key advocate or group of key advocates in support of creating a comprehensive early childhood system?

- We have a very strong key advocate or group of key advocates.
- We have a somewhat strong key advocate or group of key advocates.
- We do not have a key advocate or group of key advocates.
- Don't know

choose one
response

1a. If there is not a strong advocate or group of advocates, have you crafted strategies for developing champions?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

Collaborative Leadership

2. **During the development of the comprehensive early childhood system, people with authority to commit resources and/or to influence policy have been involved from which of the following agencies or groups?**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a) Governor's office | <input type="checkbox"/> l) Public education – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b) Mayor or other local elected leader | <input type="checkbox"/> m) Head Start |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c) City council or other city officials | <input type="checkbox"/> n) Cooperative Extension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d) County Commission or other county officials | <input type="checkbox"/> o) Social services agency – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e) Business community | <input type="checkbox"/> p) Mental health agency – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f) Leaders of early childhood programs | <input type="checkbox"/> q) Health agency – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g) United Way or philanthropic organization or foundation | <input type="checkbox"/> r) University or higher education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> h) Grassroots or community organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> s) Child or family advocacy groups or individuals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> i) Faith community | <input type="checkbox"/> t) Juvenile justice/ Law enforcement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> j) Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> u) Economic development/ Dept. of Labor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> k) Child care providers | <input type="checkbox"/> v) Other: <i>(specify)</i> |

check all that apply

3. **Of those checked above, which group(s) demonstrates the strongest leadership?**

write the corresponding letter for 1-3 groups

4. **For which group(s) does leadership most need to be developed?**

write the corresponding letter for 1-3 groups

Comprehensive Vision

5. **Has the leadership group developed a vision statement?**

- Yes
- The group is in the process of developing a vision statement.
- No **If No, skip to the end of this section**
- Don't know

choose one response

6. **Does the vision reflect a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of young children, including early care and education, family support/parent education, mental health, and health?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

Commitment to a Cohesive Vision among a Diverse Group of Leaders

7. **Select the statement which best describes the leadership group's support for a comprehensive vision:**

- Overall, there is group consensus that the vision needs to address the multi-faceted needs of young children and not focus solely on one particular domain, such as health or child care.
- The majority of the group is committed to a comprehensive vision, but there is some fragmentation surrounding turf issues or some disagreement.
- The group is currently in the process of building a cohesive commitment to a comprehensive vision.
- Unsure of the group's commitment to a cohesive vision.

choose one
response

8. **To what extent is the vision endorsed and used by highly visible leaders, such as elected officials, business leaders, etc.? Consider if the vision is mentioned in speeches, media appearances, departmental meetings, etc.**

- The vision is used often by highly visible leaders.
- While highly visible leaders support the vision, there is some, but not much, evidence of them using the vision.
- There is little evidence of highly visible leaders using the vision.
- Don't know

choose one
response

9. **To what extent is the vision used by different components of the system (i.e., health, human service, education, mental health)? Consider if the vision statement is used in planning documents, as conference themes, as taglines or in a logo.**

- The different components use the vision statement in a variety of ways.
- The different components are in the beginning stages of using the vision statement.
- The vision statement is not used in visible and/or meaningful ways by system components.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Section II: Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a critical component for developing and implementing comprehensive, community-based early childhood systems. A thorough planning process that involves a broad range of stakeholders will assist with implementing the system in an effective manner. The purpose of this section is to learn:

- ✓ Which stakeholders have been involved in planning
- ✓ The level of support for planning efforts
- ✓ The types of steps undertaken by planning efforts

Strategic Plan

1. Has a **completed** version of a strategic plan for a comprehensive early childhood system been developed?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

if Yes

1a. What is the level of support for the plan among a diverse group of leaders and constituents?

- High level of support
- Moderate level of support
- Low level or no support
- Don't know

choose one
response

2. If you are in the process of developing a strategic plan, what is the level of support for the plan at this point in time?

- High level of support
- Moderate level of support
- Low level or no support
- Don't know
- Not applicable

choose one response

Broad Based Participation

3. People from which of the following agencies or groups have participated in planning?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a) Governor's office | <input type="checkbox"/> l) Public education – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b) Mayor or other local elected leader | <input type="checkbox"/> m) Head Start |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c) City council or other city officials | <input type="checkbox"/> n) Cooperative Extension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d) County Commission or other county officials | <input type="checkbox"/> o) Social services agency – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e) Business community | <input type="checkbox"/> p) Mental health agency – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f) Leaders of early childhood programs | <input type="checkbox"/> q) Health agency – top ranking official |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g) United Way or philanthropic organization or foundation | <input type="checkbox"/> r) University or higher education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> h) Grassroots or community organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> s) Child or family advocacy groups or individuals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> i) Faith community | <input type="checkbox"/> t) Juvenile justice/ Law enforcement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> j) Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> u) Economic development/ Dept. of Labor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> k) Child care providers | <input type="checkbox"/> v) Other: <i>(specify)</i> |

check all that apply

4. Of those checked, which group(s) demonstrates the strongest level of participation in planning efforts?

write the corresponding letter for 1-3 groups

5. In which group(s) does participation in planning efforts most need to be developed?

write the corresponding letter for 1-3 groups

6. To what extent is there representation on the planning team from high ranking officials who have knowledge of management policies, funding sources, and rules and regulations that govern funding sources?

- Most representatives are high ranking officials.
- Some representatives are high ranking officials.
- Few representatives are high ranking officials.
- Don't know

choose one response

7. To what extent is the planning team reflective of underrepresented groups in your region, such as ethnic and cultural minority groups, underrepresented geographic regions, etc.?

- The planning team is reflective of the state.
- The planning team is somewhat reflective of the state.
- The planning team is not reflective of the state.
- Don't know

choose one response

Steps in Planning

8. What steps have you undertaken to complete your plan?

- a) Conducted needs assessment/assets inventory
- b) Incorporated needs assessment/assets inventory data into the plan
- c) Identified target population (e.g., "all children" or "at-risk children")
- d) Identified region (e.g., city or county-wide)
- e) Developed long-term goals
- f) Prioritized needs, goals, and long-term outcomes
- g) Developed strategies that build on existing, effective programs and best practices
- h) Defined implementation steps
- i) Included budget or approximate costs
- j) Considered issues unique to the state, such as differing issues among urban or rural communities
- k) Reflected the diverse cultures and approaches to raising young children practiced by groups, especially underrepresented groups, across the state

check all that apply

9. Which steps are most in need of development?

write the corresponding letter for up to three steps

Soliciting Support for the Strategic Plan

10. What methods have you used to gain support for the strategic plan?

- a) Solicited feedback from a wide range of constituents, including diverse and hard to reach populations
- b) Pursued diverse methods of soliciting feedback, including face-to-face meetings and written comments
- c) Incorporated feedback into the strategic plan

check all
that apply

For Discussion

- How do you know there is support for the plan?
- What is the relationship between your planning efforts and other planning efforts that are occurring:
 - At the state level
 - Within your community
 - Within other communities across the state?

Notes and Questions about Section II: Strategic Planning

Section III: Accountability for Results

The overall intent of a comprehensive early childhood system is to improve conditions for young children. As such, it is critical that communities demonstrate meaningful results for systems building efforts. The purpose of this section is to learn:

- ✓ If long-term results have been established
- ✓ The linkage between systems building efforts and results for children
- ✓ The level of support for established results
- ✓ The capacity to measure results
- ✓ The relationship between state and local results

Setting Long-term Results

1. Have measurable long-term results for the comprehensive early childhood system been developed?

- Yes
- We are in the process of identifying measurable long-term results (i.e., beginning to talk or meet).
- No **If No, skip to Question 5**
- Don't know

choose one response

If Yes to Question 1:

1a. To what extent do long-term results relate to identified needs or significant concerns in your community?

- Long-term results closely relate to identified needs.
- Long-term results somewhat relate to identified needs.
- Long-term results are not related to identified needs.
- Don't know

choose one response

1b. Are there results that pertain to outcomes for children and families, such as increased immunization rates, increase in the number of nationally accredited child care programs, etc.?

- Yes
- We are in the process of identifying long-term results.
- No
- Don't know

choose one response

1c. Are there results that measure the effectiveness of the system, such as improved coordination among specified components of the system?

- Yes
- We are in the process of identifying long-term results.
- No
- Don't know

choose one response

Soliciting Support for Long-term Results

2. Efforts to gain support for long-term results include which of the following?

- Solicited feedback from a wide range of constituents, including diverse and hard-to-reach populations
- Pursued diverse methods of soliciting feedback, including face-to-face meetings and written comments
- Incorporated feedback into the final results
- Specific steps to gain support have not been determined.
- Don't know

check all that apply

3. What is the level of support at the state level for long-term results?

- High level of support
- Moderate level of support
- Low level of support
- Don't know

choose one response

4. What is the level of support at the local level for long-term results?

- High level of support
- Moderate level of support
- Low level of support
- Don't know

choose one response

Learning About the System

5. Are there formal methods (e.g., community forums, surveys) for learning directly from families and direct service workers (e.g., home visitors) how the early childhood system is working or not working effectively?

- Yes, there are formal methods in place.
- We are in the process of developing methods.
- No, there are no formal methods in place.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Linking Systems Development to Results

6. Is there a direct and clear link between the efforts to build a comprehensive early childhood system and positive, concrete results for young children? In other words, are systems leaders and planners able to state what will be different for young children?

- Yes, there is a direct and clear link.
- We are in the process of determining how efforts to develop a comprehensive early childhood system will directly benefit young children.
- No, it is unclear how the development of a comprehensive early childhood system will directly benefit young children.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Measuring Long-term Results

7. To what extent is there an adequate data collection system in place to measure progress for systems building efforts? Consider issues such as adequate data sources, capacity to collect data, etc.

- An adequate data collection system is in place.
- A somewhat adequate data collection system is in place.
- We are in the process of developing a data collection system.
- There is no data collection system in place.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Resources for Evaluation

8. What is the availability of resources (e.g., time, expertise, funding) for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data about long-term results?

- Adequate resources are available.
- Some, but not adequate, resources are available.
- Few or no resources are available.
- Don't know

choose one
response

For Discussion

- How do you know the level of support for long-term results?
- What methods are in place or could be put in place?
- As the system is developed, what changes will be realized for young children?
- What is the current level of capacity for evaluation?
- Who is responsible for the accountability function (e.g., external evaluator, local staff, etc.)?
- How do your community results relate to existing results across the early childhood sub-systems at the state and local levels?
- How do your community results link to existing state-level initiatives or programs?

Notes and Questions about Section III: Accountability for Results

Section IV: New and Existing Resources

Resources are necessary for both planning and implementation efforts. Some communities will work solely with existing resources, while others will work with a combination of new and existing resources. The purpose of this section is to learn:

- ✓ If resources are available for planning and implementation efforts
- ✓ What types of efforts are in place to garner new resources
- ✓ What types of policies are in place regarding the distribution of resources
- ✓ What types of collaborative relationships are in place to foster resource development

Existing Resources for Planning and Implementation

1. Are resources currently available to support efforts to plan a comprehensive early childhood system?

- Yes, resources are available.
- We are currently seeking resources for planning efforts.
- No, resources are not available.
- Don't know

choose one
response

2. Are resources currently available to support efforts to implement a comprehensive early childhood system?

- Yes, resources are available.
- We are currently seeking resources for implementation efforts.
- No, resources are not available.
- Don't know

choose one
response

If Yes:

2a. Are there sufficient resources to develop the system community-wide at this time?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

2b. If yes, are there policies or regulations to ensure equitable distribution of existing resources?

- Yes
- We are in the process of developing policies.
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

choose one
response

New Resources

3. Are there plans to bring new resources into the comprehensive early childhood system?

- Yes
- No, the system will be implemented solely with existing resources at this time.
- Don't know

choose one
response

4. Is there a mechanism or entity in place to raise new funds for systems planning and/or implementation?

- Yes
- We are in process of developing a mechanism.
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

choose one
response

5. Are there policies or regulations to ensure equitable distribution of new resources?

- Yes
- We are in the process of developing policies.
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

choose one
response

Collaboration for Resource Development

6. Have key collaboration partners for resource development been identified?

- Yes
- We are in the process of identifying partners.
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

If Yes:

6a. What types of plans have been developed for collaborative relationships with key partners?

- Identify how joint ventures will be of mutual benefit, especially for private sector partners
- Leverage or share funds
- Jointly administer programs
- Co-write proposals for future programs
- Set joint policies and procedures
- Set joint goals and priorities
- Develop a common set of short and long-term measures
- Collaborative relationships need to be developed

check all
that apply

For Discussion

- Are funds currently distributed from the state to the local level for systems building efforts? If so, how?
- What are potential sources for new resources – private, public, or some combination of both? What strategies have been used to generate resources? Consider issues such as cultivating donors from the business sector, undertaking economic impact studies, legislative advocacy, etc.
- What types of relationships have been forged with potential private sector donors?
- To what extent are existing and/or new resources coordinated across the various sub-systems? Are discretionary funds available to address gaps in services within or across services?
- What plans are in place to ensure effective use of resources, such as conducting resource mapping to identify service gaps and duplication?
- How are efforts to develop a comprehensive early childhood system coordinating with other currently funded, visible efforts such as universal pre-kindergarten or universal home visiting programs?

Notes and Questions about Section IV: New and Existing Resources

Section V: Decision-Making and Systems Management

In addition to crafting a vision and establishing long-term results, a key component of systems development is determining the structure of the comprehensive system, particularly structures for the purposes of decision-making and management. The purpose of this section is to learn:

- √ If organizational structures for decision-making have been developed
- √ If organizational management functions have been defined
- √ About capacity building issues

Development of Organizational Structure

1. Is an organizational structure in place for the purposes of managing or convening the components of a comprehensive early childhood system?

- Yes
- We are in the process of developing an organizational structure.
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

2. Which aspects of developing a board or organizational structure are defined?

- a) Overall purpose of organizational structure (i.e., direct oversight of programs, advisory, or some combination of both)
- b) Type of entity, such as new non-profit, new governmental department, coordinating body of existing governmental departments, etc.
- c) Type of authority for decision-making
- d) Methods for selecting members
- e) Committee structure
- f) Member roles and responsibilities
- g) Conflict of interest policies
- h) Methods to ensure buy-in for long-term goals and results, etc.
- i) Roles for generating revenue
- j) Staffing and relationship between staff and organizational structure (i.e., board)
- None of the above are applicable.

check all that apply
or Not applicable

3. Which areas are most in need of development?

write the corresponding
letter for up to three areas

Implementation

4. Which aspects of managing implementation efforts are defined?

- a) Mechanisms for establishing fiscal oversight
 - b) Mechanisms for establishing program oversight
 - c) Strategies for encouraging new approaches to meeting the needs of young children
 - d) Mechanisms for providing technical assistance
 - e) Mechanisms for convening appropriate stakeholders
 - f) Strategies for fostering communication, coordination, and collaboration among sub-systems and systems partners
 - g) Strategies for ensuring systems efforts do not become fragmented from new and emerging early childhood efforts
 - h) Strategies for ensuring a unified, ongoing approach to advocacy and public engagement
 - i) Strategies for ensuring results are measured and communicated
 - j) Strategies for ensuring there are ongoing efforts to continuously improve the system
- None of the above are applicable.

check all that apply
or Not applicable

5. Which are most in need of development?

write the corresponding
letter for up to three areas

Staffing

6. To what extent is staffing in place?

- Adequately staffed
- Partially staffed
- No staff in place
- Don't know

choose one
response

For Discussion

- What are the primary capacity-building issues?
- Is staff available to guide functions such as: leadership development; systems planning and development; program planning and development; public engagement; accountability; resource development, etc.?

Notes and Questions about Section V: Decision-Making and Systems Management

Section VI: Public Engagement/ Advocacy

Active involvement from both top level officials and a broad base of grassroots constituents is essential to maintain support for efforts to improve conditions for young children. The purpose for this section is to learn:

- ✓ The level of public support
- ✓ If a public engagement plan is in place
- ✓ If a network of advocates has been developed
- ✓ If unified messages have been adopted and communicated
- ✓ If a legislative and policy agenda is necessary to implement systems efforts

Public Support

1. What is the current level of public support for a comprehensive early childhood system?

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Don't know

choose one
response

2. In your opinion, does the public have an understanding of the key issues surrounding the need for a comprehensive approach to ensure children have quality experiences in the early years?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

Planning for Public Engagement and Advocacy Efforts

3. To what extent is there a plan to engage both the general public and key stakeholders in understanding and supporting early childhood efforts?

- There is a well-developed plan in place.
- We are in the process of developing a plan.
- There is no plan in place.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Brand Name

4. Has your community created a brand name that identifies your efforts to create a comprehensive early childhood system? (Examples from other communities include Smart Start San Jose and Memphis' First Years Last a Lifetime.)

- Yes
- We are in the process of creating a brand name.
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

5. To what extent are components of the system using the brand name, logo, tag-line, or other identity tools that show a unified approach to early childhood?

- Most components are using common identity tools to signify a unified approach.
- Some components are using common identity tools.
- No components are using common identity tools.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Simple, Unified Messages

6. To what extent have public engagement and advocacy messages been developed in a way that is easily understood by a broad audience?

- Simple, easily understood messages have been developed.
- We are in the process of developing easily understood messages.
- We have not developed easily understood messages.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Advocacy at the Grassroots Level

7. To what extent has a broad-based network of advocates been developed at the grassroots level?

Consider strategies such as:

- Identifying a broad base of grassroots advocates
 - Developing leadership and advocacy skills among grassroots advocates
 - Developing communication mechanisms for keeping grassroots advocates informed
 - Providing ongoing opportunities for grassroots advocates to participate in public engagement and advocacy activities
 - Developing mechanisms for mobilizing grassroots advocates quickly
- A strong, broad-based network of grassroots advocates has been developed.
- We are in the process of developing a strong, broad-based network.
- A strong, broad-based network does not currently exist.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Legislative and Policy Agenda

8. In order to create and implement a comprehensive early childhood system, will it be necessary to introduce legislation?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

choose one
response

9. To what extent have steps been taken to develop a successful policy agenda?

Consider strategies such as:

- Identifying bill sponsors, if applicable
 - Developing a broad base of support for legislation and policy initiatives
 - Developing support among key stakeholders, such as the mayor's office, legislative committee leaders, key campaign supporters of legislative leaders, etc.
- We have both identified and prioritized issues for our policy agenda.
- We are in the process of developing strategies for a successful policy agenda.
- We have not taken steps.
- Don't know

choose one
response

For Discussion

- How do you know the current level of support? What types of mechanisms are in place to gauge public support (i.e., public opinion polls, establishment of new policies and programs, increased resources, etc)?
- What are the top three key issues in your community?
- Which components or programs would garner the most public support? Consider items such as universal pre-kindergarten, universal home visiting, child care subsidies, etc.
- Is there public support for an investment of resources?
- What is the brand name that identifies your systems efforts?
- Is there a lead organization that brings together constituents around advocacy and public engagement efforts? If yes, which organization serves in that role?
- Which constituents have come together to agree upon common, unified messages?
- What are the messages, and to which audiences have they been targeted?
- What is the availability of resources for public engagement and advocacy efforts?

Notes and Questions about Section VI: Public Engagement/Advocacy

Section VII: Effective Practices

Note: While a comprehensive early childhood system is made up of several “sub-systems,” such as health, early care and education, family support, and mental health, in our experience early care and education is frequently in need of strengthening. The majority of questions in this section focus on elements of the early care and education sub-system. This is in no way meant to minimize the importance of health, mental health, or family support. Smart Start’s National Technical Assistance Center has direct experience with developing a quality early care and education sub-system that can be shared with states and communities. The Technical Assistance Center also can connect states and communities with technical assistance resources and experts on health, mental health, and family support.

When developing comprehensive community-based early childhood systems, it is important to consider the quality of the overall system. In doing so, one needs to consider the effectiveness of policies, programs, and practices within each sub-system.

The purpose of this section is to learn:

- ✓ The extent to which effective practices for a sub-system of early care and education are in place
- ✓ If there are elements of the health, mental health, and family support sub-systems that need to be strengthened

Early Care and Education

1. To what extent does your community or state have licensing and regulatory standards (i.e., tiered licensing, low staff:child ratios, etc.) that support high quality early care and education programs?

- Strong standards are in place.
- We are in the process of strengthening standards.
- Strong standards are not in place.
- Don't know

choose one
response

2. To what extent does your community focus efforts and resources on ensuring access (i.e., resource and referral, expanded eligibility for purchase of care) to early care and education for those who need it?

- There is strong emphasis on ensuring access.
- We are in the process of developing strategies to ensure access.
- Efforts are not focused on ensuring access.
- Don't know

choose one
response

3. To what extent does your community focus efforts and resources on increasing the education level of the early childhood profession?

- There is strong emphasis on increasing education.
- We are in the process of developing efforts to increase education.
- Efforts are not focused on increasing education.
- Don't know

choose one
response

4. To what extent does your community focus efforts and resources to improve compensation and reduce turnover among the early care and education workforce?

- There is strong emphasis on improving compensation/reducing turnover.
- We are in the process of developing efforts.
- Efforts are not focused on improving compensation/reducing turnover.
- Don't know

choose one
response

5. To what extent does your community focus efforts and resources on providing technical assistance to increase the quality of early care and education?

- Efforts are focused on technical assistance.
- We are in the process of developing technical assistance efforts.
- Efforts are not focused.
- Don't know

choose one
response

Family Support

6. To what extent does your community focus efforts and resources to adopt a high-quality approach to family support?

Consider efforts such as:

- Comprehensive approaches to support families, such as community-wide home visiting models, widespread access to parent education, etc.
 - Comprehensive strategies to strengthen families' abilities to meet children's basic needs in a nurturing environment
 - Utilization of family support principles when creating and implementing policies and programs
-
- Efforts are focused on a high-quality approach to family support.
 - We are in the process of developing family support efforts.
 - Efforts are not focused on a high-quality approach to family support.

choose one
response

Health

7. To what extent does your community focus efforts and resources to ensure use of primary, preventive health care?

Consider items such as:

- Access to a medical home
 - Access to health insurance for children
 - Adequate provider coverage (i.e., pediatric, dental, etc.) across the community
 - Coordination of services (such as screenings) with the medical home
-
- Efforts are focused on ensuring the use of primary, preventive care
 - We are in the process of developing efforts to ensure the use of primary, preventive care.
 - Efforts are not focused on ensuring the use of primary, preventive care.

choose one
response

Mental Health

8. To what extent does your community focus efforts and resources to support mental health services for young children?

Consider items such as:

- Access to routine social/emotional/developmental assessments
 - Access to services that support positive social/emotional development
 - Training and support for families
 - Training and support for providers
-
- Efforts are focused on providing mental health services.
 - We are in the process of developing mental health efforts.
 - Efforts are not focused on providing mental health services.

For Discussion

- What elements of the early care and education sub-system are most in need of development?
- To what extent are staff of the various sub-systems guided by family support principles?
- Are there particular circumstances where the system or sub-systems are most problematic for families, especially circumstances that influence achieving positive results for children?
- Are there other aspects of the sub-systems that are in need of greater development, or in need of becoming more integrated with other services?
- What commitment is there to a comprehensive system that emphasizes high quality care and education; access to health and mental health services; and services to support families?

Notes and Questions about Section VII: Effective Practices

Section VIII: Direct Technical Assistance for Staff

Staff Technical Assistance

1. In which areas can staff benefit from technical assistance?

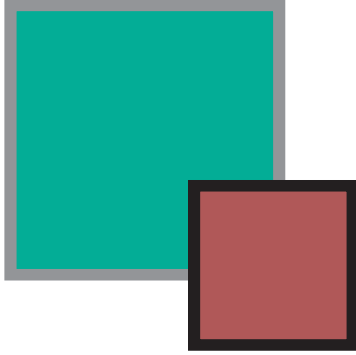
- a) Fiscal policies and procedures
- b) Program development (best practices in program areas, e.g., early childhood, family support, health)
- c) Organizational development
- d) Gaining participation from key stakeholders at the local level (e.g., child care providers, parents, agency directors)
- e) Evaluation
- f) Public engagement/Advocacy
- g) Resource development

check all that apply

2. Which are most in need of development?

write the corresponding letter for up to three areas

Notes and Questions about Section VIII: Direct Technical Assistance for Staff



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