ADMINISTRATION OF ECE COACHING INITIATIVES

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OF ECE COACHING INITIATIVES

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ALAMEDA COUNTY

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ADMINISTRATION OF ECE COACHING INITIATIVES

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SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

The past decade has seen a renewed focus on improving the quality of Early Care and Education (ECE), spurring a proliferation of new initiatives to enhance child care providers' practices, enrich curricula, and improve caregiving environments.

The growth of quality interventions in an era of reduced budgets has brought an essential question to the surface: which interventions have the most lasting impact on ECE quality? Recent research on teacher preparation and professional development converges on a common theme: child care providers' practices are more likely to change—and these changes are more likely to be sustained—when providers receive personalized support, in their unique settings, from a skilled, caring, and knowledgeable professional.[1] As a result, an increasing number of quality intervention and support initiatives are building on-site technical assistance, such as coaching,* into their menu of services.

This growing interest in coaching as an intervention has increased the demand for the provision of coaching services to support ECE programs on a range of child care issues. Those issues include early childhood mental health, ECE curriculum, health and safety practices, teacher-child interactions, and ECE business and fiscal practices.

The dramatic increase in coaching initiatives has also created a need for knowledgeable initiative administrators who are familiar with the unique considerations of implementing effective coaching initiatives within the singular context of ECE.

Professional coaching in ECE brings professional development directly into the day-to-day realities of ECE professional caregivers. Coaching, in general, requires intellectual adaptivity and interpersonal dexterity. In the diverse and socially significant world of caring for young children, coaching can be particularly demanding, requiring specialized knowledge, advanced skills, and continual self-reflection. To date, there are few formal training resources to prepare ECE coaches and coaching initiative administrators on the critical aspects of quality coaching. That deficit triggered the creation of this manual.

1. Martha Zaslow, Kathryn Tout, Tamara Halle, Jessica Vick Whittaker, and Bridget Lavelle, compilers, *Toward the Identification of Features of Effective Professional Development for Early Childhood Educators: Literature Review* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, 2010).

*. "Coaching" is a relatively new term in ECE professional development and there is currently no universally accepted definition of "coaching" versus "consultation." See Definitions page in Section 2 for definition of coaching.

THIS MANUAL

This manual, *Administration of ECE Coaching Initiatives*, is designed for use by **coaching administrators** who are responsible for the creation and oversight of effective coaching initiatives for ECE providers.

The manual provides an overview of the myriad initiative structural and administrative issues to consider when developing and leading effective ECE coaching initiatives.

WORKING TOWARD "QUALITY" IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

ECE coaching initiatives generally share the same ultimate goal of improving and/or sustaining the quality of child care programs. Various national policy agencies such as the National Association of Educators of Young Children (NAEYC), have developed broad statements of quality, as have many states and localities. First 5 Alameda County has adopted the following principles as basic elements of quality child care:

- ▶ Highly skilled teachers

- ▶ Small class sizes and high adult-to-child ratios

- ▶ Safe physical settings

- ▶ Age appropriate curriculum

- ▶ Language-rich environments

- ▶ Warm responsive interactions between staff and children

- ▶ Low turnover among staff and children[2]

While many in the broad child care field agree with these quality statements in principle, many ECE providers, parents and professional development professionals may have very different opinions on which specific practices and caregiving approaches meet these goals. It is critical that everyone involved in your coaching initiative be clear not only about which general definition of quality applies to the programs you are working with, but also what specific practices and approach your initiative will promote and how improvements in quality will be gauged.

2. "First 5 Alameda County: Quality Child Care," 2013, http://www.first5alameda.org/quality-counts

ALIGNMENT WITH LOCAL, STATEWIDE, AND NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Interventions to improve quality have evolved from ad hoc, local initiatives to state and national-level discussion and coordination. This policy shift is most evident in the recent increase in the number of states adopting statewide Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)[3].

Recently the federal government has taken up this policy platform by providing targeted funding for research, development and expansion of QRIS. The rapid growth of national and state-level initiatives raises a complex issue: to what extent will existing initiatives—many of which have been developed and administered on the local level—match the standards and measures set by state and national standards? Administrators developing coaching initiative outcomes and measures should consider the advantages and potential challenges of aligning their initiatives with broader state and national standards.

The benefits of alignment with broader initiatives are numerous:

- ▶ Adoption of universal terms and standards creates a common language across program types and geographic distance, facilitating dialog among programs, regulators, funders, parents, and communities.

- ▶ Adoption of universal standards and measures eases the burden on individual programs; assessments and documentation can be streamlined to fit one set of regulations.

- ▶ Adoption of broadly used measures makes it possible for individual programs to measure progress relative to local as well as state and national standards.

- ▶ Adoption of universal terms, standards, and measures allows trends to be tracked for comparative research and analysis.

- ▶ Universal standards and measures provide a platform for more unified policy advocacy, as well as coordinated funding and regulation practices.

Potential challenges of such alignment may include:

- ▶ Necessitating a move away from locally developed standards and terms, which may have more meaning to and "buy-in" from the local community.

- ▶ Finding a universally used measure that is appropriate for the area of quality addressed by your initiative.

- ▶ Having to train existing coaches and providers to fully understand the new terms, standards, and measures.

3. NAEYC Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) Toolkit, 2010.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The content in this manual has been informed by the primary authors' own experiences developing and implementing coaching initiatives; in-depth conversations with ECE professional development researchers such as Susan Neuman, PhD (University of Michigan), Kathryn Tout, PhD (Child Trends), Donna Bryant, PhD (Frank Porter Graham Institute), and others; input gathered from coaching administration colleagues from throughout the U.S.; reviews of relevant research and policy literature (see bibliography); and our own participation in the Quality Interventions for Early Care and Education (QUINCE) national research study which validated the efficacy of our coaching approach. Additionally, the primary authors have presented on ECE coaching at state and national conferences such as California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC), NAEYC, and Zero to Three.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank the hundreds of child care providers, child care coaches, child care quality improvement researchers, policy makers, program directors, and colleagues with whom we have partnered over the past fifteen years. In particular, we thank Jane Bernzweig, Peggy da Silva and Lisa Erickson for their important contributions in the writing of this manual and Angela Bouwsma for her assistance with copy editing. Special gratitude also for our community reviewers and contributors, including representatives from coaching programs in San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Marin, San Francisco, and Contra Costa County, as well as the many coaches and coaching affiliates in Alameda County.

We hope this manual will serve as a valuable resource for your child care coaching initiative. Thank you!

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BLUEPRINT

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BLUEPRINT

This manual is organized for use in either of two ways:

- as a front-to-back guide for administrators who are setting up or improving Early Childhood Coaching Initiatives; or

- as a piece-by-piece reference for administrators who need ideas only for a specific component of a coaching initiative.

There are seven sections to the manual:

1. Introduction

2. Blueprint (you are here)

3. Key Principles of Effective Coaching

4. Foundations

5. Building Blocks

6. Samples

7. Bibliography

Section 3 outlines the key principles that form the fundamental practical structure of a coaching initiative across a variety of coaching topics and domains.

Section 4 provides guidance in setting the foundation of your coaching initiative using the principles described in Section 3. This section includes the essential components that must be in place before you offer services to any program.

These are the components in Section 4:

A. Quality Outcomes, Target Population, and Assessment Tools

B. Budget

C. Policies and Procedures

D. Effective Coaches and Administrators

E. Coaching Initiative Evaluation

Section 5 offers concrete guidance on each of the building blocks needed for implementing your coaching initiative with each ECE program. While we feel that each of these building blocks is necessary regardless of coaching domain, the manner in which they are implemented will likely vary across coaching initiatives. For example, a six-week literacy coaching initiative may have a relatively short needs assessment, change implementation, and client evaluation process. A 10-month general quality coaching initiative, on the other hand, would spend more time and go into more depth on each building block.

These are the topics in section 5:

A. Outreach to and Screening of ECE Programs

B. Entry Process—ECE Program Orientation

C. ECE Program Assessment

D. Action Plan Development

E. Supporting Implementation of the Action Plan

F. Conclusion of Coaching Services—ECE Program Evaluation and Transition from Coaching

Each component in Section 4 and Section 5 is organized with the following elements:

▶ A Scenario to give a real-life perspective on the topic

▶ A Purpose Statement to provide an overall perspective on how this component contributes to the overall effectiveness of coaching

▶ Key Points that outline the main ideas make up this component

▶ A Rationale that explains why these elements are important

▶ Steps that illustrate how to implement the component being discussed

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DEFINITIONS

This manual focuses on professional **coaching** within ECE programs. Multiple terms are applied to the process of one professional supporting another to learn new information, reflect on current practices, and intentionally engage in new practices. There is currently no widely accepted standard definition for any of these terms; while some in the business and social service fields assign distinct meanings to each term, others use these terms interchangeably.[1]

For the purposes of this manual, we are using the following definitions:

- **Coaching**[2]—relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors, and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or group.

- **Coaching Initiative**—the combination of services that an organization provides to a variety of ECE programs.

- **ECE Professional Development**[3]—a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing professional experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of early education professionals.

- **Early Childhood Education Program** (ECE site)—any group care facility that is responsible for the care and education of children from birth through age 5.

- **Principle**—a fundamental tenet necessary for effective coaching.

- **Approach**—the method used or steps taken in your coaching work.

- **Client**—the ECE program that is receiving services.

- **Participants**—the individuals who are receiving coaching services within an ECE program.

- **Strengths-Based**[4]—the strengths-based approach operates on the assumption that people have strengths and resources necessary for their own empowerment.

- **Cultural Humility**—the active engagement with, and respectful ongoing effort to learn about, all clients, colleagues, and communities with diverse, multidimensional identities and backgrounds.

1. Tabitha Isner, Kathryn Tout, Martha Zaslow, Meg Soli, Katie Quinn, Laura Rothenberg, and Mary Burkhauser, *Coaching in Early Care and Education Programs and Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS): Identifying Promising Features* (Washington, D.C., 2011).

2 & 3. *Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary: A Joint Project of National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)* (Washington, D.C., 2011).

4. "LifeWorks Learning: Philosophy," 2009, http://lifeworkslearning.com/html/philosophy.html.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COACHING

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KEY PRINCIPLES OF
EFFECTIVE COACHING

PURPOSE

This section explains the philosophical principles that underlie a successful ECE coaching initiative.

THIS SECTION

■ Introduction to seven key principles of effective coaching to child care.

■ Applying the key principles to the realities of ECE coaching.

RATIONALE

Through our years of working with diverse child care settings and communities, we have adapted our coaching approach to best meet the individual needs of each client. This responsive approach, however, is grounded in seven unwavering fundamental principles. These principles have proven to be key in attaining and maintaining changes in client practices.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COACHING

1. Client-driven Services

2. Systemic Approach

3. Praxis

4. Results-focused

5. Intentional Framework

6. Ongoing Support for Coaches

7. Relationship-based Capacity Building

These principles closely match those highlighted in the Zaslow & Tout 2010 Report on Professional Development.[1]

Consider carefully whether these principles align with your agency's current service delivery approach, are new to your agency, or are in conflict with your agency's current practices. If matching, or new but acceptable, your initiative has some strong foundation. If these principles do not resonate with you and your staff, our experience is that it will be difficult to sustain an effective coaching initiative.

1. Martha Zaslow, Kathryn Tout, Tamara Halle, Jessica Vick Whittaker, and Bridget Lavelle, compilers, *Toward the Identification of Features of Effective Professional Development for Early Childhood Educators: Literature Review* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, 2010).

To illustrate how these abstract principles can be put into action, we have provided a few samples of the principles in practice.

1. Client-driven Services

Effective coaching is grounded in the interests and needs of the client within each unique environment, and respects and responds to the culture of the client, program, and community. Change is more likely to occur and be sustained when clients have the opportunity to develop their own improvement goals, after thoughtful reflection on cultural and environmental influences.

Principle in Practice

- The coach identifies areas of agreement among the client, the program leadership (if different from client), and the coach on areas of needs and strengths.

- The coach cultivates authentic collaboration between the client, the program leadership, and the coach to develop specific and attainable improvement goals.

- The coach adopts an attitude of cultural humility. The coach, in a partnership role with the client, learns about the unique mix of perspectives and cultures that influence the program. This learning informs the coach's suggestions for change.

2. Systemic Approach

ECE program quality results from the interaction of several systemic factors, including: program philosophy, policies, procedures, personnel, and the families and communities being served. Effective coaching supports clients in taking a systemic perspective when considering and instituting change.

Principle in Practice

- The coach begins services with a thoughtful assessment of needs and strengths, and a global-context perspective that takes into account the many factors that impact care.

3. Praxis

Effective coaching not only assists ECE professionals in the acquisition of new theories and perspectives, it also provides support as professionals put these theories into practice in their complex, unique settings.

Principle in Practice

- The coach assists the clients in translating their quality vision into a prioritized work plan of specific goals and related activities.

- The coach observes the clients as they attempt new practices and provides specific feedback on their efforts.

4. Results-focused

Effective coaching is based on achieving clearly defined goals through an adaptive process. With results-focused coaching, coaches help clients reflect on their progress toward goals, identify successful strategies, and maintain their progress despite unexpected challenges.

Principle in Practice

- The coach creates clear, mutually agreed-upon rubrics to measure the effectiveness of strategies and the progress toward stated goals.

- The coach conducts periodic assessments of the overall coaching initiative's efficacy, including client reports, coach self-reports, and some form of objective pre- and post-coaching measure (pre- and post-coaching tests, third-party observations, etc.).

5. Intentional Framework

Effective coaching takes place within an intentional framework that includes a clearly articulated coaching philosophy and a well-defined coaching protocol.

Principle in Practice

- The coach establishes clear roles and responsibilities for the coach and client (and, if relevant, the other child care program staff and administrators) in implementing strategies.

6. Ongoing Support for Coaches

Coaching can be complex and intense work. To maintain efficacy, coaches need a supportive infrastructure that provides reflective supervision, peer support, and periodic professional skills training.

Principle in Practice

- The coach participates in monthly case-conference meetings led by a knowledgeable advisor or supervisor.

- The coach undergoes periodic performance assessment (including self-assessment, client assessment, and third-party assessment).

7. Relationship-based Capacity Building

The overall goal of effective coaching is to build a client's capacity to lead change. Having a strengths-based attitude helps a coach to see beyond a need, to the capabilities a client brings to the work. An effective coach builds a relationship that fosters the client's own abilities and lessens the client's need for coaching.

Principle in Practice

- When creating strategies with the client, the coach focuses on what is currently working well in the program. From that frame of reference, the coach can empower the client to draw on individual internal resources as well as the programs' strengths to navigate through current challenges.

- The coach regularly reflects on work and project progress to preclude unintentionally undercutting the client's leadership and/or fostering the client's dependence on the coach. The coach watches for the client's increasing ability to deal with current situations, and builds on those successes to enable the client to independently handle future situations.

FOUNDATIONS

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SECTION 4A:
QUALITY OUTCOMES, TARGET POPULATION, AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS

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SECTION 4B:
BUDGET

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SECTION 4D:
EFFECTIVE COACHES AND ADMINISTRATORS

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SECTION 4E:
COACHING INITIATIVE EVALUATION

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SECTION 4A:
QUALITY OUTCOMES, TARGET POPULATION, AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS

SCENARIO

Andrea is leading an initiative that aims to assist ECE programs in handling the challenges presented by asthma in children. Her three coaches are experienced ECE staff with excellent additional training in working with children and families with chronic conditions. They have decided to target their initiative to programs with high reported numbers of children with asthma, compared to the county as a whole. They know how to assess both asthma rates among ECE sites, and individual management of the asthma within each family.

The three coaches have visited some sites in the community, and have received enthusiastic responses to the idea of coaching on this topic. They are reporting at a staff meeting: Susan says that Program A wants her to become engaged in the fight against a proposed additional lane for the freeway near the site. Sally says that Program B wants her to write up guidelines for parents on handling asthma with their children, and then to train the program staff in working with the parents. Sam says that Program C wants help in its relationship with the emergency room and the public health clinic where lots of families seek care. They also want clear guidance on what supplies they need in order to do good work with children with asthma, and want Sam to write procedures for the program to follow whenever a child has an asthma flare-up. All of these needs are relevant to childhood asthma, but Andrea worries that their efforts may become too diffuse.

PURPOSE

This section explains the importance of clearly specifying the coaching initiative's intended impacts (outcomes) on child care quality.

THIS SECTION

- Explains the value of well-defined outcomes as the starting point for coaching initiative development.

- Discusses the importance of well-considered selection of the target population for coaching.

- Outlines the benefits of understanding and choosing assessment tools as part of the coaching initiative.

RATIONALE

Outcomes

Quality improvement initiatives like coaching can take place over the course of several months or even years. As such, a coaching initiative benefits from clearly articulated goals and observable, measurable outcomes that can be used to track its efficacy in improving quality and provider practices. Regardless of domain (early childhood mental health, curriculum, health & safety, etc.), client-driven coaching can touch on a wide range of topics which are related to overall quality improvement. While this flexible, responsive approach can be great impact, it also has the potential to wander far afield of the originally intended scope of coaching. Such diversions are not necessarily unproductive, but they may not be the most strategic use of resources and can drain the focus and energy needed to address fundamental issues.

Coaches who work within coaching initiatives that lack defined goals often struggle with prioritizing which of the myriad client issues should be included in the coaching work. Similarly, in the absence of clearly articulated goals, outcomes, and measures, clients can be confused as to the purpose of coaching. Without agreement on overall goals and specific indicators of progress, the coach and the client may struggle in determining whether adequate progress is being made, each party coming to conflicting conclusions. As one coach put it, "My client and I might have different perspectives on many things, but we have to have the same basic idea of 'success' or else we will keep going in circles. How can we know if we are on the right path if we don't even agree on the destination?"

Target Population

A target population is selected based on the resources and/or needs of the community and the content capacity of your initiative. Once a target population has been determined, it can be valuable to double-check the viability of the intended outcomes within that specific population. For example, an agency with expertise in art education would not offer services to a community with completely different interests.

Ideally, coaching initiatives would have enough resources to serve all interested and eligible child care programs, but most coaching initiatives work with finite resources which limits the number of child care sites that can be served. While "rationing" can cause discomfort within a community, a transparent selection methodology can maintain an atmosphere of trust and understanding. As part of this effort, we recommend that your agency proactively determine and adhere to a clear, standardized client selection process.

Assessment Tools

The intent of providing coaching services to ECE professionals is generally to increase the quality of an ECE program. Regardless of a coaching initiative's intended outcomes, participants, funders, administrators, and other stakeholders need a way to ascertain that the initiative's strategies are effective at reaching those outcomes. One way to measure progress toward outcomes is through the use of standardized, validated tools.

The value of using a standardized assessment tool is multifold:

▶ Builds a common language among and across multiple ECE programs and professional development initiatives.

▶ Provides useful data to funders during funding consideration.

▶ Provides robust data for tracking coaching progress at individual ECE programs.

▶ When aggregated across coaching participants, provides robust data for tracking the coaching initiative's overall impact on the target community.

▶ Enhances professional development within the ECE workforce by increasing familiarity with widely used tools

STEPS

Outcomes

▶ Determination of outcomes

  ■ Aim to develop SMART outcomes (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound).

  ■ Consider ways to gather input from a variety of stakeholders including parents, potential clients, researchers, child care support agencies such as Resource and Referral (R&Rs), and experienced ECE coaches.

  ■ Prioritize potential outcomes based on impact on children, ability to effect sustained change, etc.

▶ To ensure understanding and promote use among all stakeholders, memorialize your intended outcomes by documenting them in clear, community-friendly formats.

▶ Plan for evaluation as you develop your outcomes.

Target Population

▶ Ideally, the process of selecting the target population should be guided by community-determined priorities and informed by a community needs assessment process. The results of such an assessment can illuminate needs within a specific community including:

  ■ Establishing which populations will benefit most from your coaching services. Consider

    ▶ the types of child care programs: centers, licensed/unlicensed, family child care, child care centers, state-funded programs, federally funded programs, for-profit programs, etc.; and

    ▶ the types of families/children served (infants and toddlers, children with special needs, low-income, ESL, etc.).

  ■ Of the populations that would be most positively impacted by investments in improving the quality of care, determining which are most interested in/available to participate in coaching.

  ■ Ascertaining whether your program has the necessary skills and reputation in the community to effectively reach out to and recruit clients from these populations.

▶ Document your rationale for determining your target population as well as your selection process. Be prepared to clearly articulate this to a variety of interested stakeholders.

  ■ Once you have established your outcomes and identified your target populations, cross-check and be sure that your proposed outcome is attainable and applicable for the targeted population.

STEPS

Selecting Assessment Tool(s)

Once you have decided on your initiative's intended outcomes, consider the range of existing assessment tools to find the best fit with your initiative.

▶ Collect relevant assessment tools available for your review.

▶ Determine which tools, if any, have been standardized.

▶ Determine which tools, if any, have been validated (i.e., proven to accurately measure what it intends to measure).

▶ Gather feedback on the use of these tools.

  ▪ Contact initiatives that have used/are using the tool(s) to learn what challenges and strengths the tool(s) have brought to their initiatives.

  ▪ Review research literature for discussions of the power and potential limitations of these tools.

▶ Solicit input from community stakeholders on the use of these tools within their communities. Review the costs associated with using these tools. (Do they require use from an externally trained and validated assessor?)

▶ Ascertain what training coaching staff will need to administer the tools reliably.

▶ Explore how the data provided by the tool can be used to meaningfully inform ECE clients, funders, agency staff, and the broader community about the baseline status of ECE clients. Determine what change, if any, that corresponds to participation in coaching.

▶ Strategize ways to help ECE providers feel comfortable with and supportive of the use of standardized assessments.

An appropriate assessment tool may not always exist for the outcome you are trying to measure. In these instances, some professional development initiatives take on the challenge of developing their own assessment tool. While these tools do not provide all the benefits of a standardized, validated tool, they may provide a framework to think about the progress of coaching initiative participants.

SECTION 4B:
BUDGET

SCENARIO

Susana has worked for several years in the training unit of a large County Office of Education. She has lots of experience in needs assessment for training, designing training, and choosing excellent trainers. She has written many budgets for workshops, ranging from half-day to full-week retreats. Her unit has recently received funding for ECE Coaching, and they are in the first quarter of implementing services. This afternoon, one of the coaches approached Susana with a request for funding for incentives for the staff and parents. The coach's program is implementing a project to increase reading at home. It will track books and hours read and give prizes for participation. Susana did not write this item into the budget.

PURPOSE

This section outlines budget categories and suggests some unique resources that will be needed to support a coaching initiative.

THIS SECTION

- Provides a reminder of basic budget categories.

- Notes some unique budgeting challenges for coaching initiatives.

RATIONALE

A budget is an essential document for gaining funding and for assuring that a program can continue services throughout its planned life. Budgets for professional development initiatives vary based on the type of services offered, although some budget categories are consistent.

Along the continuum of professional development strategies, the most time-limited is a workshop and the most open-ended is ongoing coaching. Coaching requires a budget format and line items different from a workshop.

STEPS

▶ While the agency sponsoring the coaching initiative may have its own categories that a budget must fit, common categories include:

- Personnel (staff or consultants)
- Benefits
- Space
- Equipment
- Office Supplies
- Travel
- Telecommunication
- Contract Services
- Staff and Client Training
- Program Materials
- Printing
- Evaluation

▶ Within the categories, consider if you might need to include or adjust line items to fund the unique costs of coaching. Examples from the field include

- Assessment materials for the site
- Certification costs for coaches
- Larger food line items for ongoing meetings and celebrations
- Third-party evaluators
- Higher personnel costs because of
  - ▶ a longer time frame (as compared to a workshop)staff turnover at the site, which might require more time from the coach
- Incentives for clients and/or parents
- Translation of materials
- Substitute teachers/staff if your initiative covers that expense for a site

SECTION 4C:
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SCENARIO

Pamela and Robert have worked as consultants for a few years and have recently been put in charge of organizing a coaching initiative in their area of expertise: teacher-child interaction. They are discussing difficult times that they've had as consultants in the past and what they'd like to avoid going forward. Pamela remembers a time when she consulted with a program for two months. Everything appeared to be going well, but then the director of the program complained to Pamela's supervisor. The director had expected Pamela to ignore a variety of safety problems with the site building; when Pamela brought them up, the director replied, "That's not what we're here to work on." Robert had a difficult experience once when, while in a meeting with a teacher, he noticed a classroom volunteer outside the door yanking a child's arm. In response to his look of alarm, the teacher told him to ignore the matter because the child was a difficult one. Both consultants can remember situations when the program staff missed meetings and did not complete tasks when Pamela and Robert thought there had been full agreement about what needed to be done.

PURPOSE

This section outlines policies and procedures that should be in place before embarking on coaching any program.

THIS SECTION

- Discusses the value of creating a standardized Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

- Explains the essential components of an MOU.

- Covers issues of non-adherence to the MOU by the program.

- Discusses how to respond to program dissatisfaction with coach and/or coaching services.

RATIONALE

Establishing expectations and planning for difficult situations are essential for effective, smoothly run coaching services.

Have these policies and procedures in place up front:

1. a standard MOU;

2. procedures for addressing the ECE program's non-adherence to the MOU; and

3. procedures for addressing the ECE program's dissatisfaction with the coaching services.

   ▶ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)—An MOU outlines the services the coach will provide, the participation requirements for the client, and the consequences if either party fails to fulfill its part of the agreement. An MOU may include:

      ■ a brief Coaching Initiative Description, including the project's purpose and goals;

      ■ a delineation of both the client's and the coach's roles and responsibilities;

      ■ a time line of services;

      ■ a description of any participant incentives (such as stipends) and how they will be disbursed;

      ■ if applicable, the details of client confidentiality and parent notification;

      ■ the coach's reporting responsibilities to legal and regulatory agencies;

         ▶ Coaches are mandated reporters in the instance of an observation of child abuse. It is important to be clear with both the coaches in your program and the providers receiving your services about laws and regulations regarding mandatory reporting.

         ▶ ECE programs all operate under state and local regulations, which govern whether a program has a license. Coaches must be familiar with basic licensing regulations, and both the program and coach must understand that the coach cannot continue working in a program where licensing violations exist.

      ■ specific consequences for failure to uphold the agreement;

      ■ procedures to follow if the program is dissatisfied with the coaching services; and

      ■ a signature line for both parties (coaching agency and client) indicating that both have read, understood, and received a copy of the agreement.

   ▶ Non-adherence with the MOU on the part of the program—If adherence issues arise, the signed MOU should be the basis for any discussions and decisions regarding next steps and remediation.

   ▶ Dissatisfaction with coach and/or coaching services—Coaching work is complex and nuanced and circumstances are rarely black and white. Times will arise when coaches and clients disagree about a proposed plan of action or situation, and these differences of opinion can lead to an impasse in the coaching process. In such instances, it is critical to have clearly established procedures in place.

STEPS

▶ Write a standard MOU to clarify what is expected of the agency providing coaching, and the program receiving services (sample MOU in section 6).

- Consider and document how the coach will respond to any suspicion of child abuse.

  ▶ We advise that you seek legal counsel when determining your agency protocols regarding mandated reporting.

  ▶ Determine what training and support your staff might need (one time or ongoing) as mandated reporters.

  ▶ Resolve how you will ensure providers' informed consent with regard to the coach's mandated reporting status.

  ▶ Determine what protocol will be followed if a coach knows of or suspects child abuse or neglect while acting in their role of a coach (communication channels, written documentation, legal requirements, etc.).

  ▶ Decide whether your program be able to continue to provide services if a report is filed and/or if it is substantiated.

  ▶ Determine the coach's role in the case of an ongoing investigation (e.g., linking staff and families to additional supports).

- Outline how the coach will respond to any observed licensing violations.

▶ Define what is meant by adherence to the MOU.

- Determine how many missed appointments or meetings are allowable.

- Consider where there is flexibility to make "exceptions or allowances" and where it is crucial that you maintain fidelity to the model.

- Decide how you will work to resolve problems: meetings, support to clients as they develop solutions, verbal warnings, written warnings, etc.

- Determine how your agency will follow up, after dealing with an issue of non-adherence, to ensure the agreed-upon next steps are being followed.

- Document all changes to the MOU.

- Take special note of setting a precedent. If a program fails to follow the MOU and is granted an exception, recognize that other programs will likely ask for the same exception.

▶ Decide how you will respond to complaints from a program about a specific coach or the progress of the services.

- With dissatisfaction, determine where the impasse lies. What are the specific issues of disagreement?

- Ascertain who is currently involved in the situation (e.g., determine whether the issue involves just the coach and one client, or whether others, such as a program director or site administrator, are also involved).

- Decide who needs to be involved (e.g, determine whether you need include someone with higher-level decision-making authority).

SECTION 4D:
EFFECTIVE COACHES AND ADMINISTRATORS

SCENARIO

Alex, Tatiana, and Danielle all work for different school districts in a large rural county. Each of them is the only ECE coach in the separate districts and each is new to the work of coaching, though all have extensive experience as ECE teachers. They are part of a countywide coaching initiative, funded by a grant that aims to enhance early literacy. The administrator who wrote the grant application has since left the county; a brand-new administrator is trying to manage the initiative on top of her other work at the funding agency.

Neither Alex, Tatiana, nor Danielle received much training for their new roles, just some articles to read. When they come in from a challenging day of coaching, they don't find anyone else at the district office who shares their experience. They've each mentioned their feelings of isolation to the administrator, but she is overwhelmed and does not seem able to help. Tatiana, however, has just heard about a once-a-month meeting of coaches in a neighboring county. She has requested permission to join these meetings, but the administrator says there is not enough travel money in the budget.

PURPOSE

This section discusses key issues to consider when hiring and managing coaching staff.

THIS SECTION

- Lists specific coaching competencies to look for when hiring coaching staff.

- Explains the importance of training and supporting coaches.

- Provides strategies to refine coaching skills and to maintain effective coaching practices.

- Outlines the support needs of administrators.

RATIONALE

Coaches are the heart of the initiative. It is important to carefully select people with the underlying disposition to function as coaches, to train them in the process and content of coaching, to support them through the coaching initiative, and to be aware of common pitfalls that can derail effective coaching.

As an intensive, adaptive intervention, coaching relies heavily upon an individual coach's ability to be analytical yet empathetic, to set clear boundaries yet be approachable, and to be knowledgeable but open to new ideas and perspectives. Since formal coaching in ECE is relatively new, coaching initiatives often struggle to find experienced coaches with such skills to staff their initiative. Once hired, managers quickly realize that supporting coaches in their work requires a unique approach.

The person who manages coaches needs support, too. The manager must be able to maintain oversight of a variety of ECE programs receiving coaching services, and assist coaches in solving day-to-day challenges.

Hiring

The responsive nature of coaching—the ability to adapt to the specific, multifaceted needs of a provider within each program's unique ecology—requires different skills from those applicable to professional development activities such as instructing a college course or workshop, mentoring, or leading individual or group training on the job.

Effective coaches are able to encompass the many support roles of relationship-based change. Regardless of the content area (e.g., literacy, social-emotional development, business practices), coaches may find themselves wearing many hats—often in the same coaching visit. In the course of a two hour visit a coach may be:

▶ a good listener: providing a nonjudgmental sounding board for the client's frustrations and acknowledging the role of these emotions in the client's work;

▶ an advisor: offering strategies that have proven successful in similar situations;

▶ a diagnostic technician: providing a perspective on how logistical factors may be impacting the issue under consideration;

▶ a discussion facilitator and mediator: assisting two or more staff to come to consensus on classroom/program practices;

▶ a trainer: providing specific theoretical and technical content and support to assimilate that content into work;

▶ a systems analyst: relating the specific issue being discussed to larger programmatic and community issues;

▶ a navigator: considering how a program's philosophy and a provider's own beliefs may conflict with the practices the coach is promoting, and carefully moving the Action Plan forward through possible blocks; and

▶ a cheerleader: encouraging and celebrating a provider's individual efforts and achievements.

Training

People who come to ECE coaching will likely have some, but not all, of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required. Before beginning work with a program, each coach will need to be assessed to determine areas for development, and have the chance to "fill in the blanks" in order to attain full competency.

Many coaching initiatives report difficulty finding qualified staff who are well-versed in ECE theory and practice, experienced with the diversity of child care programs, and appropriate language and personality matches for the child care community. In response to these realities (as well as tight initiative time lines and limited personnel) coaching initiatives often hire experienced content experts (e.g., literacy, health and safety, socio-emotional development) who demonstrate strong interpersonal skills. The content expert then requires training on the coaching model.

Coaches benefit from receiving training on the specific work of a coach within ECE settings, and the way the coaching process functions to sustainably transform client practices. It can be difficult to find the time and resources for training that addresses the specific function of professional coaches in ECE, but it is worth the effort.

Refining

Each coaching assignment is different, and coaches will face different challenges each time. They will need time to reflect and adapt over the course of coaching each program. They will need the support of their managers as they work through the Action Plan for each program. They may need to research best practices in the content area, seek similar situations for clues on ways to proceed, and build the capacity within themselves to have difficult conversations. It is important to build reflection and ongoing learning time into the staffing budget.

Administrators

Because it includes leading coaching initiatives and supervising coaching staff, coaching administration and management can be truly engaging and provide a unique glimpse into the complex, fascinating realities of the diverse child care world. Just as effective coaches constantly reflect and adapt to respond to specific situations, coaching program managers often find themselves reexamining their models, methods, policies, and procedures in response to new situations.

This variability, while sometimes exhilarating, can also be exhausting; many managers and administrators feel that there is never a "slow period." Caring, responsive administrators, just like coaches and child care providers, can be susceptible to becoming overwhelmed and eventually burning out. Planning for these challenges, and recognizing the value of time taken for nurturing the administrators, will pay dividends in the long run. When focused time is given to their own professional development, administrators can learn new field-tested techniques, hear new insights into specific issues, and debrief challenging situations with other administrators. Ultimately, they become better equipped to provide the essential emotional support necessary to lead intensive people-focused coaching initiatives.

STEPS

Hiring

▶ Identify the traits, knowledge, skills, and attitudes that a prospective coach must bring to the job.

▶ Identify which knowledge, skills and attitudes—that can be trained—will be most critical to the successful implementation of your coaching initiative.

▶ If you are recruiting coaching staff, consider conducting a broad outreach to the community, colleges, and other social service agencies so you can increase your candidate pool and the likelihood of identifying potential coaches who have the right background and disposition for this work. Consider hiring staff who do not have much direct coaching experience but whose work performance demonstrates the essential competencies.

▶ Develop a hiring process that will help you screen potential coaches for the most critical skills (sample job description in section 6).

Training

▶ Coaches who are new to your coaching initiative will require frequent support through their first year of service. Put the following in place for them:

   ▪ A written practice manual that clearly articulates

      ▶ the coaching initiative's goals and intended outcomes,

      ▶ the measures used to track progress,

      ▶ how data is gathered for these measures,

      ▶ the coaching initiative's overall philosophy and approach, and

      ▶ specific directions on how to implement the initiative.

- Opportunities to shadow veteran coaches to observe the model in action.

- Opportunities to discuss what they observed.

- Opportunities to practice the model while being observed by an experienced coach or supervisor.

- A training plan in place that will build the skills of new coaches and enhance the skills of existing coaches. First 5 Alameda has been offering training for coaches for several years, and has published a manual on the subject.[1]

Refining

▶ Ensure that coaches are provided with multiple means of ongoing support, including peer collaboration and individual supervision.

▶ Provide coaches with ongoing training and technical assistance with writing an effective Action Plan and and leading a Facilitated Discussion.

Administrators

▶ Identify supports for your own administrative work. Look at both internal agency resources (such as supervisor support), but also intra-agency opportunities to share with colleagues engaged in similar coaching administration roles. Options include:

- Opportunities for topic-specific, in-depth dialog on specific coaching initiative issues with colleagues from other coaching initiatives.

- Periodic training and updates on emerging best practices in coaching initiatives and management.

- Opportunities for peer-networking and support.

1. *Effective Coaching in Early Care and Education Training Manual. Second Edition* (Alameda County, California: First Five Alameda County, 2011).

SECTION 4E:
COACHING INITIATIVE EVALUATION

SCENARIO

Kara works for an agency that has received funding for nutrition-related coaching from the Peach Foundation, which aims to address the problem of childhood obesity. For the past 10 months, Kara has been working with two family child care providers. Each provider had different quality issues they were working on based on the results of their initial observations, assessments, and subsequent Action Plans. One provider was working on improving snack and meal quality and another on improving communication with parents around children's eating patterns. At the end of the 10 months, Kara asked each provider to complete a brief, open-ended questionnaire about their reactions to and satisfaction with the coaching. These questions focused primarily on the perceived relationship between coach and provider. Was Kara qualified to provide assistance on their topic, and were the strategies she used effective? What didn't work and what would they have liked to have been different?

After each provider completed the questionnaire, Kara presented the results to her supervisor. Both providers felt very positively about Kara and found the coaching to be useful. One provider said the only thing she would have preferred would have been for the coaching to continue for more than 10 months. Kara's supervisor asked if Kara had observed any changes in meal or snack patterns, or in communications with parents. Kara said she hadn't observed any of these situations so she couldn't say.

Kara's supervisor, the agency head, has a meeting scheduled with the Peach Foundation one week from now.

PURPOSE

This section will help you plan and carry out an evaluation of your coaching initiative.

THIS SECTION

- Explains the value of tracking the specific impacts of the coaching initiative on child care quality.

- Offers specific strategies on gathering feedback from various stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the coaching initiative.

- Discusses the role of evaluating the coaching initiative to refine existing strategies and develop new strategies for greater impact.

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RATIONALE

Tracking Impacts

Coaching in ECE is intended to increase the quality of the ECE program. First 5 standards of quality, and those developed by state and national initiatives and research programs, require highly skilled and caring providers, safe and healthy settings and care practices, age-appropriate education, and positive interactions with parents and family caregivers. A coaching initiative will be designed to support quality improvements in one or more of these areas, but will target some specific aspect of a program's practices.

Sometimes clients want to immediately evaluate how coaching improved the quality of a child care program. Our evaluation must look at both the big picture and at the targeted services offered by the coaching initiative.

In the big picture, it may take a relatively lengthy period of intervention to bring about sustained improvements in child care quality. With limited time and evaluation resources, is it realistic to expect to see overall improvements in quality? An evaluator would need to use quality-rating tools to evaluate "quality," as well as whether better practices were put in place.

Evaluating services that change practices, which in turn affect quality, is more achievable. If the coaching focuses on improving providers' health and safety practices or on improving provider–child interactions, it's possible to measure change in those areas.

In order to gain insight from any evaluation, we must be clear on what we are trying to change, then accurately and reliably measure effects in that area. When evaluating coaching, it is important to choose evaluation strategies that measure the coaching's impacts on the specific goals set out for the overall initiative.In a classroom training situation, a trainer might learn whether people enjoyed the learning and what knowledge they acquired, but it would be difficult to learn what changes in practice resulted from this knowledge. Coaching, however, is unique because it goes beyond content learning (knowledge), allowing evaluation of how providers apply or practice what they've learned from a content learning setting.[1]

Strategies to Gather Feedback

The scenario at the start of this section illustrates how people often evaluate professional development activities by asking participants for their feelings about the activities. While this is important, it may not provide the information necessary to learn what knowledge participants gained and what changes resulted from the activity. You will notice the coach was unable to speak about the focus of the coaching—changes in meals or interactions—because she had not observed or even asked the participants for examples of changes they'd made.

Evaluations of professional development activities can occur across a range, which includes:

- ▶ Examining participants' reactions to the activity.

- ▶ Gathering information about the acquisition of knowledge or changes in attitudes.

- ▶ Observing or learning about changes in behavior that result from the activity at the individual level.

- ▶ Documenting changes that take place at the organizational level.

1. Nicole Forry, Kathryn Tout, Martha Zaslow, and Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, "Coaching, Consultation & On-site Quality Improvement" (presented at the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 20th National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, Providence, Rhode Island, July 2011).

Level 1 — Reactions

The first level of measurable change is provider reactions. Reactions include a provider's personal reaction to an activity, such as satisfaction with material, presenters, or coach. Providers' reactions to the training may be related to the qualifications of the coach, how experienced and knowledgeable the coach is, and the "fit" between the coach and the provider. Reactions may tell you less about how effective your coaching intervention is, but more about how well accepted the materials or coach may be. Reactions may also be important for the development of a strong relationship between coach and providers, leading to a greater likelihood that the provider will be motivated to implement and maintain in practice the information learned from the coaching.

Level 2 — Knowledge Gain and Attitude Change

The second level of measurable change is knowledge gain and attitude change. This level of change requires deeper evaluation and usually a longer period of coaching. For the evaluator to know what to measure at this level, it's essential to make sure there are specific, articulated, measurable objectives for the coaching services being offered to each program.[2]

Level 3 — Behavioral Change

The third level of measurable change is individual behavioral change. Linking Objective A (knowledge gained) to Objective B (corresponding change in practices) is generally the explicit focus of successful coaching interventions. In order to evaluate whether the coaching has successfully changed individual behavior, there should be a clear statement at the commencement of coaching services about the change in behavior you expect to see.

For example, the initiative might focus on health and safety practices, specifically on infection control. A behavioral objective might be an improvement in hand-washing practices. A useful evaluation would look for specific and realistic changes that can be observed within a defined time frame.

Level 4 — Organizational Change

The fourth level of measurable change is organizational change. An organization—even one as small as a family child care home—generally changes more slowly than an individual. Despite excellent coaching and demonstrated individual behavioral change, the organization itself might not respond as quickly. Organizational change will depend on the members of the organization, the organizational structure, and outside forces that affect how the organization operates.

Refining and developing new strategies.

Level 1 — Reactions

Evaluating reactions can provide useful information for modifying future choices in materials and for determining who to recruit, hire, and train to be coaches.

Level 2 — Knowledge Gain and Attitude Change

Evaluating knowledge gain and attitude change can provide helpful insight for modifying a coaching initiative's content and methods. An administrator can consider whether the coach is presenting enough information to the ECE program staff and presenting it in a manner that the staff can easily understand. If staff attitudes are changing in the desired direction, it's likely that the coach is listening to the staff and building from their current beliefs and attitudes to bring about subtle changes.

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2. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and PolicyDevelopment, Policy and Program Studies Service, *Toward the Identification of Features of Effective Professional Development for Early Childhood Educators, Literature Review.* Washington, D.C., 2010.

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Level 3 – Behavioral Change

After knowledge and/or attitudes have been changed, coaching services recipients' positive behavioral change will validate the methods used to support practice. If the desired behavioral change occurs, an administrator may want to duplicate the successful style of coaching in another program, with appropriate adaptations to the ecology of the new program.

Sometimes, however, the behavioral change doesn't happen. In this case, the administrator will want to consider both the coaching itself and the environmental factors supporting or inhibiting the adoption of the desired behaviors.

Level 4 – Organizational Change

When seeking organizational change, evaluators will need to study the behavior of various individuals, policy statements, and feedback from the organization's stakeholders. Coaching services designed to promote organizational change will likely be provided over an extended period of time.

Seeing some change at the organizational level, the administrator will want to identify the key factors that led to the change and plan to support those factors on an ongoing basis. The administrator will also want to be alert for behaviors or environments that could work against the desired change and be vigilant about minimizing opportunities for backsliding to "old ways."

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION METHODS TO MEASURE CHANGE

Levels of change	Evaluation Methods			
	Satisfaction surveys	Pre-, post-coaching retrospective surveys	Interviews, focus groups	Behavioral observations or vignettes
Reactions	√		√	
Behavioral Change	√	√	√	√
Organizational Change	√		√	√

STEPS

▶ Planning for evaluation should be built into the coaching initiative from the beginning.

▶ Clearly identify the changes you hope to see and design your evaluation to measure those changes. If possible, make the evaluation anonymous so that respondents don't feel pressured to react positively to the coaching experience. If they have a positive relationship with the coach, they may feel pressured to report only positive experiences and be less likely to report what was less useful.

▶ To Measure Reactions—It is standard to measure reactions using paper and pencil satisfaction questionnaires. These questionnaires usually ask providers to rate how they feel about a coach's knowledge, presentation style, credentials, or qualifications. Sometimes the survey will ask the provider to write about something particularly liked about or learned from the experience, what was disliked about the experience, or what might be useful next time. The quality of the experience may depend on the provider's reactions to the coach's characteristics.

▶ To Measure Knowledge Gain or Attitude Change—It is common practice to assess this level of change during content learning, an educational experience where traditional testing of knowledge gained is the norm. In coaching, knowledge gain can be assessed through the use of pre- and post-coaching questionnaires on the content learning topic. To evaluate what they've learned, providers are often asked to respond to "knowledge-based" questions before they receive coaching, then asked the same questions after they've completed the experience. The expectation is that the provider will answer more questions correctly following coaching. Providers may also be asked to respond retrospectively (e.g., "now I know . . . which I didn't know before") when it's not possible to conduct pre- and post-coaching assessments.

▶ To Measure Individual or Organizational Change—The best way to measure changes in individual and organizational behavior is to conduct direct observations. Standard and validated tools such as the Classroom Assessment Scoring System,[3] the Environmental Rating Scales,[4] and the Program Administration Scale,[5] are observational tools designed to evaluate changes in practice and structure of ECE settings. However, the proper use of these tools also requires significant investment in resources, so evaluators frequently rely on self-reported changes in behavior using questionnaires or vignettes which describe specific situations. Providers' responses can then give an idea of what providers might do in similar situations.

3. Robert C. Pianta, Karen M. La Paro, and Bridget K. Hamre, Classroom Assessment Scoring System (Baltimore: Brookes Publishing, 2008).

4. Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer, *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised Edition* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998).

5. Teri N. Talan and Paul Jorde Bloom, *Program Administration Scale: Measuring Early Childhood Leadership and Management,* Second Edition (New York: Teachers College Press, 2011).

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BUILDING BLOCKS

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SECTION 5A:
OUTREACH TO AND SCREENING OF ECE PROGRAMS

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SECTION 5B:
ENTRY PROCESS— ECE PROGRAM ORIENTATION

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SECTION 5C:
ECE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

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SECTION 5D:
ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

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SECTION 5E:
SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

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SECTION 5F:
CONCLUSION OF COACHING SERVICES

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SECTION 5A:
OUTREACH TO AND SCREENING OF ECE PROGRAMS

SCENARIO

Last year, Carrie was contacted by several classrooms in the local school district's state-funded child development program. Each had recently lost a teacher who was reassigned to a different campus, and the remaining children and staff were struggling with the transition. Carrie worked with the lead teachers in these classrooms to help the children adjust to these transitions. This year, Carrie has received several more requests from classrooms in the district. Through the screening process she learns that sudden staff transitions are a frequent practice in the school district. One site director says, "We go through this every semester. In fact, we could keep you working here permanently just to help the staff and children deal with these constant transitions."

While Carrie would like to continue to support these classrooms, she is mindful that many of the classrooms she has worked with will likely face another round of transitions in a few months. Carrie wonders about the long-term impact of her work; she feels she is treating "symptoms" rather than the structural and policy issues causing these frequent staff transitions. She considers whether treating the symptoms without addressing the cause may actually do more harm than good. It's possible that the school district finds it easier to rely on Carrie's services—having her remediate the fallout from its policies—than to spend time reexamining the policies themselves. Her work addresses an immediate need, but is it also enabling the district's dysfunction? Carrie thinks about all the other non-school district child care programs that have been waiting for years for her services.

Unfortunately, while the school district certainly shows signs of "readiness" for coaching, the services Carrie can offer are not a good "fit" with the needs of the larger program. Carrie and her supervisor discuss whether the current situation is the best use of scarce coaching resources. They discuss whether they should meet with the district decision makers and explain that, in their professional opinion, the constant staff transitions are creating a continual state of crisis. Although Carrie's services can help reduce some of the negative impact of the constant transitions, her coaching is only a "band-aid" to the problem.

Carrie's supervisor considers to whom she could refer the district if it would like assistance in redesigning its staffing practices.

PURPOSE

This section details the importance of descriptive outreach to the intended target population and discusses the value of screening potential clients prior to their enrollment in coaching.

THIS SECTION

- Explains the value of clear, informative outreach strategies that familiarize the target service population with coaching.

- Discusses developing a screening process that determines a program's readiness for coaching.

- Details the importance of assessing the "fit" between the prospective client and your agency's coaching initiative.

RATIONALE

Coaching Outreach

Administrators of child care coaching initiatives may find that their ECE community is less familiar with coaching than more traditional professional development activities such as evening workshops, local conferences, or college classes. Thoughtful outreach can help your coaching initiative inform your target population on and interest it in this approach. While providers and directors may have heard about coaching, many have neither experienced nor observed a formal partnership with a professional coach.

In the absence of this experience, providers and directors will likely have many questions, assumptions, and possibly fears about participating in a coaching process. In such situations, coaching initiative outreach must first act as an education campaign about the basic principles and practices of coaching. Due to the intensive nature of the coaching process, it's beneficial to ensure, as much as possible, that potential participants are aware of both the unique promise and potential challenges of engaging with a professional coach.

Screening

Just as important as clearly communicating the potential and limits of coaching, administrators will find that a preliminary assessment of a potential client's "readiness"—both interest and resources—will help both parties determine if coaching is the most strategic match for the client's needs. Screening processes can help ensure that both your coaching initiative and potential clients have considered how well your initiative will meet clients' specific needs.

Some of the key characteristics of client readiness include:

▶ Having a Sincere Commitment to Change

  ■ Both the client and the other decision makers in her/his child care program **desire** change.

▶ Being Reflective and Introspective

  ■ Provider is able and willing to engage in honest self-reflection.

  ■ Provider is willing to engage in collaborative problem-solving processes.

▶ Being Open to Innovation

  ■ Provider is willing and able to try new practices.

▶ Being Patient and Persistent

  ■ Provider understands that sometimes there is no "quick fix" and that change may be incremental.

  ■ Provider is willing to maintain change efforts despite daily distractions of child care.

▶ Having Baseline Resources

  ■ Provider has sufficient time and authority to contemplate, plan, and evaluate changes.

  ■ Child care program's structure supports sustenance of change (e.g., staff meetings are held at least monthly).

  ■ Child care program staffing is relatively stable and classroom assignments are consistent.

Without these baseline values and attributes in place, substantive change will be difficult and likely unsustainable.

If possible, administrators should use the screening process to determine whether potential clients exhibit readiness for coaching. Screening could be conducted through phone questionnaires and/or written applications with interested providers.

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"Fit"

Once you have explored the client's readiness—including individual interests—and characteristics as well as the ECE program itself, you can determine whether your coaching expertise is an appropriate fit for that program. Depending on the type of coaching you provide, you may find that the child care program may be better served by first pursuing a strategy different than what you or your coaching program offer.

As illustrated in the opening scenario, coaches should carefully consider the impact of their coaching in light of the child care program's overall situation. This may require nuanced examination of the various factors at work. Given the multiple needs of many child care programs, the program will likely find some benefit from your coaching services. The question, then, is not "Will the program benefit from our coaching?" but rather, "In terms of the client's overall ecology, will our coaching most effectively address the root causes of the program's concerns?"

This question can be challenging to answer. It requires honest reflection about the limits of your coaching program, acknowledging the fact that mismatched coaching may enable a dysfunctional situation, and facing the possibility that by recommending that a program access other resources, you may be sacrificing your client service numbers—often tracked by funders—for the greater good of the ECE program.

STEPS

Outreach

▶ Consider how your agency will reach out to the target population:

- If possible, identify existing community groups working with this population and/or on this issue and explore partnering with these groups for outreach.

▶ Be sure that your outreach methods are varied:

- Use multiple languages as needed.

- Use verbal and written communication methods.

- Utilize meetings and other venues where the ECE providers are usually found.

- Remember that follow-up is needed after the initial outreach. It is generally most effective to follow up in person or by phone.

▶ All outreach materials should include clear communication about the potential and limitations of the coaching process. Outreach should clearly:

- Outline the basics of the coaching process.

- Detail the role and responsibilities of the coach.

- Explain the minimum commitment (in both time and other resources) a client will be expected to provide.

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Screening

▶ Implement a screening process - such as a verbal questionnaire or written application - that gauges the prospective client's readiness for coaching (sample screening questionnaire and written application in section 6) .

- An effective screening process should include

  ▶ determination of who is making the request for coaching;

  ▶ the applicant's goals for the coaching process;

  ▶ the applicants previous experience with coaching or other quality improvement initiatives;

  ▶ the applicant's understanding of coaching services;

  ▶ the applicant's ability to commit to the process and supply the basic resources needed; and

  ▶ the applicant's willingness to make changes to their program and practice.

- Prioritize coaching services based on responses from the screening process.

"Fit"

▶ Determine the types of program issues that are most effectively addressed by your coaching initiative.

▶ Decide which types of program issues are better addressed by other interventions.

▶ Consider what other quality improvement efforts a client may be engaged in.

- Participation in other quality improvement efforts may impact a client's work with a coach. If this is the case, consider placing the interested client on a "wait list" and revisit providing services at a more appropriate time.

▶ Develop a referral process for ECE programs that are determined to be more likely to make productive change through other strategies.

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SECTION 5B:
ENTRY PROCESS—
ECE PROGRAM ORIENTATION

SCENARIO

Today is Carrie's first extended conversation with a new client, The Children's Academy (TCA). TCA, a small, preschool-age-focused child care center, requested coaching on working with children's challenging behaviors. The site director and all the ECE staff are present for the meeting.

Carrie starts by explaining the overall coaching initiative, including her role and expectations of both parties. She then reviews various documents, including the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and an in-depth time line, both of which detail the various activities and processes in which they will engage.

During this time, the ECE staff members ask many questions about the coaching process, and Carrie learns that the staff worked with a previous coach for the same issue. She also learns that the previous coach's methods were quite different from her own, and that the staff felt the previous coach was not helpful. The orientation meeting allows Carrie to clearly explain her process and clarify any misconceptions.

PURPOSE

This section describes an effective ECE client orientation process.

THIS SECTION

- Explains the components of a basic ECE client orientation process.

- Details how written documentation can support entry to the coaching process.

RATIONALE

The introductory period, or entry process, sets the tone and expectations for the coach's work with a client. As discussed in Section 5A, client outreach should have provided a basic description of coaching and its possibilities and limitations. Similarly, the client screening process should have winnowed out potential clients who are not ready or able to commit to the coaching process. Based on this information, it can be tempting to just "dive in" to the work. Experience, however, has shown that carving out time for an introductory, more in-depth discussion can make a critical difference in the development of an effective coaching relationship.

Components

► **Introductory meeting with the coaching initiative's administrative staff.**

Before coaching commences , we recommend a meeting between the staff responsible for administering the coaching initiative and the client. The goal of the meeting is to ensure that the client understands the coaching initiative's commitments and requirements, as well as its overall goal and structure. It is beneficial to have this meeting before the client meets the coach, as it distinguishes the coaching role from the program compliance and administration role. This allows for the coach/client relationship to focus as much as possible on the goal of the coaching intervention. To ensure all parties are literally on the same page, it is important that a written participation agreement (e.g., an MOU) be shared at the introductory staff meeting with all individuals directly or indirectly participating in the coaching process (e.g., program director, head/lead, and assistant teachers). A printed schedule with the dates and times of the planned coaching meetings should also be shared at this meeting. When reviewing the schedule with the client, the coach may want to reemphasize that change often takes time and effort, and that it is vital that the program staff fully commit to the process.

► **Introductory meeting with the coach.**

Coaching starts with a meeting between the coach and client. The sole focus of this meeting is for both parties to get to know each other, clarify their goals and expectations, and honestly share any questions or concerns. This meeting ideally takes place in person, but can also be conducted over the phone. As with all conversations, it is helpful to follow up with a written acknowledgment of any decisions made in the conversation.

It is common for a client to have some level of anxiety or uncertainty about working with a coach. This introductory meeting, where providers are encouraged to share their past experiences with receiving feedback from or working with a coach, will hopefully elicit some of the client's concerns.

The client might assume that this is an "expert" consultation model where the coach will provide opinions and advice based on professional expertise. The orientation provides an opportunity to emphasize that the provider will be an active participant throughout the coaching process, encouraged to reflect on the program and develop strategies to address identified challenges. We recommend using a questionnaire (referenced in more detail below) during this meeting to guide both coach and client and to help facilitate this initial conversation. Despite completing the screening process and having some familiarity with the basic structure of coaching, the client may still have questions about the role of the coach. Common, and sometimes conflicting, misconceptions about the role of a coach in a coaching initiative include the following beliefs:

- A coach is an "expert" who knows the exact "right way" to do things in every child care setting.

- A coach will tell staff what to do and how to do it.

- A coach will "fix" problems facing child care programs.

- A coach functions as an extension of the child care program director and consequently

    ► the coach with share with the director observations and details of conversations with teaching staff;

    ► the coach will convey and help enforce the program director's policy changes and edicts;

    ► the coach will have input in child care employee discipline and termination decisions; and

    ► the coach will be an arbitrator in inter-staff conflict.

- A coach functions as an agent of state licensing or other regulatory agencies.

- A coach will determine whether a program is "good quality" or "bad quality."

- Coaching is an "extra" that makes staff feel good, but doesn't address underlying structural issues.

- Coaches have significant academic credentials and theoretical knowledge but little understanding of the daily realities of child care.

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Written Documentation

Coaching is an involved process and, especially for clients who are new to the process, can seem a bit overwhelming. As a coach and client build their relationship, judicious use of written documentation can support both parties by memorializing the information shared and the agreements made. Given providers' busy lives, documentation should be short, clear, and cover the major points.

STEPS

Components

▶ Set up an initial meeting between the coaching initiative administrator and the client to review overall coaching initiative's goals and requirements

▶ Review a written participation agreement, such as an MOU with all individual directly participating in the coaching process

▶ Review printed schedule and timeline and emphasize importance of adherence to both the MOU and timeline

▶ Arrange for an initial meeting between the coach and client to review goals, expectations and roles

Written Documentation

An ideal orientation packet contains the following:

▶ An MOU template for use with all clients (sample MOU in section 6).

▶ An introductory questionnaire for use by coaches when meeting with clients (sample questionnaire in section 6).

▶ A schedule that spans the entire course of the coaching process, with meeting dates clearly marked (sample schedule in section 6).

▶ A visual diagram that will give the client a clear overview of the stages of the coaching process including orientation, assessment, strategy development, etc. (sample visual diagram in section 6).

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SECTION 5C:
ECE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

SCENARIO

Carrie learns from the director of Sunny Days Preschool that parents have been complaining about how some of the teachers communicate with them during pick-up time. Carrie thinks it would be helpful if she could observe the teachers "in action." She also wonders what the teachers see as their strengths and challenges in this area. She asks the director to set up a time for her to observe the teachers one afternoon during pick-up. She then discusses this plan with the teachers and asks that they take notes on their own observations on parent-teacher communication during pick-up. While all the teachers agree, Carrie senses that some of the teachers are uncomfortable with the idea of being observed.

Once the self- and coach observations are completed, Carrie arranges a time for a facilitated discussion to share their respective observations. Carrie is careful to emphasize the many strengths she saw and also share the areas where she saw room for improvement. During the discussion, she notices that the few teachers who share their observations only focus on their own strengths and often blame the parents for any challenges. She also notes that many teachers remained quiet. Carrie wonders how she can best support the ECE providers in developing better communication with parents during pick-up.

PURPOSE

This section describes a basic program needs-assessment process that supports ECE program participation and builds shared understanding between the coach and program.

THIS SECTION

- Outlines the assessment process that creates shared understanding of the ECE program's strengths and challenges.

- Explains the role of observation as part of the assessment process.

- Explains the role of facilitated discussion in the ECE program's prioritization of issues to be addressed.

RATIONALE

Observation and Assessment

The overall goal of observation and assessment is to come to a common understanding of the program and its functions, to identify strengths and challenges, and to inform the development and implementation of improvement strategies. Through planned observation, information can be gathered about many ECE issues, including program structure, program environment and materials, program curriculum, teacher/child/parent relations, and health and safety practices. The scope of the observation depends on the issue under consideration. For example, if the ECE provider is concerned about a specific issue—such as how to better conduct an intake process for families—observation will likely be limited to that specific practice. Larger issues, such as how to better serve diverse families, will require a more global perspective and significantly more observation.

Observations are often a necessary component of any assessment tool(s) that the overall coaching initiative has decided to use as part of its coaching practice. Additionally, targeted interviews with coaching clients provide another venue for information gathering during the assessment process. It is important to speak to all ECE providers who are part of the coaching process to best understand their unique perspectives and needs.

A thorough needs/resource assessment is an essential tool for gathering more information about a program's challenges and resources, and for placing these factors in their unique context prior to attempting change. This process can uncover unexpected resources and potential pitfalls before time and energy are invested in what may seem, at first glance, to be the most obvious "solution." The information gathered in this process will inform the goals and strategies developed in the subsequent Action Plan.

Provider Self-Observation and Assessment Process

To be true partners in the change process, a client should be fully engaged in the observation and needs assessment process. However, many ECE providers are unfamiliar with how to engage in self-observation and needs/resource assessments and structured reflection practices. This process can feel particularly foreign for ECE providers who work in busy settings with large caseloads and multiple demands, and who are forced to spend much of their day reacting to events rather than reflecting on and planning them. Because self-observation and needs/resource assessment are fundamental strategies for gaining information, it is worth the investment of time and resources to build these skills with your client.

Clients who actively participate in their own self-observation and assessment can provide valuable information about what they perceive as their own strengths and challenges. They can then contribute greatly to the goal setting and action planning steps, and claim ownership throughout the change process. Mastering these skills increases providers' internal capacity to address problems even after your coaching partnership concludes.

Facilitated Discussion

Self-observation and needs/resource assessment, as well as additional information gathered by the coach and provider, are shared through focused and honest discussion aimed at reaching authentic consensus on needs, resources, and quality improvement goals. The coach provides structure for this process by facilitating perspective sharing and discussion, ensuring that the client is actively engaged in the discussion and noting areas of consensus and disagreement.

This facilitated discussion has the potential to provide a rich resource of insights and perspectives on the issues at hand. In many programs, this discussion may be the first opportunity that longtime colleagues have had to delve into an issue in a collaborative setting. This process can be powerful for the creation of a shared understanding of the issue and its contributing factors, all of which foster a sense of teamwork that will be essential in changing practices.

Effective discussion facilitation can be quite challenging even for experienced coaches and facilitators. While honest discussions can provide the springboard for significant change and program improvement, poorly facilitated discussions can actually harm staff dynamics and derail improvement efforts. It's important to be aware that providers may not always feel comfortable sharing their honest observations for a variety of reasons, including fear of angering or embarrassing a superior and/or the desire to protect colleagues' feelings. It is essential that coaches are fully trained in discussion facilitation and provide ongoing support in implementing this technique. Optimal training includes opportunities to try out facilitation in safe settings and opportunities to observe effective facilitators.

STEPS

Observation/Assessment

▶ Both coach and provider (for self-observation) should determine when and where observation will occur, who will participate, and what practices will be observed. Ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of both the content and purpose of the observations (including parents).

   ▪ Anticipate that some ECE providers may feel reluctant about the observation. Plan for time to clearly explain the observation process, answer any questions, and establish some ground rules (e.g., whether notes from the observation will be shared with anyone, etc).

▶ Ensure that your observation will allow you to gain the necessary information needed to complete any assessment.

   ▪ If needed, provide training to ECE providers on observation techniques and the assessment tool being used. If a tool is being used to guide the providers' observation, ensure that the tool is accessible for the provider (e.g., language and literacy level are a match)

▶ Arrive at the program at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled time to acclimate yourself before beginning the observation.

   ▪ For provider self-observation, videotaping techniques may be used and can then be viewed by the provider at a later time. Additionally, providers can observe general program practices within their classrooms. If this is the case, release time should be granted to complete the self-observation.

▶ During the observation, both coach and provider should take notes, using a standardized documentation form (sample observation form in section 6) appropriate for the context in which an interaction takes place and the language used. This documentation will enrich your discussions with the provider and allow you to accurately complete any assessment.

▶ Upon conclusion of the observation, you may have questions about phenomena you were not able to observe. An additional 45 minutes to one hour should be allowed immediately following the observation for asking these questions.

▶ Before leaving the program, confirm a date for a facilitated discussion on the observation and assessment and remind the provider to complete and be prepared to discuss any observations and elf-assessment conducted.

▶ Use your observations (along with other information gained via interviews) to complete any required assessment tools.

▶ If possible, request that providers share their self-observations and assessments so that you can use that information to better prepare for your discussion.

Facilitated Discussion

The coach's role is to facilitate a discussion to identify the program's strengths and challenges.

▶ Using a collaborative process to ensure everyone's agreement, set some guidelines prior to the discussion.

▶ Place the focus on discussing specific and concrete observations and then, if your coaching initiative allows, share scores from assessment tools.

   ▪ It is important to not get bogged down in the particulars of the scoring process, but to emphasize the content and rationale behind the indicators and/or items gleaned from assessment tools.

   ▪ Be sure to focus on the positive aspects or strengths within a particular indicator before addressing the challenges.

   ▪ Use a flip chart to document strengths, challenges, and any strategies or resources mentioned to address challenges.

▶ Use open-ended questions to encourage reflection and to summarize themes or agreements for the group.

   ▪ Pay attention to how providers use key words and concepts. Does everyone have a shared understanding of these words and concepts?

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- Observe the group dynamics. If some participants are more vocal than others, encourage equal participation among the group.

- Note any group dynamics that might inform your facilitated discussions moving forward. Dynamics that might occur include

  ▸ unequal participation amongst group members;

  ▸ non-verbal communication;

  ▸ heated/intense disagreements; and

  ▸ lack of participation/"buy-in" from members.

▸ While listing challenges, begin to think about overall themes or potential goals.

- The challenges identified through this discussion will inform the development of the Action Plan.

▸ Share your observation of any conceptual conflicts that emerge throughout the discussion.

- It is highly unlikely that everyone will agree with each other on every issue, but clients may be reluctant to acknowledge this. If conflicts are not addressed, genuine consensus might not be reached, which could inhibit the improvement process. In other words, if staff does not agree with a challenge that has been identified, they may be less likely to follow through with a plan to address it.

- When disagreement occurs and remains despite discussion, you may want to note all the divergent points of view and revisit them when developing the Action Plan.

▸ Keep the discussion on track. Periodically sum up the discussion points raised so far.

- It is important not to spend time identifying a way to solve a particular challenge. (Monitor your own urge to "jump in" and provide a solution.) When the discussion leads to identifying strategies, explain that strategies will be explored and identified at the Action Plan meeting. Write down the suggested strategies to revisit when creating the Action Plan.

- Ask providers to identify four to five goals that they would like to have in their Action Plan.

SECTION 5D:
ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

SCENARIO

Carrie has been working with several ECE programs on early literacy for the past several months. Each program has differing strengths and challenges in this area. During the facilitated discussion, Carrie and the providers from each program come up with some mutually agreed upon strategies to achieve their goals. However, no one documents these agreements, identifies responsible parties, or assigns target dates for reaching their stated goals. At subsequent visits, Carrie feels frustrated when she does not see any progress on the goals. She senses that the providers are also frustrated because they have been engaged in a coaching process for several months and are not seeing any changes, and at one site she overhears teachers expressing that sentiment explicitly. Carrie discusses these setbacks with her supervisor who suggests consulting with another coaching initiative. During this consultation, they learn about a tool called an Action Plan.

PURPOSE

This section describes the role of the Action Plan and details the basic components of an effective plan.

THIS SECTION

- Familiarizes the reader with the process of writing an Action Plan with specific components included.

- Explains the role of the Action Plan in guiding the coaching process.

- Details the role of the Action Plan in documenting progress and next steps.

RATIONALE

The goals developed through facilitated discussion form the foundation for the adaptive Action Plan, which guides the coach and provider's work together. During this stage, the overall program improvement goals are finalized and strategies to attain these goals are identified. The provider determines who will be responsible for implementing the strategies and their time line for completion. In order for the Action Plan to be an effective tool for quality improvement, it is crucial to include all the individuals who may be involved in implementing the plan in its development, and that those individuals agree upon the identified goals and strategies.

Development of the Action Plan is a collaborative process. Together, coach and client will identify goals and strategies to address challenges. Goals should be broad, while strategies will be more specific. The Action Plan should be a living document, as strategies and dates may change throughout implementation. Strategies should be feasible, attainable, and prioritized based on urgency and/or ability to implement the change. You may want to consider prioritizing some items that can be accomplished quickly. This can reinforce a client's feelings of efficacy, providing inspiration for work on longer-term strategies.

The Action Plan is a place to chart progress made towards documented goals. While certain elements of the Action Plan may change over time, both the coach and client should use it to document all changes, identify ongoing obstacles, and gauge success based on the accomplishment of goals. Funders may ask that a certain percentage of goals be met on the Action Plan as a uniform way of documenting successful coaching.

STEPS

Creating the Action Plan

▶ Review the standardized observation form (referenced in section 5C; sample observation form in section 6) and print one copy for each participant.

▶ Review the four to five possible goals identified at the Facilitated Discussion Meeting before the Action Plan Meeting.

▶ Make note of any strategies discussed during the Facilitated Discussion Meetings.

▶ Remind providers that developing the Action Plan is a collaborative process; together, you will all identify goals and strategies to address challenges.

▶ Remind providers that the Action Plan is a living/fluid document and can be revisited as needed.

▶ When a disagreement occurs between the coach and provider, the coach will document the issue in the Additional Notes section of the Action Plan form.

Components

The Action Plan (sample Action Plan in section 6) should have the following basic components:

▶ Goals

▶ Strategy

▶ Responsible Party

▶ Potential Obstacles

▶ Notes

▶ Target Date

▶ Status

   ▶ Goal

     ▪ State the goal area, such as "Health and Safety" or "Language and Reasoning."

     ▪ Each goal should be broad, saving the specifics for the correlated strategy. (sample goals list in section 6.)

   ▶ Strategy

     ▪ Explain what strategy will be implemented to address the particular goal.

     ▪ Each strategy should be SMART;

       ▶ Specific—It should describe how the task will be accomplished and by whom.

       ▶ Measurable—It should include concrete criteria for measuring progress.

       ▶ Attainable—It should be realistic.

       ▶ Relevant—It should be representative of the overarching program objectives (or representative of the broad goal).

      ▶ Timely—It should be within the Quality Counts program time frame. (See "Target Date" below.)

Examples of Types of Strategies to Include

▶ Discussion—facilitated discussion is useful for issues that may have many approaches and/or ways you might address them, such as discipline or ways to support children's social emotional development.

▶ Hands-on activities—demonstration of particular learning activities is helpful when the goal is for the client to learn how to replicate an activity first hand.

▶ Observation of practices and feedback—observation and feedback can be used in a variety of ways, but are especially useful when the goal is improving teaching practices like interactions with children or leading a circle time.

▶ Group training—training is best used when everyone needs to receive the same information, such as learning appropriate health and safety practices. Ideally, follow-up coaching would take place after a group training to ensure the content is understood and applied within the classroom.

▶ Written and video materials—various types of materials might be shared with clients so that they can use them as references when the coaching is complete, or as ways to help reinforce their learning. For example, photos might be helpful to show a classroom environment setup, whereas videos might be useful when learning how to implement a particular curriculum.

▶ Referral to other resources—sometimes there is a need for further support for a child care program beyond what the coach might provide, so referrals to trainings in the community, higher education opportunities, and grant opportunities are often necessary.

▶ Responsible Party

■ Identify who will hold primary responsibility to ensure the strategy is implemented and tracked.

▶ Potential Obstacles

■ Identify any potential obstacles that may arise when implementing a strategy.

▶ Target Date

■ Identify a date by which you expect to complete a particular strategy.

■ Ensure you are setting dates within the program time frame If a target date needs to be changed to allow for more time to complete the strategy, please document the reason for the change in the "obstacle" column.

▶ Status

▶ Track your progress on completing a particular strategy.

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Guiding the Process

▶ Bring the most recent version of the Action Plan with you to each coaching session.

▶ Start each session with a brief review of the Action Plan to determine

 ▪ goals that have been achieved;

 ▪ goals that are still relevant and in progress;

 ▪ goals and/or strategies that should be altered or deleted;

 ▪ goals and/or strategies that need to be added; and

 ▪ whether any other information (target dates, responsible party, etc) need to be changed.

▶ Based on the above step, make any needed changes and use the updated version to guide your coaching session. For example, if a new goal or strategy was identified, the coaching session can focus on the necessary steps to achieve the new goal.

Documenting Progress

Use the Action Plan as a way to document progress towards goals.

▶ Note any changes made during the coaching session. (See above for possible changes that should be documented.)

▶ If there is little progress towards a goal, document challenges and adjust target dates as needed.

▶ At the end of coaching services, note the percentage of completed goals.

▶ If some goals were not accomplished, note any obstacles towards goal completion.

▶ Be clear on who ultimately holds responsibility for progress on the Action Plan.

▶ Determine what consequences, if any, are in effect if the ECE program does not make the desired progress towards its Action Plan.

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SECTION 5E:
SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

SCENARIO

Abby has been working with Tiffany's Family Child Care (FCC) for several weeks and she and Tiffany developed an Action Plan to support Tiffany with her business practices. Tiffany was unable to rely on a set monthly income because she allowed her families to pay as they could, but with Abby's support, she developed a set of written policies around tuition and payment. During the implementation process, Abby learned that Tiffany's enrollment fluctuated widely each month as well, a fact that contributed significantly to Tiffany's financial challenges. Abby suggested revisiting the Action Plan and adding a strategy around maintaining enrollment.

PURPOSE

This section details the role of the coach and the ECE program throughout the implementation of the ECE program's Action Plan.

THIS SECTION

- Discusses the coach's responsibility for:
  - ▶ assisting with implementing the strategies outlined in the Action Plan;
  - ▶ evaluating progress against the Action Plan; and
  - ▶ communicating when changes are needed.

RATIONALE

Implementation is when the work outlined in the Action Plan begins. The coach is responsible for assisting with outlined strategies and tracking and communicating progress throughout implementation. The coach should also facilitate an ongoing assessment of the relevance and feasibility of the goals and strategies identified in the Action Plan.

The coach and client should periodically "check in" with the Action Plan to see how the changes made match up with the previously planned activities and time line. It is not uncommon for some implementation activities to go more quickly than expected, while others take much longer as new issues are uncovered or unexpected incidents temporarily stall the coaching process.

While these ebbs and flows of activity are to be expected, coaches and their administrators should be watchful for signs that a client's progress on the Action Plan has slowed or stopped, and be sure to document progress carefully. If the current status of intended strategies lags significantly behind the Action Plan, the coach is responsible for raising this issue for discussion with the client. Similarly, administrators should periodically review each coach's Action Plan and the progress each coach's sites have (or haven't) made relative to the plan. When documenting this progress toward the goals in the Action Plan, it is helpful to be specific, noting new skills gained, insights, or lessons learned as part of the change process.

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Through the process of documenting and communicating progress, the coach and client might determine that the goals and strategies identified in the Action Plan are not relevant and/or feasible. As implementation typically takes place over a long period of time, it is highly probable that changing circumstances may have an effect on the identified goals, such as a change in staff or clientele served or a decrease in funding.

STEPS

- ▶ Note any changes made during the coaching session such as, "Play structure was purchased with external funding and is no longer an area of coaching focus."

- ▶ If there is little progress towards a goal, document challenges and adjust target dates as needed.

- ▶ At the end of coaching services, note the percentage of completed goals.

- ▶ If some goals were not accomplished, note any obstacles towards goal completion.

- ▶ Revisit goals and strategies to determine if any changes or additions need to be made.

- ▶ Be clear on who ultimately holds responsibility for progress on the Action Plan.

- ▶ Determine what consequences, if any, are in effect if the ECE program does not make the desired progress towards its Action Plan.

SECTION 5F:
CONCLUSION OF COACHING SERVICES

SCENARIO

Carrie has spent the last eight months providing coaching to a Montessori program to support it in incorporating universal developmental screening into its practices. She has two months left before the coaching term is over. In a recent meeting with her supervisor, she explains that she and the program have accomplished about 50 percent of the goals on the Action Plan and worries that the site will be unable to complete more in the remaining two months. Carrie and her supervisor discuss approaching the site director to develop a plan for the conclusion of Carrie's coaching services, including follow up support from Carrie as well as links to community resources. They also discuss distributing a survey to all the ECE providers who participated in order to obtain feedback on the coaching. Finally, Carrie decides to acknowledge the site by hosting a small gathering and providing some light refreshments.

PURPOSE

This section describes how to employ site and process evaluations not only as the final step in the coach/client partnership but also as a foundation for continued improvement.

THIS SECTION

■ Discusses the importance of using an assessment tool that measures progress toward previously determined outcomes.

■ Discusses the importance of creating a plan for ongoing support for programs after the conclusion of the coaching process.

■ Explains the value of receiving feedback and celebrating success when closing the coaching relationship.

RATIONALE

Measuring Progress
Once the Action Plan is completed or the coaching period has concluded (whichever comes first), a final reevaluation can capture the improvements that have been made and any work that remains.

In most situations, it is helpful to use the same assessment method employed at the beginning of the coaching process. So, if you and your clients initially used a standardized assessment tool, the post-services evaluation should use the same tool to facilitate comparisons.

As at the beginning of the process, it is preferable that both the coach and client conduct a post-intervention assessment, then compare notes. Once this information is collected and analyzed, update the Action Plan citing what has been completed and what remains. Hopefully the Action Plan will serve as an ongoing, adaptive document for the child care program, so it is entirely appropriate to add new items to the plan even if coaching is concluding. Strategies for these new items can include referrals to other community resources and supports.

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Ongoing Support

Many sites benefit from periodic check-ins after intensive coaching has concluded. These check-ins can be as simple as a brief phone call to ensure that changes are being sustained and that simple questions can be addressed. If issues have arisen it is beyond the child care program's current capacity to address, the coach may be able to refer the program to additional training, written resources, or peers who may be able to serve as resources.

Closing

This stage is also an opportunity to receive in-depth feedback on your client's feelings about the coaching process, what worked, and what was challenging. By proactively asking for this feedback and receiving responses in a manner that is open and not anxious, coaches not only gain valuable information but also continue to model the reflective process.

Be aware that some clients are concerned about being "disrespectful" to a coach who has worked closely with them over the course of weeks or months. This concern can prevent some clients from sharing their full opinions of both the positive and negative experiences. In this case, collecting feedback through a third party can be particularly helpful, as clients sometimes feel more comfortable sharing the full range of their thoughts with a neutral party.

Make sure to acknowledge the hard work and effort that both the client and the coach invested in this change process. As we've discussed, successful coaching requires the full commitment of both the client and the coach to engage in a time-intensive and sometimes emotionally honest process. It is important to acknowledge and honor the dedication this process requires. Even if work remains, call out the milestones reached and encourage your clients to celebrate these accomplishments. Such celebration can provide not only ECE coaching clients with a renewed impetus for change, but also serves as an important message for the broader ECE community on the value of personal investment in quality improvement.

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STEPS

Measuring Progress

Once elements of the original Action Plan have been completed or the client is close to the maximum number of hours allotted for coaching, talk with the client about the wrap-up process. Include in this process:

▶ Coach-led client self-assessment using the same assessment tool as in step 5C.

▶ Coach and client discussion of the differences, if any, that appear between the pre- and post-coaching assessments.

▶ Documentation of the strategies that were employed and the changes, if any, that resulted.

▶ Documentation of work that remains from Action Plan.

▶ Documentation of additional strategies that the client may continue to work on after the coaching's conclusion.

▶ A process for gathering the client's honest feedback on what worked, what was challenging, and his experience going through the coaching process (what was interesting, what was rewarding, what was frustrating, etc.).

Ongoing Support

▶ Provide targeted referrals to other supports (college classes, Resource and Referral Agency (R&R) services, specialized trainings, etc.) that can assist the client with continuing quality improvement.

▶ Provide written or other supports that help the client move into self-coaching (e.g., reflective questionnaire that helps a client reflect on which parts of the coaching process she wants to incorporate into her future change efforts)

▶ If possible, have a representative of the coaching initiative (ideally the same coach who provided services) check in with former the coaching client three to six months after the conclusion of services.

Closing

▶ Acknowledge the hard work and effort put forth by the client. Consider offering a "certificate of completion" or other small token as an appreciation for their efforts.

▶ Provide time to reflect together on all that was accomplished and any remaining activities.

SAMPLES

FIRST 5
ALAMEDA COUNTY

SECTION 6:
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

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SECTION 6:
COACH JOB DESCRIPTION

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SECTION 6:
SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

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SECTION 6:
QUALITY COUNTS APPLICATION

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SECTION 6:
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INTRODUCTORY MEETING AGENDA

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SECTION 6:
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2-YEAR ESTIMATED TIMELINE

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SECTION 6:
VISUAL DIAGRAM

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QUALITY COUNTS OBSERVATION FORM

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SECTION 6:
QUALITY COUNTS GOALS

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

FIRST 5 ALAMEDA COUNTY
AND
AGENCY/PROVIDER NAME

The California Children and Families First Act of 1998 (Proposition 10) created a program in the state for the purposes of promoting, supporting, and improving the early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age. The intent of this act is to enable counties to create and implement an integrated, comprehensive and collaborative system of information and services to enhance optimal early childhood development.

First 5 Alameda County approved a Strategic Plan for a comprehensive system of early intervention services for children 0 to 5 years of age and families in Alameda County. The Strategic Plan is called Every Child Counts. A key component of the First 5 Strategic Plan is **to support professionals to provide high quality services to children 0-5 and their families** (2009-2013 Strategic Plan, page 7).

I.   BACKGROUND AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Quality Counts (QC) provides the resources for a highly trained Quality Counts Coach to work collaboratively with early childhood educators to improve program quality. QC Coaches may be employees of First 5 Alameda County OR of one of the three Resource and Referral agencies in Alameda County (BANANA'S Inc., 4C's, or Child Care Links). The Quality Counts process also gives early childhood providers a method for identifying and addressing needed improvements in their programs after consultation has ended.

II.   PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

To achieve these goals, Agency/Provider Name is committed to doing the following:

QUALITY COUNTS CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT

      A. Participation in weekly or bi-weekly 2-3 hour on-site consultation services for up to 24 months. Meetings with the QC Coach during Phase A: Action Plan and Phase B: Implementation will take place *weekly.* Meetings during Phase C: Specialized Resources may take place on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Consultation services will focus on the global program, with particular attention to any special needs of children in the program (e.g. disabilities, English Language Learners, at-risk).

      B. Participation in up to five Saturday trainings, as assigned and identified by QC staff.

          1. For Centers: At least 2/3 of center staff and the director must attend the Saturday trainings.

C. Collaborative assessment of need by QC Coach and provider(s) at the onset of consultation.

D. Allow First 5/R&R agency staff to conduct an initial and post CLASS observation and assessment.

E. Collaborative development of a written Action Plan based on the assessment. Upon completion of the Action Plan development, the QC Coach reserves the right to determine whether a site will begin participation in Phase B: Implementation, or Phase C: Specialized Resources.

F. Allow QC Coach to conduct a health and safety assessment to evaluate progress toward the identified health and safety challenges, identified in the Action Plan, prior to submitting an application for the first QC Grant.

G. Participation in bi-monthly follow-up visits from QC Coach once participant begins Phase C: Specialized Resources through the end of the two year project term.

H. Participation in Phase C: Specialized Resources which includes additional training, specialized consultation, technical assistance and/or independent completion of goals and strategies as identified in the Action Plan.

I. Collaborative final evaluation of program in relation to the Action Plan at the end of Phase C: Specialized Resources, prior to applying for the second QC Grant.

J. Participation in a meeting with an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant who will explain the child development referral and screening process.

K. Evaluation of effectiveness of the consultation. This may include but not be limited to allowing a First 5 Alameda County independent evaluator to conduct an on-site assessment at the beginning and at the end of consultation services, and the completion of a brief, staff-completed questionnaire about consultation services.

L. Quality Counts Coach Resource and Referral (R&R) training at site. This may include, but not be limited to, allowing child care R&R agency staff to observe the First 5 QC Coach at the site throughout the Quality Counts process, or for the child care R&R staff to perform the QC coaching with the support of a First 5 QC Coach.

M. If QC participant does not complete or chooses not to participate in any one of the above listed activities, including Phase C activities recommended by QC staff, QC services may be terminated immediately which will result in the participant being ineligible to apply for any/further grant funding.

N. QC participant will notify QC Coach/consultant within 36 hours if the child care site receives a Substantiated Complaint or Type A deficiency with Community Care Licensing Division during the time period of acceptance to the Quality Counts program and the end of the two-year project term.

O. Notify all parents of enrolled children in writing of any serious health and safety hazards (e.g. unsafe playground equipment or inadequate surfacing) that are identified during the QC process. Provide QC Coach/consultant with proof of written notification.

INSURANCE AND REPORTING

A. <u>Additional Insured Endorsement</u> shall name First 5 Alameda County, the individual members thereof, and all First 5 officers, agents, employees, contractors, and volunteers, and Alameda County, its Board of Supervisors, officers, agents and employees as Additional Insureds with respect to services being provided. Additional insured endorsement shall be equivalent to ISO form CG 20 09 10 93.

B. Maintain a minimum of $300,000.00 in general liability insurance, with First 5 Alameda County and Alameda County listed as additional insured, for the full two years of the project term. The insurance must be purchased without installments on an annual basis. Any request for exception to this provision of insurance purchased without installments must be submitted in writing and approved by First 5 Alameda County. Proof of insurance with the appropriate levels of coverage must be submitted to First 5, attention Sonia Gonzalez-Garcia. Failure to maintain the required insurance during the project term may affect current and future participation in the Quality Counts program, as determined by First 5.

C. For the duration of the two-year project term, complete and return annual reports in a form specified by First 5 Alameda County. Reports are due on June 30th for each year of the project term. Programs also agree to allow pre-arranged site visits from First 5 Alameda County/R&R agency staff.

D. Provide First 5 Alameda County/R&R agency with race/ethnicity information for the child care site staff and children enrolled at the child care site as well as educational level of staff. Names will NOT be attached to this information.

SERVICE DELIVERY

A. For the duration of the two-year project term, continue to operate a child care program at the address listed on the program's approved application to Quality Counts.

To achieve these goals, First 5 Alameda County, in partnership with the R&R agency and associated contractors, is committed to doing the following:

A. Identified staff will conduct observations and activities related only to the functions of the QC process; student or staff records will not be reviewed by First 5 Alameda County, R&R agency staff, or associated contractors.

First 5 Alameda County, R&R agency staff, and associated contractors cannot and will not replace regular program staff, nor be "counted" for the mandated adult-child ratios in the program.

If the QC Coach/consultant observes serious hazards or behavior that jeopardizes the health and safety of children at the site, First 5 will be responsible for determining the steps to be followed including but not limited to:

1. First 5 Alameda County, in partnership with the R&R agency and associated contractors, may determine that the situation warrants a report to a regulatory agency. If a report is made, First 5 Alameda County, R&R agency and/or associated contractors will inform the QC site **unless the investigating agency has determined and notified First 5 Alameda County, R&R agency and/or associated contractors in writing that it would impede the investigation of the incident or situation.**

2. First 5 Alameda County, in partnership with the R&R agency and associated contractors, reserves the right to determine if they will continue working with an agency that has been reported, based on its professional judgment and the feasibility of making needed changes within the site and/or program staff.

3. First 5 Alameda County, in partnership with the R&R agency and associated contractors, reserves the right to withdraw its staff and/or QC Coaches at any time. Eligibility for any First 5 Alameda County funding and/or grants program may be discontinued, modified, or withheld at the discretion of First 5 Alameda County pursuant to a change in law or a material adverse change in the Grant Recipient's condition, including failure to comply with licensure requirements, investigation by any entity with authority over the program, or in the case of any citation for child abuse or neglect without follow-up clearance by the appropriate regulatory agency.

III.   LIMITATION ON LIABILITY; INDEMNIFICATION

Both **First 5 Alameda County and Agency/Provider Name** agree to indemnify, to save and hold harmless the other party and their respective individual members, officers, agents, employees, contractors, and volunteers, from any and all liability in addition to any and all losses, claims, actions, lawsuits, damages, judgments of any kind whatsoever arising out of the negligent acts, omissions or intentional misconduct of **First 5 Alameda County or Agency/Provider Name's** respective employees, agents, subcontractors or volunteers in performance of services or in the course of performing services rendered pursuant to this Agreement.

IV.   GENERAL TERMS

Period of Operation and Termination

This agreement will take effect upon signing of both parties to the agreement and shall remain in effect until terminated. Each party shall have the right to terminate the agreement upon 30 days prior written notice to the other party.

Alteration of Terms

It is mutually agreed that this agreement may be modified or amended upon the written consent of the parties hereto.

Governing Laws and Regulations

It is agreed that, if any of the provisions of this MOU are affected by changes in Federal or State laws or regulations, this MOU may be renegotiated and amended accordingly, subject to the provisions outline in the preceding two (2) paragraphs.

Failure to Participate

If First 5 Alameda County and/or R&R agency staff determine that the child care program is failing to uphold its commitment to and participation in the QC process (e.g. missing scheduled meetings, failing to make progress toward identified health and safety challenges, or deciding not to participate in recommended Phase C specialized consultation), First 5 Alameda County and/or the R&R agency will provide a written warning that the program is in jeopardy of losing QC services. If the child care program continues to fail to comply with the QC process, First 5 Alameda County, in partnership with the R&R agency may, at staff's discretion, discontinue QC services.

Consent to Share

If your program is receiving services from two or more First 5 Alameda County-funded projects, these projects may share information, within legal limits and First 5 Alameda County's Confidentiality policy, about your site and the services provided. This process will enhance the quality and relevance of the services you receive and ensure that we are not duplicating services.

V. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

The term of the Quality Counts consultation process is two years from the date of this fully executed MOU. Provisions of this agreement will be subject to modification only by the written consent of the undersigned parties.

VI. FILING REPORTS WITH CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS) / CHILD CARE LICENSING (CCL)

If **Agency/Provider Name** has knowledge of or observes a child who they suspect has been the victim of child abuse or neglect within the course of First 5 funded work, it is expected that they will file a report of the situation to CPS. In accordance with CPS guidelines, the report should be filed by phone within 24 hours of the incident, and in writing within 36 hours of the incident. If the abuse or neglect occurs in a licensed child care facility, it is expected that **Agency/Provider Name** will also file a report immediately to CCL.

Reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to First 5, the R&R agency, or other persons is not a substitute for making a report to CPS or CCL. Reporting duties are individual and cannot be delegated to another person.

If First 5 staff or any funded contractors become aware of suspected child abuse or neglect while providing consultation and/or project support, and a report is not filed within the legal timeframe by program, First 5 staff and/or contractor will file a report by phone and in writing within 24 hours.

Failing to report abuse or neglect to the appropriate agencies is not consistent with the mandates of First 5 Alameda County to improve health and development of children age 0-5. Failure to report may result in termination of services or funding.

First 5 Alameda County

_____   _____
Mark Friedman   Date
Chief Executive Officer

Agency/Provider Name

_____   _____
Authorized Signature   Date
Agency/Provider Name

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COACH

DEFINITION

The Quality Improvement Coach provides coaching, technical assistance and training to providers in identified child care programs to improve the quality of programs and environments.

This full-time, non-exempt position reports to the Quality Improvement Coaching Manager, and is classified in the Manager level.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES include, but are not limited to, the following. Other duties may be assigned.

- Conducts assessments of up to 15 licensed child care programs participating in the ___ program, using Environmental Rating Scales, to evaluate each program's current quality
- Facilitates meetings with program participants to discuss the assessment, and collaborates with the participants to identify strengths and challenges in their program, and develop an individualized Action Plan for program quality improvement
- Provides intensive coaching, technical support, in-service training, and follow-up visits to child care programs to support achievement of goals identified in their Action Plans
- Collaborates with other First 5 programs/staff and external consultants, such as mental health consultants, as needed to ensure successful implementation of Action Plan
- Collaborates with LIIF (Low Income Investment Fund) to schedule program participants' grant application meetings and respond to and facilitate programs' requests for purchases
- Enters descriptions of consultation activities and strategies, provider response, referrals, and other progress notes ECCOnline database
- Prepares final reports for each site and program data summaries as requested
- Conducts trainings for Resource and Referral agencies in Alameda County to further support implementation of the quality model
- Assists with review of applications from child care programs desiring to participate in the Quality Improvement Program
- Attends agency and program staff meetings, as assigned
- Regularly drives and/or travels throughout Alameda County to perform the above job duties; driving is an essential function of this position

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education

Bachelor degree in child development, early childhood education, human development, social science or related field

And

Experience

Minimum three years full-time progressively responsible experience in a public or private organization or community development agency providing direct delivery of services to clients or the oversight of such services. Experience working directly with children, families and staff in a childcare setting and experience conducting environmental assessments, trainings, and/or offering technical assistance to child development professionals is required.

Other

- Must have a valid California driver's license, personal automobile insurance and ability to meet the driving record requirements for coverage under Agency's non-owned auto liability policy, access to own transportation and ability to travel within Alameda County as necessary to carry out job duties.
- Some evenings and weekends required
- Ability to speak a second language, such as Spanish, Mandarin or Cantonese strongly preferred and may be required for some positions
- Negative TB test (pre-employment)
- Prefer certification in CPR and First Aid

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of

- Principles and practices in the early childhood field, including reflective practices
- Knowledge of and experience conducting environmental assessments using Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, FCERS); prefer knowledge of CLASS, PITC, BAS and/or PAS
- Applicable state laws, rules and regulations related to child care licensing
- Various adult learning styles and proven strategies for working with each style
- Basic program development, planning and evaluation methodologies
- Practices of contract negotiation, development and management
- Basic budgetary and financial recordkeeping procedures
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite, use of the internet for research

Ability to

- Establish and maintain effective, collaborative working relationships with a wide range of professionals including but not limited to, F5AC staff, partnering agencies, community partners and child care providers
- Coordinate and/or provide informal and formal trainings and presentations to diverse audiences
- Facilitate group meetings effectively
- Effectively represent the program and agency in meetings
- Plan, monitor and evaluate program and service delivery

- Develop and maintain data collection and reporting processes
- Demonstrate cultural awareness and sensitivity in a variety of contexts
- Work in a multidisciplinary team setting
- Think proactively, anticipate and identify problems, gather information/data to analyze situations, and develop effective recommendations and solutions
- Exercise sound judgment within generally established policies and procedures to select appropriate strategies and make and carry out effective decisions
- Communicate clearly and effectively, orally and in writing, to staff, the Commission, partners, and the public
- Read, analyze and interpret common professional publications, policy documents, financial reports and related business documents and information
- Demonstrate initiative and work independently with little supervision
- Plan and organize work to ensure organizational and program goals are achieved
- Meet attendance requirements of the position, be punctual and timely in meeting all requirements for work performance
- Adapt, with minimal or no advance notice, to changes in agency operations and work assignments or procedures

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

The physical demands and work environment described below are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Mobility to work in a standard office environment and attend off-site meetings; mobility and manual dexterity to use standard office equipment and handle documents; vision to read handwritten and printed materials and a computer screen; hearing and speech to communicate in person and by telephone
- May occasionally lift and/or move heavy (up to 25 pounds) items such as furniture and boxes
- Frequently type and/or enter data while sitting for approximately 3-4 hours per day
- Stoop, crouch, reach, stand and move about as necessary to complete child care site physical inspections and assessments; assessments frequently require sitting on preschool-sized chairs or the floor
- The primary work environment is a normal office setting. The noise level is usually moderate. Some child care homes/centers do not have air conditioning and may be hot at times.
- Ability and willingness to work at sites located in a high-risk, low-income community

I have read and understand this job description, and certify that I have the ability to perform the essential function of this position either with or without reasonable accommodation.

_____   _____

Employee Signature   Date

FIRST 5 ALAMEDA COUNTY

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POTENTIAL QUALITY COUNTS PARTICIPANTS

Date:

Contact Name:

Child Care Center/ Family Child Care Name:

Address:

(If program is in Oakland, check zip code list below to determine if site is East Oakland)
94601
94603
94605
94621

East Oakland Site   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Please list by County (R&R Tracking):

☐ **North County**

Oakland, Berkeley
Alameda, Emeryville
Albany and Piedmont

☐ **South County**

Fremont, San Lorenzo
Hayward, Newark
Castro Valley and San
Leandro

☐ **East County**

Livermore, Pleasanton
and Dublin

Are you currently participating in the Hayward Promise Neighborhood Quality Counts program?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

(If yes, please inform the caller that programs are not eligible for both HPN and First 5-funded coaching services).

Phone no.:

E-mail:

Would you like to receive the application by mail or e-mail?

☐ E-mail   ☐ Mail

**Completed applications must be Mailed, Emailed or Hand-Delivered to First 5 Alameda County by 5:00 PM on June 15, 2012.

Questions to ask:

1. Has the child care program had any Substantiated Complaints or Type A deficiencies with Community Care Licensing since your site was first established? If you're unsure please contact Community Care Licensing at 510.622.2602 and speak with an analyst to find out. *Please inform the caller that First 5 Alameda County does check licensing files.*

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   (If yes, the site may still apply.)
   Please explain any Substantiated Complaints or Type A deficiencies:

2. How many children is the child care site licensed to serve? _____

3. How many are currently enrolled under the age of 5 years? _____

FAMILY CHILD CARE (FCC) ONLY:
Must have at least 50% of its licensed capacity enrolled and under the age of 5 (see chart below)

FAMILY CHILD CARE LICENSED CAPACITY	REQUIRED NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE
12-14	6
6-8	4

Do you meet the enrollment requirement? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

4. Quality Counts is a two year on-site consultation program. If selected, classroom staff/FCC provider meet with Coaches or Consultants for up to 3 hours a week *every* week for at least 6 months and potentially weekly for the remaining two year time period based on need. Ideally these meetings would take place on the same day of the week at the same time of day, similar to taking a class. How will your program accommodate this process? (i.e. use substitutes, assistants, stay after work etc.)

There will also be between 3-5 trainings scheduled on Saturdays – Will the participating staff or provider be able to attend these?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Are you willing and able to make changes to your child care program such as making changes to your protocols, procedures, environment, program structure, practices, or other program areas as needed?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Quality Counts participants may begin consultation as early as October 2012. Will your program be ready to start in October 2012 if chosen?

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Will your program be closed at any time for more than 3 consecutive weeks? If yes, when will this be? (Please inform the caller that not having the ability to meet with QC staff for more than 3 consecutive weeks may affect whether they are accepted and/or when their start date will be).

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. In what language would the teacher(s) / Provider in your program prefer services to be delivered?

   If they say a language other than English, Cantonese or Spanish, ask him / her if the teacher(s) are proficient enough in English to participate in the program if services are not delivered in their home language.

9. Each **APPROVED** applicant will be required to carry a minimum of $300,000 general liability insurance, with First 5 Alameda County-Alameda County listed as an additional insured for the entire 2 year program term.

   Does the program carry at least $300,000 of professional liability insurance?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

   a. If yes, ask if he/she would be willing to add First 5 Alameda County and Alameda County as additional insured to the professional liability insurance policy.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. If no, ask if he/she would be willing to purchase $300,000 of professional liability insurance and add First 5 Alameda County and Alameda County as additional insureds. The insurance must be purchased without installments on an annual basis. Any request for exception to this provision of insurance purchased without installments must be submitted in writing and approved by First 5 Alameda County. There is financial assistance reimbursement of up to $400 annually if you qualify under the low income guidelines. (**Family Child Care Sites only**)

☐　　Yes　　　　☐　　No

Please Note: Quality Counts Associate can provide some information about the process of obtaining insurance and adding additional insured.

☐　Check here if the provider would like the QC Associate to contact them.

10. Do you plan to operate your child care program for two years in its current location?

☐　　Yes　　　　☐　　No

11. Do you think you may need assistance completing the Quality Counts Application?

☐　　Yes　　　　☐　　No

(If yes, inform her/him that Quality Counts staff will be contacting them at a later time to schedule a TA session).

FIRST 5
ALAMEDA COUNTY

QUALITY COUNTS APPLICATION

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5:00 PM, JUNE 15, 2012

WHAT IS QUALITY COUNTS?

Quality Counts is a two-year consultation program that assists child care sites with enhancing their program quality including, but not limited to: health and safety; relationships with children, families and staff; and learning opportunities for children. Quality Counts also provides opportunities for learning through a variety of resources including:

- Program assessments and action plan development

- Coaching and consultation to implement the program's action plan including on-site and off-site program support and trainings to improve program practices and the child care environment

- The opportunity to apply for a grant to obtain quality-enhancing supplies and materials

- Referrals to additional resources

HOW TO APPLY

Complete and return this application with all the required attachments listed on page 7 before **5:00 pm on June 15, 2012**.

If you need assistance in completing this application or have any questions, please call:

Sonia Gonzalez-Garcia
Administrative Associate, Quality Enhancement Programs
Tel: 510.875.2488

Tanya Smith
Quality Counts Manager
Tel: 510.875.2447

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for participation in Quality Counts, a child care site **must be**:

- A licensed child care facility
- In "good standing" with the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division
- Providing services to children under the age of five years

FAMILY CHILD CARE (FCC) ONLY:

Must have at least 50% of its licensed capacity enrolled and under the age of 5 (see chart below)

FAMILY CHILD CARE LICENSED CAPACITY	REQUIRED NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE TO BE eligible for QUALITY COUNTS
12-14	6
6-8	4

PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

1. To successfully participate in the two year Quality Counts program, a significant commitment and investment of time are required of staff (approximately 2 hours a week for at least 6 months followed by up to 2 hours a week for the remaining time period, depending on program needs). Meetings may occur during and after regular business hours. F5AC does not pay staff for time spent in QC meetings or trainings.

2. Each approved applicant will be required to sign a **two-year** Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), assuring that each participating site will remain in operation for the two year duration of participation in Quality Counts.

3. Each approved applicant will be required to provide First 5 Alameda County (F5AC) with self-reported race/ethnicity information for the child care site staff and children enrolled at the child care site, as well as information on the educational level of staff. Names will NOT be attached to this information.

4. Each approved applicant will be required to carry a minimum of $300,000 general liability insurance, with First 5 Alameda County and Alameda County listed as additional insureds for the entire 2 years of the program term. The insurance must be purchased without installments on an annual basis. Any request for exception to this provision of insurance purchased without installments must be submitted in writing and approved by First 5 Alameda County. There is financial assistance reimbursement of up to $400 annually, if you qualify under the low income guidelines (Family Child Care Sites Only).

5. Each approved applicant will agree to provide children's art, according to F5AC's specifications, to be displayed in an exhibit at F5AC Children's Art Gallery in San Leandro.

First 5 Alameda County will use the following additional criteria to help prioritize the selection of applicants:

- **Infants and Young Toddlers** - Applicant provides services to children under the age of 24 months

- **Special Needs** - Applicant provides services to children with special health or mental health needs or other disabilities (see special needs definition on page 4)

- **Income** - Applicant provides services to children from low-income families (see attached *Parent Guardian Certificate*)

- **Language** - Applicant provides services to children from families whose primary language is not English

- **East Oakland Community** - Applicant's child care facility is located in one of the following zip codes: 94601, 94603, 94605 and 94621

- **School Readiness Communities** – Applicant's child care facility is located in one of the following cities: Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Mountain House, Newark, Oakland, San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Union City

- **Mental Health Consultation** – Applicant's child care facility is currently receiving or recently received mental health consultation funded by First 5 Alameda County

- **Sites receiving HPN funded Quality Counts services are not eligible to receive services from First 5**

Please note that First 5 Alameda County reserves the right to approve applicants for participation in Quality Counts and may limit the number of participants or discontinue services due to availability of funding and/or staffing capacity.

Applicants who are not approved may contact Tanya Smith, Quality Counts Manager at 510.875.2447 to discuss the reasons for denial. Applicants may re-apply subject to available funding.

This application and all supplemental information listed on page 7 must be mailed, emailed or hand delivered by June 15, 2012 at 5:00 pm to:

First 5 Alameda County
1100 San Leandro Boulevard, Suite 120
San Leandro, CA 94577

APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED OF THEIR AWARD STATUS BY JULY 6, 2012

CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization/ Owner Name				

Organization/ Owner Address	Street Number	Street Name		Unit #
	City			Zip Code

Organization/ Owner Phone Numbers	Phone	Cell	Fax

Site Address (if different from above)	Street Number	Street Name		Unit #
	City			Zip Code

Executive Director/FCC Provider	First Name	Last Name

Contact Person (if different from above)	First Name	Last Name

Phone	Cell	Fax	E-mail

TRANSLATION / INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Check the languages (other than English) for which you and/or your **STAFF** may need translation and/or interpretation services: (Please note that F5AC is only able to provide services in English, Spanish and Cantonese)

☐ Cantonese   ☐ Spanish

OPERATION INFORMATION

Please Check All That Apply:

a. ☐ For-Profit   ☐ Nonprofit

b. ☐ Licensed   ☐ In Process of Becoming Licensed

c. ☐ Full Day   ☐ Part Day

Number of years in operation: _____

License Number, if applicable: _____

☐ Accredited by: _____

Have there been any Substantiated Complaints and/or Type A Deficiencies filed against the site with the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division? ** If you are unsure of whether there have been any Substantiated Complaints or Type A Deficiencies since the program was first established, please review your file with Community Care Licensing by calling 510.622.2602.

☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

If yes, please explain: _____

_____
_____
_____
_____

**Please note: We review ALL applicants' files at Community Care Licensing. Having substantiated complaints and/or Type A deficiencies does not automatically disqualify a site from participating. We review all substantiated complaints and/or Type A deficiencies on a case-by-case basis.

| Do you rent or own the property where you operate your business? | ☐ Own | ☐ Rent |

If rent, what is the term of the lease?

__ years / __ months (number of remaining years/months)   OR   ☐ month-to-month lease

SERVICE DELIVERY STATISTICS

AGE OF CHILDREN ENROLLED AT THE CHILD CARE SITE	NUMBER ENROLLED
0 to less than 2 years old	_____
2 to less than 5 years old	_____
TOTAL	_____

CHILD/FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS?	NUMBER ENROLLED
Children who speak a language other than English at home	_____
Children who receive subsidized child care (including sliding scale based on family size and income)	_____
Children with parents paying full fee	_____
Children with Special Health Needs/Disabilities	_____

1. Are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
2. Have, or are at -risk for a developmental disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C (Early Start 0-3 years old)
3. Or have a specific diagnosis as defined by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B (3 years and above)
4. Or, who do not fit 1, 2 or 3 above, but whose mental health, behavior, development, and/or health as defined by a licensed professional (physician, nurse, social worker, psychologist, speech specialist, etc.) requires services above and beyond those required by children generally. This includes conditions lasting 6 months or more that have been identified by the licensed professional.

Describe the Special Health Needs/Disabilities of the children enrolled at the child care site.

CHILD CARE SERVICES TO LOW INCOME CHILDREN

Number of low-income children enrolled _____

Be sure to attach a Parent/Guardian Certificate for *each* low-income family.

EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

Name of organization providing Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation to your site:
_____

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED SUPPORT OR REASON FOR APPLYING TO QUALITY COUNTS
(for each item below, attach additional sheets of paper as needed)

Why would you like to participate in Quality Counts? Describe one or two issues you would like to focus on.

How will you ensure that you will be able to fully participate in Quality Counts (i.e., have time for weekly meetings with the coaches or consultants, have the ability to make changes in your program, etc.)?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Have you or your staff participated in any ECE professional development activities? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, please indicate which activities below (check all that apply):

☐ Community College Classes on child development, child care, etc.

☐ Mental Health Consultation

☐ On-site professional development training

☐ Resource and Referral (BANANAS, Child Care Links, or 4C's) agency trainings on child development and/or child care

☐ Staff membership in the California Early Childhood Mentor Program

☐ Staff received services from a CA Mentor Teacher or Director

☐ Other _____

CENTER CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION ONLY:

How many classrooms would be participating in Quality Counts? _____

If you would like to have more than one classroom participate, **please copy and complete this chart for each classroom.**

Classroom Name: _____

Please enter the number of children in this classroom by age:

AGE OF CHILDREN IN THIS CLASSROOM	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
Infant (Birth – 12 months)	_____
Toddler (13 – 35 months)	_____
Preschool (3 – 5 years)	_____
TOTAL	_____

Will your program be closed at any time for more than 3 consecutive weeks?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, when will this be? (Not having the ability to meet with QC staff for more than 3 consecutive weeks may affect whether your program is accepted and/or when your start date will be).

ATTACHMENTS

☐ Copy of Child Care License or Facilities letter from Community Care Licensing, or explanation of exemption from licensure, if applicable

☐ Parent/Guardian Certificate for each low-income family

OPTIONAL

First 5 Alameda County wants all eligible child care providers to know about the program services we offer. Please tell us how you heard about Quality Counts.

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct. This form gives permission to the Qualilty Counts staff to discuss my application with the local Resource and Referral agencies, Community Care Licensing and the funders of Quality Counts.

► _____   _____
Signature   Date

_____   _____
Print Name   Title

ORIGINAL APPLICATION AND SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS MUST BE MAILED OR HAND-DELIVERED TO OUR OFFICE. FAXED OR EMAILED COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. APPLICATIONS AND SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE OF 5:00 PM, JUNE 15, 2012 WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Submit applications and supplemental documents to:

First 5 Alameda County

Attn: Sonia Gonzalez-Garcia

1100 San Leandro Boulevard, Suite 120

San Leandro, CA 94577

QUESTIONS?

Contact: Tanya Smith

Quality Counts Manager

Tel: 510.875.2447

PARENT/GUARDIAN CERTIFICATE

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Your child care program is applying for funding to the **First 5 Alameda County Quality Counts** program. The funding may be used to pay for quality improvements to their child care facility and/or classroom environment. Child care programs can make their applications stronger by reporting that they are serving low-income families. If your annual family income falls below the amounts listed below, please sign this form and return it to your provider. Your child care program will attach this form to their application.

This information will only be used to evaluate your child care program's application for funding and will be held in the strictest confidence. Thank you for supporting your child care program's application for funding.

Low-income* Guidelines: Family Size and Annual Family Income

1-2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 or more
$39,396	$42,216	$46,896	$54,408	$61,908	$63,312	$64,728	$66,132	$67,536	$68.940	$70,356

*Based on the California Department of Education, Child Development Division Schedule of Family Income Ceilings for Child Development Programs effective July 1, 2011.

I have ____ number of children enrolled in this child care program.

I certify that my family qualifies as low-income under the government guidelines listed above.

►_____   _____

Parent/Guardian Signature   Date

QUALITY COUNTS INTRODUCTORY MEETING AGENDA - COACH

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Provide information about yourself (e.g., professional experience, ECE specific experience, consultation experience, etc.)

- Encourage participants to share information about themselves (e.g., role in the child care program, professional experience, what they hope to gain through participation in Quality Counts)

- Ask for any program materials (e.g., parent and/or staff handbook, philosophy statement, program brochure, etc.) that will help to learn more about the program

QUALITY COUNTS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Review *Quality Counts Guiding Principles*

- Facilitated Discussion: Have you ever worked with a Consultant in the past? What did you like or dislike about the experience? Or: Describe a time when you received feedback from a supervisor or colleague. What did you like or dislike about this experience?

- Ask if there are general concerns about their participation in Quality Counts

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

- Facilitated Discussion: Ask the provider(s) what they feel are the strengths and challenges of their child care program. Be sure to take clear notes.

REVIEW OBSERVATION TOOLS

- Briefly review tools, pointing out the main topics

- If possible, ask the provider to choose to use either the ERS Scale or the Quality Reflection Guide. (If provider wants more time to choose, give provider a deadline to call you with their choice so that you can appropriately plan the observation training.)

TIMELINE OF QUALITY COUNTS PROCESS AND SCHEDULING WEEKLY MEETINGS

- Use the Quality Counts Estimated Timeline and QC Process/Calendar to review the steps of the process. (Please note: If the Coach senses that the provider(s) is overwhelmed, going over the entire QC process/calendar is not necessary. It may be more helpful to give a brief overview of only the next 1 to 2 steps.)

- Explain the objectives of the next meeting, observation training

- Decide on a set day and time for weekly meetings to take place

FIRST 5 ALAMEDA COUNTY

QUALITY COUNTS

2-YEAR ESTIMATED TIMELINE*

Please note: This is an estimated timeline. The timeline for your program may look different depending on your program's unique situation and circumstances.

Phase A: Action Plan

MONTH	ACTIVITY	TIME COMMITMENT
MONTH PRIOR TO START	**ORIENTATION WITH QC PROGRAM MANAGER**	1 – 2 hours
MONTHS 1 - 4	**ASSESSMENT & ACTION PLANNING** **STEP ONE:** Introductions **STEP TWO:** Observation Training **STEP THREE:** Observation and Assessment **STEP FOUR:** Observation Discussions ➢ Observation Discussion with Director (Center) **STEP FIVE:** Develop the Action Plan **Centers directors will participate in consultation related to the Program Administration Scale	8-10 hours/month
MONTH 5	▪ Health and Safety Check ▪ Apply for Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF) Grant (up to $1250 for small Family Child Care, $2000 for large Family Child Care, $3000 for centers with one classroom, $4000 for centers with two or more classrooms) ▪ Collaboratively select materials for which to apply with the grant	8-10 hours/month

After Phase A, Action Plan, is complete, the QC Coach determines whether sites will then participate in one of two implementation activities to complete their Action Plan goals: Phase B, Implementation, **or** Phase C, Specialized Resources. The QC Coach, in collaboration with the QC Program Manager, will consider the following criteria in determining the need for Implementation:

- The FCC business has been operating less than 2 years or the head/lead teacher of a classroom has been in his/her current position for less than 2 years
- The site has Action Plan goals and strategies related to program structure including but not limited to daily schedule, routines, transitions, and/or staff communication, planning and defined responsibilities
- The site has coaching/training/technical assistance needs and related goals for which there are currently no community resources available to meet this need
- The site needs technical assistance to complete health and safety-related strategies

Sites that do not begin Phase B, Implementation, will begin Phase C, Specialized Resources, upon completion of Action Plan development. All sites that participate in Phase B will begin Phase C in their tenth month of participation in Quality Counts. If beginning Implementation, please turn to page 3. For sites beginning Specialized Resources, please turn to page 4.

PHASE B: IMPLEMENTATION

MONTH	ACTIVITY	TIME COMMITMENT
MONTHS –6 - 9	**STEP SIX:** Implementation - Coaching and technical assistance to begin completion of Action Plan goals and strategies	8 – 10 hours/month

Upon completion of QC Coach technical assistance and coaching to support site's implementation of Action Plan goals and strategies, all QC participants begin Phase C, Specialized Resources in the QC process (please see page 4).

Phase C: SPECIALIZED RESOURCES

There are different timeline estimates that are dependant on whether your program participates in training(s), &/or specialized consultation(s), &/or what type(s) of specialized consultation is received (e.g. business/fiscal, early childhood mental health, etc.). The type of training(s) &/or specialized consultation(s) is determined by the site's Action Plan goals and internal/external resources available.

ALL SITES: IMPLEMENTATION & RESOURCE UTILIZATION

MONTHS	ACTIVITY	TIME COMMITMENT
MONTHS 6-24	▪ **STEP SIX:** Complete remaining Action Plan goals including training & utilization of additional community resources ▪ **STEP SEVEN:** Final evaluation & report (upon completion of Action Plan goals)** ▪ **STEP EIGHT:** QC Coach conducts bi-monthly follow up	Time Varies; 1 – 2 hours/visit (follow-up & final evaluation meetings)

WHEN DETERMINED: BUSINESS/FISCAL CONSULTATION

MONTH	ACTIVITY	TIME COMMITMENT
UP TO 6 MONTHS	IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ACTIVITES FOR ALL: ▪ Transition to business consultant ▪ **STEP SIX:** Business Administration Scale Assessment & Action Plan; Business/Fiscal Technical Assistance	8 – 10 hours/month

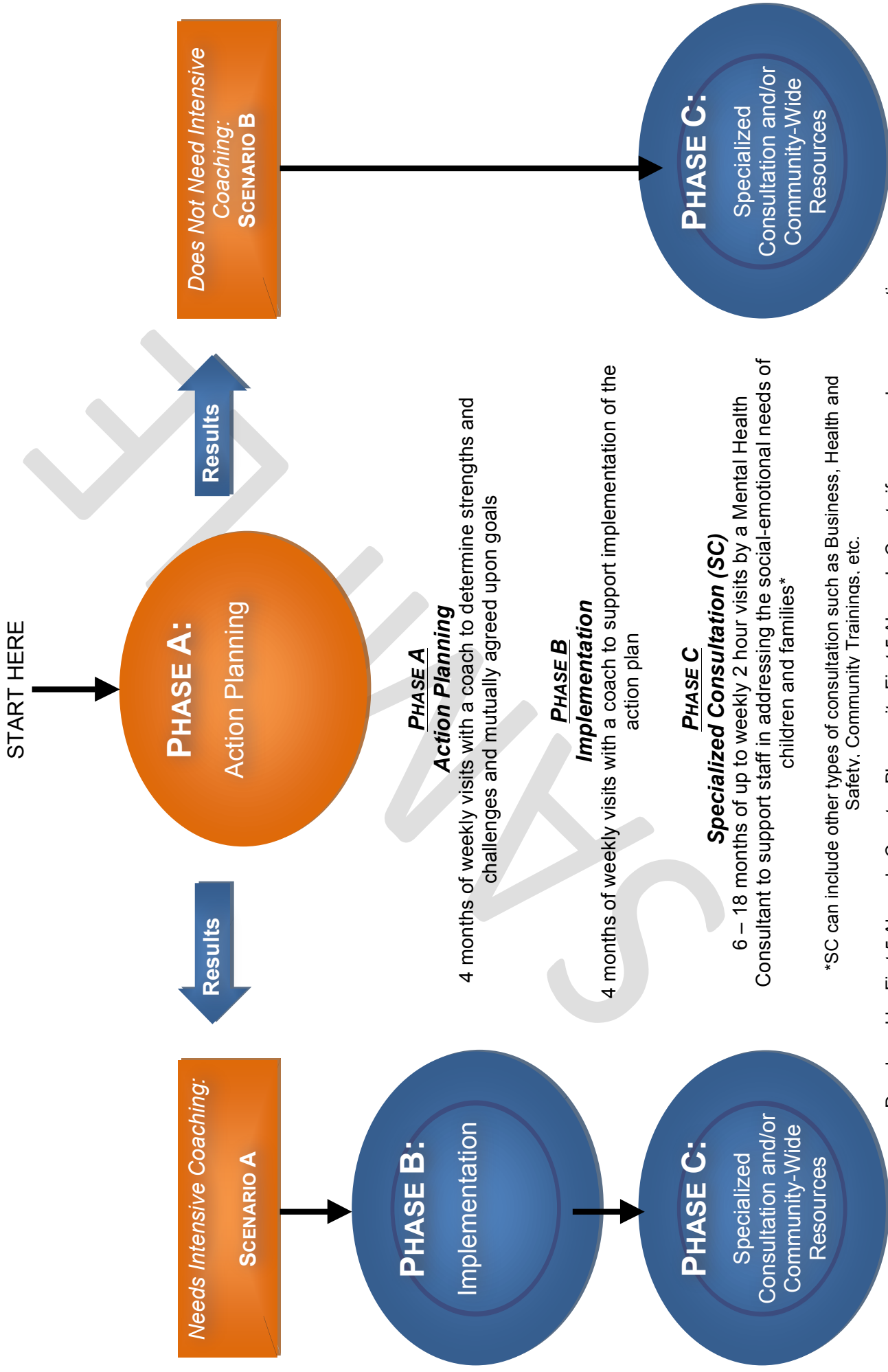### WHEN DETERMINED: EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH (ECMH) CONSULTATION

MONTH	ACTIVITY	TIME COMMITMENT
UP TO 20 MONTHS	IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ACTIVITES FOR ALL: ▪ Transition to ECMH consultant ▪ **STEP SIX:** ECMH consultation (includes partial CLASS-based observation& Action Plan Strategies)	8 – 10 hours/month

WHEN DETERMINED: CLASS COACHING

MONTH	ACTIVITY	TIME COMMITMENT
UP TO 10 MONTHS	IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ACTIVITIES FOR ALL: ▪ Transition to CLASS coach (if needed) ▪ **STEP SIX:** CLASS coaching (includes videotaping & Action Plan Strategies)	8 – 10 hours/month

** QC participants that complete all Action Plan goals receive the 2nd half of the LIIF grant upon completion of the Final Evaluation and Final Report (Up to $1250 for small Family Child Care, $2000 for large Family Child Care, $3000 for Center with one classroom, $4000 for Center with 2 or more classrooms)

FIRST 5 ALAMEDA COUNTY

QUALITY COUNTS – 2 YEAR COACHING PROGRAM

START HERE

PHASE A:
Action Planning

Results

Does Not Need Intensive Coaching:
SCENARIO B

PHASE C:
Specialized Consultation and/or Community-Wide Resources

Results

Needs Intensive Coaching:
SCENARIO A

PHASE B:
Implementation

PHASE C:
Specialized Consultation and/or Community-Wide Resources

PHASE A
Action Planning
4 months of weekly visits with a coach to determine strengths and challenges and mutually agreed upon goals

PHASE B
Implementation
4 months of weekly visits with a coach to support implementation of the action plan

PHASE C
Specialized Consultation (SC)
6 – 18 months of up to weekly 2 hour visits by a Mental Health Consultant to support staff in addressing the social-emotional needs of children and families*

*SC can include other types of consultation such as Business, Health and Safety, Community Trainings, etc.

FIRST 5
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QUALITY COUNTS
OBSERVATION FORM   DATE:

PROGRAM:	
PARTICIPANT(S):	
QUALITY COUNTS COACH:	

STRENGTHS
Health and Safety
Relationships with Children, Families and Staff
Opportunities for Learning

CHALLENGES
Health and Safety
Relationships with Children, Families and Staff
Opportunities for Learning

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FIRST 5 ALAMEDA COUNTY

QUALITY COUNTS ACTION PLAN

DATE:

PROGRAM:

PARTICIPANT(S):

QUALITY COUNTS COACH:

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	OBSTACLES	NOTES	TARGET DATE	STATUS
Health and Safety	• Apply for funding to purchase child size furniture	Lori (Director)	None Noted	Target date was changed from 7/31/11 to 8/31/11 due to delay in grant application processing.	8/31/11	Complete
	• Provider will encourage children to wash their hands after naptime and before and after meals by posting pictures of children washing hands and reading books during story time	Melissa (Head teacher)	Making time for hand washing and teaching the children about the new routine.	On 7/15/11 and 7/26/11 Coach observed that most children washed their hands before and after meals.	9/30/11	Complete
Enhance Social Interaction and Communication with Children and Families	• Coach will demonstrate interactions with children during mealtime and return to observe teachers' interactions	Coach	Finding time to sit down with the children during mealtime	• On 9/15/11 Coach observed all teachers sitting with children during lunch and participating in social conversations with children.	9/30/11	Complete
	• Coach will conduct an onsite training on social interaction and communication	Coach	Scheduling training when all staff can be present	Tentative trng date set for 10/15. Lori plans to bring in 2 subs so teachers can attend	10/15/11	In Progress

ADDITIONAL NOTES

SAMPLE

Enhance the health and safety of the child care program

Enhance the physical child care environment

Expand learning activities for children

Enhance program structure

Enhance interactions and communication with children

Enhance interactions and communication with families

Expand language and thinking opportunities for children

Expand professional development opportunities for staff

Engage in more professional development activities (for FCC only)

Enhance staff communication and interactions

Enhance guidance and discipline strategies

Enhance children's social and emotional development

Enhance business and fiscal program practices

Enhance provisions for staff professional and personal needs

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