Head Start Self-Assessment

Your Foundation for Building Program Excellence

Presented by: Leslie Porter, Oklahoma State TA Manager

A member of the National Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Network
As a result of today’s session you will:

• Understand the purpose of the Head Start Self-Assessment

• Review the key components to the process

• Incorporate findings into daily activities.
What is...

The Head Start Program Self-Assessment?
Key Head Start Management Systems

- Governance
- Planning
- Communication
- Record Keeping and Reporting
- Ongoing Monitoring

- Self-Assessment
- Human Resources
- Fiscal Management
- ERSEA
Objective

Establish dynamic and cohesive management systems that support continuous improvement and foster commitment to providing the highest level of services to children and families in accordance with legislation, regulations, and policies.

Introduction to 1304.51
Self-Assessment and Monitoring

• 1304.51(i)1

At least once each program year, with the consultation and participation of the policy groups, and as appropriate, other community members, grantee and delegate agencies must conduct a self-assessment...
...of their effectiveness and progress in meeting program goals and objectives and in implementing Federal regulations.

1304.51(i) 1
Rationale

1304.51(i)1

• Measure agency accomplishments, strengths, and weaknesses
• Allows for continuous improvement of program plans and service delivery methods
• Provides an opportunity for involvement of parents and community stakeholders
• Increases staff awareness of how the program is viewed by consumers
1304.51(i)1

- Entails the participation and oversight by policy groups

- Each program designs their own process.
The Self Assessment process:

- Specify time schedule
- Select team members
- Provide training about the process
- Assess the program
- Analyze and share findings
- Develop and implement action plans
- Make evaluations ongoing

130451(i)1 Guidance
SELF-ASSESSMENT

Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

Community Assessment

Results of Federal monitoring (PRISM)

Summaries of ongoing monitoring

Self-Assessment Information

Interpreting the Data
Analysis of: Strengths Weaknesses Patterns Underlying Causes Priorities

Program Improvement Plan
Goals Outcomes Action Steps Timelines Resources

Training and Technical Assistance Plan

Strengthening Your Program

PIR Data

Summary of Child Outcome Data

Other data sources

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Guiding Principles

• Addresses all areas of the Performance Standards
• Can be administered by a diverse team
• Promotes an efficient use of time and resources
• Provides valuable information to inform leaders about ways to strengthen and improve the program
The Self Assessment Process

Preparing Your Self-Assessment

Interpreting the Information

Collecting and Synthesizing the Information

Strengthening the Program

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Four Stages of Self Assessment

- Preparing
- Collecting and Synthesizing
- Interpreting
- Strengthening
Key Features

• Addresses all areas of the Head Start Performance Standards
• Flexible format that can be adapted to programs of all shapes and sizes
• Leads to the collection of objective, meaningful information from all relevant Head Start data sources
• Guides teams through the analysis process
• Results in Program Improvement Plans and Training and Technical Assistance Plans to strengthen the program
• The objective of 45 CFR 1304.50 is to ensure that each grantee and delegate agency has an established policy group and a well-functioning governing body that share responsibility for overseeing the delivery of high quality services to children and families in accordance with Head Start legislation, regulations, and policies.

Introduction p 158
Stage One

Preparing

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Program Design

Programs design a system that meets the needs of their program

- Divide responsibilities
- Select team leaders
- Recruit team participants
- Train and orient
- Focus your assessment
- Establish a timeline
Stage Two

Collecting and Synthesizing Information
Collecting and Synthesizing

• Team leaders and team members collect information and data in all program areas

• 18 booklets serve as helpful tools in assessing systems and services.

• Team members summarize their findings

• Team leaders begin to analyze data and produce succinct booklet analyses
Becoming Familiar with the Protocol

With your team:

• Review the booklets assigned to your group

• Identify the key features of the booklet

• Identify useful tools that accompany your assigned sections
Multi-Method, Multi-Source

Multi-Method:

• Substantiate accuracy of the information
• Determine whether a situation is an isolated incident or a pervasive situation
• Minimize drawing early conclusions from limited data
• Multi-method overcomes the weaknesses of each method alone
Stage Three

Interpreting
Stage Three: Interpreting Information

- Review and analyze section summaries
- Examine program strengths and accomplishments
- Analyze and interpret areas to be strengthened
- Display the data in a useful manner
- Identify underlying causes and systemic issues
- Classify and prioritize issues and concerns
Stage Four

Strengthening

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State Four: Strengthening

- Identify resources
  - Head Start TA Network
  - Internal program resources
  - Other technical assistance providers
- Develop Program Improvement Plans
- Move from Program Improvement Plan to TA planning
- Evaluate progress
Identifying Strengths

- Build upon strengths to develop and support new strategies
- Draw from strengths in analyses
- Focus on areas that are exceptional and exceed Performance Standards
- Provides a broader program context and balanced program perspective
Analyzing and Interpreting

• Weigh contradictory information

• Ask the *reasons* for the issues that arise and look at the supporting management systems

• Make decisions based on a comprehensive review of all relevant data to gather sufficient evidence to draw a conclusion
Underlying Causes

• For each area to strengthen, you will need to uncover the underlying causes

• Identifying causes will facilitate the development of appropriate and effective strategies to strengthen program systems and services
Examining Underlying Causes

- Information Sources
- Questions to Consider
- Underlying Causes
- Developing Strategies
Program Improvement Plan

- Goal
- Outcomes
- Action steps
- Person (s) responsible
- Resources that will be applied to the effort
- Expected dates of completion
Natural progression from the development of a Program Improvement Plan
Head Start
Ongoing Monitoring

Result Based Monitoring
Presented by: Nicole Holman – Alexander, Oklahoma Grantee
Performance Support Specialist

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As a result of today’s session you will:

• Understand what ongoing monitoring is.

• Review the key components to this system.

• Discuss steps to successful monitoring.
Ongoing Monitoring?
Key Head Start Management Systems

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Objective

Establish dynamic and cohesive management systems that support continuous improvement and foster commitment to providing the highest level of services to children and families in accordance with legislation, regulations, and policies.

Introduction to 1304.51
Grantees must establish and implement procedures for the ongoing monitoring of their Early Head Start and Head Start operations, as well as those of each of their delegate agencies, to ensure that these operations effectively implement
... to ensure that these operations effectively implement Federal regulations.
• Assesses grantee and delegate operations

• Ensures that necessary steps are being taken to meet Federal regulations, local goals, and objectives.

• Ensures appropriate interventions are taken in a timely manner.

• Helps build trust and strong partnerships between grantee and delegate agencies.
• Entails analyzing reports, findings, plans and other documents to determine whether program services and fiscal operations are in compliance.

• Encourages grantees with delegates to build cooperative relationships.
Something to think about...

- If you do not measure results, you cannot tell success from failure.
- If you cannot see success, you cannot reward it.
- If you cannot reward success, you are probably rewarding failure.
- If you cannot see success, you cannot learn from it.
- If you cannot recognize failure, you cannot correct it.
- If you can demonstrate results, you can win public support.

Source: Adapted from Osborne & Gaebler 1992.
“If you do not know where you are going, any road will take you there.”

Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,
Lewis Carroll, 1865
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Monitoring and/or Evaluation

Monitoring
- Clarifies program objectives
-Links activities and their resources to objectives
- Translates objectives into performance indicators and sets targets
- Reports progress to managers and alerts them to problems.

Evaluation
- Analyzes why intended results were not achieved.
- Assesses specific causal contributions of activities to results.
- Examines implementation process
- Explores unintended results
- Provides lessons, highlights significant accomplishments or program potential, and offers recommendations for improvements.

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An Ongoing Monitoring Process

- Formulate outcomes and goals
- Select outcome indicators to monitor
- Gather baseline information on the current condition
- Set specific targets to reach and dates for reaching them
- Regularly collect data to assess whether the targets are being met
- Analyze and report the results.
Formulate Outcomes and Goals

Decide...
Select Outcome Indicators

Select...
Gather Baseline Information

Where are we now...

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Set Specific Targets

What should we target...
Collect Data

Collect...

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Make decisions based on a comprehensive review of all relevant data to gather sufficient evidence to draw a conclusion.
Keys to Success

- Ownership
- Management
- Maintenance
- Credibility

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