DAVID P. WEIKART
CENTER FOR YOUTH
PROGRAM QUALITY

program improvement planning guidebook

2018-2019 DRAFT EDITION

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The David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality,

a division of the Forum for Youth Investment, is dedicated to empowering education and human service leaders to adapt, implement, and scale best-in-class, research-validated quality improvement systems to advance child and youth development.

The Weikart Center encourages managers to prioritize program quality. We offer training, technical assistance, and research services that all come together in the Youth Program Quality Intervention, an comprehensive system for improving the quality of youth programs.

The Program Quality Assessment Handbook Series

supports training with the use of the Youth and School-Age Program Quality Assessment (PQA). The Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA) is a validated instrument designed to evaluate the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs. It has been used in community organizations, schools, camps, and other places where youth have fun, work, and learn with adults.

The Youth PQA is a dual-purpose instrument, robust enough to use for accountability and research purposes and user-friendly enough to serve as a tool for program self assessment. It is both a quality monitoring tool and a learning tool.

To learn more, please visit www.cypq.org.

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program improvement planning guidebook

2016-17 draft edition

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This guidebook is intended to support the Improvement phase of the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI). Strategies and resources have been included to support managers as they guide and coach program staff toward improving their practice and the experiences youth have in their programs. The Program Improvement Planning Guidebook is a supplement to the Planning with Data Workbook and may be used as an extension to create strong improvement plans, or as a follow-up designed to strengthen existing program improvement plans after they have already been created.

CONTENTS

YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY INTERVENTION

The Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) is a comprehensive system for improving program quality, build around the research-validated Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA). It involves a three-part approach to program quality: the assess-plan-improve sequence as shown below. This sequence begins with assessment in order to identify both your workers' existing strengths and areas for improvement. These areas then become goals in an improvement plan, with clear steps and benchmarks for success. To manage improvement, the Weikart Center also provides powerful supports for youth leaders and the high quality Youth Work Methods series of workshops for staff. As a whole, the assess-plan-improve sequence establishes a supportive system for continuous improvement.
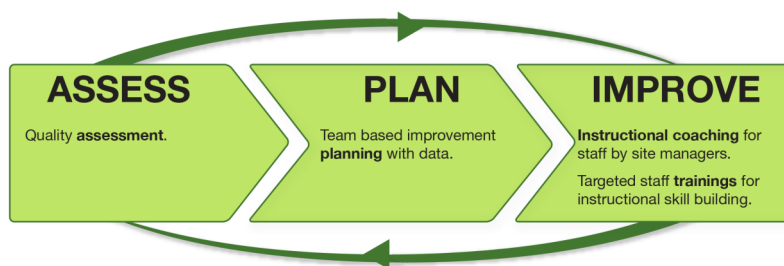
The assess-plan-improve sequence helps programs to turn data into useful information for program improvement. Assessment and evaluation can supply a wealth of valuable data about the quality of a youth program, but assessment provides just the data—numbers and words. To learn from data and use it effectively to improve the quality of experiences for youth, program staff engage in conversations that lead to professional development decisions. The Weikart Center Youth Work Methods trainings are aligned to the practices promoted in the Youth PQA and are designed to strengthen the skills of program staff. Program managers can provide support to their staff by using Quality Instructional Coaching to observe staff and reflect with them on their practice.

Once you make assessment and improvement planning a regular practice, you can keep doing it every year, tracking your progress from year to year and adjusting your focus based on the needs of your staff. The more you engage in improvement planning, the better you'll get at using data to effectively improve the experience youth have in your program.

	Element	Training	Action
ASSESS	Program Self Assessment (PQA Form A)	*PQA Basics* (1 Day)	Site teams complete a team-based program self assessment
	External Assessment (PQA Form A)	*External Assessor Workshop* (1.5 days)	External assessments completed by reliable external assessors
	Organizational Interview (PQA Form B)		Site teams and external assessors complete Form B
PLAN	Improvement Planning	*Planning with Data Workshop* (1 day)	Site teams develop program improvement plans based on PQA data.
IMPROVE	Youth Work Methods (Active Participatory Approach aligned to Youth PQA)	*Youth Work Methods Workshops* (2 hour workshops, usually in a half-day or one day summit)	Youth Work Methods Summit for staff and managers is delivered by local trainers that have attended the Youth Work Methods Training of Trainers Workshop. Selected workshops are identified by improvement plans.
	Quality Instructional Coaching	*Quality Coaching Workshop* (1 day)	Managers are trained to support staff improvement through one-on-one consultation using strengths-based feedback on practices in the PQA.

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Program Improvement Planning

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

The Improvement phase of the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) provides us with an opportunity to examine the structure, planning, and implementation of programming, and what we might change to provide higher quality experiences for youth. Assessment and evaluation can supply a wealth of valuable data about the quality of a youth program, but left alone, it's just data—a list of numbers and words. Using data to help narrow down potential areas for growth sets us on a path toward change, but it's just a beginning. In the following pages, we'll present ideas, strategies, and resources to help you create, and refine, program improvement plans that are focused, detailed, and supportive of your change process.

In thinking about the work we do with youth, we are consistently asking them to try something new, step out of their comfort zones, take risks, set goals, and talk about their future. The same should be expected of adults, right? In other words, we have an opportunity to model a growth mindset for youth as we participate in our own continuous improvement and encourage staff to try something new, step out of their comfort zones, take risks, set goals, and talk about their future.

> *...we have an opportunity to model a growth mindset for youth as we participate in our own continuous improvement...*

If nothing changes, nothing changes! In an efficient quality improvement system, participants must learn from their data and use it to create effective program improvement plans that support change. **Program improvement plans are the action plans we create to equip program staff with the vision, skills, incentives, resources, and support necessary to manage change and be successful in engaging youth in high quality experiences.**

Equally essential to the success of managing change is the involvement of staff in the planning and implementation of goals. Each staff person has a unique perspective of the program and has a role to play. It is strongly recommended that program improvement plans are team-created and focus on items that the staff cares about and has some level influence or control.

MEASUREMENT AND DATA SOURCES

The data speaks: Are you listening? The first step of the program improvement process is to find the story of your program. Often times, we rely on our gut, or what we 'think' is happening in our program. While that can be helpful, and we should not completely disregard our instincts, data provides us with a solid foundation to begin understanding what is actually happening in your program. From here, we can identify areas to celebrate, share, and grow.

Formal and informal. Internal and external. Qualitative and quantitative. You likely have several sources of data available to you. Including, but not limited to:

- Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA)
- Leading Indicators Report
- School Data
- Youth Surveys
- Parent Surveys
- Staff Surveys
- Teacher Surveys
- Local Evaluator Report
- External Assessment
- Gut
- Personal Observations

The source of the data is less important than your response to it. Your response to your data is program improvement planning. Data can be used to identify specific areas for improvement. Plus, when you choose goals based on your data, you have already identified a build-in way to measure growth!

Login to your ScoresReporter account at https://portal.cypq.org// to access additional support materials, including a user guide, tutorials, and videos to help you create PQA reports.
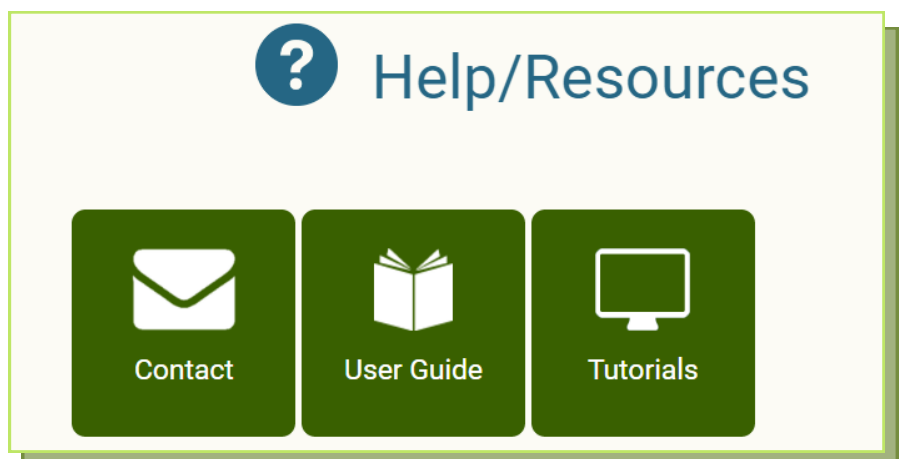
CREATING & REVIEWING GOALS

Creating meaningful program goals can be a challenging and overwhelming process, not only for program staff, but managers as well. While the YPQI provides a framework, and sequence, for developing program improvement plans, the reality is the goals we create don't always lead to the change we hope to see. Perhaps your data leads you to a growth area that is outside of your control or isn't focused on youth experiences and staff practices? Maybe your action steps don't match the goal or program staff don't value the goal itself? Whether you are preparing to engage your team in goal-setting or you have created goals already and they don't seem to meet your expectations, there are some promising practices to consider as you plan for growth and some are presented here in this guidebook.

After completing the Root Cause Analysis activity with your team, start identifying a few specific focus areas that you truly care about and have directly control over to begin to develop your program goal. Simply write the goal. As a team, reflect on the goal to ensure it addresses staff practices in order to impact the experiences you want participants to have in our program. In order to ensure your goal is well-rounded, and truly captures your intended outcome, check to make sure it is SMART: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-based.

Goals already submitted? This is your opportunity to take another look at your existing goals to ensure they accurately reflect your desired program outcome and encompasses each element of the SMART goal framework. What happens if your goal isn't so SMART? You have the autonomy to restart the process with the team. Feel free to abort those goals that are not working and restart the process.

The goal below is a sample that we will use throughout this guidebook. Notice how the goal is written as a success statement and focuses on what STAFF WILL DO and how it focuses on a YOUTH EXPERIENCE?

SAMPLE VAGUE GOAL

Youth will be more engaged in programming.

Making them SMART

Youth will reflect during the program. (Reflection)

- Specific—Staff will facilitate reflection activities.

- Measurable—All youth will have an opportunity to reflect daily.

- Attainable—Lesson plans will include reflection strategies and time to facilitate. Staff will receive support and training on how to facilitate reflection.

- Relevant—Intentional opportunities for reflection help youth to make connections, learn from experiences, engage in critical thinking, and much more.

- Time-based—Staff will receive training and planning-time over the next 4 weeks and begin facilitating daily reflection in February 2017.

SMART GOAL-What does success look like?

Beginning in February 2017, staff will facilitate daily opportunities for youth to participate in intentional reflection. Staff will receive training and support as they modify lesson plans to include time for reflection and a variety of strategies that allow youth to reflect each day.


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ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

The "Five Whys" technique is used when little is known about the root causes of a problem. The purpose of this problem analysis technique is to surface, challenge, and test assumptions. The technique is often used because it requires members to challenge each idea generated and attempt to dig further to arrive at a set of truly foundational root causes. This process is similar to peeling the layers of an onion.

1. After choosing a growth area identified in reading your data, use a whiteboard or large piece of paper (e.g. flipchart paper), write your desired outcome in the center of the paper and draw a circle around it.

2. Ask, "Why isn't this happening in our program now?" and write the answers (in a few short words) just outside of the circle around your desired outcome. List as many answers, reasons, causes, etc...as you can think of in a few minutes. As the responses slow down, read the list of answers and ask, "Which one of these do we value and have influence over?" Circle, highlight, or star the group's consensus and then draw a second ring around all responses, much like you did at the end of step 1.

3. Ask, "Why isn't this happening in our program now?" and repeat the process outlined in step 2.

4. Repeat this process until you have 5 rings of responses...the "Five Whys".

Additional questions to support dialogue might include:

-   Why is this?

-   What gets in the way of this happening?

-   Questions about a specific item, e.g. Why does it take too long? Why don't staff follow the written plans? Why isn't there enough time to do reflection?

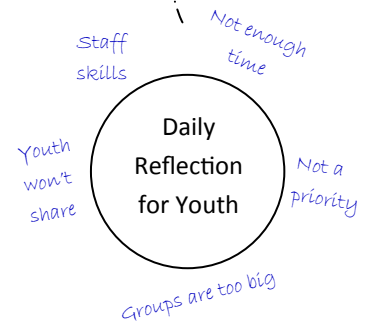If you have feedback on this DRAFT workbook, please contact Trevor Davies: trevor@cypq.org
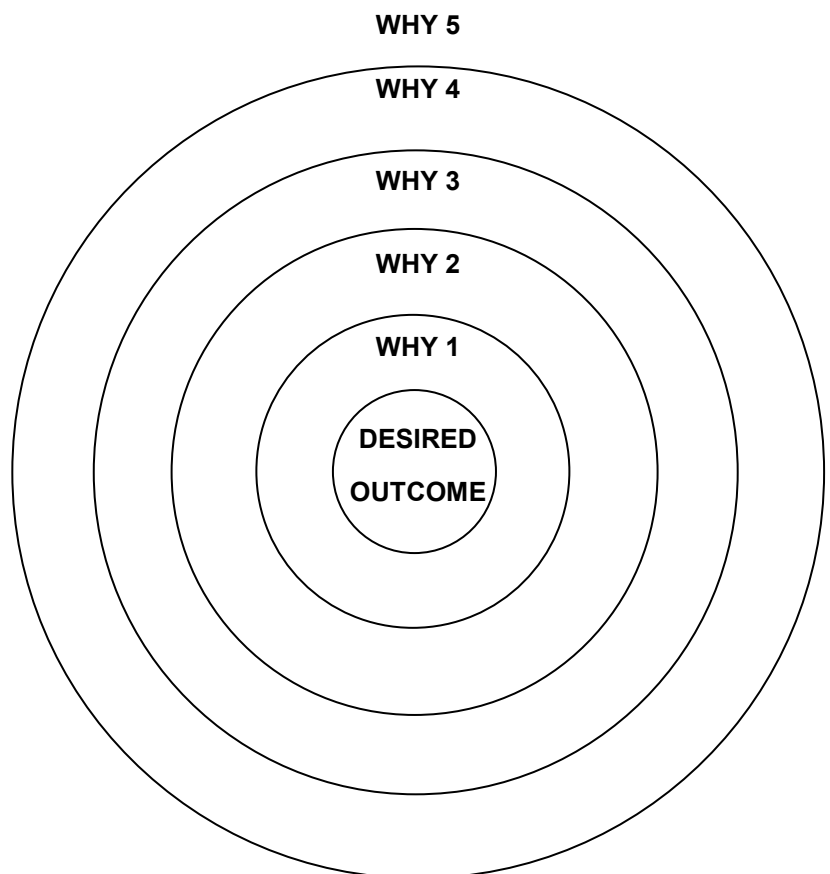
DESIRED OUTCOME

Begin by identifying a desired outcome that the team values and believes they have the opportunity to influence. In other words, *"What do we care about and can control?"* Using positive language, write the outcome down and circle it. The "Five Whys" activity is designed to incorporate ideas and thoughts from your entire team. **Consider providing each team member with a marker so they can contribute their ideas both verbally and using their own words on the paper/board.** It's natural for individuals to want to explain or justify their answers. Should this happen, respectfully acknowledge their sharing and encourage the team to focus on identifying potential barriers and challenges rather than solutions or justifications. There will be time for planning and problem solving later.
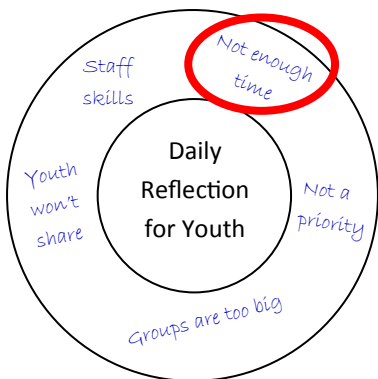
(Daily Reflection for Youth)

WHY 1

Ask the question, *"Why isn't this happening in our program now?"* Write down the responses in the area immediately around your inner circle. Be prepared to ask follow-up questions to encourage sharing. Examples here might include: "Why don't we do reflection now?" "Does everyone know how to do reflection?" "What is reflection?" The goal at this stage is to get your team discussing the topic and sharing. Encourage staff to share and reinforce that this is not a time to solve the problem, but to understand it. Once the staff has a few ideas down, move on to the next step. **Don't worry about creating an exhaustive list. The nature of this activity is that it is cyclical** and it is likely that you will see overlap and themes develop throughout.

(Daily Reflection for Youth — Staff skills, Not enough time, Youth won't share, Not a priority, Groups are too big)
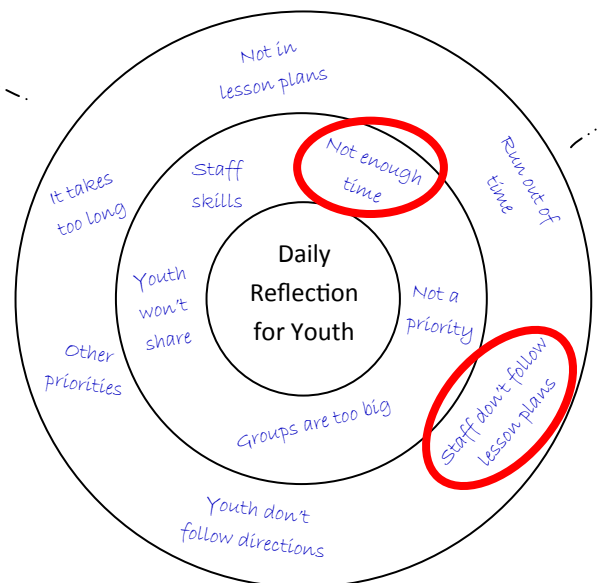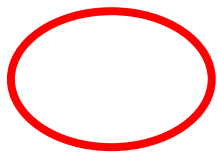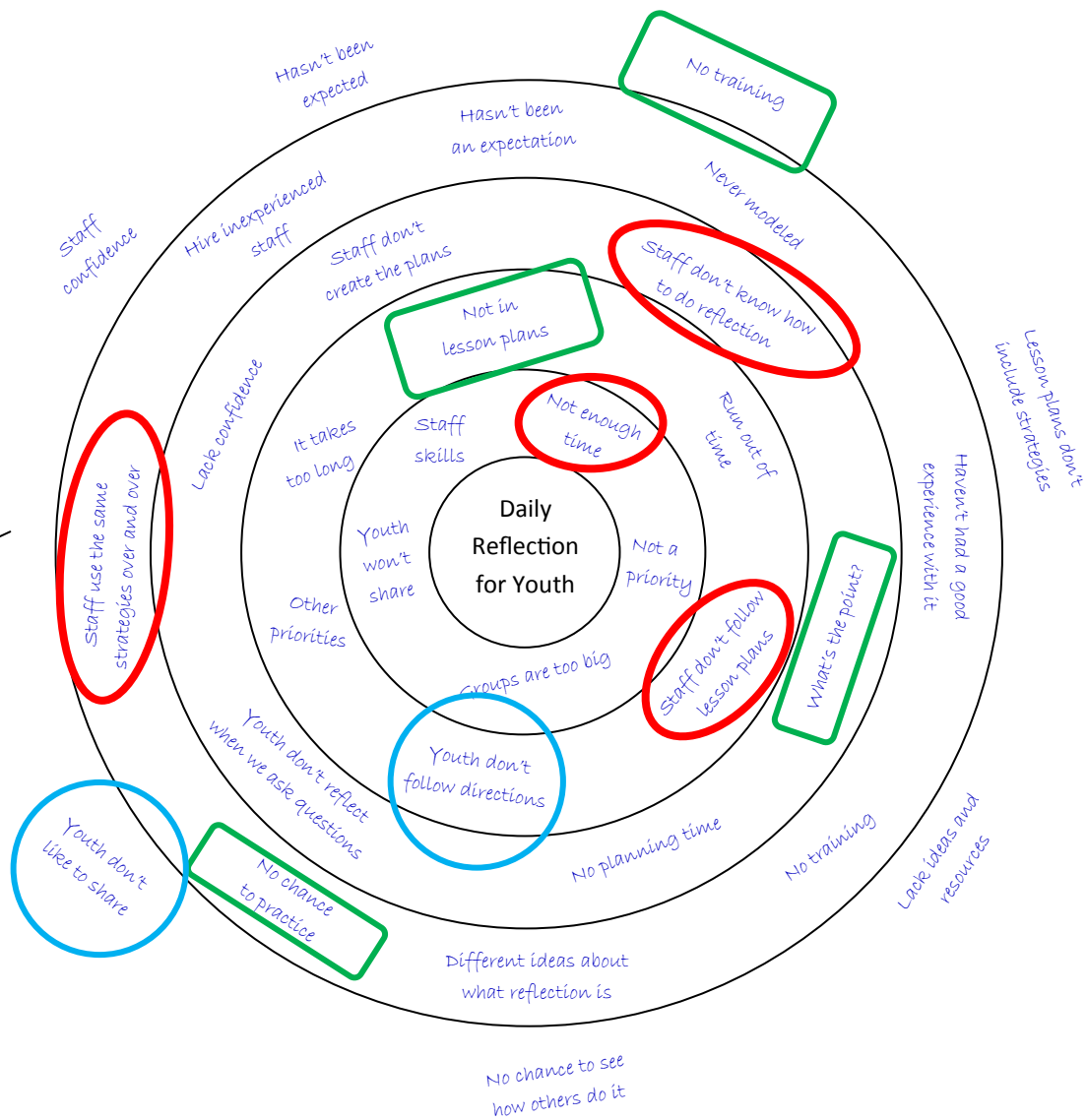
WHY 2...3...4...5

Draw a circle around the response to create a new ring. Read the response aloud and ask the team to **select one that they value AND have influence over**. What do they care about and can control? What is a priority and within their authority to change? If there is no clear consensus, ask the team to identify one that they all agree on, even if it's not their top choice. Again, chances are that the topics will surface again in a future ring if it truly is a root cause or barrier to your desired outcome. Once you arrive at a consensus, circle that item and ask "Why isn't this happening in our program now?" Write the responses immediately outside of the ring and **repeat these steps until you have 5 rings**.

(Daily Reflection for Youth — Staff skills, Not enough time (circled), Youth won't share, Not a priority, Groups are too big)

SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

As you continue through each round of the activity, continue to remind the team that you are looking to tell a story and identify possible challenges and barriers to your desired outcome. **This process is not about solving a problem, but understanding it.** As you'll notice, many of the items written down will become action steps in your Program Improvement Plan or potentially new desired outcomes for future discussion.

(Daily Reflection for Youth — It takes too long, Staff skills, Not enough time (circled), Run out of time, Youth won't share, Not a priority, Staff don't follow lesson plans (circled), Other priorities, Groups are too big, Youth don't follow directions, Not in lesson plans)

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The diagram shows concentric circles with "Daily Reflection for Youth" at the center. Surrounding items (handwritten in blue) include:

- Hasn't been expected
- Hasn't been an expectation
- No training
- Never modeled
- Staff confidence
- Hire inexperienced staff
- Staff don't create the plans
- Staff don't know how to do reflection
- Lesson plans don't include strategies
- Not in lesson plans
- Lack confidence
- It takes too long
- Staff skills
- Not enough time
- Run out of time
- Haven't had a good experience with it
- Staff use the same strategies over and over
- Youth won't share
- Not a Priority
- What's the point?
- Other Priorities
- Groups are too big
- Staff don't follow lesson plans
- Youth don't reflect when we ask questions
- Youth don't follow directions
- No planning time
- No training
- Lack ideas and resources
- Youth don't like to share
- No chance to practice
- Different ideas about what reflection is
- No chance to see how others do it

Legend:

⬭ (Red oval) Consensus items that the collective group felt were a **priority and within their authority to influence in some way.** This doesn't mean A + B = C, but it does begin to tell a story as you uncover the possible root causes or barriers to your desired outcome.
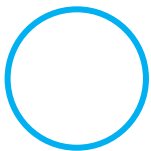
◯ (Blue circle) It is not uncommon to identify barriers and challenges that impact multiple outcomes and experiences. When these items are brought forward, and staff feel strongly about them, you might **consider them for a new "Five Whys" activity** with your desired outcome in the center.

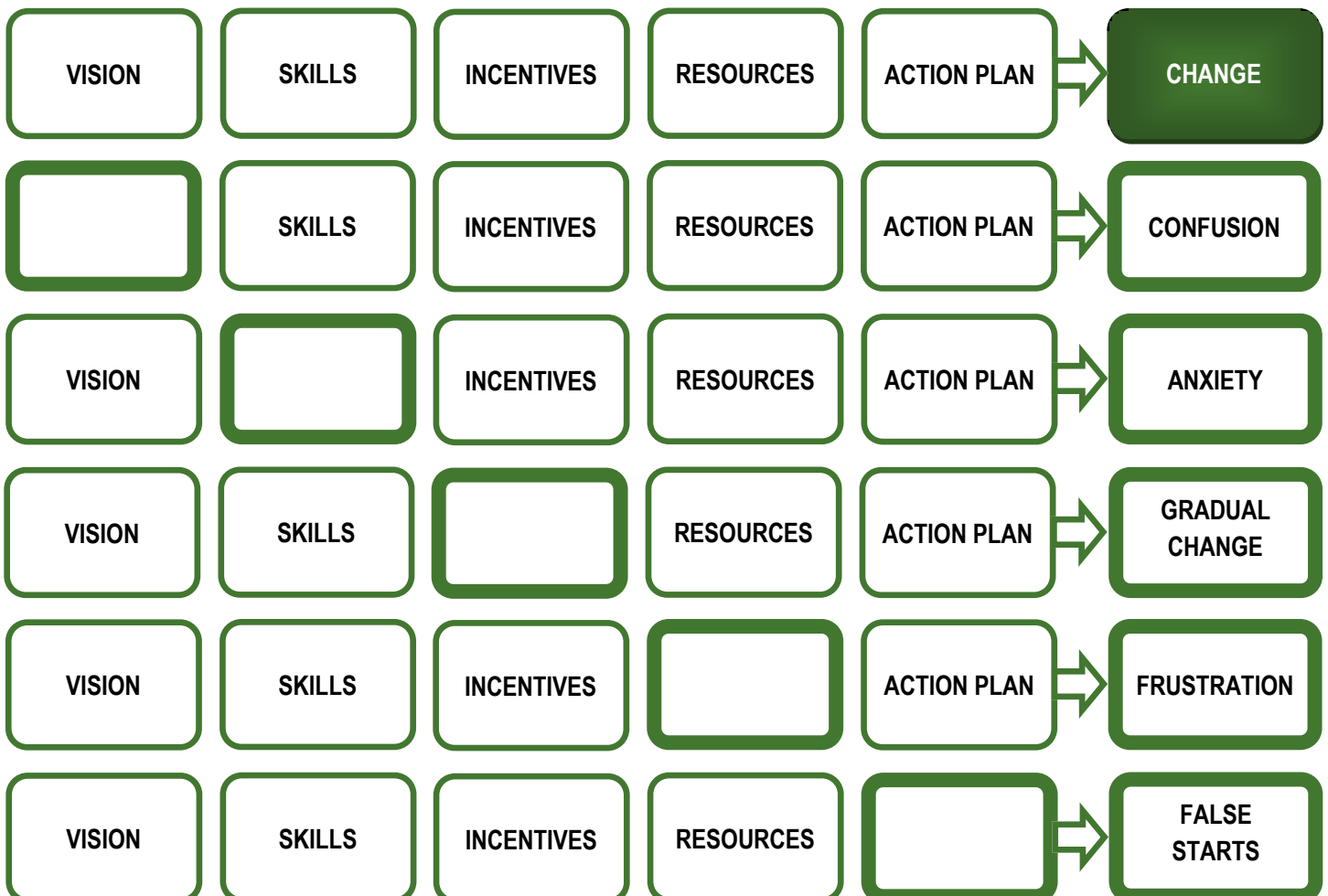▭ (Green rectangle) Many of the barriers, challenges, and "causes" for why things aren't happening in your program **could be written directly into your Program Improvement Plan as action steps**. Staff training, time for planning, checks for progress, and resources are often tangible ways to support your goals.

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MANAGING CHANGE

The Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) is about driving change. It's about looking at your program, identifying some experience you want youth to have, or have more of, and then creating a plan that supports staff efforts to do just that. The *Managing Complex Change* (Ambrose, 1987) model below outlines five elements that are necessary for real, lasting change to occur. Accounting for vision, skills, incentives, resources, and an action plan, prepares you for managing complex change. When you do not account for these things, you are more likely to encounter confusion, anxiety, gradual change, frustration, and false starts. If any one of these elements is missing, change becomes difficult and often times doesn't happen.

The "program improvement plan" we address throughout this guidebook is the action plan we create to equip program staff with the vision, skills, incentives, resources, and support necessary to manage change. Program improvement plans support the change process within the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) and can be bolstered by intentionally incorporating each of these elements.

An additional element not shown in the model below, but just as essential, is PROGRESS. Incorporating intentional progress checks in your improvement plans provides opportunities to celebrate and modify your plans as necessary.

VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	→	CHANGE
VISION (blank)	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	→	CONFUSION
VISION	SKILLS (blank)	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	→	ANXIETY
VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES (blank)	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	→	GRADUAL CHANGE
VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES (blank)	ACTION PLAN	→	FRUSTRATION
VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN (blank)	→	FALSE STARTS

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ACTION STEPS

Without an action plan, it will be difficult to achieve targeted goals. In fact, without an action plan, you may experience false starts in trying to manage complex change within your program. If the "goal" of your program improvement plan is your "success statement" or outcome, then your action steps are your verbs; action steps are the things you DO. Your action steps should be connected to staff practices (how staff work with each other and with youth) and youth experiences (what opportunities youth have in the program). If you are not able to identify staff practices and youth experiences in your action steps, you might consider if the goal is something the team cares about and has the control or influence to change.

Strong program improvement plans include action steps that intentionally address the vision, skills, incentives and resources needed to make effective program changes. There is no magic number of action steps required for each goal to be achieved, but too few, or a surplus, of steps may be indicative of a different issue. Consider asking yourself, and your team, these questions if you find yourself staring at an action plan with very few steps or pages upon pages of tasks:

Too Few Steps?

- Are your action steps realistic?

- Do your actions steps include all the elements of managing complex change?

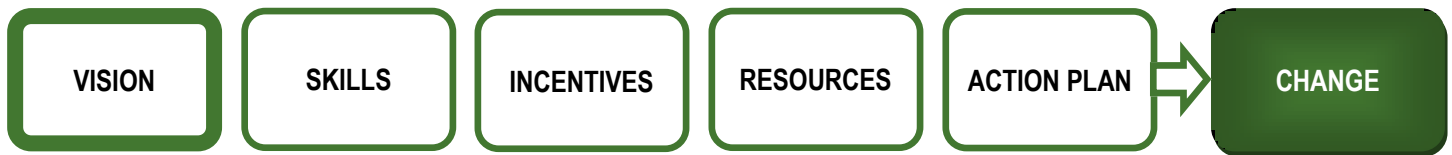- Does everyone have a role in the plan?

Too Many Steps?

- Are your action steps realistic? Can you do all of those things?

- Are the steps directly connected to the goal?

- Could the goal be split into two more specific goals?

Once you have created your action steps, it can be helpful to circle back to your original goal. Do the steps support the goal? If not, that's okay! If this is the case, consider rewriting your goal to fit the steps or reexamine the steps to see if there is an additional goal that fits those steps and pull them out. The program improvement process is not about creating a perfect improvement plan the first time. Think of it as Plan-Do-Review and an opportunity to improve your improvement! In fact, you may even find that your improvement plan and steps change throughout the course of the year and improvement period. Your flexibility and willingness to modify your plans along the way may be the difference between successful change and confusion, anxiety, gradual change, frustration, and false starts.

| VISION | SKILLS | INCENTIVES | RESOURCES | ACTION PLAN | CHANGE |

VISION

VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	→	CHANGE

An often overlooked step in program improvement planning is having a shared vision for the work. Without it, staff can become confused as to why you are setting certain goals or what role they might play in the work. Why is this goal important? What are the desired outcomes? How do your goals align with the broader vision and mission of the organization, grant goals and objectives? Does the team have a shared understanding of the language? Does everyone know what "reflection" is and why it's important for youth to experience it? If your vision has not been clearly articulated and shared, your staff may become confused on how to create the goals and program improvement plans you create.

SAMPLE

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

Beginning in February 2017, staff will facilitate daily opportunities for youth to participate in intentional reflection. Staff will receive training and support as they modify lesson plans to include time for reflection and a variety of strategies that allow youth to reflect each day.

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (VISION)

⇒ Develop shared understanding and definition of "reflection" at a staff meeting. Read, and discuss, pages 106-109 in the Youth PQA Handbook. Discuss why reflection is important and how it will positively impact youth and staff.

⇒ Review organization, program, and funder goals, mission, and vision to identify connections and support for youth reflection.

⇒ Review program data and identify measurement sources and potential targets. Discuss how we will know when we've been successful.

YOUR TURN

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (VISION)

⇒

⇒

⇒

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SKILLS

| VISION | SKILLS | INCENTIVES | RESOURCES | ACTION PLAN | ➡ | CHANGE |

When we make an assumption that staff have the skills necessary to carry out a task, we run the risk of causing them great anxiety. If staff don't know how to do something, they are not likely to try it. Providing training for staff is one way we prepare them for success and it can occur in many forms, including lecture, case studies, role-play, simulation, shadowing, online, and so on. Training is about developing skills and intentionally preparing staff to be successful. When preparing our staff to implement change, we must think about why the change is important, what they need to change, and how to do it.

SAMPLE

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

Beginning in February 2017, staff will facilitate daily opportunities for youth to participate in intentional reflection. Staff will receive training and support as they modify lesson plans to include time for reflection and a variety of strategies that allow youth to reflect each day.

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (SKILLS)

⇒ Register all staff for the online Youth Work Methods training, *Planning and Reflection*. Ask all staff to prepare a summary of their experience (Hope & Fear and one idea to try).

⇒ Allow staff to shadow each other, visit another site to observe staff facilitating reflection with youth, or host staff from another site who wish to observe reflection in our program.

⇒ Staff take turns modeling a new reflection strategy at the end of each staff meeting. Create a folder to save reflection strategies and activities for staff to use with youth.

YOUR TURN

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (SKILLS)

⇒

⇒

⇒

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YOUTH WORK METHODS

The workshops in the Youth Work Methods series are aligned with the Youth PQA. After gathering data from a Youth Program Quality Assessment and creating a plan for improvement through participation in a Planning With Data training, program managers can choose to offer trainings to program staff that are aligned to the Improvement Plan. These **interactive** and **hands-on courses** provide participants with practical skills that are geared to improve the quality of interactions with youth.

Who should attend?
The Youth Work Methods workshops are designed to empower direct-staff with tools that will increase the quality of their work with youth.

Time Commitment:
Workshops are typically two to three hours in length. Courses are also available online.

Workshop Description: To learn more about the Youth Work Methods series, **visit www.cypq.org/methods2011** to watch an interactive video. Descriptions of each course also appear on the next page.

Online Courses:
Interactive, self-paced online courses provide you with another way to experience the Methods. These online courses are not intended to replace live training, but rather to provide a blended delivery method for live training participants. The online courses could also be used to extend introduction of this content to a much larger audience of afterschool practitioners.
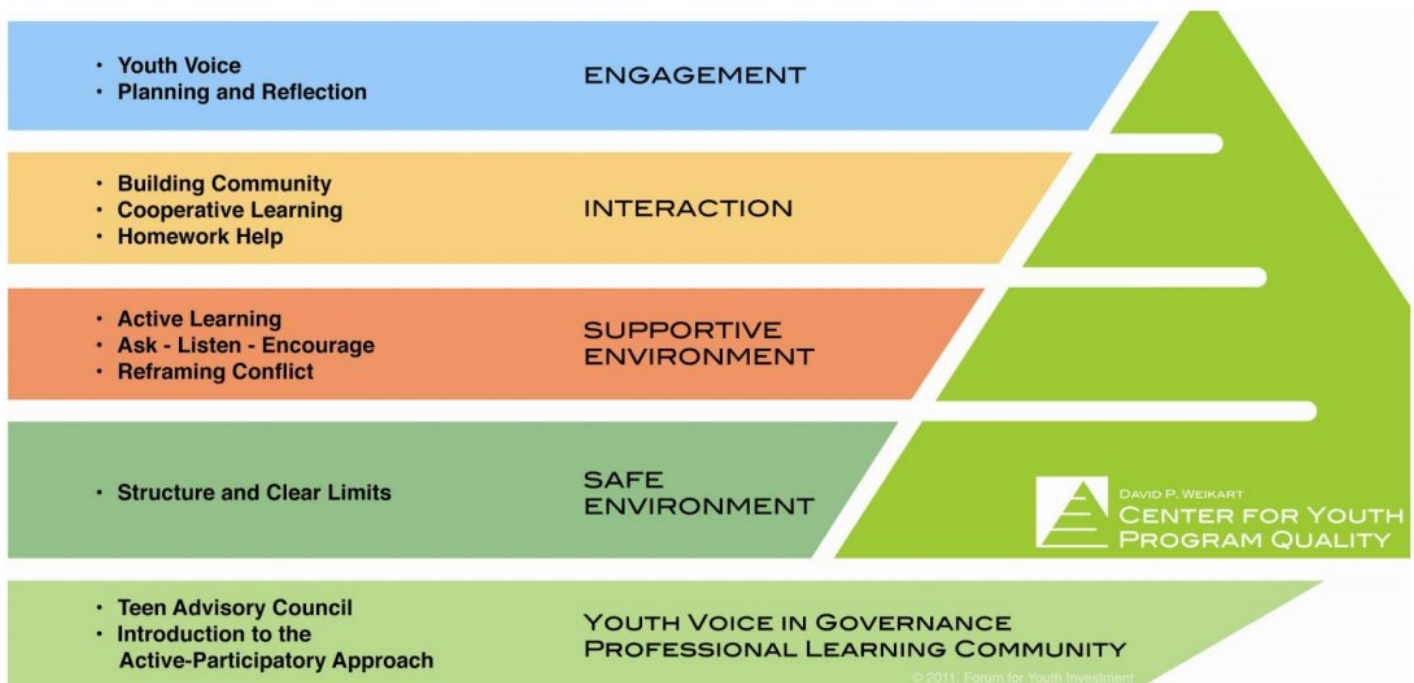
Introduction to the Active-Participatory Approach – Youth programs can be optimized for youth needs, motivation, and engagement. The Active-Participatory Approach to youth work was designed to address these goals. This youth-centered approach is the foundation for the Youth Work Methods Series.

Active Learning – Do you know the difference between active learning and "hands-on" learning? Giving youth materials is just the beginning. This interactive workshop introduces the "ingredients" of active learning, explains the role that active learning plays in the experiential learning cycle, and helps participants create more powerful learning opportunities for youth.

Ask-Listen-Encourage – Do you communicate with youth in a way that makes them feel supported and heard? This interactive workshop introduces various communication techniques that help you build more supportive, youth-centered relationships. Participants will learn how to ask more effective questions, to listen actively to youth, and offer youth encouragement rather than praise.

Building Community – Do you know what it takes to build an emotionally and physically safe space for youth? Building an emotionally safe community of peers and adults is essential for youth to learn and develop as individuals. This interactive workshop will introduce participants to a variety of activities designed to support the community building process.

Cooperative Learning – Do the youth in your program have opportunities to work together in groups, teaching and learning from each other? Cooperative learning is an excellent way to nurture youth leadership, build community, and keep things fun. This interactive workshop will equip participants with grouping strategies and ways to think about building cooperative learning into any program offering.

Homework Help – This course focuses on making homework help time effective by helping youth get organized, by providing an atmosphere that helps youth focus on their work, and by building a supportive relationship with youth. These elements help participants reconsider Homework Help as an opportunity to build relationships and nurture positive growth, beyond getting the work done.

Planning and Reflection – Are you engaging youth in the critical life skills of planning and reflection? Are you ready to be more intentional about including planning and reflection strategies into your daily routine and activities but not sure where to start? This interactive workshop will introduce participants to powerful and easy to use methods that promote youth engagement in planning, implementing, and evaluating activities and projects.

Reframing Conflict – What role do you play in conflict situations with the youth in your program? Do you know how to turn a conflict situation into an opportunity for growth? This interactive workshop introduces participants to the High/Scope step-by-step model for reframing conflict as well as general principles of conflict resolution.

Structure and Clear Limits – How do you prevent chaos in a youth environment without stifling youth's positive energy? Youth need structure and clear limits in order to feel safe. This interactive workshop helps participants analyze the level of structure in their programs and practice identifying and maintaining clear limits.

Youth Voice – Are you providing young people with authentic, meaningful choices throughout your program? Does your program reflect the input of the youth involved? Research shows that quality programs incorporate youth input at both activity and organizational levels. This workshop will emphasize the importance of offering real choices and meaningful participation to youth, and nurturing youth leadership. This interactive workshop is focused on providing meaningful choice within activities and opportunities for youth input within the youth program itself.

INCENTIVES

| VISION | SKILLS | INCENTIVES | RESOURCES | ACTION PLAN | → | CHANGE |

All adult learners have previous experiences, are often preoccupied, and can have clear motives. A common question we ask ourselves before committing to change is "what's in it for me?" or "why should I do that?". If we are unable to answer those questions, and cannot identify these incentives, we may be faced with gradual change, or no change at all. These motives can be extrinsic and include things like job security, promotion, increased pay, meeting organizational requirements and goals, or intrinsic incentives like power, prestige, happiness, harmony, or simply making their job easier. Including action steps that address the benefits for staff is a valuable use of time and can contribute significantly to the success of the program improvement plans.

SAMPLE

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

Beginning in February 2017, staff will facilitate daily opportunities for youth to participate in intentional reflection. Staff will receive training and support as they modify lesson plans to include time for reflection and a variety of strategies that allow youth to reflect each day.

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (INCENTIVES)

⇒ Facilitate a series of reflection activities (Matter of Opinion, Rose & Thorn, Quotation Stations, etc…) and discuss possible incentives for staff to incorporate reflection strategies into their practice. Highlight the benefits and value to staff… "What's in it for them?"

⇒ Identify connections between organizational requirements/goals, and the practice of facilitating reflection with youth.

⇒ Identify staff who are "reflection all-stars" and have them mentor staff who are learning how to facilitate reflection.

YOUR TURN

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (INCENTIVES)

⇒

⇒

⇒

RESOURCES

| VISION | SKILLS | INCENTIVES | **RESOURCES** | ACTION PLAN | ⇒ | **CHANGE** |

While materials and finances can be extremely important, resources are not always tangible or physical. Staff meeting time, access to your supervisor, training, opportunities to problem solve, practice, or plan with colleagues are a few of the resources we can make available to staff. A failure to provide resources can result in staff frustration. As you identify action steps for your program improvement plans, don't forget to list any resources needed for those steps, and make them available to your team. Each action step will likely require unique resources. If you are unable to provide the resources required for an action step, consider if that step (or entire goal) is SMART...specifically, is it attainable with the resources available? If not, you may need to revisit your data or the 5-Whys activity in order to identify a different goal you feel passionate about and have the resources and capacity to address.

SAMPLE

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

Beginning in February 2017, staff will facilitate daily opportunities for youth to participate in intentional reflection. Staff will receive training and support as they modify lesson plans to include time for reflection and a variety of strategies that allow youth to reflect each day.

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (RESOURCES)

⇒ Staff meeting time to practice new activities

⇒ Staff coverage so staff can shadow each other

⇒ Book of reflection activities

⇒ Modified lesson plan template

⇒ Copy of original grant

⇒ Project director to share org vision

⇒ Online registrations for training

⇒ Youth PQA Handbook

YOUR TURN

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (RESOURCES)

⇒

⇒

⇒

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Program Improvement Planning

PROGRESS

While not listed in the model for managing complex change, monitoring progress is extremely important. Intentionally checking-in on program improvement plans provides an opportunity to identify what needs to be changed or added to the goal in order to be successful. Checking for progress is intentional reflection to gauge whether or not movement towards the goal is actually happening. It is also important to "check-in" with team members to reflect on their "feelings" as they continue to grow, change, and provide quality experiences and new opportunities for youth. A word of encouragement here…incremental growth is progress! Trust the process; real change often takes time, continue to be diligent and authentic through this process.

There are many formal and informal ways to check for progress within your team and program. Some strategies include written updates, site visits, staff meetings, manager feedback, observation/reflection (Quality Coaching), self assessment, etc...

SAMPLE	**PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL** Beginning in February 2017, staff will facilitate daily opportunities for youth to participate in intentional reflection. Staff will receive training and support as they modify lesson plans to include time for reflection and a variety of strategies that allow youth to reflect each day.
	POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (PROGRESS) ⇒ Modify staff meeting agenda to include a standing agenda item that provides an opportunity for staff to share a Rose (highlight), Thorn (challenge), and two Emotions they are experiencing as they work on their goal. ⇒ Site coordinator will observe activities (selected by the staff) and take anecdotal notes, focusing exclusively on page 20 of the Youth PQA (Reflection scale). ⇒ Site coordinator will submit a written progress report (1 page or less) to the project director twice each month (on payroll days). Progress report will include highlights, challenges, resources/support needed, and next steps.

YOUR TURN	**PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GOAL**
	POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS (PROGRESS) ⇒ ⇒ ⇒

Program Improvement Planning

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REVIEWING AND STRENGTHENING PLANS

Providing feedback and direction to your team can be a tricky balance between leadership and management. As a supervisor, you're likely ultimately responsible for the development of program improvement plans and for submitting them by some deadline and will be held accountable for showing growth. Beyond that, though, is an opportunity to provide continuous support, modeling, and leadership for your team. The YPQI refers to this piece as the Improve phase and follows the Assess and Plan phases.

While you can certainly provide leadership throughout all phases of the YPQI, the Improve phase is tailor made for you to lead and support your team through coaching. Coaching is *leading learning and growth towards a goal, with a mindset, through a process, using a set of skills, and demonstrating competency.* We won't get into all of the details here, but approaching this phase with a coaching mindset is of great value. Visit http://cypq.org/capacitybuilding for additional information and resources related to coaching, Quality Coaching, and the Coaching for Continuous Improvement Training.

One of your first opportunities to provide coaching and support for your team is by reviewing and strengthening their program improvement plans. Below is a sample agenda for reviewing these plans with your team.

SAMPLE AGENDA

I.   Welcome & Check-In

II. Review/Create Goal

III. Review Action Steps

IV. Revisit Original Goal

V.   Next Steps

      a. Celebrations

      b. Modifications

      c. Resources

      d. How can I help?

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SAMPLE FEEDBACK

What do you mean when you say, "encourage"? How can you make this goal more SMART (specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and time-bound)?

Are there any smaller steps that you are taking for granted or want to celebrate along the way?

Based on the steps and outcomes below, it sounds like the goal and corresponding Youth PQA scale you want to focus on is Reflection.

Program Improvement Plan

Number of Goals: 3

Date prepared: 12 / 20 / 2016

Program Goal: What does Success look like?	Encourage youth to be more engaged in programming.					
Measurement: How will you measure progress?	Form: Youth PQA Scale: Active Engagement Item: Youth talk about activities Other:					
ACTION STEPS: What needs to happen?	OUTCOME: When this step is completed, what will be done?	LEADER: Who will be responsible?	RESOURCES: What is needed for success?	TIMELINE: When will this step be completed?	STATUS:	
Staff will facilitate reflection activities.	Reflection	All staff	Updated lesson plans	ASAP		
Buy book of reflection activities.	Book available for sign-out	John	$20 (Amazon)	ASAP	Completed	
Do a better job of reflecting.						
Have a staff meeting to check on progress and hold staff accountable.			1 hour of staff meeting	End of session		
Give youth more choices in field trip options.						

Will staff be trained on how to facilitate reflection? What resources do you already have access to? The online *Planning & Reflection* training could support this goal.

Who? How often? When?

Is there any support that I, or a colleague, could provide?

This action step, while possibly related to reflection, is about youth voice/choice. What's the significance of listing it here?

This could be an additional action step. What needs to be updated? Who is updating it?

Program Improvement Plan

Number of Goals: 3

Date prepared: 12 / 20 / 2016

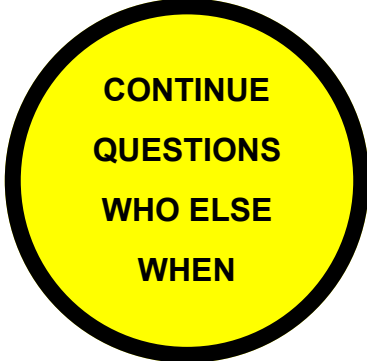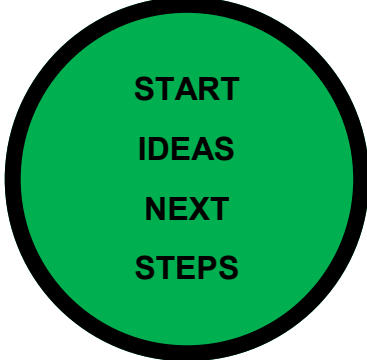| Program Goal: What does Success look like?	Staff will have positive relationships with youth.				
Measurement: How will you measure progress?	Form: Youth PQA Scale: Emotional Safety Item: Positive motional climate				
ACTION STEPS: What needs to happen?	OUTCOME: When this step is completed, what will be done?	LEADER: Who will be responsible?	RESOURCES: What is needed for success?	TIMELINE: When will this step be completed?	STATUS:
Staff will use reflection to get to know youth.	Staff will know every student's name	All staff	Class list	First week of January	
Staff will intervene when youth make poor choices	Zero behavior referrals	All staff		Ongoing	
Site coordinator will hold staff accountable		Site Coordinator		Ongoing	
Youth will have fun.	Smiles, laughter	Youth			
Staff will review Emotional Safety scale in PQA and discuss ideas.	Staff understand what emotional safety is.	Site Coordinator	PQA Handbook	First week of January	

Program Improvement Planning

REFLECTION

Now that you have reflected on your program improvement goal(s), it's time to reflect on what you'll do next. Use the activity below to continue working toward real, meaningful change. As you reflect on all of the activities included in this guidebook, use the space below to begin listing:

RED: Things you'd like to stop or avoid doing. Potential pitfall or barriers.

YELLOW: Practices to continue. Questions you may have. Who else could/should be involved? When will you start?

GREEN: What new ideas do you have? What are your immediate next steps? What do you want to see change?

STOP

AVOID

PITFALLS

BARRIERS

CONTINUE

QUESTIONS

WHO ELSE

WHEN

START

IDEAS

NEXT

STEPS

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PROGRAM GOAL:
(What does success look like? Specific and Supportive; Measureable and Meaningful; Attainable and Actionable; Realistic and Relevant; Time-Bound and Teachable)

MEASUREMENT:

(How will you measure progress?)

☐ Youth or School-Age PQA Scale or Item: ___

☐ Leading Indicator: ___

☐ Youth Measure DESSA,DAP): ___

☐ Local Evaluation Report: ___

☐ School Data (Attendance, Behavior, Grades): ___

☐ Other (specify): ___

PROGRESS CHECKS: *(When will you check in to be sure you're on track to meet your goal, or to make adjustments to your plan?)*

LEAD STAFF:
Who is the primary person responsible for ensuring that the plan is followed?

ACTION STEPS: *(What needs to happen?)*	**OUTCOME:** *(When this step is completed, what will be done?)*	**LEADER:** *(Who will be responsible?)*	**RESOURCES:** *(What is needed for success?)*	**TIMELINE:** *(When will this step be completed?)*

Program Improvement Planning

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NOTES

Program Improvement Planning

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Program Improvement Planning