MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care

Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook

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Early Education Leaders
UMASS BOSTON

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What Is the Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook?

The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Playbook is a comprehensive resource designed to guide programs in Massachusetts through planning and implementing continuous quality improvement. It provides a detailed, step-by-step approach with frameworks, structured processes, and actionable steps to help your program to enhance practices and navigate the improvement journey.

The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Toolkit contains templates, tools, and resources designed to help your program engage in and document the improvement process. It also supports integrating continuous quality improvement and professional development into regular program planning and operations. These materials streamline engagement in the process, making it easier for your program to collect and review data, test changes, and commit to changes.

THE CQI TOOLKIT INCLUDES:

- ✔ **Continuous Quality Improvement Plan Template:** Helps document the plan and activities throughout the process.
- ✔ **Professional Development Plan Guidance and Template:** Supports a comprehensive and intentional approach to planning professional development opportunities in the program and provides a template to document the plan.
- ✔ **Program Quality Measurement Tools:** Provides information about optional, commonly used tools for measuring program quality.
- ✔ **Data Reflection Tool:** Provides structure for reflection and goals setting and an example to demonstrate its use.

By using the playbook and toolkit together, your programs can create a culture of ongoing improvement that drives long-term success and impact.

Early Education and Out-of-School Time Program Quality Framework in Massachusetts

In Massachusetts, quality in early education and out-of-school time settings is built around six key categories. When these areas are strong, children, families, and the educators who care for them thrive. These categories are:

- ➜ Responsive & Supportive Interactions
- ➜ Curriculum & Assessment
- ➜ Family & Community Engagement
- ➜ Environment
- ➜ Leadership & Professional Learning
- ➜ Business Practices

For a comprehensive overview of each category, refer to the **Program Quality Framework**. Tailored frameworks are available for center-based, family child care, and out-of-school time programs. Each framework includes priority areas that are aligned to each category. Using these frameworks as the foundation, EEC created the **Quality Framework Self-Assessment**, which provides examples of what quality practice may look like in action. These examples serve as a helpful guide for your program to use to assess your current practices and determine actionable goals for continuous improvement.

What is Continuous Quality Improvement?

Continuous Quality Improvement is a process that uses information (data) about your program to guide efforts to improve classroom practices and program operations. It is an ongoing journey of growth and a process to engage in continuous reflection of your daily work. It requires an openness to change and involves thoughtful planning, trying new strategies, and thinking honestly and carefully about what is happening at your program. By consistently examining experiences, decisions, and outcomes, program teams can gain deeper insights into what works and why.

Continuous quality improvement is not about changing the entire program all at once. Small steps add up to big improvement. Starting small allows programs to try something new with lower risk, learn from what has been tried, and then gradually adjust or expand the change to other parts of the program.

Collaboration is important in this process. Engaging with other educators, families, and outside professionals can deepen thinking, provide new perspective, and introduce fresh ideas or resources that help programs better serve children and families.

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

All programs have the capacity to grow and improve. Continuous quality improvement is:

- an ongoing process of reflection
- designed to be a flexible process that applies to all program types (including center-based, family child care, and out-of-school time programs) and can be adapted to meet a program's specific needs, interests, strengths, and priorities
- a program-level effort driven by collaborative teams. These teams may include program leaders and staff (for center-based programs), family child care educators and assistants (for family child care programs), leaders and group leaders (for out-of-school time programs) and all professional support partners

WHY PARTICIPATE IN CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT?

There are many benefits to participating in continuous quality improvement. Here are just a few:

- ✔ Creates high-quality learning environments for all children
- ✔ Promotes happy and healthy children and families
- ✔ Fosters positive and supportive work environments for educators
- ✔ Builds strong and collaborative relationships with families
- ✔ Develops a program culture that values curiosity, creativity, and collaboration

The 4 Steps of the Improvement Process

Quality improvement involves multiple phases, some of which may take longer than others. Below, we outline each step for using the **Continuous Quality Improvement Plan** (available in CQI Toolkit) to track progress and develop your program's **Professional Development Plan** (available in CQI Toolkit) to support educators.

Collect & Review Program Data

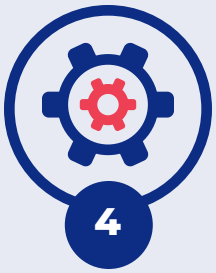
Collect, review, and reflect on your program data with trusted partners to identify common themes.

Set Improvement Goals

Define specific aims for your program's improvement. Decide what information will help you know if there has been improvement.

Test Change

Make a plan, do something new, study what happened, and act on what you learned. The Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles will guide you through this process.



Commit to Change & Expand to Others

After successful implementation, spread the change to others.

Align your professional development plan to your improvement work.

Step 1 COLLECT & REVIEW PROGRAM

Program data are essential for understanding the current state of your program, providing valuable insights into both strengths and areas for improvement. The first step is to identify, collect, review, and reflect on the data. Many EEC programs already collect valuable information, such as:

- ✔ Licensing compliance reports
- ✔ Child screening and assessments
- ✔ Family and staff surveys
- ✔ Child observations
- ✔ Educator observations
- ✔ Program records and administrative documentation

The **Quality Framework Self-Assessment** is a tool you can use to evaluate your program practices. When using the tool, programs are encouraged to focus on one quality category at a time, beginning in an area that is aligned with program priorities or where data is most limited. This approach helps you to concentrate on areas that may need more attention and ensures that improvement efforts are data informed.

For programs seeking a standardized approach to understanding program practices, EEC has compiled a list of **Program Quality Measurement Tools** (available in CQI Toolkit) that programs can consider using to measure different dimensions of program quality.

Once data has been identified and collected, the next step is to review and discuss. Engage with colleagues, trusted partners, families, and others to reflect on the findings. Consider using the following questions to guide your data reflection:

- What stands out to you?
- What patterns or common themes emerge from the data collected?
- What strengths can you identify?
- Where are the opportunities for growth?
- What professional development might help address areas for improvement?

The **Data Reflection Tool** (available in CQI Toolkit) is a set of structured reflection discussions that references the six categories and priority areas of the EEC Program Quality Framework. A completed **Example Data Reflection Tool** (available in CQI Toolkit) is provided to show what a reflection may look after completing the process.

Enter the results of the data reflection into the Step 1 of the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan. See the example below:

Program Data	When data was reviewed	Who was involved
Monthly educator observation	*Nov. 10*	*Sonia, Juanita, Betsy*
Quality Framework Self-Assessment	*Nov. 12*	*Sonia, Juanita*
Family Survey	*Nov. 20*	*Sonia, Betsy, Josie, Bernita*
Environment Rating Scale	*Dec. 1*	*Sonia, Juanita, Betsy, Josie, Bernita, Gus*

Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:
• *Educators talk with children frequently in a positive manner and usually position themselves at children's eye level during conversations.* • *Educators have a weekly curriculum plan posted in the classroom. Many activities are planned for literacy and math.* • *Educators regularly share photos and daily highlights with an opportunity for families to respond in our app.* • *Materials are organized and easily accessible to children. Each room includes a private space for children.*	• *We need to ask more open-ended questions in conversation with children to extend their learning.* • *We have limited activities focused on helping children develop social-emotional skills.* • *We want community partners that can collaborate and bring community-based learning opportunities for children.* • *Some classroom displays are outdated; materials are not consistently cycled to reflect children's current interests or learning.*

Step 2 SET IMPROVEMENT GOALS

After reviewing data and identifying strengths and opportunities for growth, the next step is to set improvement goals. We recommend addressing an area of growth or building on existing strengths. Ask yourself:

➜ **What is most manageable for you?**

➜ **What do you care about most?**

Depending on the size of your program, multiple improvement goals may make sense. In larger programs with many staff members, a program might have a few big goals that team members are working on together to meet. In smaller programs, such as family child care or a small center, it may be more manageable to set one improvement goal at a time. Regardless of the program size, setting clear and specific goals makes the planning process easier. Here are some questions to help set a specific improvement goal:

- What do we want to accomplish as a program?
- What specifically do we want to change, and why?
- What are our greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- What program data do we have to reflect on to set a goal?
- What will it look or feel like when we have reached our goal?
- How will reaching this goal impact children, families, and educators?

Record improvement goals on the **Continuous Quality Improvement Plan** in the Toolkit. Below are two examples of improvement goals that could be developed from the previous example on data reflection: one builds on the program's areas of strength and another addresses areas of improvement.

Example of an improvement goal based on your program's areas of strength during data reflection:

Goal 1: *Build a positive two-way communication routine with the families of all children in their home language.*	**Program Quality Category:** *Family & Community Engagement*
Describe what information helped you set this goal: *Family survey, parent communication log from the app we use with families*	
What will improvement look/feel like? *Our parent communication log will show an increase in communication through our app, email, or in person (at drop off/pick up).*	

Example of an improvement goal based on your program's areas for improvement identified during data reflection:

Goal 2: *Use open-ended questions in conversation with children; provide additional information and ask questions to extend their learning.*	**Program Quality Category:** *Responsive and Supportive Interactions*
Describe what information helped you set this goal: *Monthly Educator Observation, Quality Framework Self-Assessment*	
What will improvement look/feel like? *During the next preschool observation, I will see more open-ended conversation with children during center-time activities. The next time we complete the Quality Framework Self-Assessment, we will have improved in this area.*	

STEP 2: SET IMPROVEMENT GOALS *continued*

Example of an improvement goal based on your program's areas for improvement identified during data reflection:

Goal 2: *Use open-ended questions in conversation with children; provide additional information and ask questions to extend their learning.*	**Program Quality Category:** *Responsive and Supportive Interactions*

Describe what information helped you set this goal: *Monthly Educator Observation, Quality Framework Self-Assessment*

What will improvement look/feel like? *During the next preschool observation, I will see more open-ended conversation with children during center-time activities. The next time we complete the Quality Framework Self-Assessment, we will have improved in this area.*

TIP! Your improvement goals are a useful starting point for your program's Professional Development Plan. The planning and reflection process can help focus your approach to professional learning. Be sure to protect this time and document it on your professional development plan.

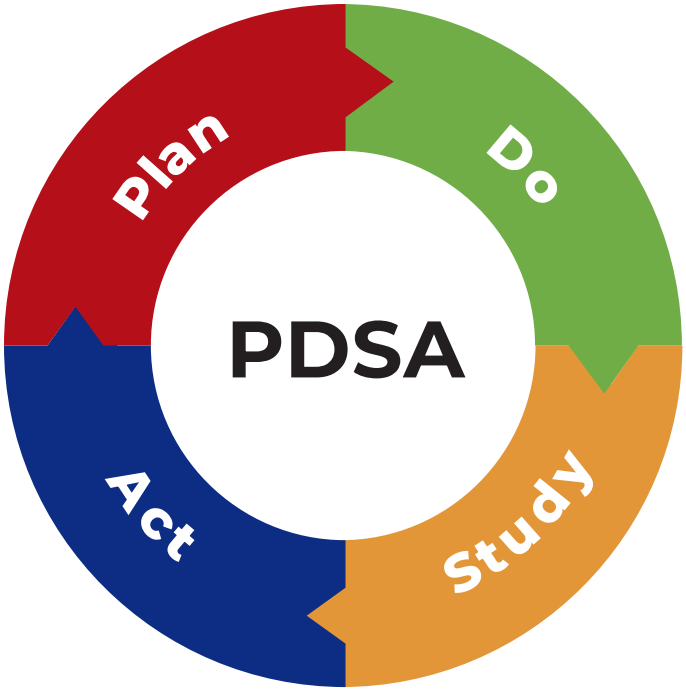
After identifying improvement goals, ensure that the program's professional development plan aligns with the quality improvement objectives. Consider what types of professional development opportunities will help support educators and enable your program to reach its goals. How can job-embedded professional development (i.e. observation and feedback, collaborative planning opportunities, etc.) be integrated into your program to support educators in engaging in continuous quality improvement? How can training and technical assistance help your program reach the improvement goals you have identified? In the CQI Toolkit, **Program Professional Development Plan Guidance** is available to support the development of a comprehensive plan for your program. Consider using your program's professional development days to provide program-wide learning that aligns with your goals, and incorporate job-embedded opportunities for educators to practice and reflect on what they learn. Use the **Program Professional Development Plan** template in the CQI Toolkit to organize and document your detailed plan.

Step 3 TEST A CHANGE

After setting improvement goals for your program, you will focus on implementing change. The **Plan-Do-Study-Act** cycle is a method that helps break large goals into small, manageable steps. The steps include making a detailed plan to try something new, reviewing the outcomes internally, discussing outcomes with others who are familiar with the program, deciding on next steps, and beginning the cycle again. By using this method, programs will make noticeable progress toward larger goals. The process helps test ideas with small groups and learn from them before spreading the change across the program. Reflecting after each cycle offers valuable insights, leading to sustainable change.

The number of Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles a program goes through will depend on the improvement goals and change you are trying to achieve. Some goals may be reached after one or two cycles, while others could take several. Remember that it may take some time before you can see tangible results. At a large program, educators in different classrooms may run different Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles focusing on different areas of improvement. It can be a fun, collaborative activity for staff to try, learn, reflect, and grow together.

Below is an overview of the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle, with examples from the **Continuous Quality Improvement Plan** to support you throughout the process. The plan provides a structured approach to guide you through each cycle, with a form to record progress and reflections. As you implement and reflect on each cycle, the form helps track improvements and ensure that the changes lead to lasting, sustainable outcomes.



Plan

- Define an improvement goal
- Identify a practice that will lead to improvement and plan for how you will try it.
- Plan to collect information that will help you understand how the practice works.

Do

- Put your plan into action.
- Collect information that will help you understand if the practice is working.

Study

- Look at the information you collected while you tried a new practice.
- Reflect on lessons learned.

Act

- Based on your reflection, decide whether to repeat your test, adapt your plan, or try something different.

Develop a clear action plan for how you will reach the goal.

Start by identifying something small you can try that will move you closer to your goal. Make a detailed action plan that answers the following:

- What change or practice will you try?
- What are the specific steps you need to take?
- Who will be involved in trying and supporting the plan?
- When will you try it, and for how long?

Write out the specific steps for what you will do, when you will do them, and who will be involved in putting your plan into action. This will make it easier for you to share the plan with others. A detailed plan will be especially helpful when you are ready to expand the improvement to other areas.

TIP! When planning for improvement, start small! Consider trying a new practice with one child, one teacher, or one family before bringing it to a larger group. Trying on a small scale helps you gather information, learn what is working, and adjust along the way. This helps the change process feel more manageable and makes it easier to keep going. Small changes add up to big improvement over time.

The next section is a sample PLAN section of the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.

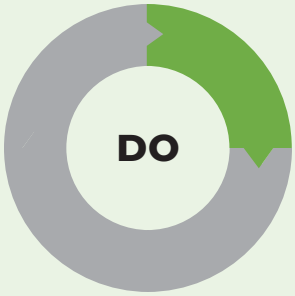
Goal to address: *Use open-ended questions in conversation with children; provide additional information and ask questions to extend their learning.*

Name of person involved in this test: *Juanita & Betsy*

Date Started: *Dec. 10* **Date Ended:**

TRACKING YOUR CHANGES

PLAN			DO	STUDY	ACT
What is the strategy you are testing? What are the specific steps you will take and who will be involved? (Keep the test small so you'll know if it works or not!)		What do you think will happen? What do you want to be different by making this change? How will you know if it worked the way you intended?	Test your idea. Record what happened.	How did it go? What worked the way you expected? What didn't? What did you learn from this test? (Don't forget to look at your data!)	What changes are needed? Will you expand, adjust, or try a new plan?
Cycle #1	• *Print out a short list of open-ended conversation prompts.* • *Attach the list to a clipboard and hang in the block area in the Rainbow Room.* • *When sitting in the block area during center time, use the questions to start*	• *We expect to have more engaged conversations with children during block play.* • *We will track how often we use the open-ended questions each day during center time block play.* • *We will set up a phone to record a video when we are in the block area.* • *At the end of the week we will review our logs and videos.*			



Now that your plan is ready, it is time to **put it into action**.

Keep notes about what you try, what happens, and who is involved. Documenting your process provides valuable information to help evaluate what worked and whether you want to repeat or share the strategy with others.

Note that in the following example, the educator documented what they tried, providing valuable information about what worked and what didn't. These notes will be helpful in deciding the next steps.

The next section is a sample DO section of the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.

	PLAN		DO	STUDY	ACT
	What is the strategy you are testing? What are the specific steps you will take and who will be involved? (Keep the test small so you'll know if it works or not!)	What do you think will happen? What do you want to be different by making this change? How will you know if it worked the way you intended?	Test your idea. Record what happened.	How did it go? What worked the way you expected? What didn't? What did you learn from this test? (Don't forget to look at your data!)	What changes are needed? Will you expand, adjust, or try a new plan?
Cycle #1	• *Print out a short list of open-ended conversation prompts.* • *Attach the list to a clipboard and hang in the block area in the Rainbow Room.* • *When sitting in the block area during center time, use the questions to start conversations with children.*	• *We expect to have more engaged conversations with children during block play.* • *We will track how often we use the open-ended questions each day during center time block play.* • *We will set up a phone to record a video when we are in the block area.* • *At the end of the week we will review our logs and videos.*	• *We hung a clipboard on the wall near the block area with the prompts: Tell me about the structure you are building. How did you make it? What is your favorite part? What will you build next?* • *When supervising the block area we held the clipboard in our lap and used the questions to start conversation with children.* • *We used a phone to record our interactions during block play. We pressed record when we entered the area and paused it when we left.* • *For some children we only needed to use one prompt and for others we had to come up with more questions in the moment.*		

You've taken an important step by trying something new to improve practices. Now it's time to **reflect on what happened**.

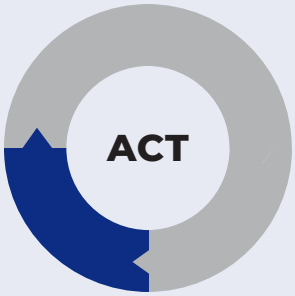
Gather everyone who contributed to the plan to review both the plan and any data or observations collected during the process.

Consider these questions:

- What went well?
- What challenges or difficulties did you face in implementing this plan?
- What outcomes or lessons did you learn from trying these practices?

The next section is an example of the STUDY section of the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.

	PLAN		DO	STUDY	ACT
	What is the strategy you are testing? What are the specific steps you will take and who will be involved? (Keep the test small so you'll know if it works or not!)	What do you think will happen? What do you want to be different by making this change? How will you know if it worked the way you intended?	Test your idea. Record what happened.	How did it go? What worked the way you expected? What didn't? What did you learn from this test? (Don't forget to look at your data!)	What changes are needed? Will you expand, adjust, or try a new plan?
Cycle #1	• *Print out a short list of open-ended conversation prompts.* • *Attach the list to a clipboard and hang in the block area in the Rainbow Room.* • *When sitting in the block area during center time, use the questions to start conversations with children.*	• *We expect to have more engaged conversations with children during block play.* • *We will track how often we use the open-ended questions each day during center time block play.* • *We will set up a phone to record a video when we are in the block area.* • *At the end of the week we will review our logs and videos.*	• *We hung a clipboard on the wall near the block area with the prompts: Tell me about the structure you are building. How did you make it? What is your favorite part? What will you build next?* • *When supervising the block area we held the clipboard in our lap and used the questions to start conversation with children.* • *We used a phone to record our interactions during block play. We pressed record when we entered the area and paused it when we left.* • *For some children we only needed to use one prompt and for others we had to come up with more questions in the moment*	• *It was easier to start conversations with children. Having the list of questions helped us know where to start.* • *The clipboard was convenient, but keeping it on our lap made it hard to move around and didn't allow children to sit in our laps.* • *Sometimes we forgot to press record when we entered the area so we lost some of our video.* • *Watching the video at the end of the week helped us reflect and see opportunities for how we can improve.* • *Sometimes the questions we asked helped children have conversations with each other.* • *Sometimes we needed more questions than the ones we had on the list.*	



Based on your experience during this cycle, you may have identified areas where your plan could be improved. In the Act stage, **reflect on your observations and use notes to determine next steps.**

There are three possible directions:

1. **Expand the plan:** If the plan worked well, consider scaling it up to a larger group to see if the results are consistent. For example, if you tried the practice with one child, try expanding it to three.
2. **Adjust the plan:** If the plan mostly worked but you see areas that could be improved, make adjustments and test it again with the same group to evaluate the impact of those changes.
3. **Try a new plan:** If the plan didn't work as expected, collaborate with trusted partners to develop and test a different strategy or practice.

The next section is a sample ACT section of the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.

	PLAN		DO	STUDY	ACT
	What is the strategy you are testing? What are the specific steps you will take and who will be involved? (Keep the test small so you'll know if it works or not!)	What do you think will happen? What do you want to be different by making this change? How will you know if it worked the way you intended?	Test your idea. Record what happened.	How did it go? What worked the way you expected? What didn't? What did you learn from this test? (Don't forget to look at your data!)	What changes are needed? Will you expand, adjust, or try a new plan?
Cycle #1	• *Print out a short list of open-ended conversation prompts.* • *Attach the list to a clipboard and hang in the block area in the Rainbow Room.* • *When sitting in the block area during center time, use the questions to start conversations with children.*	• *We expect to have more engaged conversations with children during block play.* • *We will track how often we use the open-ended questions each day during center time block play.* • *We will set up a phone to record a video when we are in the block area.* • *At the end of the week we will review our logs and videos.*	• *We hung a clipboard on the wall near the block area with the prompts: Tell me about the structure you are building. How did you make it? What is your favorite part? What will you build next?* • *When supervising the block area we held the clipboard in our lap and used the questions to start conversation with children.* • *We used a phone to record our interactions during block play. We pressed record when we entered the area and paused it when we left.* • *For some children we only needed to use one prompt and for others we had to come up with more questions in the moment*	• *It was easier to start conversations with children. Having the list of questions helped us know where to start.* • *The clipboard was convenient, but keeping it on our lap made it hard to move around and didn't allow children to sit in our laps.* • *Sometimes we forgot to press record when we entered the area so we lost some of our video.* • *Watching the video at the end of the week helped us reflect and see opportunities for how we can improve.* • *Sometimes the questions we asked helped children have conversations with each other.* • *Sometimes we needed more questions than the ones we had on the list.*	• *Adjust the plan: instead of using the clipboard, consider taping the prompts on the wall near the block area.* • *Add a few extra prompts to expand the range of conversation topics.* • *To make recording more manageable, aim to record just one day per week.*

Congratulations!

You have completed one Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle. Take a moment to celebrate your success and your commitment to continuous improvement!

Make a new plan based on what you learned from the first cycle. You'll keep doing Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles until you see consistent results and reach your improvement goal. In the example above, the teachers in the Rainbow Room will do another Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle to test if taping their list of questions on the wall gets them better results than holding them on a clipboard. Recording each cycle in your Continuous Quality Improvement Plan will help you see results over time and serve as meaningful data about your program's improvement.

Remember, continuous quality improvement is an ongoing process. Every program has opportunities for growth, and as children and families change each year, you'll want to continuously adapt to meet their evolving needs.

Step 4 COMMIT TO CHANGE AND EXPAND TO OTHERS

After you have tested and refined your change and seen consistent results or improvement, it's time to commit to the change and expand it to others. It's essential to establish supports that enable you to sustain improvement over time. Embedding your change as a standard practice will help you maintain improvement. Here are things to consider:

- **Document the New Practice**
  Documenting the steps of new practice in detail allows anyone to follow the process, increasing the likelihood of sustaining the practice over time. Use the detailed action steps you included in the plan section of your Continuous Quality Improvement Plan to write out specific steps for someone to follow. This will help them achieve similar improvement results. Regularly reviewing these steps ensures they remain effective and relevant.
- **Establish Policies and Procedures**
  Once an improvement has been tested and proven effective, formalize it as a program policy or standard procedure. This ensures that the practice is consistently followed and becomes a regular part of daily operations.
- **Secure Necessary Resources**
  For change to be sustainable, programs must have the necessary resources. If specific materials or tools are required, programs should plan to purchase and maintain them.
- **Foster Champions**
  Engage individuals who have witnessed or experienced the practice and its results to advocate for the change and mentor others to support you in spreading the change more broadly.

- **Integrate into Program Professional Development Plan**
  Training and job-embedded professional development are necessary when implementing a change. Developing a well-structured professional development plan is an important step toward supporting educators in their practice and ensuring the long-term success of the change.

TIP! Your annual data reflection is part of the job-embedded professional development you do at your program. Be sure to include it in your professional development plan.

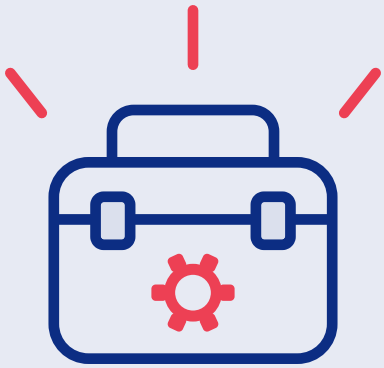
- **Plan for Program-Wide Growth**
  Expand the practice across different settings within the program. Test its effectiveness under various conditions and ensure alignment with the program's mission, values, and goals. This systemic scaling helps embed the change into the broader organization culture.

- **Measure and Monitor Improvement**
  Regularly collecting and analyzing program data helps confirm that the changes you have implemented are being carried out as intended and they continue to bring the result as expected.

Quality improvement is a continuous journey. We recommend programs establish a routine for reviewing goals and activities at least once a year. Take time to reflect on what you have tried over the year and celebrate the progress made toward improvement goals. Talk with others about what has been learned and share strategies with each other. This annual review can help recognize how small, incremental changes contribute to big improvements. Continuously collecting and reviewing data, setting new goals, and testing changes will help create a program culture rooted in collaboration, curiosity, and learning.

Congratulations on beginning this journey, and best of luck as you continue quality improvement efforts!

EEC is proud to be a partner and celebrate every step of the process.



Continuous Quality Improvement Toolkit

- ✔ Continuous Quality Improvement Plan
- ✔ Program Professional Development Plan Guidance
- ✔ Program Professional Development Plan
- ✔ Program Quality Measurement Tools
- ✔ Data Reflection Tool
- ✔ Data Reflection Tool Example

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Name:

Program Provider Number/P-number:

Program Address:

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan Contact Name and Role:

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan Contact Email:

Collaborative partners represented (list the names and roles of partners involved in developing this plan, e.g., educators, families, administrators, coaches, FCC system staff, social workers, public schools, CFCE):

STEP 1: COLLECT & REVIEW PROGRAM DATA

(If you choose to use the Data Reflection Tool, reference it here.)

Program Data	When data was reviewed	Who was involved

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement

STEP 2: SET IMPROVEMENT GOALS

Goal 1:	**Program Quality Category:**

Describe what information helped you set this goal:

What will improvement look/feel like?

Goal 2:	**Program Quality Category:**

Describe what information helped you set this goal:

What will improvement look/feel like?

Goal 3:	**Program Quality Category:**

Describe what information helped you set this goal:

What will improvement look/feel like?

STEP 3: TEST CHANGE

Please use a separate page for each goal for which you would like to test a change.

Goal to address in this test: **Date Started:**

Name of person involved in this test: **Date Ended:**

TRACKING YOUR CHANGES

	PLAN		DO	STUDY	ACT
	What is the strategy you are testing? What are the specific steps you will take and who will be involved? (Keep the test small so you'll know if it works or not!)	What do you think will happen? What do you want to be different by making this change? How will you know if it worked the way you intended?	Test your idea. Record what happened.	How did it go? What worked the way you expected? What didn't? What did you learn from this test? (Don't forget to look at your data!)	What changes are needed? Will you expand, adjust, or try a new plan?
Cycle #1					
Cycle #2					
Cycle #3					
Cycle #4					

STEP 4: COMMIT TO CHANGE AND EXPAND TO OTHERS

Please use a separate page for each goal for which you would like to test a change.

Things to consider to maintain improvement:

- Establish policies and procedures for the change to be our way of doing things
- Train others at the program how to follow the plan
- Establish a process for continuing to gather and review data related to the change
- Purchase or make materials for the change to continue

What will help our program commit to this change?
What policies, procedures, trainings, data, and materials are needed?

Expand the Practice when:

- It is aligned to the values of the program
- The change has been tested several times with multiple people
- The change is clearly documented with steps someone else can follow
- There are people ready to adopt this change somewhere else

Where or with whom can you expand this change?

*Remember to **celebrate** your program's accomplishments!*

Program Professional Development Plan Guidance

This guidance supports the development of a comprehensive Professional Development Plan. Review these considerations to develop professional development activities that enable your program to meet its quality improvement goals.

HOW TO SET PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Here are some steps to take to help you set your program's professional development goals:

Collect & Review Program Data

Collect and review all of your program data with others, including educators, to identify common themes. Refer to the Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook for steps and tools you can use to engage in this process.

Review Continuous Quality Improvement Goals

Review the improvement goals you set using the Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook and reflect on what knowledge or skills will help your program reach them.

Discuss Educators' Goals

Reflect with educators about their individual learning needs and goals in relation to program improvement goals.

HOW TO BUILD A PLAN

Once you have determined the professional development goals, plan the activities you will engage in over the year to reach your goals. Use the reflective questions below as a guide:

➜ **Staff experience and learning:**

- What strengths do educators already bring to the areas of your quality improvement goals? What new skills or knowledge will help them engage in quality improvement work or reach goals?
- How will you support educators in applying what they learn in the context of their roles and prior knowledge or experience?
- What professional development best meets the learning style of educators? How do educator's individual goals for their professional advancement inform or align to your program's quality improvement goals?
- What professional development do you need to prioritize for the program to meet EEC requirements or enable continuous quality improvement work?

➜ **Staffing structure and schedule:**

- What professional development can you do during educators' paid work time?
- What schedule or staffing accommodations are needed to protect time to engage in collaboration and routine job-embedded professional development?
- What program-wide learning should you include in a closure day for all staff?

➜ **Partners and Collaborators:**

- Who will be your thought partners as you engage in quality improvement at your program?
- What support could you use from a coach/mentor to help you stay on track with your goals?
- What professional development providers are available to support the training or coaching that is needed to meet your improvement goals?

TYPES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Effective professional development approaches are content-focused, provide opportunities to practice and reflect, encourage collaboration, are differentiated to meet individual needs, build knowledge and skills progressively, and are sustained over time. Your plan should include professional development designed to introduce new information that supports educators in applying their learning to daily work. The following provides a reference to different types of professional development you may consider including in your plan:

➜ Training:

learning experiences designed to teach specific skills, knowledge, or dispositions, led by experts skilled in the subject and adult learning methods. Can be one-time or in a series.

➜ Coursework:

a series of sessions that focus on building specific knowledge or a set of skills. May be credit-bearing.

➜ Job-Embedded Professional Development Activities:

- **Collaborative Planning Time:** Regular opportunities for educators to reflect on data in relation to improvement goals and plan intentional learning opportunities for children.
- **Reflective Supervision:** Active listening and thoughtful questioning to build trusting relationships and enhance practice. This includes reviewing data and identifying individual professional development goals for educators.
- **Observation and Feedback:** Focused on identifying the strengths and areas for growth in teaching and learning.
- **Peer Learning:** Opportunities for educators to collaboratively share strategies and resources.
- **Coaching:** Supportive relationships within a structured system that includes consistent and systematic cycles of planning, observing, modeling, personalized reflection and feedback, goal setting, action planning, and evaluating educators' strengths and needs.
- **Mentoring:** Building relationships where an experienced peer guides and advises another to support growth, overcome challenges, and develop skills.

PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Program Name:

Person responsible for this plan: **Plan Year:**

Please list all the goals you identified during your Continuous Quality Improvement planning to help identify areas of priority for your professional development plan.

Continuous Quality Improvement Goal(s)	Information that informed this goal

PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN *continued*

Please outline your plan to support program staff in achieving the goals listed above using the professional development activities described in the professional development planning guidance.

Date/ Timeline	Topic	Expected Outcome	Type of Professional Development	Professional Development Provider	Target Participant Group(s)

PROGRAM QUALITY MEASUREMENT TOOLS

This is a list of optional program quality measurement tools compiled by EEC. This list is not a complete list of tools that are available. Some tools are designed to review a wide range of practices, while others focus on specific areas. Programs are encouraged to consider these tools to gather information about current practices, identify challenges, and explore growth opportunities to support the development of individualized continuous quality improvement plans.

ECE Tools	Program Type	Age Group	Quality Focus
Environment Rating Scale (ERS) https://www.ersi.info/ • Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-3) • Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3) • Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS-3) • School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS-U)	Center-based, Family Child Care, and Afterschool/ Out-of-school	All	Health and Safety, Physical Environment and Interactions
The Rating Observation Scale for Inspiring Environments (ROSIE) https://shop.gryphonhouse.com/products/rating-observation-scale-for-inspiring-environments	Center-based	Preschool	Preschool Classroom
Developmental Environment Rating Scale (DERS) https://www.ders-app.org/	Center-based and Family Child Care	2.5 to 6 years	Physical Environment and Interactions

PROGRAM QUALITY MEASUREMENT TOOLS *continued*

ECE Tools	Program Type	Age Group	Quality Focus
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) https://teachstone.com/class/ • *Infant CLASS* • *Toddler CLASS* • *PreK-K3 CLASS 2nd edition*	All	All	Adult/Child Interactions
Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO™) https://brookespublishing.com/product/piccolo/	Center-based and Family Child Care	10 to 47 months	Adult/Child Interactions
Simple Interactions Tool https://www.simpleinteractions.org/the-si-tool.html	Center-based, Family Child Care, and Afterschool/ Out-of-school	All	Adult/Child Interactions
Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) for Preschool Classroom https://brookespublishing.com/product/tpot/	Center-based	Preschool	Social Emotional Learning
Teaching Pyramid Infant–Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS ™) for Infant–Toddler Classrooms https://brookespublishing.com/product/tpitos/	Center-based	Infant and Toddler	Social Emotional Learning
Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning & Development (CHILD) https://socialemotionalchild.org/new-page	Center-based	3 to 5 years	Social Emotional Learning

PROGRAM QUALITY MEASUREMENT TOOLS *continued*

ECE Tools	Program Type	Age Group	Quality Focus
Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Pre-K (ELLCO Pre-K) https://brookespublishing.com/product/ellco-pre-k/	Center-based	Pre-school	Curriculum: Language and Literacy
Child/Home Early Language and Literacy Observation Tool (CHELLO) https://brookespublishing.com/product/chello/	Family Child Care	Birth to 5 years	Curriculum: Language and Literacy
Program Administration Scale (PAS) https://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/services/program-evaluation/	Center-based	n/a	Business Practices
Business Administration Scale (BAS) https://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/services/program-evaluation/	Family Child Care	n/a	Business Practices
The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey (ECWES) https://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/services/program-evaluation/	Center-based	n/a	Leadership and Professional learning
Early Childhood Job Satisfaction Survey (ECJSS) https://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/library/early-childhood-job-satisfaction-survey-ecjss/	Center-based	n/a	Leadership and Professional learning

PROGRAM QUALITY MEASUREMENT TOOLS *continued*

ECE Tools	Program Type	Age Group	Quality Focus
Strengthening Families Self-Assessment https://cssp.org/our-work/projects/self-assessments-for-programs/	Center-based and Family Child Care	n/a	Family Engagement
Program Quality Assessments https://forumfyi.org/weikartcenter/assessments/ • *School-Age Program Quality Assessment (SA-PQA)* • *Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA)* • *Social Emotional Learning Program Quality Assessment (SEL-PQA)*	Afterschool/ Out-of-school time	Grade K-12	Overall practices
Afterschool Program Assessment System (APAS) https://www.niost.org/afterschool-program-assesment-system-apas	Afterschool/ Out-of-school time	Grade K-12	Overall practices
Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP™) https://products.brookespublishing.com/The-Inclusive-Classroom-Profile-ICP-Set-Research-Edition-P969.aspx	Center-based	2 to 5 years	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Assessing Classroom Sociocultural Equity Scale (ACSES) https://store.bookbaby.com/book/assessing-classroom-sociocultural-equity-scale1?srsltid=AfmBOopeIL1HQgpMi_UWp7PyTBe-zumIl-WeQGTBEF_dCVk95-TzudTH1	Center-based	PreK-Grade 5	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

DATA REFLECTION TOOL

Program data is essential for understanding the current state of an educational program, providing valuable insights into its strengths and areas for improvement. This tool is designed to help programs reflect on and review their data, using the structure of EEC's **Program Quality Framework**, to develop a comprehensive view of their program's quality.

RESPONSIVE & SUPPORTIVE INTERACTIONS

Program Data:

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**

CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

Program Data:

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Program Data:

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**

ENVIRONMENT

Program Data:

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**

LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Program Data:

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Program Data:

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**

DATA REFLECTION TOOL EXAMPLE

RESPONSIVE & SUPPORTIVE INTERACTIONS

Program Data: *Monthly Educator Observation, Quality Framework Self-Assessment*

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**
Educators talk with children frequently in a positive manner and usually position themselves at children's eye level during conversations.	*Use open-ended questions in conversation with children. Provide additional information and ask questions to extend children's learning.*

CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

Program Data: *Classroom Observation*

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**
Educators have a weekly curriculum plan posted in the classroom. Many activities are planned for literacy and math.	*There are limited activities focused on helping children develop their social-emotional skills.*

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Program Data: *Family Survey, Quality Framework Self-Assessment, Parent Communication Log from app*

Areas of Strength:	**Areas for Improvement:**
Our program uses communication apps to maintain two-way communication with families. Educators regularly upload photos and children's daily highlights with an opportunity for families to respond.	*Expand the program's presence within the community. Identify community partners that can collaborate and bring community-based learning opportunities for children.*

DATA REFLECTION TOOL EXAMPLE *continued*

ENVIRONMENT

Program Data: *Environment Rating Scale, Quality Framework Self-Assessment*

Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:
Materials are organized and easily accessible to children. Recently, we rearranged furniture to ensure that each room includes a private space for children to use.	*Classroom displays don't usually reflect what children are currently discussing. Some displays are outdated. Materials are not consistently cycled to reflect children's changing interests.*

LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Program Data: *Quality Framework Self-Assessment, Staff handbook, Staff meeting notes/agendas, administrator calendar*

Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:
Our program has documented policies and procedures for emergency procedures and mandated reporting. These policies and procedures are reviewed with all staff at least annually.	*We have difficulty consistently observing all educators or assistants and meeting to discuss feedback and set goals. We want to make this a more predictable routine at the program.*

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Program Data: *Staff handbook, parent night agenda, Enrollment Report, Quality Framework Self-Assessment*

Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:
Our program has a clear mission that is embraced by both educators and families. Each year, during our parent night, we dedicate time at the beginning to review the mission with parents and invite feedback on how to further support and align with our program's mission.	*Even though our waitlist for infant and toddler seats grow, our preschool enrollment has been lower over the past two years. We don't know the requirements and steps necessary to transition the program's licensing capacity to include more infant and toddler seats.*

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