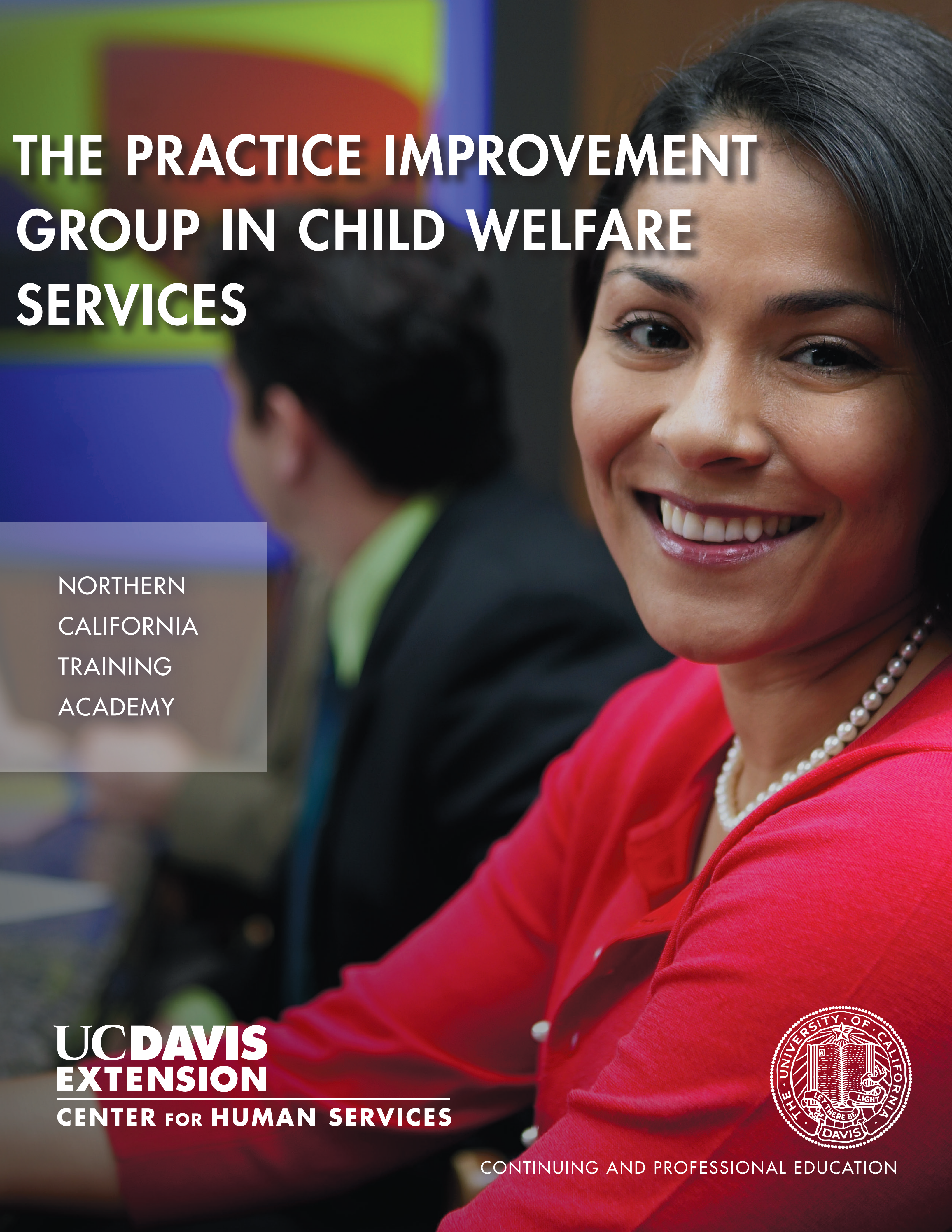

THE PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT GROUP IN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

NORTHERN
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CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

CONTENTS

THE PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT GROUP IN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES VIDEO STUDY AND REFERENCE GUIDE

This guide provides an overview of the concepts and steps involved with creating a Practice Improvement Group in child welfare services. Additionally, this guide provides suggestions of where and how to use various segments from the Practice Improvement Group Demonstration Video narrated by Sue Lohrbach and included as a DVD for print copies of this publication. The demonstration video can also be accessed by visiting the Northern California Training Academy's website, humanservice.ucdavis.edu/Academy.

1. Introduction

A Practice Improvement Group (sometimes referred to by its acronym, "The PIG") is an ongoing group of designated representatives from each team/unit of a child welfare department or agency (and active community partners) that regularly meets to provide an opportunity and a forum for looking at and working on a specific topic area, dilemma, or theme across the child welfare system. This group is then responsible for collaboratively building solutions to its specific topic area by using research and data, and applying previous professional experience. By successfully building a solution to its specific topic area, the PIG will create a concrete product. The group then disseminates this product and supports its implementation, ongoing integration into practice, and its evaluation.

A. History of the PIG: The idea of a structured, collaborative, and specific practice improvement group was developed by Damian Griffiths from the Berkshire Council, Children's Services in West Berkshire, U.K. The PIG was then implemented in 2004 through Child and Family Services in Olmsted County, Minnesota as part of an intentional improvement in infrastructure supporting collaborative practice and critical thinking within the child protective service system.

B. Purpose of the PIG: To systemically and collaboratively improve the work of child welfare agencies by sequentially working on individual, specific topics relevant to all parts of the child welfare system and their community partners. This examination of a specific topic results in the creation and implementation of a concrete product that will result in a consistent and more comprehensive response across the system. The PIG should create service delivery that is much more meaningful for all involved.

C. The PIG Product: Because the PIG is always very focused and specific, its solutions to the topic areas, dilemmas or themes it researches always include a concrete product (e.g., a guide, a new collaborative process, brochures, or a new training). The PIG is a very focused and specific forum, and the exploration of topic areas, dilemmas or themes concludes with a concrete product.

D. The Impact of Research and Data: An agency's data points—meaning any place you can collect information on the specific topic—link to the specific PIG topics. These data points should come from a broad representation of areas in the organization. These data points can include the results of case reviews, feedback or questions from front line staff and/or supervisors, feedback from service recipients, efficiency of providing program services themes, etc.

An examination of the research—an element of every PIG—funtions to guide the group in the exploration of the chosen topic, inclusive of knowledge regarding both effective and ineffective practice. Examining the data and research:

- Allows for all members of the PIG to develop a shared understanding of the dilemmas and the possible solutions
- Ensures that all members are included in the development of topic areas and the bases on which they were developed
- Allows the group to develop outcomes that result in a feedback loop that links back into the overall practice continuum.

2. How Practice Improvement Groups Benefit Organizations

The PIG looks at issues that are a concern across the child welfare system, and brings a more collaborative view and multiple perspectives to the table. It draws on a wide representation of staff from different teams/units across the continuum of child welfare services, bringing together a collective body of wisdom.

In the current child protective service system, there can be a lot of tension over work being handed over from one team to another. Information can be dropped easily in that kind of transfer. The working wisdom of the PIG brings in everyone's views so that each member is paying attention at the same time to any of the consequences, either intended or unintended, that making a change in one part of the system would have on another part of the system.

When you bring people together in a more collaborative practice pattern, you bring a different kind of work together. Additionally, you prevent some of the knowledge loss and/or unintentional and unnecessary kinds of tensions.

Bringing more collaboration to an organization, rather than more individualized practices, strengthens lines of accountability and shares risk and accountability across the system. In a truly collaborative system, everyone is invested in the ultimate outcomes regarding child safety, well-being, stability and security of care. Safeguarding children, bringing in good practice, looking at research, and painting pictures through data effectively becomes everybody's business.

3. Setting Up and Maintaining A Child Welfare Practice Improvement Group

A. Materials/Space:

- It is important to ensure that the PIG can always meet. Designate a dedicated space that can hold up to 30 people and is available every 4-6 weeks at the same specified time.
- A white board or flip chart will help track the PIG's workings, along with plenty of markers.
- If needed, provide nametags or paper name plates.

B.Required Personnel

- A two person facilitator team.
- A designated representative from every team/unit in the agency/department.
- A designated representative from active partnering agencies.
- A list of agencies or programs whose staff may be called in for a specialized PIG. (e.g. staff who have experience with caregiver use, misuse, abuse of alcohol and/or other drugs).

C. Facilitators: There should be an ongoing two person facilitation team to ensure that the meeting always has a facilitator present. Only one person facilitates the group at a time.

The facilitator has three key responsibilities:

1. Manage the meeting time;
2. Assist the group in choosing a topic and facilitate building an agenda for the current PIG.;
3. Facilitate the continued momentum
4. Ensure the continued momentum towards meeting the goals the PIG has set.

D. Membership:

- Permanent membership would include representatives from every unit/team in the agency, representatives from agency leadership/management, and representatives from active community partners.
- The membership may temporarily expand depending on the specific topic chosen.
- There can be rotations in membership of individuals every six to 12 months (or agreed upon time frame). The bigger the core membership, the more people there are to work on subgroups (or "piglets").

E. Keeping Leadership Informed: Before the first PIG starts, a selection of members should meet with agency leadership to go over the PIG process and come to an agreement on both the PIG's ability to produce and help implement tangible outcomes, and how to keep leadership informed about the PIG's progress.

F. Structure of the PIG Meeting:

- A PIG meeting is an hour long and starts and ends on time (the responsibility of the facilitator).

- The PIG always meets, and is only cancelled under the most extreme circumstances. This sends the message that the work is important.

- The PIG is a work group that is intensely focused and has to move forward to be true to its purpose.

G. PIG Meeting Process:

1. The meeting starts with introductions.
2. The facilitator asks for a volunteer to be the designated note taker for the meeting. This can rotate from meeting to meeting.
3. The group sets the agenda during the first part of the meeting.
4. The agenda for the first meeting consists of picking the topic and pulling data points from the agency's and community's work to support the priority of the chosen topic. The first PIG also determines the concrete outcome(s) the group will produce.
5. The PIG determines what other information is needed and the need for and makeup of any 'piglets,' or PIG sub-groups.
6. The PIG meeting ends with a summation of the work done, setting the date for the next PIG, finding volunteers to set up the next meeting and send out reminders, and having the note taker disseminate the program meetings to the recipient list.
7. Everyone at the meeting must know what is expected from him or her before the next PIG meeting.
8. A specific Practice Improvement Group will end when it has completed and disseminated its concrete product.
9. The next PIG will meet as scheduled and will choose a new topic to work on.

4. Facilitating a Practice Improvement Group

A. Introductions: These are important even if people in the group know each other. The introductions symbolize bringing each voice into the room, which is different from knowing who each person is. Introductions are the first step towards building camaraderie in the group around a common topic or work area.

See PIG Demonstration Video Segment:
Introductions

B. Building an Agenda and Picking a PIG Topic: The first step in building an agenda for a PIG is to ask the group to brainstorm a list of topics, dilemmas or themes, which are the primary ones for the group at the time. The facilitator writes these down so that the group has a visual list of the topics. After the group generates this list, the facilitator asks and helps the group prioritize the topics. This will be the topic/dilemma/theme that the current PIG will work on.

It is important that the members of the group come together and collectively generate topics. There may also be occasions where the topic may come from an outside group and brought to the PIG to work on. An example of this might be hearing from a neighboring jurisdiction that they have improved the way they work on engaging fathers in their work. The PIG may just agree to take up that topic this time without brainstorming others.

See Pig Demonstration Video Segment:
How to Build an Agenda, and Picking a PIG Topic

While it is fine for topics to occasionally come from outside the PIG, it is important to avoid the pitfalls of becoming a PIG that only addresses topics that consistently come from management. This undermines the collaborative nature of the PIG, which ideally builds topic lists from information gathered from supervisors, line staff, upper leadership and community partners. It is important that all voices be part of the input on topic choice instead of regularly being handed a topic from upper management.

There is often a quick consensus on prioritizing a topic for the PIG as group members see the topic from their perspective. Over time, PIG members will also realize that other topics will rise to the top and will be the subject of future PIGs.

C. Pulling Out Data to Support the PIG Topic Choice: Data can come from a number of places, including formalized sources like case reviews, to less formal sources such as the questions practitioners may ask in team meetings or individual supervision. The data for the breakdown in consistency on a certain topic area should show up in several settings.

See PIG Demonstration Video Segment:
How to Pull Out Data to Support the PIG Topic Choice

One of the important points in collaboration is that all of the information comes to the table about the PIG's chosen topic from all types of settings. In a less collaborative organization, for example, the impact of the dilemma often stays within individual program areas. With the example of safety planning, perhaps the case review team/unit keeps what it observes to itself, as would the social workers in an emergency response unit. The overall topic is the same, but the perspectives are different. Since the teams/units have different perspectives and different decision-makers, their solutions would certainly look different if they didn't work together. This would lead to fragmentation of the information within these different teams/units, and could promote an inconsistent solution and application of solution to the problem.

Through a PIG, everyone who is involved with a topic is brought to the table, both from within the agency and within the community. This group then collaboratively works with the topic going forward, bringing consistency and greater dissemination to the final product.

D. Developing Outcomes for A Specific PIG Topic Choice: While there must be a specific focus to produce a specific product, it is also important to remember the overarching goals of child welfare, safety, permanency, and well-being, with everyone clear on his or her role in this. Within that context, the group can focus on a specific product it wants to generate, such as a guide, a standard format or standardized procedure, consistent guidelines, etc.

It is effective to work on developing a specific outcome at the beginning of the PIG so the goal is clear.

See PIG Demonstration Video Segment:
How to Develop Outcomes for a Specific PIG Topic Choice

What ever the PIG produces has to be useful and functional. If the product is a guide, it needs to be meaningful across the breadth of the agency and life of a family case.

Once the group has developed guidelines and indicators as a product, members of the PIG would ensure the product is disseminated to all practitioners. This begins a feedback loop by providing information for case reviews, which then becomes updated quality improvement data for the PIG. As an additional potential benefit, an agency may find that social workers confidence is improved by the new product, which then increases the quality of their work. This then also becomes another data point.

E. What Other Information is Needed For the Specific PIG Topic Choice; the Breakout of Piglets: Examining the need for additional information contributes to a meaningful, in-depth and more comprehensive examination of its specific topic and will likely lead to a more useful end product. One way to achieve this could be to look at what others are doing in the same topic area. Explore counties that are struggling with the dilemma as well as those that are handling it successfully.

Look within the organization to see if there are places or people who are competently addressing the topic. Typically, when organizations look internally they are looking to expose gaps in services and far less frequently as an inquiry into good practice.

Look at what the literature says about what is effective and what is ineffective. Also look to outside community resources to see if they have any information to offer on this topic. Use a local university, the Web and/or any internal capacity your agency may have.

See PIG Demonstration Video Segment:
What Other Information is Needed: The Breakout of Piglets

When considering broader sources of information about the PIG topic, this is also a good time to review the PIG membership. This is a time for the larger group to ask who else needs to be at the table. Are there other people in the community or agency who might have a more in-depth or specialized knowledge of this topic?

Are there local universities or colleges in your area that may have topic experts? If there are, this is a good time to extend an invitation to them to join this specific PIG.

The list of "other information needed" can then be developed into work for smaller, breakout groups, or "piglets." The piglets/subgroups would meet on their own schedule as frequently as the members feel is necessary to make good progress before the next PIG. Working in a piglet is a more efficient way to investigate new sources of information than having that as a task for the larger group.

F. **Next Steps: What, Who, When and Other:** Go over the "What, Who, and When" questions with the group. This should include soliciting members who are willing to set up the next PIG meeting and send reminder information out to the members. These volunteers should also write up and disseminate the minutes to the recipient list, which should include frontline staff as well as upper management. This last bit is very important, as it keeps the PIG transparent and includes everyone in the update on the group's progress. This would mean that anyone in the agency would be aware of the ongoing discussion, research and final product.

See PIG Demonstration Video Segment:
Next Steps: What, Who, When and Other

In the demonstration video segment, you will notice that the group is very concrete. What happens next, before the meeting of the whole group? The piglets/subgroups will meet on their own schedule to explore the information they need before the next meeting of the whole PIG.

The number of members in the demonstration video PIG was intentionally small. In larger jurisdictions, the membership would lilkely be be between 15 and 20 people. This segment also explored the way to expand the PIG and piglets with people who may have specialized information or knowledge in the specific topic area, or colleagues from neighboring jurisdictions who might have already dealt with the PIG topic.

G. **Including Leadership/Management in the PIG Feedback Loop:** Typically, there would be a program director or, depending on the structure of authority at the agency, program managers who would be members of the PIG. There might also be members of management staff who are not a regular part of the PIG membership but who need to be regularly updated on the process. In some jurisdictions, preparation for starting a Practice Improvement Group would include several meetings with the agency/department leadership. The process is about bringing good collaboration into an organization that may have typically been fragmented in the way it approaches improving the quality of its work. Since the goal of a PIG is to produce a concrete product that will be used throughout the agency, there does need to be approval of the PIG process by upper leadership. This may take several meetings to be clear and in full agreement with the process. Leadership involvement may occur in prior meetings, or be continuous or intermittent.

H. **Closing:** The Practice Improvement Group is an example of the contribution of collaborative work that informs the building of a learning organization. The demonstration video's Practice Improvement Group chose a topic that had been defined on a number of data points that prioritized it as an issue that merited a closer look by people throughout that particular child welfare jurisdiction. The development of a concrete product/outcome will offer a learning loop back to the Continuing Quality Improvement process to afford a look at what difference this consistency, clarity, and greater guidance makes in the work of the organization.

5. Practice Improvement Group Checklist

Our PIG meets regularly; i.e., every 6 to 8 weeks.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our PIG has the same space available for each meeting.
❑ Yes ❑ No

The space is adequate.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our P.I.G. has a two person facilitator team to assure back-up.
❑ Yes ❑ No

We always have and use either a white board or a flip chart in each PIG meeting.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our PIG meetings are always one hour long.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our PIG has a representative from each team in our agency.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our PIG has the needed members from active community partners.
❑ Yes ❑ No

We successfully identify and include other partners who should be included in certain PIGs because of the subject matter.
❑ Yes ❑ No

They send members to our PIG meetings.
❑ Yes ❑ No

We consistently do introductions at the beginning of each PIG meeting.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our PIG meetings have a discrete, manageable and relevant topic.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our PIGs always identify and produce a tangible product.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our process for choosing a PIG topic include the following steps:

In the PIG, we first brainstorm and gather topic ideas;
❑ Yes ❑ No

We choose which idea is most pressing by consensus;
❑ Yes ❑ No

We gather data points on the topic as a way of making sure that it is a topic that impacts areas across the agency;
❑ Yes ❑ No

If needed, we break the topic down into smaller work groups, or piglets.
❑ Yes ❑ No

We specifically set up the next steps by going through the What, Who, When, and Other for the topic.
❑ Yes ❑ No

We have an ongoing system in place to keep leadership/management and others (line staff, staff at collaborative agencies, etc.) in the loop so they can track progress and so that people needed for the approval of any procedural change are aware of the PIG's work.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Notes for each PIG meeting are written up and disseminated within a week of the PIG's meeting.
❑ Yes ❑ No

We end each meeting knowing when the next meeting will be; who is responsible for what; what the piglets are and who is in each piglet; what will happen in the period until the next PIG; and what the PIG's tangible product is.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our subsequent PIG meetings begin with a group review of the previous 'next steps,' a review of the progress made and any barriers encountered.
❑ Yes ❑ No

Our PIG final outcomes and products are always implemented.
❑ Yes ❑ No

6. Practice Improvement Group Implementation

So your Practice Improvement Group has worked hard. Before forming a PIG, your jurisdiction's (organization, agency, department) leadership had reviewed and approved the implementationof a PIG to bring about good collaboration in a focused effort on a chosen, specific topic resulting in a concrete product. The PIG has done its homework regarding setting up a membership that included a wide range of members from a variety of units, organizational roles, and appropriate collaborative partners. The piglets have provided their supporting assignments. The PIG members have also sent out regular group updates so that all parts of the organization and relevant community providers have followed the PIG's progress, including the nature of the final product. Even better, the PIG has produced a concrete product addressing the specific topic consensually chosen by the members. What comes next? The critical next phase: Implementation.

One of the overall purposes of the Practice Improvement Group is to help fractured organizations become more cooperative and collaborative. Using a PIG can assist an organization to address critical child welfare issues in a unified manner using a specific, inclusive practice. The PIG is just the first in a series of steps in this overall process. The PIG provides the answers to the questions 'what,' 'who' and 'how.' The implementation process picks up where the PIG leaves off, addressing the 'where' and 'when' and expanding and elaborating upon the 'how' and 'who.'

There are two important measurements of the PIG's success: one is the jurisdiction's ability to both implement and integrate the PIG's concrete product so that it actually addresses the identified child welfare issue(s) that produced it; and two, the jurisdiction's success in integrating the PIG product or the data resulting from its use into the jurisdiction's Continuous Quality Improvement process.

A. Components of Implementation: In Allison Metz and Leah Bartley's (2012) article "Active Implementation Frameworks for Program Success," they assert that, "The research to-practice gap is a critical issue because children and families cannot benefit from services they don't receive" (p. 11). In this article they discuss the chronic lag between what research shows is the most effective practice and what happens in the field. They go on to discuss the science of program implementation that addresses the systematic, evidence-based way to implement changes in practice in an organization. They discuss the stages of implementation, and the fact that implementation is not a linear process. Like making any kind of change, personal or organizational, there is movement forward and backward among the stages.

There are very concrete supports an organization can provide to ensure that practice changes will occur in the most effective and sustainable way. While there are many good, important trainings and a whole body of literature that address Implementation Science, this is beyond the scope of this guide. What follows is a summary of the components of good implementation practice.

1. *Leadership Components*: As mentioned in the National Implementation Research Network's (Blasé and Fixsen, 2013) article on the components of effective implementation, it is critical for an organization to have competent, effective leaders at all levels to implement any change, big or little. Research has shown that the mastery of two types of skill areas is critical for effective leadership: technical skill and adaptive skill.

   > *"Technical leadership might be thought of as good management. The leader is engaged, quick to recognize and respond to issues that arise, organizes groups to solve problems, and regularly produces desired results" (Blasé and Fixsen, 2013, par. 2).*

   Adaptive leadership, on the other hand, is leadership that recognizes complexity. Blasé and Fixsen add that this type of leadership is also most effective at addressing the degree of resistance that always accompanies organizational change.

2. *Competency Components:* These address the need for appropriate, well-trained, and effective staff at every level to carry out the changes in procedures and practice. Competency components include:

   - *Thoughtful recruitment and hiring processes.* Good hiring processes identify what a position requires in terms of the skills needed for a strong performance.
   - *Strong and appropriate training.* For staff to do their jobs well, which includes implementing changes, they should "learn when, how and with whom to use new skills and practices" (Metz and Bartley, 2012, p. 14). The training should be appropriate for adult learners, include supporting written materials, and should offer participants the chance to practice these new skills, with follow-up feedback from the trainers.

- *Coaching.* Even with the best training, transforming knowledge into practice and then mastery is an ongoing challenge. Coaching recognizes this and provides opportunities for ongoing observation, debriefing and guidance for a practitioner from a more experienced person. With any implementation, the organization should review "where, when, with whom, and why coaching will occur" (Metz and Bartley, 2012, p. 14). The organization should also consider other ways to give staff feedback on how they are performing, including possible data sources.

- *Performance assessment.* Again, this is a key component to effective practice on all levels. It should be a collaborative process between supervisor and staff member; it should be ongoing throughout the year, perhaps culminating in an annual meeting; and it should include information from multiple sources including client outcomes, implementation of new practices, and data. Performance assessment should also offer opportunities for positive recognition.

3. *Organization Components:* These are the components that "intentionally develop the organizational supports and systems interventions needed to create a hospitable environment for new programs and innovation" (Metz and Bartley, 2012, p. 14). These include:

- *Decision Support Data Systems.* These are systems that collect data useful for evaluating participant usage, program outcomes, staff practice, and quality assurance. The jurisdiction should use this data to inform the decisions it makes.

- *Facilitative Administration.* This speaks to the leadership qualities of a jurisdiction. These leaders should support the implementation of changes recommended by the PIG, help keep staff organized and focused on the outcomes they expect from the innovations, and use a wide range of data to inform their decisions (Metz and Bartley, 2012).

- *Systems Interventions.* These include making sure the money, staff and facilities are available and ready to support the participants, practitioners and other staff.

The above summary is intended to provide an idea of best practices for the most successful and sustainable implementation. This structure may be one on which your jurisdiction is working, but, in any case, it is important to be knowledgeable of a proven framework for implementing changes.

B. Implementation: Planning-Doing-Studying-Acting: The "Plan, Do, Study Act" framework comes from the work of Dr. W. Edwards Deming. Originally developed to redesign manufacturing decision-making processes to better solve problems, it has since been adapted to for use in other settings. The framework is ideal for the critical implementation phase of the PIG process.

1. *Planning:* Your PIG group has done most of the work in this area. You know what the target area is for improvement; you know who will make the plan to implement. The next step is to bring together members of the leadership team (some should have been members of the PIG) to review the PIG's recommendations. This review should include making sure the PIG included implementation plans and support for all areas impacted by the topic, including systems issues, processes, contract compliance, and documentation. This would also be the place to discuss the timeline for implementation. Finally, depending on the nature and scope of the change, this group should consider the possible initial use of a smaller demonstration project to implement the PIG's recommendation. This would allow the jurisdiction to try the change on a smaller scale both to study outcomes and perhaps make adjustments in the larger implementation later on. If the change is small (such as making changes in how the jurisdiction's staff develop and use safety plans), the jurisdiction can implement the recommended change throughout the agency and with all collaborative partners.

   The implementation planning should also include making a plan for training and coaching.

2. *Doing:* This is the stage of implementation where you put all your plans into action. Now, again, research has shown that the most successful strategy for implementation is to have an implementation team consisting of members of the different, impacted areas in the organization and certain collaborative partners (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman and Wallace, 2005). But in the event that your jurisdiction does not have a designated implementation team, it is critical to make sure there are specific designated people who are in charge of accomplishing and supervising different parts of the implementation. For example, with training, it is important to confirm someone (group) is designing an appropriate training for the different levels of staff involved, and creating the necessary supporting

materials. Someone should coordinate the training sessions with the participants and trainers, and follow up with assessment of the training's effectiveness. There should be a similar process for coaching and performance assessment.

3. *Studying:* As part of the PIG recommendations, there should be an evaluative process to see whether the recommended changes are effective both in the outcome and to the degree predicted. The jurisdiction can collect this information through a number of avenues including data, case reviews, line staff and supervisor consultation, and through the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. Remember, the PIG initially identified the need to improve the designated topic area because the membership raised the issue and noted supporting data for the need to make changes.

   It is critical that there be strong feedback loops from the CQI process to front-line practice and back. This, again, is a big stumbling block for implementing changes in child welfare. Jurisdictions, agencies, or organizations design and make changes but either don't study the results of these changes or don't use the results of this study to further "tweak" the recommendations. The loop must include information gathered from families who are clients and part of the process, front-line practitioners and other users impacted by the changes back to those working in CQI.

4. *Acting:* This is the stage where the jurisdiction expands the changes, if it started with a demonstration project. It is also the stage where the jurisdiction incorporates the feedback and results of the Study process. This stage demonstrates responsiveness to all users at all levels of the implementation. By listening, reading and incorporating the results provided by all levels of users and by the results of CQI, the jurisdiction demonstrates a level of responsiveness that will result in a strong and positive change, but also a collaborative and unified process.

C. The Example of Safety Plans: Let's take an example from the PIG demonstration video through the 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' process. In the demonstration video, the group targeted improving safety plans as its topic and producing both a revised safety plan form and new guidelines on how to follow a safety plan. The group agreed to the need for safety plan improvement and consistency included line supervisors, quality improvement staff, and staff who worked with families. In a real PIG scenario, this PIG might also include members of collaborative agencies who work with families and members of the jurisdiction leadership team.

In the Plan stage, let's imagine the PIG met over the course of six months. The piglets provided information on the practices of neighboring jurisdictions and the research and data results. They found some evidence-based safety plan guidelines and, perhaps, even an example of best practice(s). The PIG then completed an internal review of case plans, seeing what worked well and where the challenges might be. Finally, the PIG agreed upon and developed the common elements and most beneficial uses of good safety plans, and the documentation needs related to the most effective safety planning.

As final products, the PIG produced the following: a clear document discussing the importance and role of good safety plans in the jurisdiction's mission of safety, well-being, and permanency; the new, revised guidelines for writing safety plans; samples of good safety plans; and the written procedures for evaluating the results of this new process, including how this evaluation is part of Continuous Quality Improvement.

Next, the PIG members should meet with the jurisdiction's management team to discuss their findings and products. This whole group makes final checks to make sure there are no gaps in the plan (i.e., has anything been left out? Contract compliance issues, documentation, data collection, etc.). The jurisdiction then starts the final stage of Plan by designing the rollout. This might include the appointment of an implementation team if appropriate to the jurisdiction. If not, then the group should designate certain individuals or units to take on specific roles. Because the implementation of a change in safety plans is relatively small and discrete, the group decides on the PIG's recommendation that the project does not need a demonstration project. It will be implemented jurisdiction-wide.

In the Do stage, the assigned groups or individuals work on and complete their tasks for the project rollout. This includes:

- *Training:* Develop a Safety Plan training plan including curricula, materials and modalities for delivering the training. Set up the trainings including times, personnel, place etc. Deliver the training.
- *Coaching:* Develop a coaching plan that involves the specific inclusion and roles of supervisors and lead workers.
- *Forms:* Whoever is responsible for redesigning jurisdiction forms, including obtaining any possible funder and partner approval, produces the revised Safety Planning form, instructions and samples.
- *Feedback Loops:* the jurisdiction will set up or redesign feedback loops on the new safety plan process to include information from client families, frontline staff, supervisors, and case file reviews. This will also need to include loops both to and from individuals responsible for the CQI process. Feedback should include a data piece on the use of and results of the new safety plans.

For the Study stage, the implementation team and the management team need to regularly and collaboratively study the resulting information provided by the different parts of the feedback loops, including client, staff and supervisor information; and results from CQI data. There may be parts of the initial implementation of the new safety plans and process that need to be modified, reduced, amplified or dropped. This should be a thoughtful, systematic process so as not to result in a haphazard, confusing implementation.

Finally, in the Act stage, the jurisdiction should integrate the findings of the Study stage into the safety plan process.

It is important to remember that this 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' framework may give the false impression that change and implementation are linear processes. Implementation of anything, including our example of a revised safety planning process and new safety plans, should include a regular back-and-forth between the Study and Act stages. The jurisdiction should regularly collect a wide range of information and data on the effectiveness of a practice, and should systematically make small changes, or "tweaks" to the practice in an ongoing way.

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