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**Guide to**

**Technical Assistance**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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* The Early Childhood Intervention Personnel Center (ECIPC) was funded to increase the capacity of institutions of higher education, professional organizations, states, territories, and tribal nations to prepare and support a competent workforce able to deliver early childhood intervention to each and every child and their family.
* ECIPC will engage in the technical and adaptive work of implementing and sustaining systemic and institutional changes in Institutions of Higher Education, Professional Organizations, and State Early Childhood Intervention Programs under Part C and Part B Section 619 of IDEA considering the historical socio-cultural, political, and economic contexts in the United States.

**WHAT IS Technical Assistance?**

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* The following are the core elements that were found in a [scoping review of Technical Assistance models and frameworks](https://ecpcta.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2810/2019/07/7-Scoping-Review-of-the-Core-Elements-of-Technical-Assistance-Models-and-Frameworks.pdf) (Dunst, Annas, Wilkie & Hamby, 2019) and incorporated into a self-assessment as you prepare to deliver technical assistance to a program, organization or system:
  + Preparation
  + Planning
  + Implementation
  + Evaluation
  + Sustainability
* An effective system must:
  + Coordinate and address state needs for quantity and quality of the diversity of ECI personnel and their degree of support required
  + Acknowledge the coordination between pre- and in-service personnel development (PD) to ensure consistency of practice
  + Stay informed through ongoing evaluation via multiple sources (strategic partners, consumers, etc.) and monitor the results and capacity to implement child and program quality standards.

**HOW IS TA PROVIDED?**

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* Using the Core Elements of Technical Assistance Self-Assessment:

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| --- | --- |
| **Core Elements** | **Definition of Terms** |
| **Preparation for Technical Assistance** | |
| **Needs Assessment** | Process for determining the gap between current conditions, practices, or outcomes and desired conditions, practices, or outcomes. |
| **Decision Making** | Process for involving program staff in identifying, among alternatives, the options or priorities that best fit with the organization’s mission or goals. |
| **Visioning** | Process for determining what an organization would do or “look like” if it was to make desired changes. |
| **Readiness for Change (Buy-In)** | Staff commitment to change program, organizational, or systems practices to improve effectiveness in order to achieve desired changes or outcomes. |
| **Organizational Capacity** | Ability of an organization to commit the human, program, and other resources needed for program, organization, or systems changes to produce desired practices. |
| **Technical Assistance Plan** | |
| **Goals and Objectives** | The immediate (objectives) and long-term (goals) program changes and outcomes that are the desired benefits of TA |
| **Intervention Practices** | The particular evidence-based intervention practice or best practices identified (targeted) to produce desired program, organizational, or systems change |
| **Fit Assessment** | Determining how well the targeted intervention practice matches (fits) the program or organization’s mission, priorities, desired changes, staff beliefs, etc. and how well the proposed TA practices also fit the program ecology |
| **Logic Model or Theory of Change** | A description or graphic representation of the relationship between desired program, organizational, or systems inputs and resources; the intervention practices, actions, or activities to affect desired change; and the intended outputs and outcomes of use of the practices, actions, or activities |
| **TA Resources** | TA resources made available to and/or provided to program staff to improve the use of targeted evidence-based or best practices |
| **Staff Roles and Responsibilities** | Specification of the roles and responsibilities of individual staff, and how enactment of those roles and responsibilities are expected to contribute to desired change |
| **Technical Assistance Implementation** | |
| **TA Provider Credibility** | Practices used by a TA provider to establish staff trust, respect, rapport, and beliefs that the provider is acting in the best interests of the program and staff receiving TA |
| **Professional Development** | The evidence-based professional development practices used by a TA provider to build and strengthen staff, program, organization, and systems capacity to use targeted intervention practices |
| **Coaching and Mentoring** | TA provider use of either or both coaching and mentoring as part of the provision of TA in interactions with staff to build and strengthen their capacity to use targeted intervention practices |
| **Consultation** | Tailored responses to individual staff, groups of staff members, and other program staff in response to questions, concerns, etc. about staff adoption and use of targeted intervention practices |
| **TA Provider Support/Feedback** | TA provider nonjudgmental acknowledgment, encouragement, and feedback on staff efforts toward and accomplishment of changing program practices consistent with the objectives and goals of the plan |
| **Staff Roles and Responsibilities** | Specification of the roles and responsibilities of individual staff, and how enactment of those roles and responsibilities are expected to contribute to desired change |
| **Technical Assistance Evaluation** | |
| **Process Evaluation** | Methods for determining if the practices, activities, or interventions specified (in a theory of change or logic model) were implemented as planned and resulted in identifiable outputs |
| **Outcome Evaluation** | Methods of determining if the practices, activities, or actions have resulted in desired changes and affect progress or benefits in the target group(s) of a program, organization, or system |
| **Fidelity of Use of Intervention Practices** | Extent to which the key characteristics of targeted practices that are the focus of TA were implemented in a manner in which they were designed to be used or delivered |
| **Fidelity of Use of TA Practices** | Extent to which the core elements of TA were used as intended and in a consistent manner with program staff responsible for use of the intervention practice constituting the focus of TA |
| **Lessons Learned** | Knowledge gained from the use of TA to promote staff use of the targeted intervention practice(s) constituting the focus of TA and the use of that information to make changes or improvements in the overall implementation of program activities |
| **Sustainability of TA-Facilitated Change** | |
| **Capacity-Sustaining Activities** | The program, organization, or systems resources, activities, and professional supports that are used to sustain or maintain the changes that have been put into place as a result of TA-related practices |
| **Continuous Quality Improvement** | Processes used to ensure ongoing improvements in a program, organization, or system that were the focus of TA |
| **Ongoing TA Provider Support** | Procedures used to provide either or both informal and formal TA supports to program staff after the completion of TA-related activities |
| **Follow-Up TA Activities** | Planned activities used to provide program staff opportunities to share concerns and accomplishments and to obtain input, feedback, suggestions, etc. from a TA provider |

**IMPLEMENTATION MODEL**

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