

## Implementing a Parenting Curriculum Using Implementation Science

This resource is part of a series developed to support programs in successfully implementing a parenting curriculum. In this resource, learn about the exploration stage of implementation science.

Research has shown that preschool programs can positively impact parenting when they go beyond simply providing parenting information. Parents and children receive even greater benefits when programs offer parents experiences that model positive interactions and provide opportunities to practice with feedback (Yoshikawa, 2014). A parenting curriculum can provide information and opportunities to practice skills that parents in your program may welcome.

Implementing a parenting curriculum that addresses parenting outcomes—nurturing, discipline, teaching, language, and supervision (HHS, ACF, OHS, PFCE, 2018)—is an ongoing process, not a single event. It can take as long as four years to reach full implementation (Blasé, Fixsen, & Metz, 2017). There are four stages of implementation (Blasé, Fixsen, & Metz, 2017):

1. Exploration
2. Installation
3. Initial implementation
4. Full implementation

These stages are linear but may overlap. It is possible to be in more than one stage at a time. At any point, you might need to return to the lessons learned from a previous stage to enhance your program's process for implementing your chosen curriculum. The stages serve as guides to ensuring full and successful implementation over time (Halle, Paulsell, Daily, Douglass, Moodie, & Metz, 2015).

### Exploration Stage



#### Exploration Stage Checklist

- Assemble an implementation team
- Create a plan
- Prepare for data collection
- Collect data
- Aggregate and analyze data
- Identify potential parenting curricula
- Determine fit and feasibility of the curriculum
- Choose a parenting curriculum

## Exploration Stage Key Tasks

The **exploration stage** is a time to collect information about the strengths, interests, and needs of parents and families in your community. Your program can review the different curricula available. During this stage, your program will also bring together the team that will guide and carry out implementation.

### Program Task

**Assemble your implementation team.** Select a team of people who will work together to explore options and eventually implement a chosen curriculum. When selecting team members, think about each person's availability and unique skills. Be sure to choose a diverse group with different kinds of knowledge to contribute. Team members can include center directors, teachers, professors, program coordinators, parents, community partners, and others. This team will have a number of key tasks.

### Implementation Team Tasks

**Create a plan.** Engage your implementation team to develop a plan that defines the team's purpose, goals, responsibilities, and guidelines for how the team members will work together. This plan should describe the roles of the members of the team and the process for adding members as needed. The plan should also outline how decisions will be made, how meetings will be led, and how members can communicate and share information.

**Prepare for data collection.** Seek input from a variety of stakeholders to inform your assessment of parents' strengths, needs, and interests in the following ways:

- Think about what you want to know and the data you will need.
- Review what you already know and the data you already have.
- Consider the questions that will reveal the strengths and needs of parents in your program.
- Determine the methods you will use for collecting data (e.g., surveys, interviews, or focus groups).

**Collect data.** Look at your program assessment data, community assessment data, program goals, and expected outcomes within the five-year project period. Choose data collection methods and use these to gather information from your implementation team members and program staff. Talk directly to parents in your program to get a clear understanding of the parenting skills or knowledge they would like to gain. Gather input from community partners about their ideas as well as about options that may already exist in the community.

**Aggregate and analyze data.** Look for common themes, different perspectives, and recurring issues. After you assess the data, create a list of criteria for ensuring that parenting curricula support your program's goals and vision. Now you are ready to explore potential parenting curricula that align with the findings from your analysis.

**Identify potential parenting curricula.** Use available resources and websites to find and research parenting curricula that best fit your program. Some of these resources and websites are listed at the end of this resource. Reach out to other programs that are already implementing a parenting curriculum for information about their experience.

**Determine fit and feasibility of the curriculum for your program.** “Fit” refers to how well a parenting curriculum aligns with a program or community’s priorities and values. “Feasibility” refers to the capacity of a program to implement the curriculum as intended by the developer. As your implementation team explores different curricula, consider using the Hexagon Tool (Figure 1. below) to rate each possible curriculum. You can use this scoring system to assess curricula along six categories:

- 1. Needs of individuals.** How well does the curriculum meet the identified strengths, interests, and needs of parents in your program?
- 2. Fit.** How well does the curriculum fit with your program’s current goals, initiatives, priorities, structures and supports, and parent/community values?
- 3. Resource availability.** Does your program have all of the necessary resources to implement the curriculum with fidelity? Resources may include training, staffing, technology supports, data systems, and administrative support.
- 4. Evidence.** How conclusive is the evidence or documentation that the curriculum, when implemented as the developer intended, will lead to the expected outcomes?
- 5. Readiness for replication.** How successfully has the curriculum been implemented by others? For example, can the developer provide examples of sites that are implementing the curriculum for your program to observe? How well can the lessons and strategies that are taught through the curriculum be applied in practice?
- 6. Capacity to implement.** Does your program have the capacity to implement the curriculum as intended and to sustain and improve implementation over time? For example, do you have the physical space to hold sessions? Are staff available to deliver the curriculum? Do they know about the topics included in the curriculum (Blase, Kiser, & Van Dyke, 2013)?

Each member of the implementation team should assess the parenting curriculum under consideration. The implementation team members should then take the time to compare and discuss their assessments together.

**Choose a Parenting Curriculum.** After analyzing each curriculum, the implementation team can use the priorities, goals, and vision that were set with parents in the program to select a curriculum. Your program may consider implementing more than one curriculum, given your program goals.

A thorough exploration can help your program choose the right curriculum for your families. The exploration stage also can provide insights to help you prepare for the next phase of implementation: installation.

## Implementing a Parenting Curriculum Using Implementation Science Series

Explore other resources in this series:

- Installation Stage
- Initial Implementation Stage
- Full Implementation Stage

## References

- Blasé, K., Fixsen, D., & Metz, A. (2013–2017). The National Implementation Research Network's Active Implementation Hub. Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/>
- Halle, T., Paulsell, D., Daily, S., Douglass, A., Moodie, S., & Metz, A. (2015). *Implementing parenting interventions in early care and education settings: A guidebook for implementation* (OPRE 2015-94). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/parenting\\_implementation\\_guidebook\\_109\\_b5082.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/parenting_implementation_guidebook_109_b5082.pdf)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. (2018). *Choosing a parenting curriculum for your program*. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/choosing-parenting-curriculum-for-your-program.pdf>
- Yoshikawa, H., (February 6, 2014). *Testimony to the Senate HELP Committee—Full-committee Hearing on Supporting Children and Families through Investments in High-Quality Early Education*. Retrieved from [www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Yoshikawa.pdf](http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Yoshikawa.pdf)

## Additional Resources

- An Integrated Stage-Based Framework for Implementation of Early Childhood Programs and Systems**  
[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/es\\_ccepra\\_stage\\_based\\_framework\\_brief\\_508.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/es_ccepra_stage_based_framework_brief_508.pdf)
- California Evidence-based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare—Selecting and Implementing Evidence-Based Practices: A Guide for Child and Family Serving Systems**  
<http://www.cebc4cw.org/implementing-programs/guide/>
- Choosing a Parenting Curriculum for Your Program**  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/choosing-parenting-curriculum-your-program>
- Compendium of Parenting Interventions**  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/compendium-parenting-interventions>
- Exploring Parenting Curricula Options**  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/exploring-parenting-curricula-options>
- Implementing a Parenting Curriculum Using Implementation Science: Webinar Series**  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/implementing-parenting-curriculum-using-implementation-science>
- Implementing Parenting Interventions in Early Care and Education Settings: A Guidebook for Implementation**  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/parenting-implementation-guidebook.pdf>
- Parenting Curricula Review Databases**  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/parenting-curricula-review-databases>

## **Additional Resources, cont.**

### **National Implementation Research Network's (NIRN) Active Implementation Hub— Modules**

<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/modules-and-lessons>

### **National Implementation Research Network's (NIRN) Active Implementation Hub—Resource Library Listing**

<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/list?o=sisep>

### **National Implementation Science Network—Stages of Implementation Analysis: Where Are We?**

<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/NIRN-StagesOfImplementationAnalysisWhereAreWe.pdf>

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**For more information about this resource, please contact us:  
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## The Hexagon Tool

The Hexagon Tool can be used as a planning tool to evaluate evidence-based programs (EBP) and practices during the exploration stage of implementation.

EBP under Review:				
5 Point Rating Scale: High=5; Medium=3; Low=1. Midpoints can be used and scored 2 or 4.				
	High	Med	Low	
Need				
Fit				
Resource				
Evidence				
Readiness for Replication				
Capacity to Implement				
Total Score				

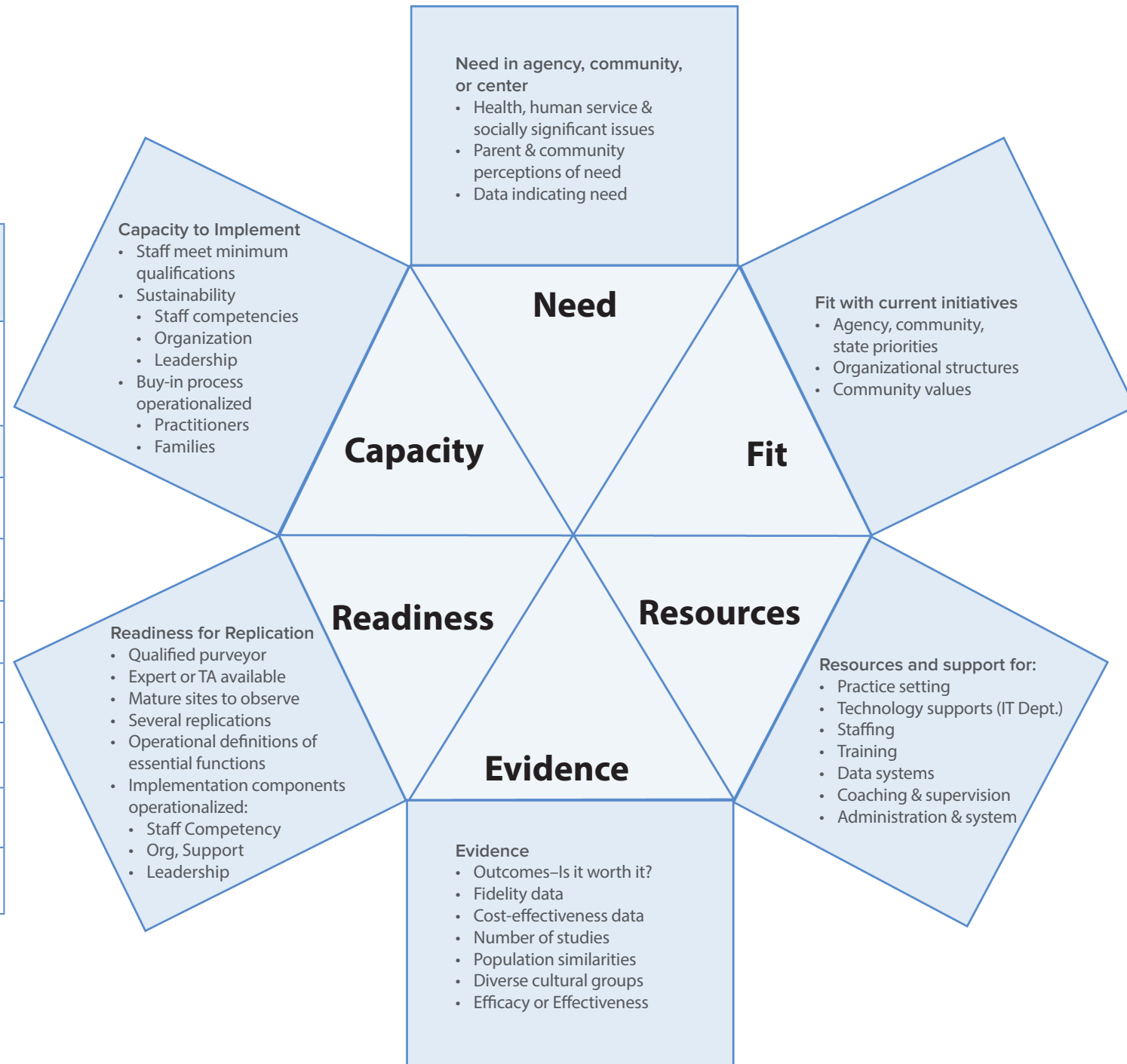


Figure 1. Hexagon Tool  
Source: Blase, Fixsen, & Mets, 2017