Building Capacity to Conduct Scientifically and Culturally Rigorous Evaluations in Tribal Communities through the Tribal Home Visiting Evaluation Institute

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Overview

• What is the Tribal Home Visiting Evaluation Institute (TEI)?
• What is the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program?
• How does TEI build capacity in Tribal communities?
• How does TEI’s approach align with the CB’s Roadmap for Collaborative and Effective Evaluation in Tribal Communities?
• Questions
TEI consists of:

• James Bell Associates, Inc.
• Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Center for American Indian Health
• University of Colorado School of Public Health, Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health
• MDRC
TEI Federal partners

• Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

• Administration for Children and Families, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development

• Office of Child Care
Tribal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

- Administered by ACF in collaboration with HRSA
- Funded through ACA, MIECHV includes 3% set aside for tribal program
- 25 cooperative agreements awarded to Tribes, Tribal consortia, Tribal organizations and urban Indian organizations
- 5-year grants that begin with a needs assessment and a planning year
- 3 cohorts: 13 in FY 2010, 6 awarded in FY 2011, 6 awarded in FY 2012
- Grantees must report to ACF on performance measures, conduct rigorous evaluation and continuous quality improvement activities
Tribal MIECHV program goals

1. Supporting the development of healthy, happy, and successful AIAN children and families
2. Implementing high-quality, culturally-relevant, evidence-based home visiting programs in AIAN communities
3. Expanding the evidence base around home visiting interventions for Native populations
4. Supporting and strengthening cooperation and coordination and promoting linkages among various early childhood programs, resulting in coordinated, comprehensive early childhood systems
TEI provides guidance on:

- Tracking and reporting on benchmarks (i.e., performance measures)
- Rigorous evaluation
- Data systems
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Ethical dissemination and knowledge translation
Three Data Requirements

**Benchmarks - Demonstrate Performance Improvement Over Time**
Legislatively mandated; grantees develop their own performance measures and indicators; no client level data reported; 36 constructs
- TEI helps grantees develop a benchmark plan, prepare for and conduct data collection, and analyze and report data to ACF; data systems and data management are also TA topics

**Rigorous Evaluation- Answer a Focused Evaluation Question Using Rigorous Research Methods**
Grantees select question using CBPR approach; use rigorous design to answer question; focus on program impact, adaptations, or implementation strategy
- TEI helps grantees develop an evaluation question and design using the PICO approach, provide TA on developing IRB protocol, analysis and ethical dissemination of results

**Continuous Quality Improvement – Use Data to Identify and Test Changes to Improve Program**
Grantees select CQI topic like screening rates, family retention, breastfeeding initiation; use benchmark or other program data in a collaborative process to make data-driven improvements to program
- TEI assists grantees in preparing for and conducting Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles
Key difference is how the data are used and the comparisons made.

Grantees make decisions about the data to collect based on community priorities.

The same data can be used for multiple purposes.

TEI provides TA on all 3 activities.

Locally defined Benchmarks

Continuous Quality Improvement

Local Rigorous Evaluation
TEI Collaborative Process

Federal Home Visiting Team

DOHVE (State MIECHV TA Provider)

Federal Project Officers

Consultants

Model Developers

Tribal Early Childhood Research Center

VisTA
A relational technical assistance process

Federal and TA Input
Federal Team

Tribal Evaluation Institute
TEI Liaisons

Grantee Home Visiting Team
Evaluator(s)

Project Director, Coordinator and other staff

Community Input
Community Advisory Board

Tribal government or leadership

Elders or cultural advisors

Tribal Home VisTA: Programmatic TA

Tribal Early Childhood Research Center
A relational technical assistance process

- Federal and TA Input
  - Federal Team
- Tribal Home VisTA: Programmatic TA
- Tribal Early Childhood Research Center
- Tribal Evaluation Institute
  - Evaluator(s)
- Grantee Home Visiting Team
  - Project Director, Coordinator and other staff
- Community Input
  - Community Advisory Board
  - Tribal government or leadership
  - Elders or cultural advisors
TA modalities

- Conference calls
- Site visits
- Grantee meetings
- Toolkits
- Tribal Evaluation Institute
- Grantee Home Visiting Team
- Feedback on plans
- Webinars
Developing and implementing a performance monitoring system (benchmarks)

- Grantees develop and operationalize performance measures that correspond to 36 Federally mandated benchmark constructs
- Grantees select appropriate measures that correspond to community priorities and provide useful data for continuous quality improvement
- Iterative process of collaborating on benchmark plan as a program team, engaging with community, and working with TEI
Rigorous evaluation

• Grantees develop an evaluation question that is important to the community and will contribute to the knowledge base.

• Grantees select an evaluation design that is both rigorous and acceptable to the community.

• Grantees are encouraged to narrow the focus of the evaluations due to resource limitations:
  - Measure small set of outcomes
  - Examine component of HV program
  - Focus on implementation strategy (e.g., recruitment, retention)
  - Evaluate enhancement or adaptation
Population

Intervention

Comparison

Outcomes

*Increased adherence to prenatal care*

*Improved parent-child interaction*
Experimental Design
Quasi-Experimental Design
Pre-Post Design
Case Studies
Opinions, Ideas
Life Experience
Community Values
Traditional Ways of Knowing
Cultural Norms
Using data to improve programs (CQI)

- Grantees receive support to implement Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles to improve implementation fidelity/quality and outcomes
- PDSA is inclusive, transparent process that involves entire program team
- Use existing benchmark, evaluation, or implementation data
- Emphasis on discovery, learning and testing new approaches
A few hot TA topics

• Identifying ethical and meaningful comparisons for rigorous evaluation

• Evaluating cultural adaptations
  • Identifying measures of cultural knowledge, identity, and practices & community connectedness

• Supporting intensive data collection efforts in Tribal communities
  • Preparing home visitors to collect data in the home
  • Addressing concerns around collecting data in small, isolated, close-knit communities.

• Identifying appropriate measures of parenting
  • Lack of parenting measures that have been validated for Tribal communities
  • Need for strengths-based measures that inform practice
  • Use of observational measures and videotaping are often a cultural mismatch
Relationship building – what’s worked

• Early site visits facilitate early relationship building
• Resources available for invaluable face-to-face time
• Intensive benchmark TA process builds foundation for evaluation TA
• Continuity of relationships is key
• Continuity helps TEI build understanding of grantees
• Trust is built by adding value
Knowledge and skill building – what’s worked

• A phased approach to developing benchmark and evaluation plans is more efficient, easier to digest
• Be strategic about what TA to provide at individual versus universal level
• Peer learning opportunities
• Provide concrete examples and help translate them into unique grantee settings
• Modify approach based on grantee capacity and needs
• Target audience for TA extends well beyond evaluators
• Successive cohorts allow us room to improve
Support for community engagement in determining evaluation priorities

• TEI supports community engagement by:
  • Encouraging participation from a diverse group of program and evaluation team members on planning calls
  • Supporting changes to planning timelines to incorporate feedback/input
  • Emphasizing requirement for/necessity of community engagement on site visits, webinars, phone calls, plan reviews
  • Asking critical questions (have you presented this design to your advisory committee? How do you think your home visitors will feel about collecting these data? Etc.)
  • Sharing experiences across grantees/cohorts (How some communities have reacted to certain observational measures, etc.)
  • Better understanding the communities through face to face interaction with Tribal leadership, community partners, and families on site visits (These partners are often included in initial “PICO” exercise)

• Emphasize meaningful community input in all evaluation phases
• Example: Inter-tribal Council of Michigan
Evaluations anchored in community and cultural context

• Federal guidance allows for individualized as opposed to prescriptive approach – respects diversity

• Flexibility to define evaluation questions facilitates consideration of examinations of program model fit:
  • Lead many grantees to examine cultural enhancements to home visiting models
  • Lead some grantees to develop theories of change regarding native parenting practices

• Flexibility to define performance measures results in benchmark plans that reflect community context

• Example: In remote Native villages where subsistence patterns of living are the traditional way of life, changes in household income have little meaning; some grantees selected adapted measures of economic security
Evaluations that blend scientific and cultural rigor

• Negotiating the balance:
  • Recognizing the value of indigenous ways of knowing and methods of inquiry
  • Application of appropriate and rigorous research methods

• Accommodating both will result in evaluation findings that will be meaningful to grantee community and to other tribal communities

• Example 1: Southcentral Foundation’s use of historical comparison group and propensity score matching to evaluate impact of model, plus qualitative study of cultural fit of model.

• Example 2: Pueblo of San Felipe’s evaluation of a newly developed cultural parenting curriculum evaluated using an internal comparison and qualitative methods
Impacts of capacity building

• Tribal communities are better prepared to oversee and conduct evaluation and consume evaluation information
• Improved services and outcomes through the integration of data into decision making
• Communities are invested in and take ownership of their evaluation plans and benchmark data collection
Questions?

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