Strengthening Out-of School Time Through Quality Improvement Systems: Lessons from the field

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Forum for Youth Investment

a nonprofit, nonpartisan action tank dedicated to helping communities and the nation make sure all young people are ready by 21 – ready for college, work and life.

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David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

a division of the Forum for Youth Investment that empowers education and human service leaders to:

- adapt, implement, and scale best-in-class, research validated quality improvement systems to advance child and youth development

www.cypq.org
Weikart Center History

• Weikart Center was the Youth Development group of HighScope Educational Research Foundation

• Best practices from the Institute for IDEAS, a summer camp for teens, were extracted and developed into training and eventually the Youth PQA.

• The Youth PQA is a validated instrument designed to assess the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs rooted in 40 years of practice and research.
Weikart Center Practices

• improving the quality of youth-serving education and human services settings
• development, validation and demonstration of assessment-driven performance improvement
• low-stakes accountability policies
Youth Program Quality Intervention

ASSESS
Quality assessment.

PLAN
Team based improvement planning with data.

IMPROVE
Instructional coaching for staff by site managers.
Targeted staff trainings for instructional skill building.
2012-2013 YPQI Systems Reach

Oct 2012 - March 2013

Individual Box Sets:
- 20 sites

PQA Downloads:
- 533 Youth PQA
- 457 School-Age PQA

Light Green - full-state
Dark Green - place-based
Gold - full-state + place-based

Policy Setting
- 85 Networks/Settings

Organization Setting
- >3250 Sites
  - Estimate based on mean of 6.5 staff per site in YPQI Study Sample

Point of Service Setting
- >21,125 Staff
- >276,250 Child & Youth
  - Estimate based on mean daily attendance of 85 youth per day in YPQI Study Sample

all youth ready for college work and life
Agenda

• Introductions
• Opening Activity
• Case Studies
• Small Group Discussion
• Closing
Building a QIS: Stages and tasks

1. PLAN & ENGAGE
- Assess readiness
- Form a workgroup
- Make the case
- Engage stakeholders
- Identify a lead organization
- Define quality
- Clarify purpose
- Consider information needs
- Determine costs & potential resources

2. DESIGN & BUILD
- Design the continuous improvement model
- Develop system supports for the model
- Recruit pilot sites
- Pilot the continuous improvement cycle

3. ADJUST & SUSTAIN
- Refine the model and system supports
- Build capacity of the lead organization
- Engage new sites and sectors
- Evaluate
- Embed and sustain

http://forumfyi.org/building_system_quality
Adjust and Sustain

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DENVER, CO CASE STUDY
Denver Implementation: Stage 1

• Convened a group of stakeholders that were already aligned and working together

• Made the case for having a standard of quality across multiple program types
  – 21st CCLC
  – Licensed childcare
  – Included 3 managing partners (Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, and Mi Casa)

• Garnered buy-in from various levels, in year 1, we focused primarily on program coordinators
Denver Implementation: Stage 2

• Started small with just the assessment piece

• Gradual introduction of key elements of support such as coaching and methods trainings

• Huge benefits from modeling at all levels
Denver Implementation: Stage 3

Guiding questions for refining the system:

#1: How do we effectively engage all levels of stakeholders to create change?

Point of Service

Management

Decision Makers
Denver Implementation: Engaging Stakeholders

Point of Service
• Training and orientation
• Calendars
• Prioritize hiring for trained staff
• Build up the hiring pool

Management
• Incorporate into supervision and performance management
• Make sure it is modeled for all staff
• Create a shared language
• Incorporate program partners into system

Decision Makers
• Ensure broad understanding of CONTENT
• Model for all management and front line staff
• Incorporate into RFP’s and other accountability structures
Denver Implementation: Stage 3

Guiding questions for refining the system:

#2: What supports and capacities do we need in place before being able to expand?

Human Capital
Funding
Denver Implementation: Ensuring Internal Capacity

Human Capital

- Have enough people to support the system: Methods & Planning with Data Trainers, Coaches, training coordinator
- Must have shared ownership and accountability for the system

Funding

To provide enough trainers and coaches to provide differentiated trainings and supports
Denver Implementation: Next Steps

• Create city wide quality standards;
• Developing a coaching program to better support the assess-plan-improve process and the content;
• Expand to additional partners and sites;
• Determine way to raise the stakes while maintaining genuine participation.
Youth Program Quality Initiative
Local Investment

- Local funder, the Raikes Foundation recognized the importance & benefits of high quality OST programs and allocated investments to out of school community for a youth program quality intervention.

- In 2009, the 1st Youth Program Quality Intervention started in King County
- First cohort of 9 sites received the following:
  - Learning community meetings
  - Coaching supports
  - External assessments
  - Methods Trainings

- School’s Out Washington (SOWA) provided the coaching and external assessors

- Each cohort receives supports for a three year cycle

- In 2010 & 2011 new cohorts are launched
Statewide Hub Model

• In July 2011, with increased investments the YPQI scaled to a statewide system in three counties using a Hub model.

• Each Hub includes a Hub Agency, Hub lead and locally trained coaches and external assessors
  • Hub Agency: Promotes & supports local Quality Initiative
  • Hub lead: Coordinates Kick-off & LC meetings & manages programs participating in the intervention

• SOWA manages the a statewide cadre of coaches & external assessors and coordinates the Basics & External Assessment trainings in each Hub

• SOWA manages statewide system support:
  • External Assessments & Coaching
  • Hub Calendars & Materials

Stage 2 – Design and Build
Supporting Multi-Sector Interventions with Multiple Funding Resources

Building Statewide System

• Statewide Raikes funded programs have expanded to 9 cohorts & over 70 sites
• Local Arts Funder is supporting 5 arts programs in the 2013 King Co. Cohort

Leveraging SAPQA for the QRIS system

• Washington Regional Afterschool Project is piloting the SAPQA with licensed child care sites in 6 regions of the state
• Working with the Department of Early Learning, the state licensing agency to align the SAPQA tool with the QRIS system scheduled to start in 2015 for school-age programs

Supporting City System

• City of Seattle Human Services Department is requiring 30 school-age sites to participate in the YPQI process. SOWA is overseeing the intervention, providing coaching, trainings & external assessments

Stage 3 – Adjust and Sustain
Washington's Quality Improvement System

DEFINE
Quality Practice

ASSESS
Quality Practice

SUPPORT
Quality Practice

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

Program Quality Standards

Individual Core Comps

Assessment Tools
• YPQA
• SACERS

Professional Development/Aligned Training

On-Site Coaching

Increase Youth Engagement

Increase Youth Participation

GOAL
Improve Youth Outcomes
Social/Emotional & Academic

all youth ready for college work and life
Building Citywide Systems For Quality

http://forumfyi.org/building_system_quality
QIS Case Studies

- **Atlanta, GA**: Good example of building buy-in and scaling up within a large, multi-site agency (BGC).

- **Austin, TX**: Focus on cost-effective assessment model, building quality improvement into United Way Community Impact approach

- **Chicago, IL**: Engaging several large city agencies in a common approach; integrating quality improvement with larger data management system.
QIS Case Studies

• **Hampden County, MA**: Focus on summer programs; use of incentives to support continuous improvement.

• **New York City**: Culture shift from compliance monitoring to continuous improvement; creating sustainable infrastructure within large public system.

• **Palm Beach County, FL**: Focus on funder, provider and intermediary relationships. Good example of a system maturing over time.