North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services
Child Welfare Services

Leader Practice Standards

Communicating Practice Standards:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

Using clear language and checking to assure two-way understanding

1. Makes organization-wide presentations to inform, educate, and inspire staff

2. Writes reports, edits materials, and provides suggestions to improve clarity while ensuring documents are for the intended audiences

3. Ensures clarity and enhances two-way communication with staff, providers and the community through questions and checks for understanding

4. Facilitates small and large meetings with ease and makes attendees feel included and motivated.

Operating with transparency and honesty

5. Clearly and openly communicates to senior managers expectations of job responsibilities and provide regular and ongoing feedback regarding individual performance

6. Consistently tells the truth during difficult conversations with staff, providers, legislators, and the community in a way that promotes dialogue.

7. Presents, explains, and defends organization positions and proposals to staff and stakeholders.

Respecting confidentiality and privacy

8. Diligently respect confidentiality while sharing information when necessary and appropriate with staff, providers, legislators, and the community

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Using clear language and checking to assure two-way understanding

Leader Practice Standard

#1 Makes organization-wide presentations to inform, educate, and inspire staff.

OPTIMAL

- Regularly sets meetings with staff which follows a prepared agenda
- Prepares and presents on a wide range of topics relevant to current happenings or agency vision
- Includes staff appreciation messages in presentations
- Conduct research on best and promising practices to inform presentation topics
- Understands how topics are tied to Federal requirements
- Actively listens, Solicits and uses opinions from staff on topics to discuss
- Solicits and uses feedback from staff on presentations
- Follows up with staff on presentation topics to ensure implementation and monitor any action steps or planning made
- Inspires staff during presentations, always referring back to how the material relates to the mission, vision, goals, and outcomes of the agency

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Sets meetings with staff sporadically, sometimes following a prepared agenda
- Presents on topics that are somewhat related to current happenings or agency vision
- Sometimes presents on a narrow range of topics
- Picks and researches topics for presentations that are most important to them, regardless of relevance
- Inconsistently solicits opinions of staff on topics to discuss, and inconsistently uses feedback from staff
- Inconsistently follows up with staff after presentations on implementation or action steps
- Presents on topics tied to mission, vision, goals and outcomes of the agency, but does not tie it to those items during presentation

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not meet regularly with staff
- Presents on siloed topics with no relevance or connection to current happenings or agency vision
- Puts little effort into presentation preparation
- Decides all topics to be discussed during presentations
- Moves onto the next presentation topic after completing previous one without follow up
- Gives lackluster presentations on sometimes irrelevant or uninspiring topics

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Using clear language and checking to assure two-way understanding

Leader Practice Standard

#2 Writes reports, edits materials, and provides suggestions to improve clarity while ensuring documents are for the intended audiences.

OPTIMAL

- Authors clear and concise emails, memos and reports (i.e., Federal, State, legislative)
- Is comfortable editing documents from superiors and subordinates providing helpful feedback to improve the clarity and quality of the document
- Tailors written communications as appropriate to intended audiences
- Incorporates data in regular communications and written materials

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Authors clear emails, memos and reports, though is more verbose than necessary
- Edits documents from superiors and subordinates, but does not provide helpful feedback to improve their skills moving forward
- Tailors written communications sometimes, but sometimes reuses the same material due to time constraints
- Inconsistently uses data in written work, or uses data that is not relevant to to purpose of the document

INSUFFICIENT

- Uses overly complicated and complex language in written communications
- Informs staff of poor writing but does not help edit or provide helpful suggestions
- Often reuses same communication and just changes the name of the recipient
- Rarely uses data in communications and written materials

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Using clear language and checking to assure two-way understanding

Leader Practice Standard

#3 Ensures clarity and enhances two-way communication with staff, providers and the community through questions and checks for understanding.

OPTIMAL

- Sets aside regular scheduled time with subordinates as well as is available for ad hoc consultation
- Takes time in meetings to make sure staff understand directives and direction.
- Meets staff frequently enough to be helpful
- Checks in with providers to ensure mutual understanding of work and next steps
- Listens and solicits feedback from staff and providers
- Actively listens to concerns from the community
- Encourages and responds to questions from the community.
- Responsive to questions from the community when issues escalate
- Uses clear, specific and understandable language in oral and written communication within the agency and to the community.
- Ensures acronyms and child welfare language is understood by providers

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Is available for ad hoc consultation whenever needed, but rarely sets aside time for formal meetings
- Explains directives once to staff and moves on
- Sometimes checks in with providers to ensure mutual understanding of work and next steps
- Somewhat listens to what staff says, but relies more on own opinion
- Listens but does not ask for feedback from providers and the communities
- Occasionally encourages and inconsistently responds to questions from the community.
- Inconsistently responds to questions from the community when issues escalate
- Sometimes over complicates written and oral communication
- Uses acronyms without explaining in communications

INSUFFICIENT

- Frequently cancels meetings when other things arise
- Does not meet on a regular basis
- Dictates directions to staff and doesn't follow up
- Rarely checks in with providers to ensure mutual understanding of expectations
- Dictates own opinions and decisions without feedback
- Does not use active listening skills
- Does not encourage or respond to questions from the community.
- Over complicates written and oral communication
- Assumes child welfare language and acronyms are known by all

Leader Practice Standards   September 29, 2021

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Using clear language and checking to assure two-way understanding

Leader Practice Standard

#4 Ensures clarity and enhances two-way communication with staff, providers and the community through questions and checks for understanding.

OPTIMAL

- Starts meetings, large and small, by checking in with participants to see how they are feeling before beginning agenda
- Ensures meeting participants know the intended outcomes of the meeting
- Solicits and uses input from meeting participants prior to developing an agenda
- Ends meetings by recapping for attendees, articulating next steps
- Expresses gratitude for meeting participation, participants time, effort and work, both during and after meetings language is understood by providers

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Inconsistently checks in at the beginning of meetings to see how participants are feeling
- Inconsistently informs meeting participants of the intended outcomes of the meeting
- Solicits but does not use input from meeting participants
- Reaches out after the meeting to assign next steps (but does not discuss during the meeting)
- Infrequently expresses gratitude for meeting participants and their time and effort

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not check in with meeting participants about how they are feeling
- Does not share why people are attending the meeting or does not have intended outcomes for the meeting
- Independently develops the agenda without input from others
- Ends meetings abruptly without recapping next steps
- Does not appreciate time and effort put in by meeting participants

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Operating with transparency and honesty

Leader Practice Standard

#5 Clearly and openly communicate to workers expectations of job expectations and provide regular and ongoing feedback regarding individual performance.

OPTIMAL

- Schedules, prepares for and conducts performance reviews on a regular basis
- Provides written and oral feedback and suggestions to improve individual performance
- Provides written and oral communication on job responsibilities and expectations
- Reinforces expectations routinely through meetings, follow up and actions
- Monitors senior managers job performance for requested corrective action and follows up when insufficient progress made

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Schedules and conducts performance reviews but does not prepare
- Provides oral but not written feedback and suggestions to improve performance
- Hands over out of date or generic job description that isn't reinforced or discussed regularly
- Monitors job performance but does not follow up when progress is not made

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not prioritize or cancels performance reviews
- Does not provide feedback on individual performance
- Does not provide written or oral communication on job responsibilities and expectations
- Does not provide regular feedback through meetings and follow up
- Does not monitor for progress made in corrective actions or progress made

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Operating with transparency and honesty

Leader Practice Standard

#6 Consistently tells the truth during difficult conversations with staff, providers, legislators, and the community in a way that promotes dialogue.

OPTIMAL

- Is consistent in messaging across staff, providers, legislators and the community
- Fosters and promotes honest conversations
- Shares information, even information internally and externally that shows challenges or setbacks, in addition to success
- Uses data or other evidence in internal and external meetings to engage participants in conversations
- Is forthcoming in conversations with legislators and the community, differentiating between 'needs' and 'wants'

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Inconsistent messaging across different groups
- Shares information only showing progress
- Shares information only showing setbacks
- Uses selective data to emphasize a subjective narrative
- Not differentiating between wants and needs with legislators

INSUFFICIENT

- Different messaging depending on the group
- Holds information as a power play
- Is not data informed and does not prioritize the use of data in decision making
- Withholds information from legislators

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Operating with transparency and honesty

Leader Practice Standard

#7 Presents, explains, and supports organization positions and proposals to staff and stakeholders.

OPTIMAL

- Presents agency data, reports, and outcomes in a clear and concise manner
- Articulates positions in a way that staff and stakeholders ask few questions and agree with the information presented
- Is knowledgeable and able to articulate policy and regulations that guide child welfare work with ease
- Articulates agency goals and outcomes in a clear and concise manner
- Presents positions and proposals that are consistent with overall agency goals, while open to hearing concerns
- Works with providers and the community to ensure they understand 'the why' behind certain decisions.
- Sets regular meetings with providers and stakeholders in the community to clearly explain agency direction, protocols, initiatives

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Overwhelms staff and stakeholders with the amount of data presented
- Articulates agency positions in a way that staff understand, but is often confusing to outside stakeholders
- Articulates agency goals and outcomes in a round-about manner
- Presents positions and proposals that are 'pet projects' more than overall agency goals
- Sometimes explains 'the why' behind certain decision
- Meets with providers and stakeholders in the community when crises arise

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not use data when discussing outcomes
- Is often confusing in presentation of agency positions
- Does not articulate agency goals
- Does not articulate positions and proposals to stakeholders often
- Makes decisions without explaining why
- Rarely meets with providers and stakeholders to explain agency direction, protocols, initiatives

Communicating:

Timely and consistent sharing of spoken and written information so that meaning, and intent are understood in the same way by all parties involved. Open and honest communication underpins successful performance of all essential functions in child welfare.

CORE ACTIVITY

Respecting confidentiality and privacy

Leader Practice Standard

#8 Diligently respect confidentiality while sharing information when necessary and appropriate with staff, providers, legislators, and the community.

OPTIMAL

- Models confidentiality in all interactions
- Ensures staff understands confidentiality standards
- Promotes understanding of what information, can, cannot and should be shared with parties and when
- Communicates with providers to ensure their staff are held to the same standards
- Models importance of confidentiality of information
- Addresses breaches in confidentiality in swift and serious manner
- Anticipates and minimizes potential breaches of confidentiality including casual conversations or insecure email
- Monitors for breaches in confidentiality

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Mostly maintains confidentiality in interactions, though occasionally makes mistakes
- Understands what information can, cannot and should be shared but doesn't often articulate to staff
- Periodically checks in with providers to ensure their staff are held to the same standards
- Understands importance of confidentiality
- Addresses breaches in confidentiality when a crisis
- Is diligent about minimizing breaches in confidentiality from insecure email, but less stringent on casual conversations

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not always practice what they preach relating to maintaining confidentiality in all interactions
- Does not share or completely understand with staff what information can, cannot and should be shared and when
- Does not hold providers to the same level of confidentiality
- Understands the importance of confidentiality but doesn't practice it
- Minimizes breaches in confidentiality
- Is lax about secure email or casual conversations in the office

Engaging Practice Standards:

Definition: Empowering and motivating families to actively participate with child welfare by communicating openly and honestly with the family, demonstrating respect, and valuing the family's input and preferences. Engagement begins upon first meeting a family and continues throughout child welfare services.

Engaging as a Leader: Empowering and motivating staff, stakeholders, elected officials, and communities to actively participate with child welfare by communicating openly and honestly, demonstrating respect, and valuing input and preferences.

Builds consensus to reach agreement among staff, stakeholders, legislature, and communities

1. Develops relationships with staff, political leaders, and key leaders
2. Meets and partners with staff and key stakeholders including elected officials and/or community leadership as appropriate to gather information for building coalitions
3. Gains support from key leaders and staff within the organization to ensure support for work objectives and team initiatives

Manages conflict by encouraging differences of opinion and resolves friction or disagreements in a constructive manner

4. Fosters an organizational culture that positively manages conflict

Engaging as a Leader:

Empowering and motivating workers, families, and stakeholders through open and honest communication, demonstrating respect, and valuing their input and preferences.

CORE ACTIVITY

Builds consensus to reach agreement among staff, providers, legislators, and the community

Leader Practice Standard

#1 Diligently respect confidentiality while sharing information when necessary and appropriate with staff, providers, legislators, and the community.

OPTIMAL

- Models confidentiality in all interactions
- Ensures staff understands confidentiality standards
- Promotes understanding of what information, can, cannot and should be shared with parties and when
- Communicates with providers to ensure their staff are held to the same standards
- Models importance of confidentiality of information
- Addresses breaches in confidentiality in swift and serious manner
- Anticipates and minimizes potential breaches of confidentiality including casual conversations or insecure email
- Monitors for breaches in confidentiality

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Mostly maintains confidentiality in interactions, though occasionally makes mistakes
- Understands what information can, cannot and should be shared but doesn't often articulate to staff
- Periodically checks in with providers to ensure their staff are held to the same standards
- Understands importance of confidentiality
- Addresses breaches in confidentiality when a crisis
- Is diligent about minimizing breaches in confidentiality from insecure email, but less stringent on casual conversations

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not always practice what they preach relating to maintaining confidentiality in all interactions
- Does not share or completely understand with staff what information can, cannot and should be shared and when
- Does not hold providers to the same level of confidentiality
- Understands the importance of confidentiality but doesn't practice it
- Minimizes breaches in confidentiality
- Is lax about secure email or casual conversations in the office

Engaging as a Leader:

Empowering and motivating workers, families, and stakeholders through open and honest communication, demonstrating respect, and valuing their input and preferences.

CORE ACTIVITY

Builds consensus to reach agreement among staff, stakeholders, elected officials, and communities

Leader Practice Standard

#2
Meets and partners with staff and key stakeholders including elected officials, and/or community leadership as appropriate to gather information for building coalitions.

OPTIMAL

- Holds regular meetings with internal and external stakeholders to gather and share information
- Utilizes a teaming approach in meetings and partnering to accomplish goals and move the work forward
- Solicits input and opinions from stakeholders both before and after meetings to engage them in the process
- Is open to hearing all feedback, even negative feedback
- Involves a variety of stakeholders in the development of new strategies

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Holds occasional meetings with internal and external stakeholders to gather and share information
- Sometimes utilizes a teaming approach in meetings and partnering to accomplish goals and move the work forward
- Occasionally solicits input and opinions from stakeholders both before and after meetings to engage them in the process
- Sometimes is open to hearing feedback, will occasionally listen to negative feedback
- Frequently involves a few stakeholders in the development of strategies

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not meet with stakeholders to gather and share information
- Does not use a teaming approach
- Does not solicit opinions
- Is only open to positive feedback
- Does not involve stakeholders in the development of strategies or only involves a few hand-picked stakeholders

Engaging as a Leader:

Empowering and motivating workers, families, and stakeholders through open and honest communication, demonstrating respect, and valuing their input and preferences.

CORE ACTIVITY

Builds consensus to reach agreement among staff, stakeholders, elected officials, and communities

Leader Practice Standard

#3 Gains support from key leaders and staff within the organization to ensure support for work objectives and team initiatives.

OPTIMAL

- Hosts or convenes meetings or utilizes other strategies to gain support for organizational change from internal staff
- Listens actively to staff and responds to concerns
- Considers other opinions or approaches, and compromises to reach agreement, when possible, about the need and approach for the change

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Occasionally convenes internal staff to gather input and ideas for organizational change
- Sometimes actively listens and frequently responds to concerns
- Often compromises to reach agreement about the need and approach for the change

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not convene or rarely convenes internal staff regarding their ideas for organizational change
- Rarely listens and/or rarely responds to concerns
- Never compromises about the need and approach for the change

Engaging as a Leader:

Empowering and motivating workers, families, and stakeholders through open and honest communication, demonstrating respect, and valuing their input and preferences.

CORE ACTIVITY

Manages conflict by encouraging creative tension and differences of opinions; manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner

Leader Practice Standard

#4 Gains support from key leaders and staff within the organization to ensure support for work objectives and team initiatives.

OPTIMAL

- Understands the nature of conflict and seeks to resolve it early on
- Is responsive when critical issues arise
- Listens to all sides and drills down to understand the root causes of the conflict when it arises
- Develops a reasonable and realistic solution to conflict and documents the results
- Adheres to and promotes agency protocol for reporting concerns
- Empowers staff to work through their conflicts with each other

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Often understand the nature of conflict
- Attempts to resolve the conflict as early as possible
- Tries to listen to all sides, might be quick to judge the source of the conflict without fully understanding root causes
- Comes up with a quick fix to try and brush the conflict under the table
- Tries to empower staff to work through the conflict, but will solve the conflict for staff if needed

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not understand the nature of conflict
- Drags conflict out and does not resolve conflict
- Does not listen to all sides of the conflict, is quick to judge and determine the source
- Determines the solution without consulting others involved in the conflict
- Resolves conflict for staff

Assessing Practice Standards:

Definition: Gathering and synthesizing information from children, families, support systems, agency records, and persons with knowledge to determine the need for child protective services and to inform planning for safety, permanency and well-being. Assessing occurs throughout child welfare services and includes learning from families about their strengths and preferences.

Assessing as a Leader: Gathering and synthesizing information and using data to make decisions and determine next steps for organizational strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

Understands and uses data to inform decision making

1. Provides overall agency focus on using data and evidence to measure outcomes, guide decision making and inform best practice
2. Ensures data is gathered by race, ethnicity, gender and tribal affiliation to guide systemic improvements
3. Establishes strategic performance measures to allow the organization to continually assess and adjust program direction

Identifies and analyzes problems, weighs relevancy and accuracy of information, and generates and evaluates alternative solutions

4. Synthesizes information from internal and external sources to identify solutions
5. Addresses systemic barriers inhibiting the achievement of results by forming teams to explore root causes of problems and develop solutions
6. Includes diverse perspectives when exploring solutions

Assessing as a Leader:

Gathering and synthesizing information and using data to make decisions and determine next steps for organizational strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

CORE ACTIVITY

Understands and uses data to inform decision making

Leader Practice Standard

#1 Provides overall agency focus on using data and evidence to measure outcomes, guide decision making, and inform best practice.

OPTIMAL

- Incorporates data and evidence into strategic plans, reports, presentations, communications, meetings, and other information sharing forums
- Makes decisions based on data and evidence
- Models, coaches, and is transparent with staff and stakeholders while using data and evidence in the decision-making process

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Inconsistently incorporates data and evidence into strategic plans, reports, presentations, communications, meetings, and other information sharing forums
- Sometimes makes decisions based on data and evidence
- Infrequently models, coaches, or is transparent with staff and stakeholders while using data and evidence in the decision-making process

INSUFFICIENT

- Rarely uses data and evidence in strategic plans, reports, presentations, communications, meetings, and other information sharing forums
- Makes decisions based on outside pressures and gut instinct
- Dictates to staff and stakeholders decisions that have already been made without using data and evidence

Assessing as a Leader:

Gathering and synthesizing information and using data to make decisions and determine next steps for organizational strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

CORE ACTIVITY

Understands and uses data to inform decision making

Leader Practice Standard

#2   Ensures data is gathered by race, ethnicity, and tribal affiliation to guide systemic improvements.

OPTIMAL

- Identifies gaps in data and ensures collection of missing data is implemented
- Encourages staff to discuss data, discover root causes of system problems, and determine solutions and interventions to implement
- Fosters an environment in which cultural and other differences are explored and appreciated

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Sometimes identifies gaps in data and ensures collection of missing data is implemented
- Occasionally encourages staff to discuss data, discover root causes, and determine solutions and interventions to implement
- Inconsistently fosters an environment in which cultural and other differences are explored and appreciated

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not ensure data is gathered by race, ethnicity, and tribal affiliation
- Never encourages staff to discuss data and the connection needed to guide system improvements
- Does not foster an environment in which cultural and other differences

Assessing as a Leader:

Gathering and synthesizing information and using data to make decisions and determine next steps for organizational strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

CORE ACTIVITY

Understands and uses data to inform decision making

Leader Practice Standard

#3 Establishes strategic performance measures to allow the organization to continually assess and adjust program direction.

OPTIMAL

- Uses a CQI approach to continually assess and adjust program direction
- Aligns performance measures with the Child and Family Services Review outcomes and process
- Models and coaches the staff and stakeholders regarding setting strategic performance measures, tracking measures over time, and the importance of accountability and reporting to determine if measures are being met
- Connects performance measures with the importance of serving families and improved outcomes for children, youth, and families in safety, permanency, and well-being

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Sometimes uses a CQI approach to assess and adjust program direction
- Aligns most performance measures with the Child and Family Services Review outcomes and process
- Often models and coaches the staff and stakeholders regarding setting strategic performance measures, tracking measures over time, and accountability and reporting of measures
- Frequently connects performance measures with family outcomes

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not use a CQI approach to assess and adjust program direction
- Does not align performance measures with the CFSR
- Never models and coaches the staff and stakeholders regarding setting strategic performance measures, tracking measures over time, and accountability and reporting of measures
- Does not connect performance measures with family outcomes

Assessing as a Leader:

Gathering and synthesizing information and using data to make decisions and determine next steps for organizational strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

CORE ACTIVITY

Identifies and analyzes problems, weighs relevancy and accuracy of information, and generates and evaluates alternative solutions

Leader Practice Standard

#4 Synthesizes information from internal and external sources to identify solutions.

OPTIMAL

- Assesses information from a variety of sources (internal and external) to determine the root causes in order to inform solutions
- Seeks evidence-based practices, evidence informed practices; information from subject matter experts, leaders from county administered states; and other reliable and valid sources for innovative and creative solutions to problems
- Relies on internal experts as reliable and valid sources for innovative and creative solutions to problems
- Synthesizes information from a variety of sources in a succinct manner

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Sometimes assesses information from a variety of sources to determine root causes in order to inform solutions
- Occasionally seeks evidence-based practices, evidence informed practices; information from subject matter experts, leaders from county administered states; and other reliable and valid sources for innovative and creative solutions to problems
- Often relies on internal experts as reliable and valid sources for innovative and creative solutions to problems
- Frequently synthesizes information from a variety of sources in a succinct manner

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not assess information from a variety of sources to determine root causes
- Never seeks evidence-based practices, evidence informed practices; information from subject matter experts, leaders from county administered states; and other reliable and valid sources for innovative and creative solutions to problems
- Does not rely on internal experts as reliable and valid sources for innovative and creative solutions to problems
- Synthesizes information from a variety of sources in a succinct manner

Assessing as a Leader:

Gathering and synthesizing information and using data to make decisions and determine next steps for organizational strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

CORE ACTIVITY

Identifies and analyzes problems, weighs relevancy and accuracy of information, and generates and evaluates alternative solutions

Leader Practice Standard

#5 Addresses systemic barriers inhibiting the achievement of results by forming teams to explore root causes of problems and develop solutions.

OPTIMAL

- Forms teams by assigning the right staff and stakeholders with the right skill sets and capabilities with time and availability to participate
- Empowers teams to explore root causes of problems and develop solutions by assigning clear roles and responsibilities to teams (including decision making abilities and limitations)
- Models and coaches to staff and stakeholders consensus building processes to get to solutions

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Sometimes forms teams and often assigns the right staff and stakeholders with related skills sets and capacities; staff and stakeholders may or may not have time or availability to participate
- Frequently empowers teams to explore root causes of problems and develop solutions; often assigns clear roles and responsibilities to teams
- Often models and coaches to staff and stakeholders consensus building processes to get to solutions

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not form teams or forms teams that do not have the right staff or stakeholders to participate
- Does not empower teams to explore root causes or develop solutions to problems; is not clear about team roles and responsibilities
- Does not model or coach to staff and stakeholders consensus building processes to get to solutions

Assessing as a Leader:

Gathering and synthesizing information and using data to make decisions and determine next steps for organizational strategic plans, goals, and objectives.

CORE ACTIVITY

Identifies and analyzes problems, weighs relevancy and accuracy of information, and generates and evaluates alternative solutions

Leader Practice Standard

#6 Includes diverse perspectives when exploring solutions.

OPTIMAL

- Encourages many voices at the table when considering solutions, including the voices of families and youth, providers, stakeholders, and other important and impacted parties
- Includes diverse populations and cultural groups in decision making processes and in exploring solutions

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Frequently encourages many voices at the table when considering solutions
- Frequently includes diverse populations and cultural groups in decision making processes and in exploring solutions

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not encourage diverse perspectives when exploring solutions
- Does not include diverse populations or cultural groups in decision making processes and in exploring solutions.

Planning Practice Standards:

Definition: Respectfully and meaningfully collaborating with families, communities, tribes and other identified team members to set goals and develop strategies based on the continuous assessment of safety, risk, family strengths and needs through a child and family team process. Plans should be revisited regularly by the team to determine progress towards meeting goals and make changes when needed.

Planning as a Leader: Works with staff, stakeholders, partners, and others to develop a joint vision for the organization and to develop short and long-term strategic plans.

Takes an aspirational and long-term view and builds a shared vision with others

1. Involves staff, stakeholders, and partners to develop and communicate a shared vision for the organization
2. Communicates vision and mission to staff, stakeholders, and partners while incorporating feedback on accomplishing new goals and objectives
3. Engages and provides guidance to managers to develop long-term strategic plans

Provides project management oversight, including developing strategic plans with short and long-range goals with the involvement of all organizational levels and stakeholders

4. Acknowledges organizational strengths and develops plans to address areas needing improvement
5. Handles multiple demands and competing priorities in a strategic manner
6. Successfully finds and allocates resources such as training and tools to support staff needs

Planning as a Leader:

Works with staff, stakeholders, partners, and others to develop a joint vision for the organization translated into guidance to develop short and long-term strategic plans.

CORE ACTIVITY

Takes an aspirational and long-term view and builds a shared vision with others

Leader Practice Standard

#1 Involves staff, stakeholders, and partners to develop and communicate a shared vision for the organization.

OPTIMAL

- Provides technical assistance to build vision, strategy, and goals for the organization
- Collaborates with staff in setting annual goals to ensure buy-in
- Uses data informed decision making to identify gaps and needs to inform the vision
- Develops and implements a clear communications plan with messages and channels to ensure communications are appropriately disseminated internally and externally

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Occasionally invites others to help in building the vision, strategy, and goals for the organization
- May involve staff in setting annual goals
- Staff inconsistently buys-in to the annual goals
- Sometimes uses data to inform decision making, to identify gaps and needs, and to inform the vision
- Is inconsistent with communications, messages, and channels for sharing the vision with the organization

INSUFFICIENT

- Provides staff with the vision, strategy, and goals for the organization without building/developing with staff, stakeholders, and partners
- Does not involve staff in setting annual goals to ensure buy-in
- Rarely uses data to inform decision making, to identify gaps and needs to inform the vision. Bases vision on own goals for the organization
- Does not develop a clear communications plan or take the time to communicate to staff, stakeholders, and partners a vision for the organization

Planning as a Leader:

Works with staff, stakeholders, partners, and others to develop a joint vision for the organization translated into guidance to develop short and long-term strategic plans.

CORE ACTIVITY

Takes an aspirational and long-term view and builds a shared vision with others

Leader Practice Standard

#2 Communicates shared vision and mission to staff, stakeholders, and partners while incorporating feedback on accomplishing new goals and objectives.

OPTIMAL

- Has a personal vision and contributes to realizing the shared vision of the organization
- Takes ownership of the organization's vision as leaders
- Communicates a commitment and plan for dismantling systemic racism in the organization and working with those with differing abilities, as well as addressing issues as they arise
- Involves staff and stakeholders in an organizational change process by conducting meetings and providing frequent updates
- Meets with staff and stakeholders to address concerns about the new goals and objectives

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Contributes personal ideas to the organization's vision
- Has a plan for dismantling systemic racism in the organization but does not communicate the plan
- Struggles to develop a plan for dismantling racism in the organization but regularly communicates the need to dismantle racism in the organization
- Occasionally involves staff and stakeholders in organizational change management processes
- Holds infrequent meetings to provide updates
- Inconsistently meets with staff and stakeholders to address concerns about the new goals and objectives

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not make the vision of the organization personal or contributes his/her personal vision to the organization's vision
- Does not communicate a commitment and plan for dismantling systemic racism in the organization
- Does not involve staff and stakeholders in organizational change management processes
- Does not conduct meetings to provide frequent updates
- Avoids meeting with staff and stakeholders to address concerns regarding new goals and objectives

Planning as a Leader:

Works with staff, stakeholders, partners, and others to develop a joint vision for the organization translated into guidance to develop short and long-term strategic plans.

CORE ACTIVITY

Takes an aspirational and long-term view and builds a shared vision with others

Leader Practice Standard

#3 Engages and provides guidance to managers to develop long-term strategic plans.

OPTIMAL

- Clearly links and connects the organizations strategy to individual sections' goals
- Encourages or supports others to translate vision into action
- Integrates planning efforts across sections

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Inconsistently links and connects the organizations strategy to individual sections goals
- Does not provide the same guidance across all sections
- Inconsistently offers encouragement or guidance to others in translating vision to action
- Often will encourage others to act and also tell others what actions to take
- Inconsistently integrates planning efforts across sections

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not provide clear links and connections to the organizations' strategy to individual sections goals
- Does not encourage or influence others to translate vision into action
- Others often wait to be told what actions to take out of fear of making mistakes
- Is siloed in planning efforts, does not make connections across sections

Planning as a Leaders:

Works with staff, stakeholders, partners, and others to develop a joint vision for the organization translated into guidance to develop short and long-term strategic plans.

CORE ACTIVITY

Provides project management oversight, including developing strategic plans with short and long-range goals with the involvement of all organizational levels and stakeholders

Leader Practice Standard

#4 Acknowledges organizational strengths and develops plans to address areas needing improvement.

OPTIMAL

- Assesses organizational strengths and builds upon those strengths in planning
- Conducts regular organizational assessments to help identify needs and strengths
- Seeks input from internal and external stakeholders on strengths and areas needed improvement
- Is realistic and accurately identifies areas needing improvement and support
- Puts resources in place for areas needing improvement
- Monitors for achievement of desired outcomes

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Assesses organizational strengths but lacks capacity to build upon the strengths in organizational planning
- Inconsistently uses organizational strengths in planning
- Seeks input from internal stakeholders on strengths and areas needing improvement
- Sometimes is realistic and accurate about areas needing improvement and support
- Inconsistent about putting resources in place for areas needing improvement
- Monitors for achievement of some desired outcomes

INSUFFICIENT

- Lacks capacity to assess organizational strengths
- Does not build upon organizational strengths in planning
- Does not seek input from stakeholders on strengths and areas needing improvement
- Is unaware of areas needing improvement and support
- Does not recognize areas needing improvement and support
- Is unrealistic and not accurate in identifying areas needing improvement and support
- Does not or cannot put resources in place for areas needing improvement
- Is not able to shift resources around to areas that need the most help or assistance

Planning as a Leader:

Works with staff, stakeholders, partners, and others to develop a joint vision for the organization translated into guidance to develop short and long-term strategic plans.

CORE ACTIVITY

Provides project management oversight, including developing strategic plans with short and long-range goals with the involvement of all organizational levels and stakeholders

Leader Practice Standard

#5 Handles multiple demands and competing priorities in a strategic manner.

OPTIMAL

- Organizes the work and sets priorities so that staff and stakeholders are clear regarding timelines and deadlines

- Aligns staff and allocates resources according to strategic priorities, shifting personnel and budget as needed to meet priorities

- Strategizes and determines necessary sequence of activities needed to achieve goals

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Work is inconsistently organized, and priorities are understood but shift at times

- Deadlines and timelines are clear but can change

- Attempts to align staff and allocate resources according to strategic priorities

- Inconsistently shifts personnel and budget to meet priorities

- Sometimes determines necessary sequence of activities needed to achieve goals

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not organize the work

- Is not clear regarding priorities, priorities consistently change

- Timelines and deadlines are not clear or are constantly changing

- Is not able to align staff and allocate resources according to strategic priorities

- Resources, such as personnel and budget, are not shifted to meet the priorities

- Necessary sequence of activities is unclear

Planning as a Leader:

Works with staff, stakeholders, partners, and others to develop a joint vision for the organization translated into guidance to develop short and long-term strategic plans.

CORE ACTIVITY

Provides project management oversight, including developing strategic plans with short and long-range goals with the involvement of all organizational levels and stakeholders

Leader Practice Standard

#6   Successfully finds and allocates resources such as training and tools to support staff needs.

OPTIMAL

- Seeks out and provides staff and stakeholders with needed training in advance of new knowledge, skills, and behaviors required for the job
- Seeks out and provides staff and stakeholders with needed technology required for the job
- Provides resources for coaching and support to staff and stakeholders ahead of implementing new policies, practices, and procedures

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Inconsistently seeks out and provides staff and stakeholders with needed training in advance of new knowledge, skills, and behaviors required for the job
- Inconsistently seeks out and provides staff and stakeholders with needed technology required for the job
- Inconsistently provides resources for coaching and support to staff and stakeholders ahead of implementing new policies, practices, and procedures

INSUFFICIENT

- Expects staff and stakeholders to learn as they go and does not provide any new training or professional development
- Does not seek resources for new technology required for the job
- Does not provide resources for new technology

Implementing Practice Standards:

Definition: Carrying out plans that have been developed. Implementing includes linking families to services and community supports, supporting families to take actions agreed upon in plans and monitoring to assure plans are being implemented by both families and providers, monitoring progress on behavioral goals, and identifying when plans need to be adapted.

Implementing as a Leader: Guides change efforts through a purposeful process resulting in improved outcomes.

Directs implementation activities and supports (internal and external) needed to promote sustainable change

1. Understands and utilizes phased approach to implementation

2. Strategically delegates responsibilities, tasks, and decisions to others and acknowledges ideas and success of those they lead

3. Acts as a champion for change efforts

Continuously assesses progress and adjusts as needed to achieve outcomes

4. Facilitates process assessing implementation progress on change efforts, identifying barriers and developing solutions to achieve outcomes

Implementing as a Leader:

Guides change efforts through a purposeful process resulting in improved outcomes.

CORE ACTIVITY

Directs implementation activities and supports (internal and external) needed to promote sustainable change

Leader Practice Standard

#1 Understands and utilizes phased approach to implementation.

OPTIMAL

- Understands and identifies when a change is needed
- Identifies and communicates phases of organizational change efforts and their importance
- Leads change efforts using a specific model and process
- Maintains fidelity to the model and process unless implementation monitoring indicates needed course correction
- Develops and implements internal controls, including an implementation plan, to manage potential barriers to implementation
- Attends to training, technology, policy, practice, continuous quality improvement, family voice, and other organizational factors in implementation

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Identifies when a change is needed, but often too late
- Identifies phases of organizational change efforts and their importance but does not communicate them
- Leads change efforts using a specific model but not articulated process
- Monitors the day to day of the implementation of change efforts, but does not use a plan to maintain focus on the big picture
- Considers some but not all extra resources and infrastructure needed to successfully implement change efforts

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not identify when a change is needed and rarely changes course on efforts
- Does not utilize a phased approach to implementing change efforts
- Does not use a model or process to initiate change efforts, just makes decisions
- Minimally anticipates barriers to implementation, and is caught off guard when they arise
- Plans to use existing resources and infrastructure to implement change efforts

Implementing as a Leader:

Guides change efforts through a purposeful process resulting in improved outcomes.

CORE ACTIVITY

Directs implementation activities and supports (internal and external) needed to promote sustainable change

Leader Practice Standard

#2 Strategically delegates responsibilities, tasks, and decisions to others when appropriate and acknowledges ideas and success of those they lead.

OPTIMAL

- Engages staff at all levels in change efforts
- Clearly communicates expectations regarding what each level of staff is responsible and accountable for in the change effort
- Communicates with staff using various mechanisms about change efforts' status
- Empowers others first to make decisions and provides coaching and mentoring needed to do so
- Acknowledges and promotes ideas and success of others they lead
- Balances leading by example with delegating to others

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Engages staff at all levels in change efforts
- Clearly communicates expectations regarding what each level of staff is responsible and accountable for in the change effort
- Communicates with staff using various mechanisms about change efforts' status
- Empowers others first to make decisions and provides coaching and mentoring needed to do so
- Acknowledges and promotes ideas and success of others they lead
- Balances leading by example with delegating to others

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not engage any staff in change efforts
- Writes a plan on staff responsibilities for change efforts but does not share or enforce it
- Does not allow any others to make decisions
- Does not acknowledge the ideas and successes of staff
- Delegates all responsibilities to staff

Guides change efforts through a purposeful process resulting in improved outcomes.

CORE ACTIVITY

Directs implementation activities and supports (internal and external) needed to promote sustainable change

Leader Practice Standard

#3   Acts as a champion for change efforts

OPTIMAL

- Generates buy-in with staff and partners around proposed system or practice changes
- Explains rationale for changes to get buy in from staff and partners
- Connects change efforts back to the agency's strategic mission, vision, values and strategic plans
- Partners with leaders from related systems to improve outcomes for families
- Routinely communicates with external stakeholders, including service providers and families, progress in change efforts

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Inconsistently generates buy-in with staff and partners around proposed system or practice changes
- Explains rationale for changes internally with staff to get buy in, bit not with external partners
- Sometimes connects change efforts back to the agency's strategic mission, vision, values and strategic plans
- Occasionally partners with leaders from related systems to improve outcomes for families
- Occasionally communicates with external stakeholders, including service providers and families, progress in change efforts

INSUFFICIENT

- Demands buy-in from staff around proposed system or practice changes
- Does not engage partners in buying into proposed system or practice changes
- Does not take time to connect change efforts back to the strategic mission, vision, values and strategic plans
- Adds on to change efforts without assessing where current implementation efforts are at
- Seldom partners with leaders from related systems to improve outcomes for families
- Seldom communicates with external stakeholders, including service providers and families, progress in change efforts

Implementing as a Leader:

Guides change efforts through a purposeful process resulting in improved outcomes.

Leader Practice Standard

#4 Facilitates process assessing implementation progress on change efforts, identifying barriers and developing solutions to achieve outcomes.

OPTIMAL

- Monitors implementation process on change efforts and makes course corrections as needed
- Utilizes project management plans to assess progress on change efforts
- Models a continuous quality improvement approach to using data in assessing progress, identifying barriers and developing solutions ,and course corrections as needed
- Collaborates and seeks input from staff and partners to identify barriers and develop proactive solutions to implementation problems
- Uses data to inform decision making and assess achievement of outcomes
- Utilizes root cause analysis to determine solutions to barriers
- Identifies gaps in data and develops plan to acquire

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Periodically monitors implementation process on change efforts
- Sometimes makes course corrections as needed regarding implementation efforts
- Occasionally utilizes project management plans to assess progress on change efforts
- Occasionally models a continuous quality improvement approach to using data in identifying barriers and developing solutions
- Sometimes encourages staff and partners to identify barriers and develop proactive solutions to implementation problems
- Frequently uses data to inform decision making and assess achievement of outcomes
- Uses data on hand to determine solutions to barriers
- Identifies data needed but not available

INSUFFICIENT

- Does not monitor or make course corrections as needed regarding implementation processes on change efforts
- Does not utilize project management plans to assess progress on change efforts
- Does not model a continuous quality improvement approach to using data to identify barriers and developing solutions
- Does not encourage staff and partners to identify barriers and develop proactive solutions to implementation problems
- Does not use a data informed decision-making process and assess achievement of outcomes
- Does not have an understanding of what data is needed but missing