A Blueprint for Designing Effective Farm-to-ECE Professional Development

ASPHN Mini CoIIN Webinar Series

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THE | POLICY EQUITY | GROUP
EMPOWERING THE SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS

Overview

Step 1: Engage in "backward mapping" to understand where we're going and what we need to get there

Step 2: Develop specific behavior change targets as objectives for professional development

Step 3: Use learning theory to guide design of professional development

Step 4: Use the right professional development "tools" for the job

Step 5: Match expectations to learning opportunities

Step 6: Use a plan-do-study-act approach to support continuous improvement

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The Policy Equity Group

Step 1: **Engage in "backward mapping" to understand where we're going and what we need to get there**

ECE staff who…

Offer local, healthy food to young children in an accessible and appealing way.

Support families' access to and knowledge about local, healthy foods and the benefits for their family.

Promote positive food experiences and adult role-modeling to support children's attitudes toward and relationship with healthy food.

Support children's understanding and curiosity about food, nutrition, the food system, and the environment through:
- Gardening
- Cooking
- Taste tests
- Field trips/guest visits
- Daily routines, interactions, and the learning environment

Use farm-to-ECE activities to cultivate learning in other areas (e.g., language, math, literacy, science, social studies, inquiry, critical thinking, social skills)

Young children who…

Eat a variety of healthy, local foods in ECE settings and at home.

Show emerging preferences for a variety of healthy, local foods and a willingness to try new foods.

Develop "food literacy" and understand the impact of nutrition and different foods on health.

Understand where food comes from and how it gets to us.

Develop knowledge of and an empathic connection with the people, animals, and plants that provide us with food.

Develop the foundational skills to achieve their full potential as learners in elementary school and beyond.

A new generation of adults who…

Consistently make nutritious food choices and establish lifelong healthy habits.

Make decisions about food purchasing, practices, and policies that support the ethical treatment of animals, people, and ecosystems.

Have the career, social, and core life skills to be competent members of their families, communities, and the workforce.

A future of strong…

Public Health Outcomes

A healthy population with low rates of obesity, chronic disease, and food insecurity.

Food System Outcomes

A sustainable food system that provides food for all through environmentally sound and socially just approaches.

Education Outcomes

A society with engaged citizens, a healthy economy, and just social structures.

Regardless of race, ethnicity, economic standing, or geographic location.

Step 2: Develop specific behavior change targets as objectives for professional development

Sample Professional Development Competencies

ECE staff will increase the number of experiential cooking activities that cultivate farm-to-ECE knowledge; positive attitudes toward healthy food; and learning in other domains.

ECE teachers will be able to:

a. **Select recipes** that encourage hands-on involvement; draw on age-/developmentally appropriate skills; highlight healthy, local foods; and are culturally relevant.

b. **Structure activities** to support active child engagement and effective implementation (e.g., has materials/ingredients prepared, discusses rules and safety, includes all children through turn-taking or multiple sets of materials/ingredients)

c. **Use effective teaching strategies** (e.g., uses open-ended questions, promotes problem-solving and reasoning, encourages predictions and experimentation, connects concepts and previous knowledge, scaffolds learning)

d. **Make connections to farm-to-ECE learning objectives** (e.g., uses food vocabulary, talks about how foods affect our bodies, discusses where ingredients came from)

e. **Promote learning in other domains** (e.g., supports print awareness, measurement skills, peer interactions, scientific learning)

Step 3: Use learning theory to guide design of professional development

Know-See-Do-Reflect Framework

Learning theory and research suggests that in order for individuals to develop new skills or change their behavior, they must experience opportunities to:

KNOW — build foundational knowledge

SEE — understand what the desired behaviors look like in a setting similar to their own

DO — practice the behaviors over an extended period of time

REFLECT — receive feedback, engage in self-reflection, and sustain ongoing application

"Tell me and I forget; show me and I remember; involve me and I understand."

Key "ingredients" to support farm-to-ECE teacher competency development

Knowledge Building

- Content knowledge of farm-to-ECE concepts
- Logistical knowledge of farm-to-ECE activity implementation (e.g., gardening, cooking)
- Pedagogical knowledge of effective teaching strategies and child development

KNOW

Modeling of Behaviors

- Models demonstrating farm-to-ECE competencies (e.g., videos, in-person, sample language, vignettes)
- Opportunities to analyze, describe, and identify why observed behaviors might be effective or ineffective

SEE

Practice Opportunities

- Goal setting and planning to practice farm-to-ECE competency behaviors
- Opportunities to practice farm-to-ECE activities (ideally in classroom setting)
- Prompting or side-by-side support from coach, consultant, trainer, director, etc.

DO

Reflect, Refine, & Remind

- Observation of farm-to-ECE practices by coach, consultant, trainer, director, etc.
- Feedback; guided reflection; problem-solving
- Ongoing support/reminders to promote sustainability and upkeep of practices

REFLECT

Step 4: Use the right professional development "tools" for the job

Not All Professional Development is Created Equal

KNOW

- Active knowledge-building opportunities
- Presentation of information

SEE

- Videos
- In-person modeling
- Vignettes
- Descriptions/sample language

DO

- Practice in classroom setting
- Goal-setting and planning
- Role-play

REFLECT

- Observation and feedback
- Guided reflection and self-assessment
- Prompts/reminders

One-on-One Support Models
e.g., coaching, mentoring, consultation, TA, reflective supervision

- Highly effective at skill-building and individualization
- Supports ongoing practice and refinement
- More effective if foundational knowledge already established
- Less efficient delivery system

Traditional High-Capacity Models
e.g., workshops, online training, higher education

- Efficient for large groups; can support peer learning
- Often emphasize the "what" and "why" rather than the "how" (theory/knowledge vs. practice/skills)
- Lack opportunities for follow-up, feedback, and troubleshooting

Other Models of Professional Development Supports

▶ Teacher study groups/professional learning communities

▶ Program capacity-building with leadership
  ▪ Training directors, administrators, or master teachers as coaches

▶ Hybrid online courses and web-based coaching and interactive learning opportunities
  ▪ e.g., *MyTeachingPartner*™ and *EarlyEdU Alliance*® models

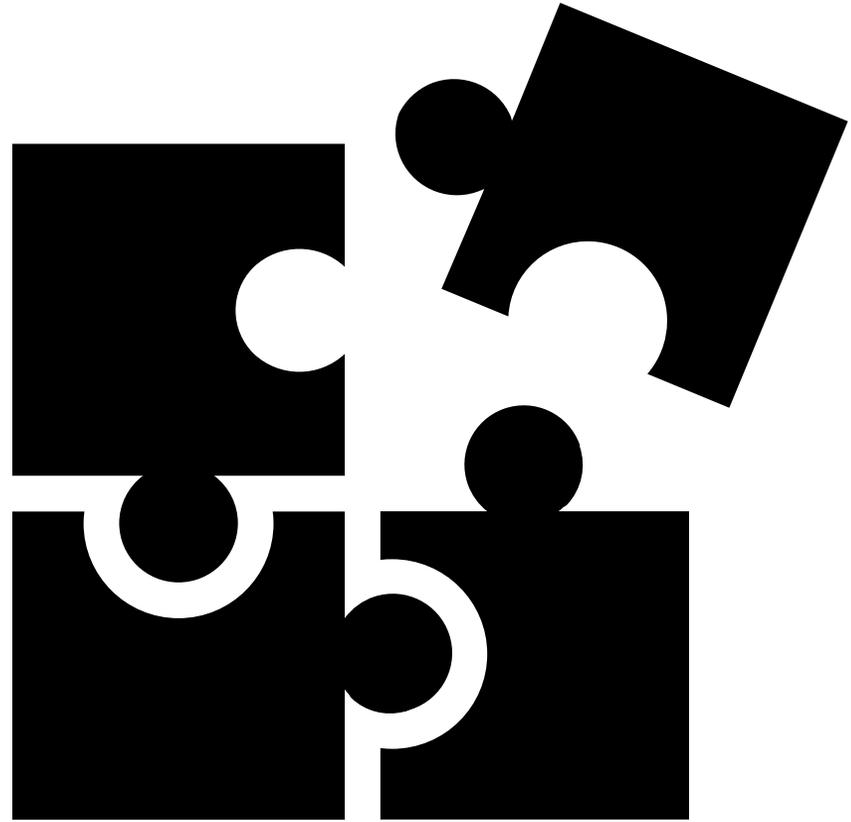▶ On-demand TA through app or "warm line"

▶ Texting support programs

Examples of Behavior Change Tools in Parent Texting Programs

Behavior Change Tools	Examples
Provide information about positive or negative consequences	*Did you know that if you don't eat enough fruits and vegetables, you're more likely to develop heart disease, diabetes, and cancer?* *Children do better in school and are more alert when they eat breakfast.*
Prompt identification as a role model	*Your children notice everything and want to imitate your behavior—good or bad! Do you skip breakfast? Do you eat from all food groups? Do you drink milk and water instead of soda? Do you take time each day to be physically active? Do you eat in front of the TV?*
Offer social comparison information	*Join your fellow parents in bringing back family meals. Nearly 4 in 5 families now have dinner together most days of the week. Children whose families eat together have better academic performance and self-esteem and lower risk of substance abuse, depression, eating disorders, and obesity.*
Encourage use of social support	*Make a pledge with a friend that for the next 10 days, you will each do at least one physical activity (e.g., family dance party after dinner; take the stairs instead of the elevator). Every day you meet this goal, simply text your friend "FIT" (or another short message you agree on).*
Give anchor points	*Did you know one apple juice box contains the <u>same amount of sugar as two donuts</u>?* *When thinking about serving sizes, remember: one serving of meat = deck of cards; pasta or rice = baseball; fruits or vegetables = light bulb; peanut butter = ping pong ball; cheese = four dice.*
Prompt intention formation	*Writing down goals makes us more likely to achieve them. Write down the following statement: "This week I will limit my family's screen time to no more than 1 hour per day (or less for children under age 2)."*
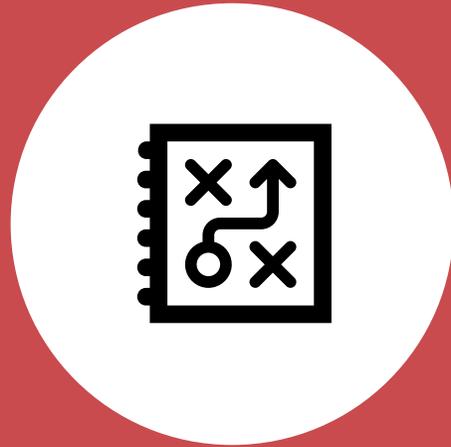
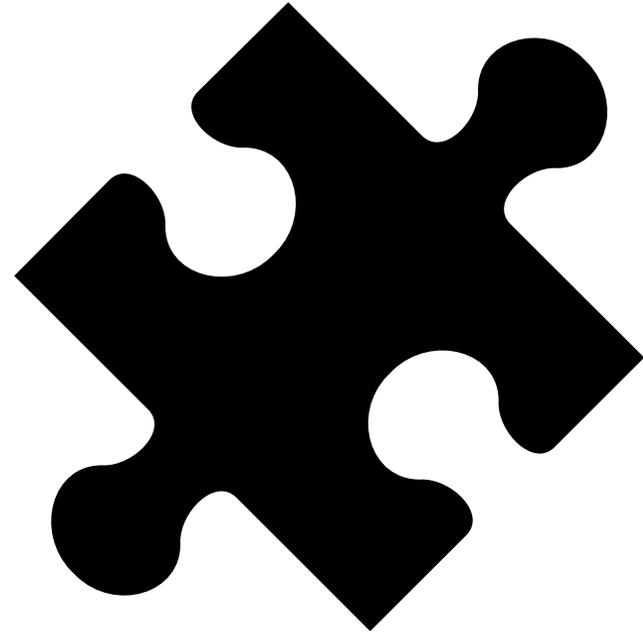**Step 5:** Match expectations to learning opportunities

Big Picture Design

Large Client

	KNOW	SEE	DO	REFLECT
Workshops + Booster Trainings	• Farm-to-ECE 101: What & Why • Content, pedagogical, & logistical knowledge	• Video examples of activities • Modeling by trainer	• Role-play activities • Develop personal goals and plan	• Journaling • Small-group discussions
"Graduated" Coaching Model (In-person → virtual → internal)	• Individual knowledge-building/ review as needed • Connection to resources	• In-class modeling by coach • Videos/pictures of own practice reviewed virtually with coach	• Classroom implementation • Goal setting and review with coach	• Feedback from coach • Guided self-reflection & assessment • On-demand TA through video/"warm line" coaching
Leadership Training	• Principles of coaching • Connection to resources	• Observations of coaching process • Videos/vignettes	• Practice coaching, initially with coach present	• Feedback • Guided self-reflection • Ongoing TA

Smaller Client

	KNOW	SEE	DO	REFLECT
Teacher Study Group	• In-depth modules on each competency topic	• Video examples • Modeling by facilitator • Peer observation (video or in-person)	• Role-play activities • Develop personal goals and plan • Homework and follow-up	• Journaling • Small-group discussions • Group troubleshooting
In-Person Coaching	• Individual knowledge-building/review as needed • Connection to resources	• In-class modeling by coach • Videos/pictures of own practice reviewed with coach	• Classroom implementation • Side-by-side practice • Goal setting and review with coach	• Feedback from coach • Guided self-reflection & assessment • Ongoing follow-up & review
Texting Support Program	• Weekly tips • Links to resources	• Links to videos • Sample language for in-the-moment activities	• Prompting intention-/goal-setting • Reminders • Motivational messages	• Positive feedback and encouragement

Mapping Out the Details

Sample Professional Development Competencies

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c. **Use effective teaching strategies** (e.g., uses open-ended questions, promotes problem-solving and reasoning, encourages predictions and experimentation, connects concepts and previous knowledge, scaffolds learning)

d. **Make connections to farm-to-ECE learning objectives** (e.g., uses food vocabulary, talks about how foods affect our bodies, discusses where ingredients came from)

e. **Promote learning in other domains** (e.g., supports print awareness, measurement skills, peer interactions, scientific learning)

Sample Learning Plan for Workshop-Model Training

OBJECTIVE:

Making connections to farm-to-ECE learning during cooking activities

(e.g., uses food vocabulary, talks about how foods affect our bodies, discusses where ingredients came from)

Knowledge Building

- Defining "*go*, *slow*, and *whoa*" food categories and examples
- Taste test identifying different fruits and vegetables
- Activity matching common ingredients with their sources/food journeys

KNOW

Modeling of Behaviors

- Trainer models engaging in a cooking activity with a group of children highlighting food vocabulary, nutrition information, and ingredient origins
- Videos of real-life cooking activities in the classroom with opportunities to analyze why observed behaviors might be effective or ineffective

SEE

Practice Opportunities

- Small-group activity (e.g., *Pyramid*-style game) having participants create child-friendly definitions for words like *calorie*, *nutrition*, *moderation*, etc.
- Identifying opportunities in recipes to highlight food vocabulary or information
- Small-group role play of practicing cooking activities with children

DO

Reflect, Refine, & Remind

- Reflection on small-group activity, identifying potential challenges in the classroom and brainstorming solutions
- Setting goals for practice and reflection (e.g., video to review with trainer or coach, "accountability buddy")

REFLECT
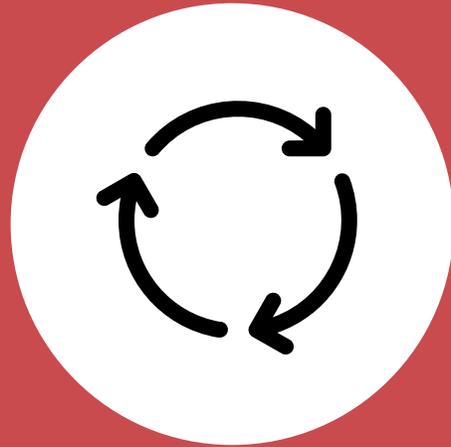
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PDSA Cycle

Design PD plan based on farm-to-ECE competencies and incorporating know-see-do-reflect learning opportunities

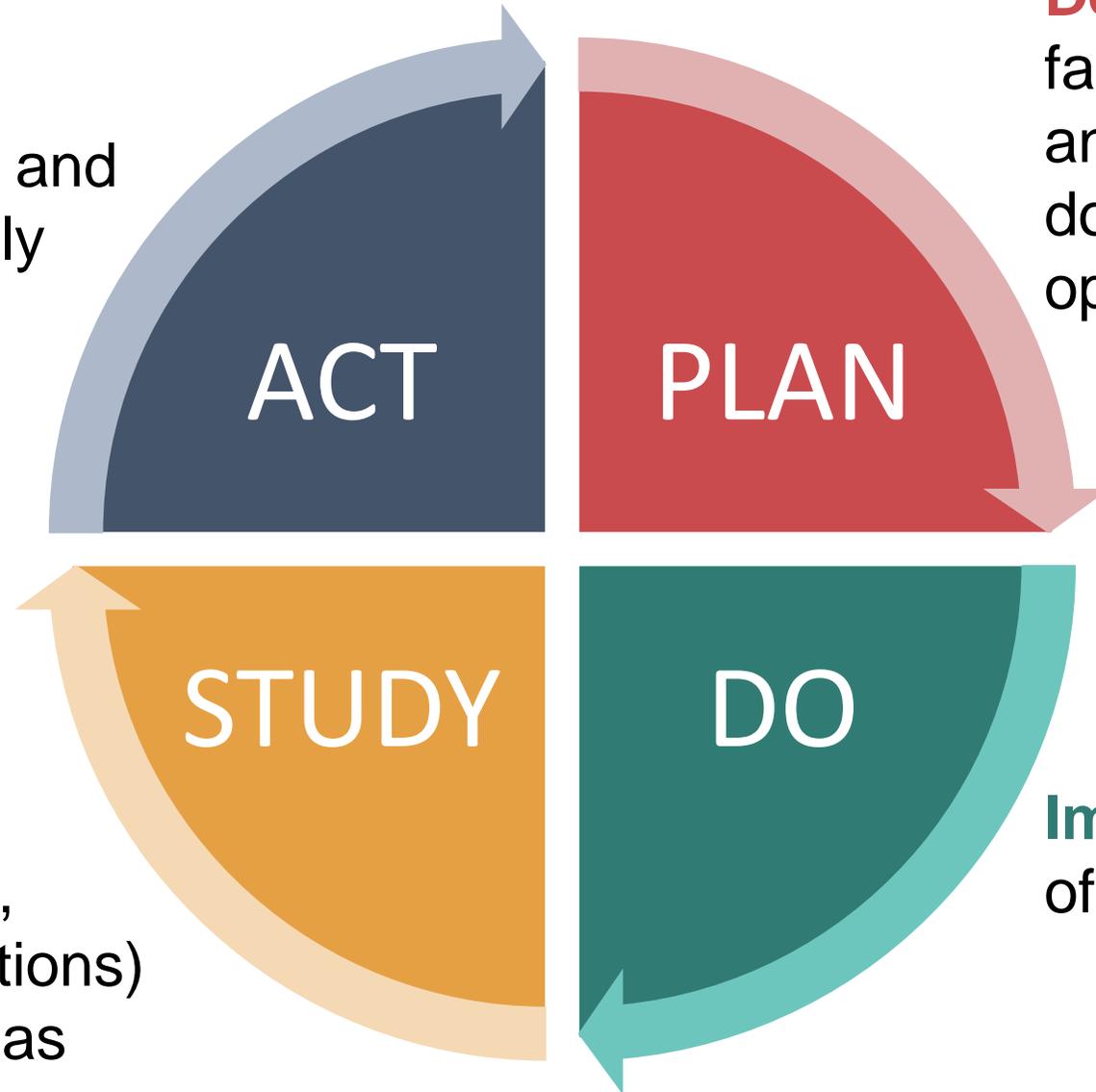**Revise PD** content and structure accordingly

Collect data (e.g., surveys, interviews, classroom observations) with competencies as outcomes

ACT

PLAN

STUDY

DO

Implement PD with cohort of participants (e.g., pilot)

Reflections

▶ What I still wonder about is…

▶ The most important take home point for me is…

▶ One thing I can use or apply in my work is…

Questions?

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