



Implementing a Parenting Curriculum Using Implementation Science: Initial Implementation Stage

This resource is part of a series developed to support programs in successfully implementing a parenting curriculum. In this resource, learn about the initial implementation 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. A parenting curriculum can provide information and opportunities to practice skills that parents in your program may welcome (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 improve 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).

Initial Implementation Stage



Initial Implementation Stage Checklist

- Adjust work plan
- Review and adjust implementation team membership, as needed
- Identify critical elements for implementation
- Complete a trial run
- Use Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles to improve delivery
- Launch the curriculum as part of regular programming
- Collect data for internal monitoring and assessment
- Continue to make improvements



Initial Implementation Stage Key Tasks

The **initial implementation stage** is a time to deliver the new parenting curriculum. Programs may test the delivery of the curriculum and make any enhancements before launching it as part of regular program operations. In this stage, programs identify and test such critical elements as key processes, supports, and data collection and use.

Adjust work plan. Engage the implementation team to review and update the work plan. Ensure that all team members are trained and prepared for group decision-making about, problem solving for, and using data to implement the new curriculum.

Review and adjust the implementation team membership, as needed. Consider who is on the team. What range of skills and perspectives are needed for this stage? Have any of the team roles and responsibilities changed? Do you need to add new members?

Consider perspectives inside and outside of the program. Are parents part of the team? Are staff perspectives represented? Is there a need to engage the curriculum developer or a consultant to address any issues?

Identify critical elements for implementation. “Critical elements” are those aspects of delivering the curriculum that you want to pay special attention to. These may include the content of the parenting curriculum, the facilitation process, organizational supports, or ways to collect feedback from the group. These elements may be critical to the success of the effort, or they may be the most difficult to execute.

Decide at this point what outcomes you will measure and how. Make a plan to determine how you will measure the fidelity to the curriculum implementation.

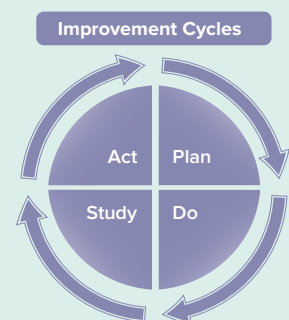
Complete a trial run. Deliver a few sessions, or try out the curriculum with a small group. Use the small test runs to assess your critical elements. You are likely to identify problems and discover solutions.

Use Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles to improve delivery. Use a Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle to help you test these solutions and make improvements.

After your team completes this cycle, review your data and feedback. Were the results what the team expected? Consider adjusting your plan, your assessment tools or procedures, as necessary. Several Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles may be needed to find all of the challenges and create solutions to address them.

Plan-Do-Study-Act for Improvement Cycles

1. **Plan:** Develop ideas and solutions to address the issues you found.
2. **Do:** Implement the solutions.
3. **Study:** Observe what happens and review the data.
4. **Act:** Make modifications or changes.



Launch the curriculum as part of regular programming. Now it's time to deliver the curriculum as part of your regular program operations.

Collect data for internal monitoring and assessment. Throughout the process, the team monitors activities closely and makes sure that accurate information is recorded regularly. The team reviews the data frequently to examine trends—for example, monthly in the first year, and then quarterly. Is the process for delivering the curriculum working? Are you seeing the results you expected? Are you satisfied?

Continue to make improvements. As you implement the curriculum, the team will continue to collect data, test, and refine the delivery of the curriculum. These activities overlap and continue over the five-year project period.

Consider ways to strengthen systems to support the success of the curriculum. There may be organizational policies that need to be changed. The implementation team may recommend adjustments to training or coaching practices, or point out partnerships that need strengthening. The team may also reach out to a consultant or the curriculum developer to share feedback about ways to enhance the delivery of the curriculum.

The focus of initial implementation is on trying out critical elements of the parenting intervention, trouble-shooting any problems, and testing any necessary changes in preparation for the next stage of implementation: full implementation.

Implementing a Parenting Curriculum Using Implementation Science Series

Explore other resources in this series:

- Exploration Stage
- Installation 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://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/implementing-parenting-interventions-guide>
- 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 <https://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Yoshikawa.pdf>

Additional Resources

The Active Implementation Hub—Designing a Fidelity Assessment System: Identifying Challenges and Strategies

<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/AIModules-Activity-7-1-DesigningFidelityAssessment.pdf>

The Active Implementation Hub—Apply the Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle in Your Work

<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/AIHub-Activity-L6-1-PDSA.pdf>

Evidence-Based Prevention and Intervention Support Center: Fidelity Observation Tools

<http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/fidelity/more>

Implementing Parenting Interventions in Early Care and Education Settings: A Guidebook for Implementation

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/implementing-parenting-interventions-guide>

Institute for Healthcare Improvement—Plan-Do-Study-Act Worksheet

<http://www.ihl.org/resources/pages/tools/plandostudyactworksheet.aspx>

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>

National Implementation Resource Network—Usability Testing

<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/module-5/topic-2-usability-testing>

New York State Department of Health: Plan-Do-Study-Act Worksheet

https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/improvement/docs/pdsa_worksheet_example1.pdf

State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices (SISEP) Center

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/2911>

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