

## Professional Development Approach Scenario

ABC's Early Childhood Development Center (AECD) was recently awarded a Head Start grant to provide comprehensive services to 48 children and their families. While AECD has been recognized in the community for delivering high-quality services for over 10 years, much work is still needed to fully align with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) and the Head Start Act. One serious issue is that only one of AECD's seven teachers is fully trained in the Creative Curriculum. Therefore, the Regional Office has informed AECD that its number one priority must be implementing the curriculum in compliance with [45 CFR §1302.32](#). To achieve this, AECD will use each of the five technical assistance strategies described below.

**Consulting:** *A collaborative, problem-solving process between a skilled external consultant and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation is meant to address and facilitate the assessment and resolution of a specific concern. This may be an issue related to the organization, program, staff, or a family or child.*

AECD purchased all curriculum materials and had two of its employees—its education manager and education coach—obtain a train-the-trainer certificate for the Creative Curriculum. At that point, the program decided to hire a Creative Curriculum consultant. As part of the consultant agreement, AECD will receive a full week of training for all teachers. Each teacher will receive a pre- and post-classroom observation. The education manager and education coach will then meet monthly with the consultant to obtain further guidance on successful implementation.

**Professional Development Advising:** *Sometimes referred to as career or professional development counseling, this is a one-on-one process through which an advisor offers information, guidance, and advice to an individual about professional growth, career options, and pathways to obtain or meet required qualifications.*

Prior to the Creative Curriculum training, AECD's education manager met with each teacher to discuss the new curriculum implementation. As part of the meeting, the education manager described required qualifications, professional growth, and anticipated challenges related to the implementation. Teachers who chose not to engage in the training would be offered alternative career pathways. Fortunately, all teachers embraced the new challenge and were excited about the upcoming training.

**Coaching:** *A relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role from the recipients. Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or group.*



After receiving the Creative Curriculum training as well as their pre-classroom observation, each teacher was scheduled for an initial coaching session with the education coach. During the sessions, the teachers and coach debriefed the training and pre-classroom observations. The teachers shared the areas they liked most as well as the challenges they anticipated. Together, the education coach and each teacher broke down the challenges and established goals for the upcoming month. To assess progress toward achieving the goals, the education coach will conduct an observation of each teacher's classroom and prepare feedback prior to their next scheduled coaching session.

**Reflective Supervision:** *Supervision is not only about staff accountability. It also involves nurturing and guiding staff so they have the tools to engage children and families successfully. Effective relationships between supervisors and staff contribute to the ability to reflect upon and cope with the stresses and demands of their work. It is an important aspect of building a safe and healthy climate for Head Start and Early Head Start staff, families, and children. Structured supervision maintains staff productivity and reinforces the goal of caregiving within the program.*

During the monthly consultant meeting, as well as during teacher coaching sessions, relationship-building is a priority. All participants listen to one another and, instead of acting as problem-solvers for one another, respond by posing questions that help one another think about situations from a different perspective. By analyzing and reflecting on their situations and challenges, each person develops a solution on their own. In this manner, individuals are empowered and continue to grow.

**Mentoring:** *A relationship-based process between colleagues in similar professional roles, with a more experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skills acting as the mentor and providing guidance and examples to the less experienced protégé or mentee. Mentoring is intended to increase an individual's personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness.*

After three months of implementing the Creative Curriculum, AECDK has finally filled its teacher vacancy. While all teachers are making great strides, the education manager and education coach are a little overwhelmed by all the extra work. For that reason, one of the teachers who had previously been certified to train the curriculum volunteered to mentor the new teacher. The intent was to provide guidance as the new teacher became familiar with the structure of the organization and the organizational culture. In addition, the new teacher would receive regular, modified coaching sessions to get her up to speed on curriculum implementation.

