

Leadership in Action

Sharing Tribal Head Start Leadership Experiences with a Focus on Best Practice Talking Circle



National Indian Head Start Directors Association Conference
June 15 - 18, 2026 - Costa Mesa, CA



Welcome from your AIAN TTA Facilitators

Dr. Betsy McDougall
Grantee Specialist, GS



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Leadership in Action Agenda

2:45–4:30 PM

Fiscal, personnel, wellness wrap up talking circle, closing.

9:00 -10:30

Objectives, monitoring.



1:00–2:30 PM

Child safety, education, fair engagement, ERSEA, break

10:45 AM–12:00 PM

RAN, Health & Mental Health.

Breaks at 10:30 and 2:30; lunch at 12:00.



Head Start Regional TTA Network

Learning Objectives



Governance, Program Structure, and Continuous Improvement

Interpret the story of governance systems to strengthen accountability, Tribal sovereignty, and continuous improvement.



Child Safety, Workforce Development, and Significant Incident Reporting

Protect the circle by building safe, culturally grounded systems that support children, families, and staff.



Monitoring, Data Systems, and Ongoing Improvement

Transform monitoring findings and data into teachings that drive evidence-based improvement.



Fiscal Management, Facilities, and Grants Administration

Honor Tribal resources through strong stewardship, fiscal integrity, and sustainable infrastructure.



Director Wellness and Future Collaboration

Sustain leadership through wellness, healing-centered practices, and collective action for future generations.

Monitoring Events

CLASS®

- Years 2-4
- On-site, video or self-review

Special, Follow-Up, RAN

- As needed
- On-site or virtual



Focus Area One (FA1)

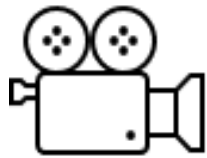
- Typically, years 1-2* of the grant cycle
- 3 days: hybrid on-site & virtual

Focus Area Two (FA2)

- Typically, years 3-4* of the grant cycle
- 3 ½ days: hybrid on-site & virtual

** Timeframes may vary for multi-grant agencies*

FY26 CLASS[®] Reviews will be conducted using the same three formats.



Video

Grant recipient self-records and submits videos for scoring by certified CLASS[®] reviewers.



Onsite

Grant recipient can request to have an onsite review with certified CLASS[®] reviewers.



Self-Review

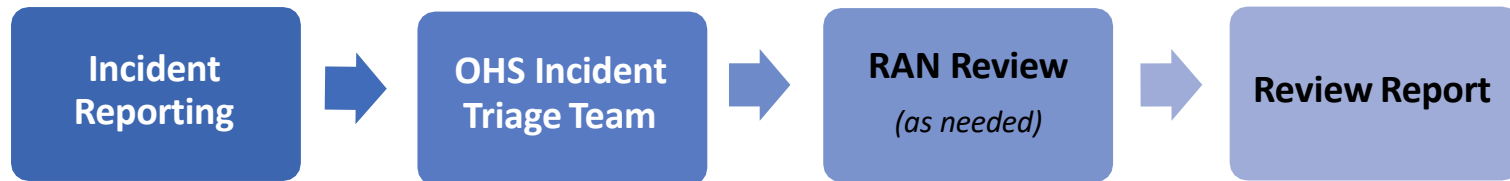
AIAN grant recipient can request to conduct their own CLASS[®] review using their staff that are CLASS[®] certified.

In FY26, OHS will utilize the CLASS[®] 2008 version.

Risk Assessment Notification (RAN) Reviews

Purpose: RAN Reviews collect information about a reported child safety incident. RAN Reviews focus on significant issues such as abuse, neglect, inappropriate conduct, inadequate supervision, or unauthorized release of a child.

RAN Process Overview



FY26 RAN Reviews: No changes are being made to the process or content of the RAN Review for the launch of FY26 monitoring.

FA1 Protocols

Office of Head Start (OHS) Monitoring Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Focus Area 1 Program Systems Review Protocol

What to Expect: FY26 FA1 Review

FA1 Review Approach

The FA1 Review is a three-day review event that includes on-site and virtual by a Review Lead and a team of reviewers.

Before the Review

- Grant recipients will be notified in summer 2025 if they will receive an FA1 Review. A letter will be sent through Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) Correspondence.
- OHS will confirm the date of the review 45 days in advance. A small nut will not have a 45-day confirmation letter.
- A Review Lead will schedule a virtual planning touchpoint with the Head Start program. This planning touchpoint provides an opportunity to discuss questions, share the three-day schedule.

During the Review

Grant recipients will showcase their strengths and practices through the FA1 Review.



Touchpoints with program leaders prior to the review and at the end of each review day



Kick-off meeting with director, fiscal officer, and program managers



Discussions with program staff members, the governing body, and the policy council



Data tours with directors, fiscal officer and managers

Finishing the Review

The FA1 Review ends with a final touchpoint on the last day of the review. The review will be completed no later than 5:00pm on the final day of the review to be considered complete.

Following the FA1 Review, OHS will issue a report with information about program performance. OHS will use the results of the review to inform training and support.

Office of Head Start (OHS) Monitoring Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Focus Area 1 Program Systems Review Protocol

Focus Area 1 Program Systems Review (FA1): Overview

Through the FA1 Review, OHS will learn about the strength of each grant recipients' management systems. OHS is conducting its program systems review early in the five-year grant period to ensure that grant recipients have a solid foundation to provide high-quality program services. In FY26, key program systems reviewed through the FA1 Review include:

Program Design, Management, and Improvement

- ✓ Use of data to inform program design, planning, and improvement
- ✓ Governing body and policy council oversight of program operations
- ✓ Recruitment, supervision, and retention of a qualified staff team

Supporting a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment

- ✓ Safety in staffing, facilities, and equipment
- ✓ Developmentally appropriate teaching and home visiting practices

Fiscal Infrastructure

- ✓ Budget development, implementation, and oversight
- ✓ Meeting the administrative and reporting requirements of the Head Start grant
- ✓ Internal controls to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse of Federal funds
- ✓ Adequate insurance for the Head Start program to mitigate identified risk

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

- ✓ Ensuring that families are eligible for Head Start services
- ✓ Selection of children and families who will benefit from Head Start services
- ✓ Maintaining full enrollment and promoting enrollment of children with disabilities

OHS will gather information through the review to evaluate how well each grant recipient is performing. OHS will provide feedback directly to grant recipients. OHS will also provide training and technical assistance to support program improvement.



FA1 Review Guides

FY26 FA1 Review Monitoring Review Guide Program Design, Management, and Improvement (PDMI)


The Program Design, Management, and Improvement (PDMI) Monitoring Review Guide outlines what to expect on the upcoming Focus Area 1: Program Systems Review (FA1). This guide shares information about the key topics review teams will explore and monitoring activities they will use during the FA1.

Through the PDMI content area, the Office of Head Start (OHS) learns how grant recipients use data to inform program design, planning, and implementation. Grant recipients will demonstrate how it supports and collaborates with the community to ensure effective oversight and governance of the program. Grant recipients will also demonstrate approaches for staff member supervision and staff development.

PDMI: Key Topics

This section shares the topics typically reviewed in the PDMI content area. Review teams may request additional information from grant recipients. This includes:

- ★ **Program Design and Strategic Planning:** How grant recipients use data to inform program design, planning, and implementation. This includes:
 - ✓ Self-assessment and ongoing monitoring: Grant recipients use program data (e.g., self-audit and ongoing monitoring data) to monitor and evaluate program performance, evaluate progress toward goals, and continuously improve their program.
 - ✓ **Community assessment:** How grant recipients use data to understand and remain responsive to the needs of children and families.
- ★ **Program Governance:** How the governing body provides oversight and ensures the program is effective. This includes:
 - ✓ **Governing body membership and active participation:** Grant recipients ensure the governing body includes members from the community, training to members, and uses members' input to inform program design and implementation.
 - ✓ **Sharing information with the governing body:** Grant recipients share with the governing body the data they receive to inform their oversight and ensure the program is effective.
 - ✓ **Policy council composition and active participation:** Grant recipients ensure the policy council maintains oversight and actively engages with the community.



FY26 FA1 Review Monitoring Review Guide Supporting Safe & Healthy Learning Environments (SSHLE)

The Supporting Safe & Healthy Learning Environments (SSHLE) Monitoring Review Guide outlines what to expect on the upcoming Focus Area 1: Program Systems Review (FA1). This guide shares information about the key topics review teams will explore and monitoring activities they will use during the FA1.

Through the SSHLE portion of the FA1, the Office of Head Start (OHS) learns how grant recipients provide children with safe and nurturing learning environments to support their healthy development. The review teams will monitor to ensure the physical environment, including facilities, equipment and materials children use. The review team will also monitor staff members' implementation of the program's safety and hygiene procedures. Finally, the review team will focus on how education staff members promote safe, healthy learning environments for children through responsive teaching practices that foster trust, security, communication, and support the needs of all children.

SSHLE: Key Topics

This section shares the topics typically reviewed through the FA1 SSHLE monitoring event. Review teams may request additional information during the monitoring event. This includes:

- ★ **Safe and Sanitary Environments:** This section focuses on how the grant recipient ensures safety in staffing, facilities, materials, and equipment through effective monitoring procedures.
 - ✓ **Emergency preparedness:** Walk through the plans, practices and policies to ensure the grant recipient has a plan in place for managing emergencies. This includes how the grant recipient made aware of the plans, practices and policies they should implement in the event of an emergency.
 - ✓ **Background checks:** How the grant recipient checks for all staff members within required timeframes.
 - ✓ **Daily and ongoing safety checks:** How the grant recipient ensures that facilities, equipment and materials used by children are safe for children. This includes demonstrating the grant recipient's approach to preventative maintenance.
 - ✓ Process for reporting incidents affecting children's health and safety.
 - ✓ Indoor and outdoor equipment and materials are clean and safe.
 - ✓ Facilities are free from pests, mold, pollutants, and safety hazards.
 - ✓ Grant recipient's current licensure meets state, local, and tribal requirements.
 - ✓ How the grant recipient ensures children are not exposed to lead in any Head Start facilities.



FY26 FA1 Review Monitoring Review Guide Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance (ERSEA)

The Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Monitoring Review Guide outlines what to expect on the upcoming Focus Area 1: Program Systems Review (FA1). This guide shares information about the key topics review teams will explore and monitoring activities they will use during the FA1.

Through the ERSEA portions of the FA1 monitoring event, the Office of Head Start (OHS) learns about how each grant recipient recruits, selects, and enrolls eligible children and families into its Head Start program. The ERSEA components of the FA1 monitoring event focuses on grant recipients' efforts to accurately manage its ERSEA processes, including accurate documentation. Grant recipients' policies and practices for selecting children and families who apply for the program and enrolling them into the program to determine eligibility to enroll in the Head Start program. Documenting their information to determine eligibility policies help prevent fraudulent enrollment. The ERSEA monitoring review also explores how grant recipients' policies help prevent fraudulent enrollment.

ERSEA: Key Topics

This section shares the topics typically reviewed through the FA1 ERSEA monitoring activity. Review teams may request additional information during the monitoring event, as needed.

- ★ **Selection Criteria:** Demonstrate how the grant recipient used the needs it identifies current community assessment to develop its selection criteria for the current program year. Show how grant recipient used the selection criteria to rank children currently on the waiting list.
- ★ **Training:** Share the training plan and specific examples of the training staff members receive to ensure they understand the program's ERSEA practices, including documentation for enrolling eligible children and families into the program.
- ★ **Preventing fraud:** Share the policies and practices the grant recipient has put in place to prevent fraudulent or erroneous enrollment of children and families who are not eligible for Head Start services.
 - ✓ Maintains fewer than 10 percent of enrolled children or expectant families who are ineligible for enrollment.
 - ✓ Maintains fewer than 35 percent of enrolled children or expectant families who are between 100 percent and 130 percent of the poverty line.



FY26 FA1 Review Monitoring Review Guide Fiscal Infrastructure (FIS)

The Fiscal Infrastructure (FIS) Monitoring Review Guide outlines what to expect on the upcoming Focus Area 1: Program Systems Review (FA1). This guide shares information about the key topics review teams will explore and monitoring activities they will use during the FA1.

Through the FIS content area, the Office of Head Start (OHS) learns about how each grant recipient maintains integrity of fiscal operations and mitigates the risk of fraud, waste, and abuse. Grant recipients will demonstrate how it develops and implements its financial management system and the internal controls it has put in place to ensure accurate, timely and efficient fiscal operations, oversight, and reporting.

Before the review begins

To support an efficient review, grant recipients preparing for the FA1 monitoring event will be asked to provide certain fiscal documentation before the beginning of the review, including:

- ✓ Most recent audit
- ✓ Subrecipient / delegate contracts
- ✓ Fiscal policies and procedures
- ✓ Detailed general ledger from the most recently completed program year

Grant recipients will receive details about how to provide these documents prior to the review.

FIS: Key Topics

This section shares the topics typically reviewed through the FA1 FIS monitoring activities. Review teams may request additional information during the monitoring event, as needed.

- ★ **Budget Development, Implementation & Oversight:** The process the grant recipient uses for developing and maintaining its program budget. This includes:
 - ✓ **Budget development:** Demonstrate how the program develops its budget and engages others in the process.
 - ✓ **Tracking budgeted to actual costs:** Show how the program identifies and manages variances between its actual and budgeted costs.
- ★ **Comprehensive Financial Management Structure & Systems:** The grant recipient's system for maintaining financial records, generating reports and financial data information needed to manage the program, and safeguarding federal funds. This includes:
 - ✓ Maintains accurate financial records.
 - ✓ Generates reports and financial data information needed to manage the program, and safeguarding federal funds.





FA2 Protocols

Office of Head Start (OHS) Monitoring Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Focus Area 2 Comprehensive Services Review Protocol

Focus Area 2 Comprehensive Services Review

Through the FA2 Review, OHS will explore how each grant recipient implements services for children and families. Key topics in the FA2 Review include:

Program Design, Management, and Improvement

- Use of data to inform program evaluation, planning, and improvement
- Recruitment, supervision, and retention of a qualified staff team

Fiscal Infrastructure

- Budget development, implementation, and oversight
- Meeting the administrative and reporting requirements of the Head Start grant
- Internal controls to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse of Federal funds
- Management of Federally funded facilities and equipment

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

- Ensuring that families are eligible for Head Start services
- Selection of children and families who will benefit from Head Start services
- Maintaining full enrollment and promoting enrollment of children with disabilities

Education and Development

- Use of child assessment and learning for all children
- Developmentally appropriate home visiting practices

Health Services

- Safety in staffing, facilities, and equipment
- Support for children's oral health care
- Mental health consultation and services
- Nutrition services needs
- Support for expectant and pregnant women

Family and Community Engagement

- Welcoming and meaningful family engagement in the program
- Collaboration with community organizations and stakeholders

Office of Head Start (OHS) Monitoring Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Focus Area 2 Comprehensive Services Review Protocol

What to Expect: FY26 FA2 Review

FA2 Review Approach


The FA2 Review is a 3.5-day review event that includes on-site and virtual activities. All review events will be led by a Review Lead and a team of reviewers.

Before the Review

- Grant recipients will be notified in summer 2025 if they will receive an FY26 FA2 Review. All notification will be sent through Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) Correspondence.
- OHS will confirm the date of the review 45 days in advance. A small number of reviews are unannounced and will not have a 45-day confirmation letter.
- A Review Lead will schedule a virtual planning touchpoint with the Head Start director and the fiscal officer. The planning touchpoint provides an opportunity to discuss questions, share requests for information, and confirm the 3.5-day schedule.

During the Review

Grant recipients will showcase their strengths and practices through the FA2 Review activities, including:

 Touchpoints with program leaders prior to the review and at the end of each review day	 Kick-off meeting with director, fiscal officer, and program managers	 Data testing to review fiscal transactions and eligibility files
 Discussions with program staff members, the governing body, and the policy council	 Data tours with directors, fiscal officer and managers	 Explorations in centers, classrooms, and home-based group socializations

Post-Review

The FA2 Review ends with a final touchpoint on the last day of the review. All documentation must be received no later than 5:00pm on the final day of the review to be considered.

Following the FA2 Review, OHS will use data from the review to evaluate how well each grant recipient is performing. OHS will issue a report with information about the grant recipient's performance. OHS will also share meeting minutes with Regional Office and Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Network.



FA2 Review Guides



Head Start Regional TTA Network

These materials were developed for OHS/Region XI Training and Technical Assistance Network under Contract No 14000425C0027 by ICF.

Learning Objectives - PDMI



Governance, Program Structure, and Continuous Improvement

Interpret the story of governance systems to strengthen accountability, Tribal sovereignty, and continuous improvement.



Protect the circle by building safe, culturally grounded systems that support children, families, and staff.



Monitoring, Data Systems, and Ongoing Improvement

Transform monitoring findings and data into teaching that drives evidence-based improvement.



Fiscal Management, Facilities, and Grants Administration

Honor Tribal resources through strong stewardship, fiscal integrity, and sustainable infrastructure.



Director Wellness and Future Collaboration

Sustain leadership through wellness, healing-centered practices, and collective action for future generations.

PDMI Talking Circle Process



PDMI Reflection Guidelines

- Welcome and purpose.
- Speak from experience.
- Listen without interruption.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Allow pauses and silence.
- Build shared understanding.

Talking Circle



Prompt 1

What specific information was not shared with the governing body or policy council (e.g., financial statements, credit card expenditures, enrollment reports, meal counts, audits)?

Prompt 2

How did the program fail to collect, aggregate, or analyze data across service areas (e.g., health, education, family services)?

Prompt 3

What key planning documents were outdated or missing (e.g., community assessment not updated annually, no self-assessment, no ongoing monitoring system)?

Key Findings:

- Governing body/policy council missing required reports
- No data aggregation or analysis for continuous improvement
- Community assessment not updated annually
- No self-assessment or ongoing monitoring system
- Staff vacancies causing lack of oversight

Documents Needed:

- Governing body & policy council meeting packets (monthly)
- Data reports (child outcomes, attendance, health, family goals)
- Annual community assessment & updates
- Self-assessment report & improvement plan
- Organizational chart & supervision logs

Data Tour - PDMI

1. PROGRAM DESIGN, MANAGEMENT, AND IMPROVEMENT (PDMI)



Key Documents and Data

- Organizational Chart
- Program Goals and Objectives
- Strategic Plan
- Self-Assessment Report
- Ongoing Monitoring Plan and Reports
- Continuous Improvement Plan
- Management Team Meeting Minutes
- Staff Qualifications and Training Records
- Supervision Schedules and Records
- Coaching Strategy and Documentation
- Staff Performance Evaluations
- Training Calendar and Sign-In Sheets
- HR Policies and Staff Retention Plan
- Governance and Policy Council Minutes
- Program Management Data Tour Materials

How the program uses data to inform planning, manage operations, and continuously improve services.

1 of 6



Learning Objectives – Child Safety



Child Safety & Health Talking Circle Process



Shared Responsibility

Protect children through honest reflection and collective learning.

Speak one at a time, listen without judgment, and respond with care.

Talking Circle



Prompt 1

What specific incidents occurred (e.g., child left unsupervised, corporal punishment, physical abuse), and for how long was the child unsupervised or exposed to harm?

Prompt 2

Which incidents were not reported to OHS within 7 calendar days, and how many days late was each report?

Prompt 3

What standards of conduct were missing, incomplete, or not followed (e.g., no child-specific conduct rules, staff unaware of prohibited actions)?

Child Safety, Incident Reporting – RAN



Self-Assessment Checklist Questions

Do written policies define all reportable child safety incidents?

Are staff trained during orientation and annually?

Is every incident documented completely?

Are reportable incidents submitted to OHS promptly?

Is root cause analysis completed?

Are Governing Body and Policy Council informed?

Are corrective actions monitored to completion?

High-Risk Events That Often Trigger Findings

Child left unattended

Child released to an unauthorized person

Abuse or inappropriate discipline

Serious injury requiring emergency treatment

Transportation incidents

Allegations involving staff misconduct

Environmental hazards exposing children to harm

Key Findings:

- Child left unsupervised (bus, classroom, playground)
- Staff using corporal punishment or physical abuse
- Incidents not reported to OHS within 7 calendar days
- No program-specific standards of conduct for child safety

Documents Needed:

- Incident reports & investigation summaries
- OHS notification dates & evidence
- Standards of conduct policy signed by staff
- CAPTA-mandated reporter training records
- Corrective action plans & staff discipline records

Health & Mental Health Services

Key Findings:

- Medical/oral health determinations not obtained within 90 days
- Vision/hearing screenings not completed within 45 days
- No mental health consultant contract or services
- Hygiene & safety violations (handwashing, pests, accessible chemicals)
- No Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)

Documents Needed:

- Health tracking logs (medical, dental, vision, hearing)
- EPSDT schedules & provider documentation
- Mental health consultant contract & visit logs
- HSAC meeting minutes & sign-in sheets
- Safety inspection checklists & corrective action plans



Data Tour – Health & Mental Health Services

3. HEALTH SERVICES (HEA)



Key Documents and Data

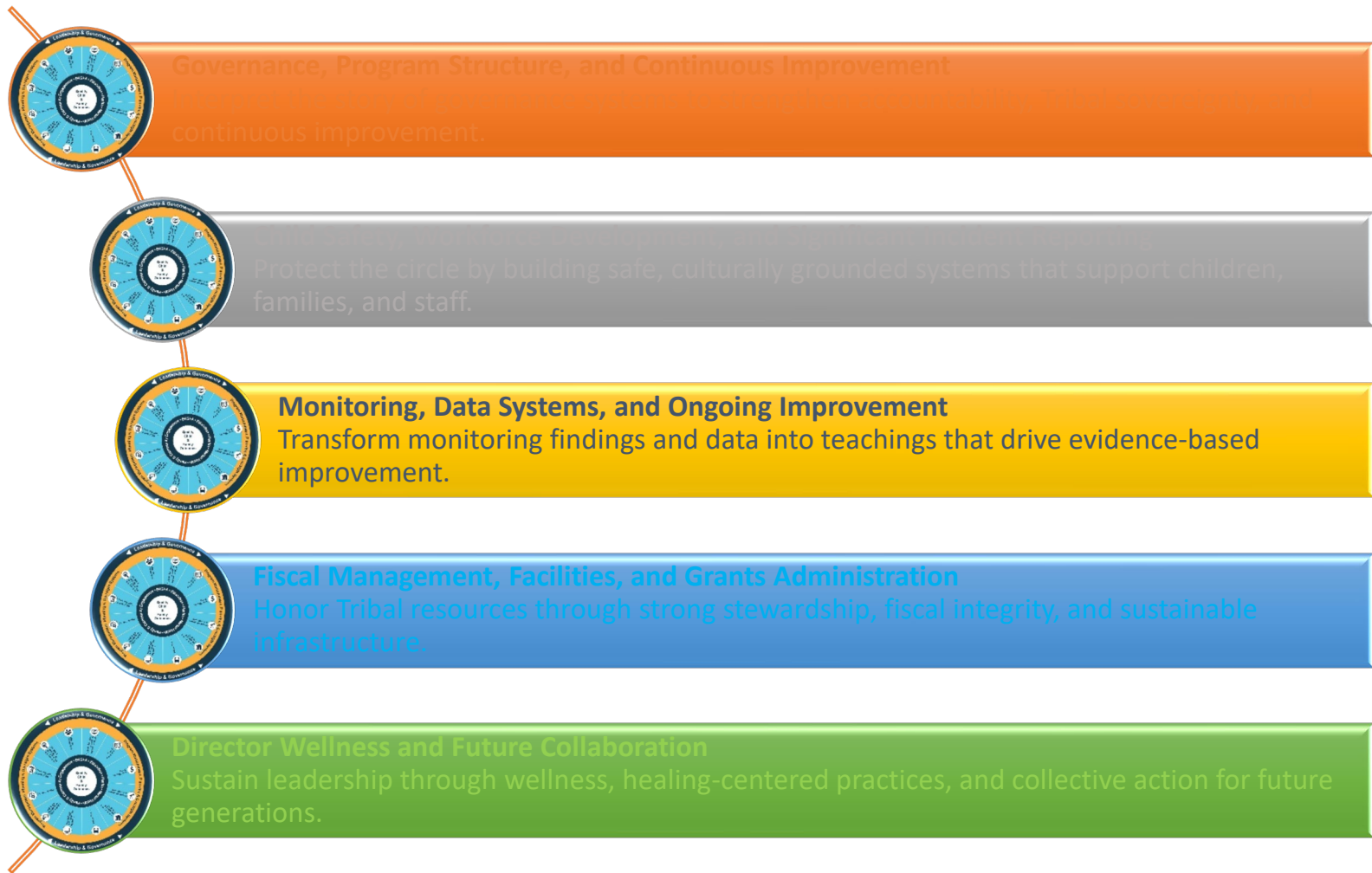
How the program promotes children's health, safety, and well-being.

- Health Services Plan
- Health and Safety Policies
- Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Preventive Maintenance Plan
- Background Check Tracking System
- Criminal Record Check Tracking Sheets
- Medical and Dental Tracking Reports
- Mental Health Consultant Agreement
- Nutrition Menus and Special Diet Plans
- Food Allergy Lists
- Child Health and Safety Incident Procedures
- Incident Reports and Significant Incident Logs
- Health Care Coverage Tracking
- Expectant Family Tracking
- Health and Safety Training Records
- Facilities Inspection Reports
- Licensing Documentation
- Health Data Tour Materials

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Learning Objectives - Monitoring



Education, Family Engagement, & ERSEA



Data are collected but not analyzed to identify trends, root causes, and emerging risks.

Ongoing monitoring findings are not translated into corrective actions and timelines.

Management reports do not provide accurate, timely information for decision-making.

Program goals, self-assessment, and service area monitoring are not integrated.

Leadership does not consistently use data to drive continuous improvement.

Education Talking Circle Process



Circle Purpose

Use this circle to reflect on teaching, learning environments, child development, and improvement. Share professional insight and lived experience; listen, respond, and build together.

Talking Circle



Prompt 1

How does your program ensure curriculum, lesson planning, and teaching practices are implemented consistently across all classrooms and program options?

Prompt 2

How do teachers and managers use child assessment and school readiness data to individualize instruction and improve child outcomes?

Prompt 3

How are coaching, supervision, and professional development aligned with CLASS observations, curriculum fidelity, and identified teaching needs?

Key Findings:

- Curriculum implementation is inconsistent across classrooms and program options.
- Child assessment data are not effectively used to individualize instruction and support school readiness goals.
- Coaching and professional development are not linked to observed teaching needs and child outcomes.
- Lesson plans do not reflect intentional planning, individualization, and alignment with the curriculum.
- Management does not consistently monitor teaching quality, CLASS performance, and curriculum fidelity.

Documents Needed:

- Curriculum Scope and Sequence and sample lesson plans.
- Child assessment reports and school readiness data reports.
- Coaching plans, CLASS observation reports, and professional development records.
- Individual child files, including developmental screenings and individualized planning documentation.
- Ongoing monitoring reports and curriculum fidelity checklists.

Talking Circle



Prompt 1

What specific qualifications were missing for teachers (e.g., AA/BA in ECE, CDA credentials), and how many staff were affected?

Prompt 2

Which required processes were not implemented (e.g., coaching strategy, classroom observations, developmental screenings within 45 days), and for how long?

Prompt 3

What evidence was missing or incomplete (e.g., professional development plans, lesson plan feedback, curriculum fidelity checks)?

Staff Qualifications



Key Instructions

Affirm staff strengths and growth. Reflect on qualifications, training, support, and development pathways. Share respectfully to build understanding and strengthen capacity.

Sault Ste. Marie Head Start and Early Head Start May 2026
Graduation – Bay Mills Community College

Education – Staff Qualifications

Key Findings:

- Teachers lack required AA/BA in ECE or CDA credentials
- No professional development plans (PDPs) for unqualified staff
- No research-based coaching strategy or classroom observations
- Developmental screenings missing within 45 days
- Curriculum not implemented with fidelity

Documents Needed:

- Staff qualification tracking sheets
- Professional development plans (PDPs)
- Degrees, transcripts, or CDA certificates
- Coaching logs and observation feedback
- Developmental screening records (e.g., ASQ)
- Lesson plans and curriculum checklists



Data Tour – Education & Child Development



2. EDUCATION & CHILD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)



How the program supports children's learning and development and promotes school readiness.

Key Documents and Data

- Curriculum Scope and Sequence
- Lesson Plans
- School Readiness Goals
- Child Assessment System Procedures
- Child Assessment Reports
- Individualization Documentation
- CLASS Observation Reports
- Coaching Plans and Documentation
- Professional Development Plans
- Teacher Qualifications and Credentials
- Home Visit Plans and Socialization Plans
- Developmental Screening Results
- Transition Plans
- Classroom Schedules and Routines
- Child Outcome Data and Dashboards
- Education Staff Discussion Notes
- Classroom Exploration Notes
- Research-Based Coaching Documentation
- ECD Data Tour Materials

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Family Engagement Talking Circle Process



Key Instructions

Recognize families as essential partners and reflect on relationships, trust, communication, and shared goals for children.

Listen with empathy, honor different perspectives, and use the next prompts to explore what is working and where deeper collaboration is needed.

Talking Circle



Prompt 1

What research-based parenting curriculum was missing, and how long has the program gone without offering it?

Prompt 2

How were family partnership agreements not reviewed, tracked, or followed up on (e.g., no goal progress monitoring, no mid-year check-ins)?

Prompt 3

What evidence was missing to show that families received referrals or follow-up services for identified needs?

Family & Community Engagement

Key Findings:

- No research-based parenting curriculum offered
- Family partnership agreements not reviewed or updated
- No tracking of family goal progress
- No follow-up with families on referrals

Documents Needed:

- Parenting curriculum materials & attendance logs
- Family partnership agreements & goal tracking sheets
- Referral tracking logs & follow-up documentation



Data Tour – Family & Community Engagement

4. FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (FCE)



How the program engages and empowers families and builds community partnerships.

Key Documents and Data

- PFCE Plan
- Intake and Family Assessment Forms
- Family Partnership Process Procedures
- Family Partnership Agreements
- Family Goal Tracking Reports
- Family Engagement Activity Logs
- Parent Meeting Minutes
- Parent Surveys
- Community Partnership Agreements
- Father Engagement Plans
- Male Caregiver Engagement Activities
- Staff Supervision Records
- Family Services Staff Training Plans
- Family Needs and Strengths Assessments
- Family Outcomes Data
- Family Satisfaction Data
- Community Resource Directories
- FCE Data Tour Materials
- Family Services Staff Discussion Notes

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ERSEA Talking Circle Process



Discussion Focus

Reflect on ERSEA process and impact through fairness, access, and consistency.

Share clearly, listen respectfully, and use the prompts to improve systems.

Talking Circle



Prompt 1

What eligibility determination errors occurred (e.g., incorrect categorization, missing verification documents, no income verification)?

Prompt 2

What written policies were missing (e.g., no procedures for staff who intentionally violate eligibility regulations)?

Prompt 3

What training was not provided within 90 days of hire (e.g., ERSEA training for management and eligibility determination staff)?

Key Findings:

- Selection criteria not updated or shared with staff
- Eligibility verification missing or incorrect
- No written policies for staff violating eligibility rules
- Eligibility training not provided within 90 days of hire

Documents Needed:

- Written ERSEA policies & procedures
- Eligibility determination checklists & verification docs
- Training sign-in sheets & agendas
- Enrollment & vacancy tracking reports

Data Tour - ERSEA

5. ERSEA



How the program ensures fair and consistent eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance.

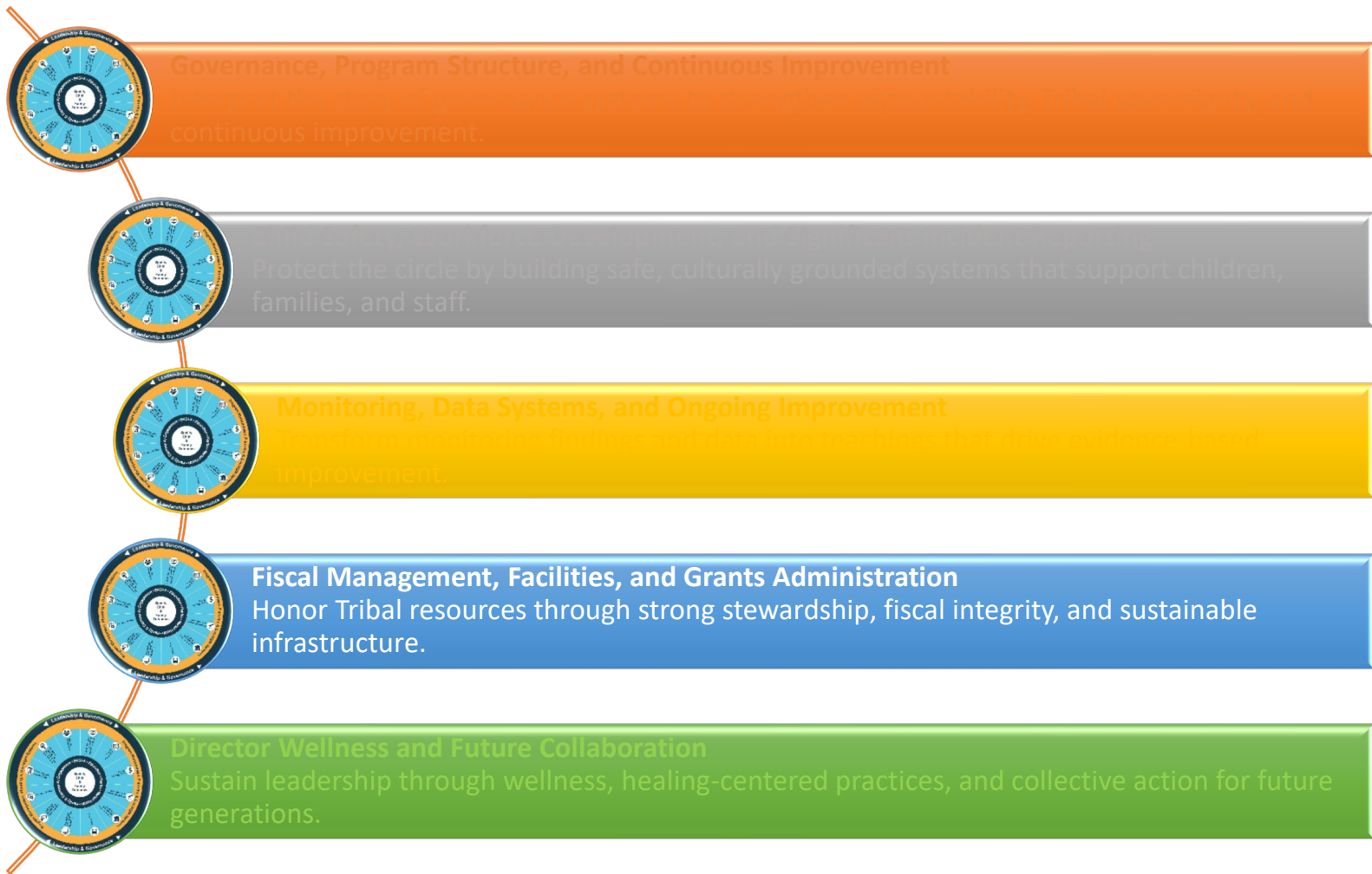
Key Documents and Data

- ERSEA Policies and Procedures
- Eligibility Determination Procedures
- Selection Criteria and Point System
- Recruitment Plan and Materials
- Waitlist Reports
- Eligibility Tracking System
- Enrollment Reports
- Attendance Reports
- HSES Monthly Enrollment Reports
- Disability Enrollment Reports
- Community Assessment Data
- Policies Preventing Fraudulent Enrollment
- Program Enrollment Roster
- Eligibility Training Records
- Sample Eligibility Files (non-Tribal only)
- Attendance Analysis Reports
- Vacancy Fill Tracking (30 days)
- Selection Ranking Lists
- ERSEA Data Tour Materials
- Eligibility File Review Materials

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Learning Objectives - Fiscal



Talking Circle



Prompt 1

Which required federal reports (SF-425, SF-429-A) were missing or filed late, and for which fiscal years?

Prompt 2

How did the program fail to track administrative costs, and what percentage of total costs was potentially exceeded?

Prompt 3

What financial management practices were missing (e.g., bank reconciliations, equipment inventory, indirect cost agreement, non-federal match tracking)?

Fiscal & Financial Management

Key Findings:

- SF-425 not filed or filed late
- SF-429-A not filed (even with no real property)
- Administrative costs not tracked; may exceed 15%
- No indirect cost agreement or expired rate
- Missing bank reconciliations & equipment inventory

Documents Needed:

- SF-425 and SF-429-A copies with submission dates
- Monthly bank reconciliations
- Equipment inventory (serial #, location, funding source)
- Indirect cost rate agreement
- Administrative cost tracking spreadsheets
- Audits & corrective action plans



Personnel & Background Checks

Key Findings:

- Fingerprint/background check not completed before hire
- No child abuse & neglect (CAN) registry check
- Background checks not renewed every 5 years
- Staff had unsupervised access before checks complete

Documents Needed:

- Criminal record check (CRC) tracking log
- Fingerprint results & date received
- CAN registry check results
- Sex offender registry check results
- HR hiring policies & procedures





6. FISCAL INFRASTRUCTURE (FIS)



Key Documents and Data

How the program manages funds in compliance with federal requirements and sound fiscal practices.

- Fiscal Policies and Procedures
- Chart of Accounts
- Approved Grant Budget
- Budget Narrative and Justification
- Budget-to-Actual Reports
- General Ledger
- Trial Balance
- Bank Reconciliations
- Payment Management System (PMS) Drawdown Reports
- SF-425 Federal Financial Reports
- SF-429A Real Property Reports
- Most Recent Audit Report
- Cost Allocation Plan
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- Procurement Policies and Procedures
- Payroll Records and Reports
- Equipment Inventory
- Transaction Testing Support Documents
- Non-Federal Match Documentation

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Talking Circle



Prompt 1

What is your immediate actions once you have received your Monitoring Report or Follow-Up Request?

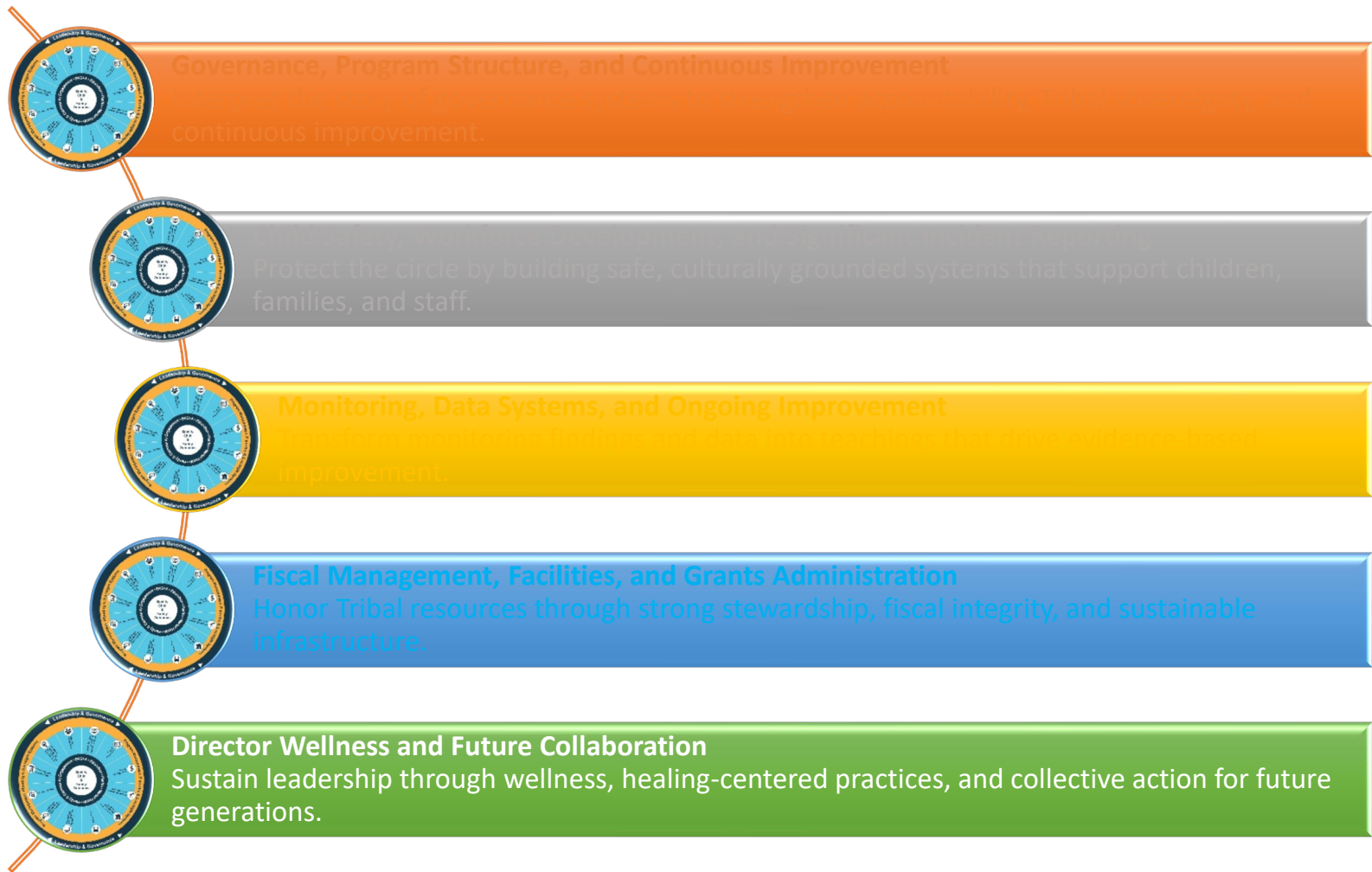
Prompt 2

What type of support do you need from TTA in helping to respond to Monitoring requests?

Prompt 3

How can a system be developed for both pre and post events with Directors to support best practice.

Learning Objectives - Wellness



Talking Circle



Prompt 1

What challenges are we experiencing?

Prompt 2

What teachings emerge?

Prompt 3

What strengths and cultural assets can we draw upon?

Director Wellness & Future Collaboration

Talking Circle Prompt

- What story do you want your leadership to tell seven generations from now?

Focus Areas

- Personal wellness
- Healing-centered leadership
- Peer support circles
- 90-day action commitments

Wrap Up



- **Talking Circle Prompt**
 - How are we honoring the resources entrusted to us?
- **Action**
 - How are we valuing the network we have created?

Thank You!



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Head Start Regional TTA Network