



# Technical Assistance Self-Reflection Tool

*A resource to technical assistance providers serving  
early childhood programs for engaging in reflection and  
continuous quality improvement*

**EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (ECLI) \* ROWAN UNIVERSITY**

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### ***Explanation of Tool:***

This document is the result of a collaboration between New Jersey's Regional Technical Assistance Center Directors, Program Managers and Senior TAS, with support from the Early Childhood Leadership Institute (ECLI), to create a tool for guiding best practices in providing technical assistance to early childhood programs throughout the state.

### ***Purpose of Tool:***

In 2016, the *Technical Assistance Specialist Standards for NJ Early Childhood Professionals* was created as a means for informing and promoting the quality of technical assistance (TA) to early childhood and afterschool programs throughout New Jersey. In an effort to build upon this work, TA Center Directors, Program Managers and Senior TAS, along with support from ECLI, began exploring the question: *What is effective TA?* This led to a tool that attempts to capture specific practices and strategies related to the original TAS Standards for the purpose of promoting effective TA, facilitating the implementation of goal setting and continuous quality improvement (CQI) for TA Staff and encouraging consistency in technical assistance provided across regions.

### ***Tips for Implementation:***

This document is meant to be used as a resource for those providing technical assistance to engage in reflective practice and routinely self-assess skills in order to identify areas of strength and areas where they would like to create goals and improvement plans for their own professional growth. Currently, it is at the discretion of each agency as to any further expectations in its use; however, below are a few tips for implementation:

- *Supervisors use tool for incorporating specific practices within conversations with staff, as a reference for articulating and highlighting best practice during one-on-ones, in providing observation feedback to affirm strengths and as a basis for asking reflective questions to promote inquiry and curiosity, etc.*
- *Agencies provide opportunities for TA providers to use tool for informing goals during agency's annual reviews and/or for creating individual goals to focus on within small coaching groups offered through ECLI and PD opportunities outside the organization.*

FOCUS: Strength-based, culturally responsive, and collaborative relationships	COMMENTS/EVIDENCE:
<p>a) <i>Actively utilizes knowledge, experiences and priorities of programs in developing goals for growth</i></p> <p>b) <i>Sets and respects boundaries</i></p> <p>c) <i>Utilizes various strategies and frameworks for engaging in meaningful and productive conversations with programs and TA systems partners</i></p> <p>d) <i>Provides follow-up to programs and colleagues in a timely manner</i></p> <p>e) <i>Clearly documents CQI efforts objectively and with specificity, avoiding jargon</i></p> <p>f) <i>Uses knowledge and/or prior experiences in relevant ECE contexts, along with standards and classroom/program evaluation tools as a measure of quality and to assist in identifying priorities</i></p> <p>g) <i>Engages in self-reflection to bring awareness of one's implicit biases and subjectivity and how it may impact work with programs</i></p> <p>h) <i>Observes cultural and linguistic strengths of the program and utilizes in goal setting</i></p> <p>i) <i>Guides programs in identifying CQI efforts that honors and respects the learning style, culture, language, needs and preferences of children, families and communities served</i></p> <p>j) <i>Utilizes various strategies and frameworks such as Skilled Dialogue, humble inquiry, making the most of coaching conversations, etc. in working through conflict with programs</i></p> <p>k) <i>Utilizes active listening</i></p> <p>l) <i>Engages with programs in solution-focused discussions to promote action</i></p> <p>m) <i>Applies knowledge and understanding of basic andragogy principles</i></p> <p>n) <i>Researches topics and creates professional learning opportunities to meet the needs of the group</i></p> <p>o) <i>Demonstrates skills in facilitating adult learning groups</i></p> <p><b>Associated TAS Standards:</b></p> <p>1.1 Relationship-based, 1.2 Communication, 1.3 &amp; 1.4 Contextual understanding of adult developmental stages, the role of the administrator, the work environment and families the programs serve, 1.5 Cultural and linguistic appropriateness</p>	<p><b>Supervisor:</b> What TA practices are you currently observing in this area? Area(s) of growth?</p> <p><b>TA Provider:</b> How have you grown in this area? What would be a next step in strengthening skills in this area?</p>



FOCUS: Leadership, reflective practice and systems knowledge	COMMENTS/EVIDENCE:
<p>a) <i>Demonstrates emotional intelligence and positive dispositions in leading</i>  b) <i>Practices and models Growth Mindset by seeking learning opportunities from peers and others</i>  c) <i>Conducts self-assessment to inform strengths and areas for growth</i>  d) <i>Creates an Individual Professional Development Plan with SMART goals and assesses progress on a biannual basis</i>  e) <i>Engages in activities designed to improve work-related skills, dispositions and practices</i>  f) <i>Stays current with latest research, trends and best practices and embeds knowledge into practice</i>  g) <i>Provides time for reflection of self and of those they are in a leadership role with as part of their professional practice</i>  h) <i>Uses a systematic approach of reflection on action, in action and for action to inform their own CQI</i>  i) <i>Knowledge and implementation of the TAS standards and dispositions</i>  j) <i>Distinguishes specific skills for TA with center based and FCC</i>  k) <i>Articulates and demonstrates the QRIS philosophy and approach in child care/family care</i>  l) <i>Understands, sets and maintains appropriate boundaries with programs</i>  m) <i>Models accountability to programs and peers/staff</i>  n) <i>Provides consistent technical assistance efforts across systems</i>  o) <i>Establishes positive relationships with and understands roles of all TA Specialists</i>  p) <i>Displays knowledge of individual program and program type (center-based, FCC, etc.) in order to customize TA services and identify priorities</i>  q) <i>Clearly articulates expectations, timelines and standards to programs and provides timely supports &amp; resources as needed</i>  r) <i>Demonstrates knowledge and inter-relatedness of local, regional, statewide, and national early childhood systems</i>  s) <i>Adheres to agency policies and procedures</i>  t) <i>Secures all files and uses discretion when discussing information involving programs, maintains confidentiality at all times</i></p> <p><b>Associated Standards</b>  3.1 Professional orientation: philosophy, responsibilities, boundaries, legal and ethical practice, 3.3, 3.4 &amp; 3.10  Collaboration, Roles of other TA Specialists and partners and managing the technical assistance process, 3.5 &amp; 3.6  Self-assessment of knowledge and skills and individual professional development plan implementation 3.8  Reflective Practice, 3.9 Leadership</p>	<p><b>Supervisor:</b> What TA practices are you currently observing in this area? Area(s) of growth?</p> <p><b>TA Provider:</b> How have you grown in this area? What would be a next step in strengthening skills in this area?</p>