

# The Data Literate Grant

## Integrating data-driven CQI into your grant writing process

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EVALUATION





# — Objectives

Review Data Literacy in the Head Start Context

Data Capacity and Setting Up for Success

Storytelling with Data

Holistic Use of Data

This Year's Grant vs. Future Grants





# DATA LITERACY

● ● ●  
**DATA**

**Numbers given context**





# DATA LITERACY

- The ability to find useful information in data.
- The knowledge and application of data as appropriate for a person's role in an organization.



# HEAD START DATA LITERACY

- **Context matters:** It is important to demonstrate knowledge of the Head Start universe
- **Head Start data literacy is knowing how to use data in the context of a Head Start program**



# THE HEAD START CONTEXT

- **Head Start is changing the focus of how it evaluates grantees**
- **This requires changes in how grantees communicate**



# FROM COMPLIANCE TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Three stages of transition towards CQI

- Compliance
- Transition
- Learning

*Understanding Data Use for Continuous Quality Improvement in Head Start – Urban Institute, 2015*





# COMPLIANCE

**Collect and report the required data**

- **PIR is complete**
- **Data demonstrates that all rules were followed**
- **Use of data in grants, outcomes reports, etc. focuses on procedure and process**

*Understanding Data Use for Continuous Quality Improvement in Head Start – Urban Institute, 2015*



# — TRANSITIONING

**Integrate learning elements alongside compliance focus**

- **Focus remains on compliance, all requirements met**
- **Staff begin to look at data on a regular basis**
- **Some staff have begun to review the data**
- **Use of data begins to shift to emphasis on outcomes**

*Understanding Data Use for Continuous Quality Improvement in Head Start – Urban Institute, 2015*

  
**LEARNING**

**Compliance, with an emphasis on outcomes**

- **Rules are followed and data demonstrates compliance**
- **Staff use data to inform decisions at all levels of the organization**
- **Staff regularly review data and organize into teams to develop ways to improve outcomes based on data**

*Understanding Data Use for Continuous Quality Improvement in Head Start – Urban Institute, 2015*



# CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



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# CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

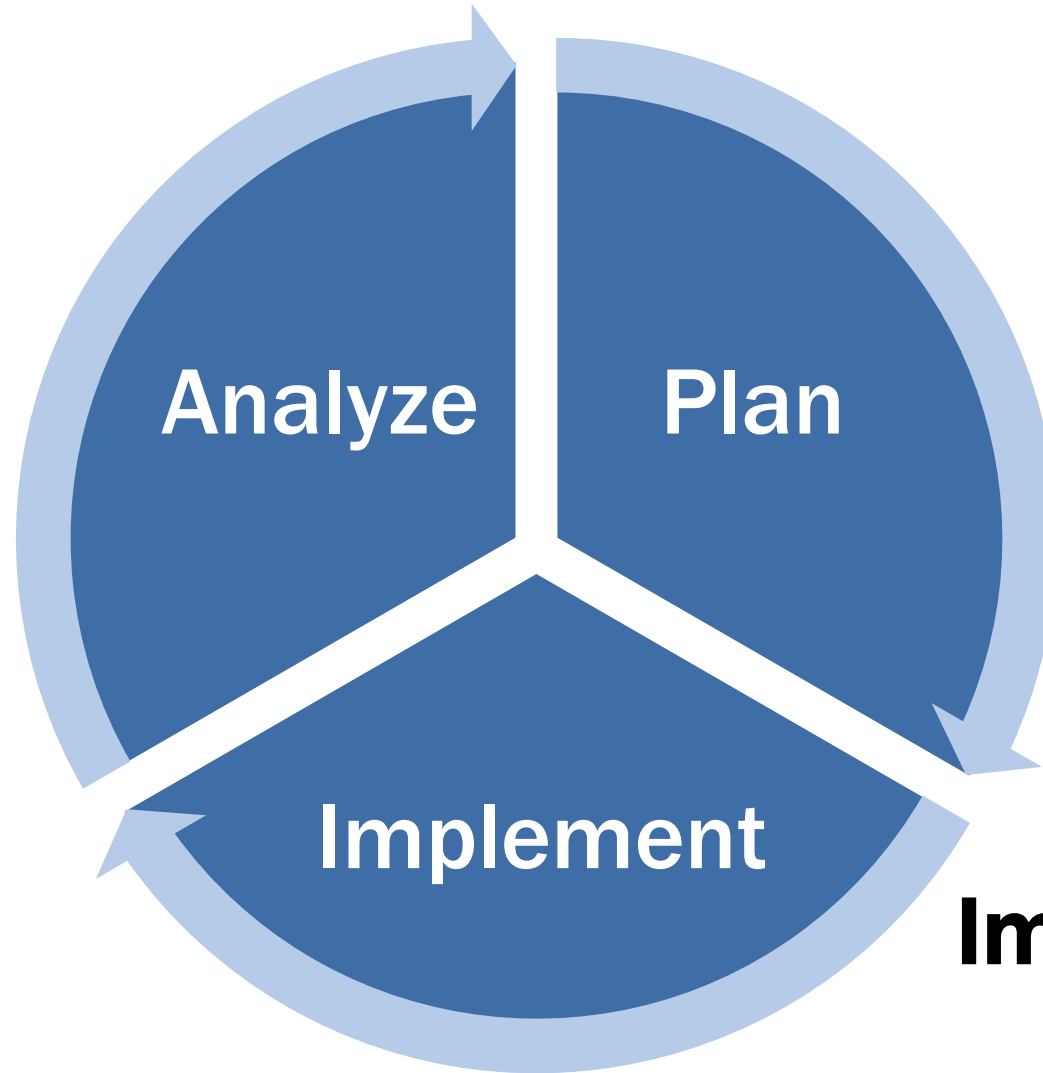
A management approach

Based on the idea that most processes can be improved and made more efficient

Instead of focusing on issues only when problems, CQI advocates for incremental, regular changes that become a part of day-to-day activities

# Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

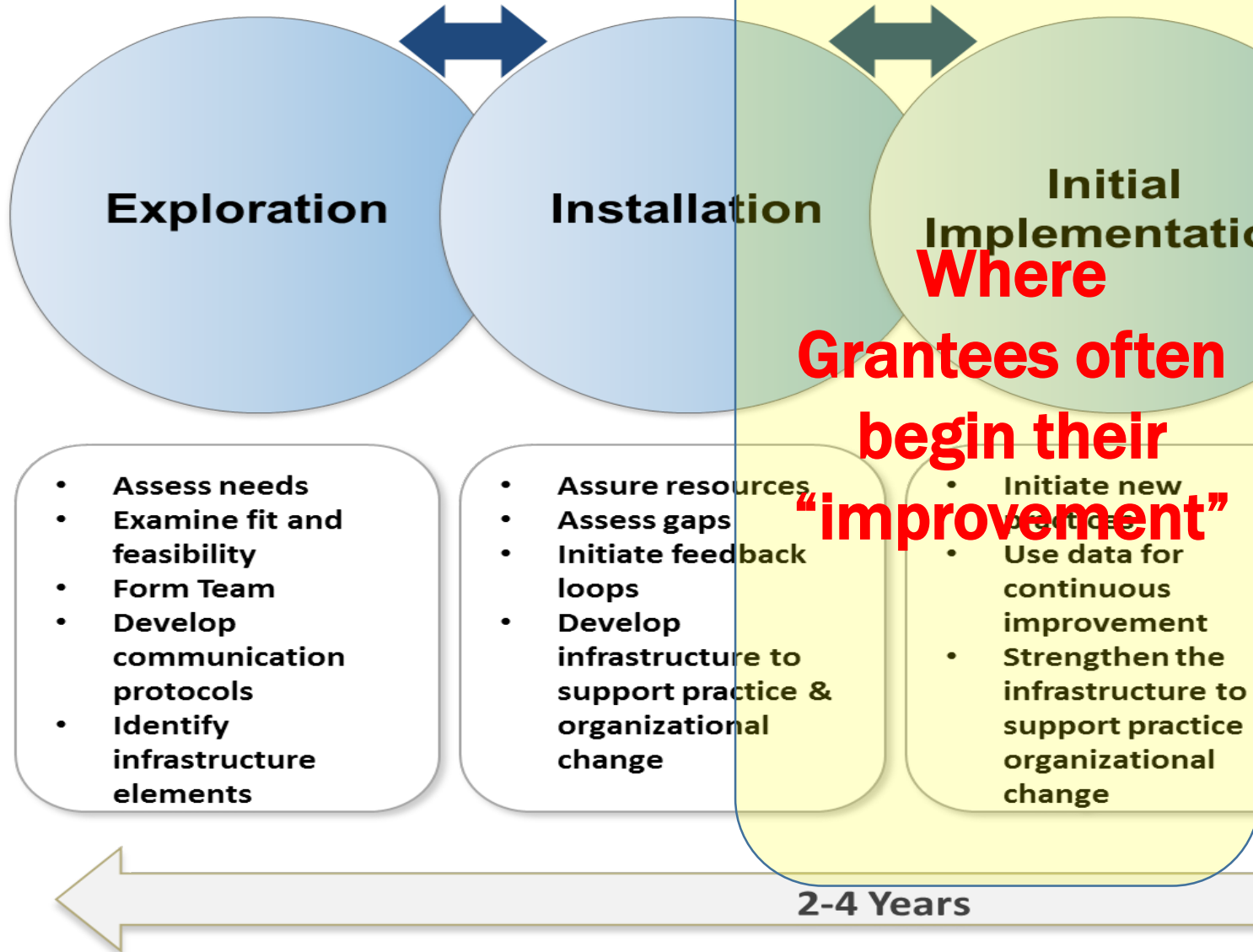
**Analyze – How  
did the Plan  
work?**



**Create the Plan**

**Implement the Plan**

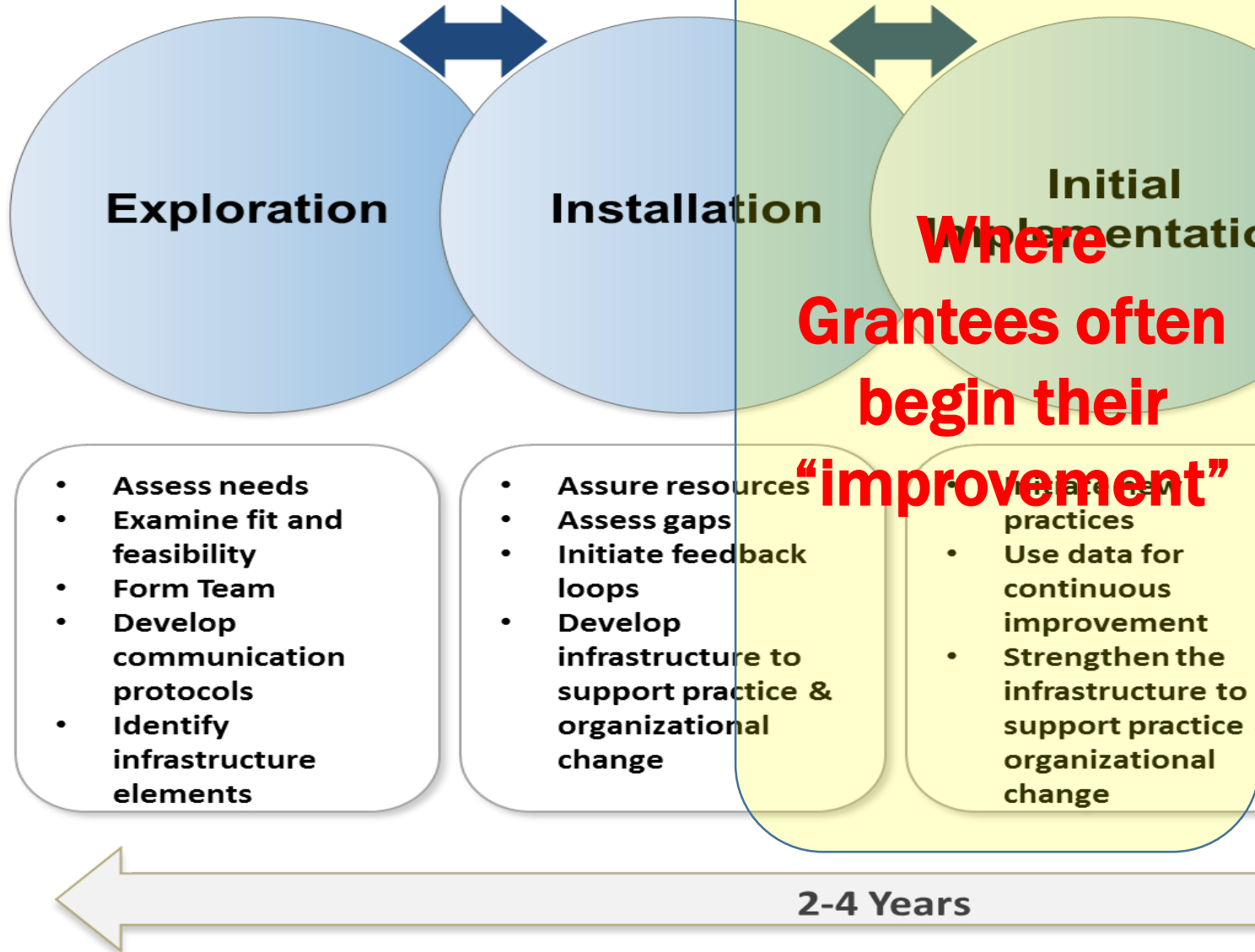
# Implementation Stages



What this often looks like at a grantee:

- New Ops Guidelines or Policies and Procedures or SOPs, rolled out to ALL STAFF at pre-service or at other times during the year, as a result of the self-assessment, or pre-year planning
- New G&O document with all kinds of new procedures

# Implementation Stages

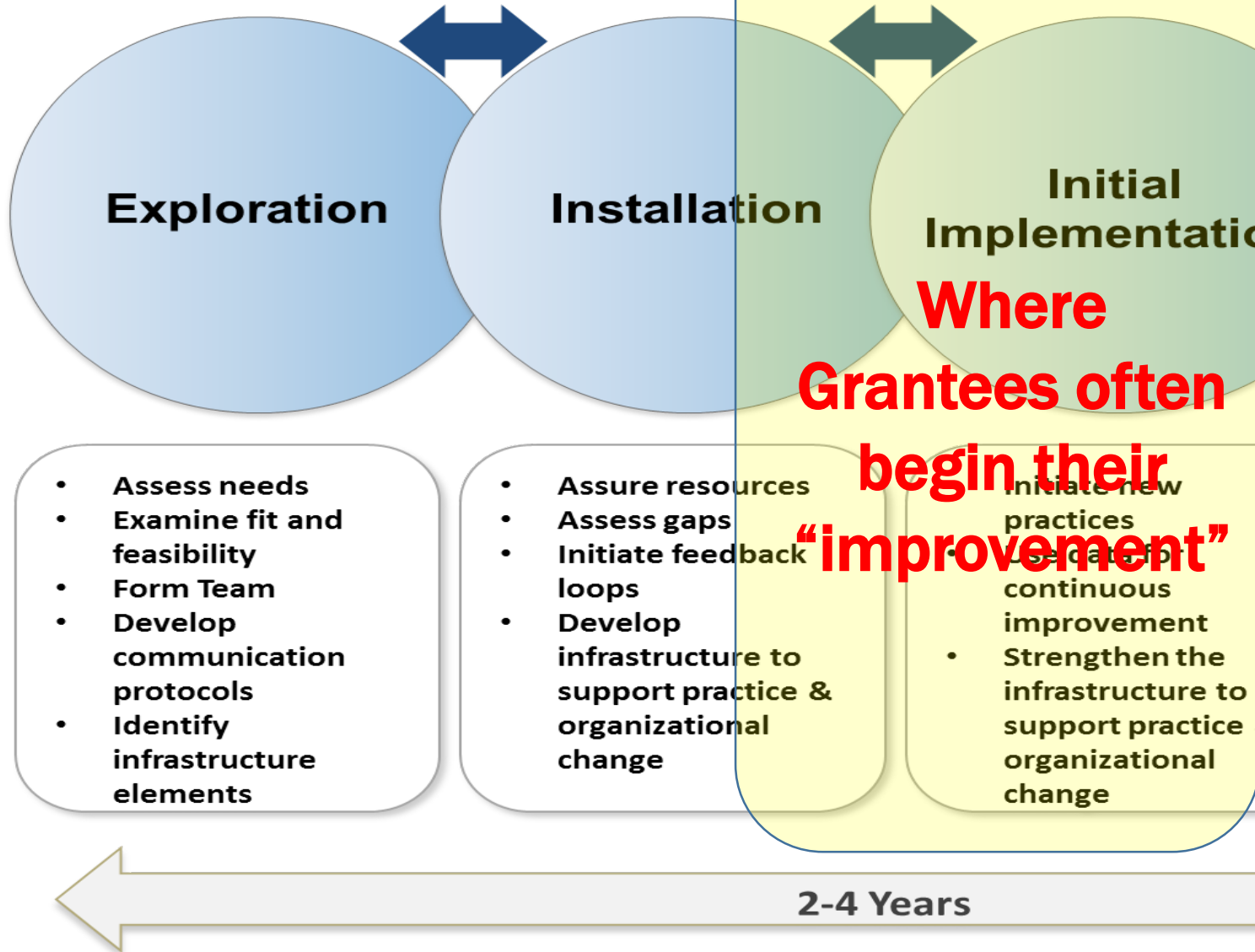


## What this often looks like:

- Doesn't fully engage staff (typically changes are "pushed down" from above)
- Follow through is often lacking ("what do THEY want us to do again, exactly?")
- At year end, not sure the plan worked (how to measure?)
- Unanticipated technological problems
- Managers aren't familiar with the program or process, hard to support their staff



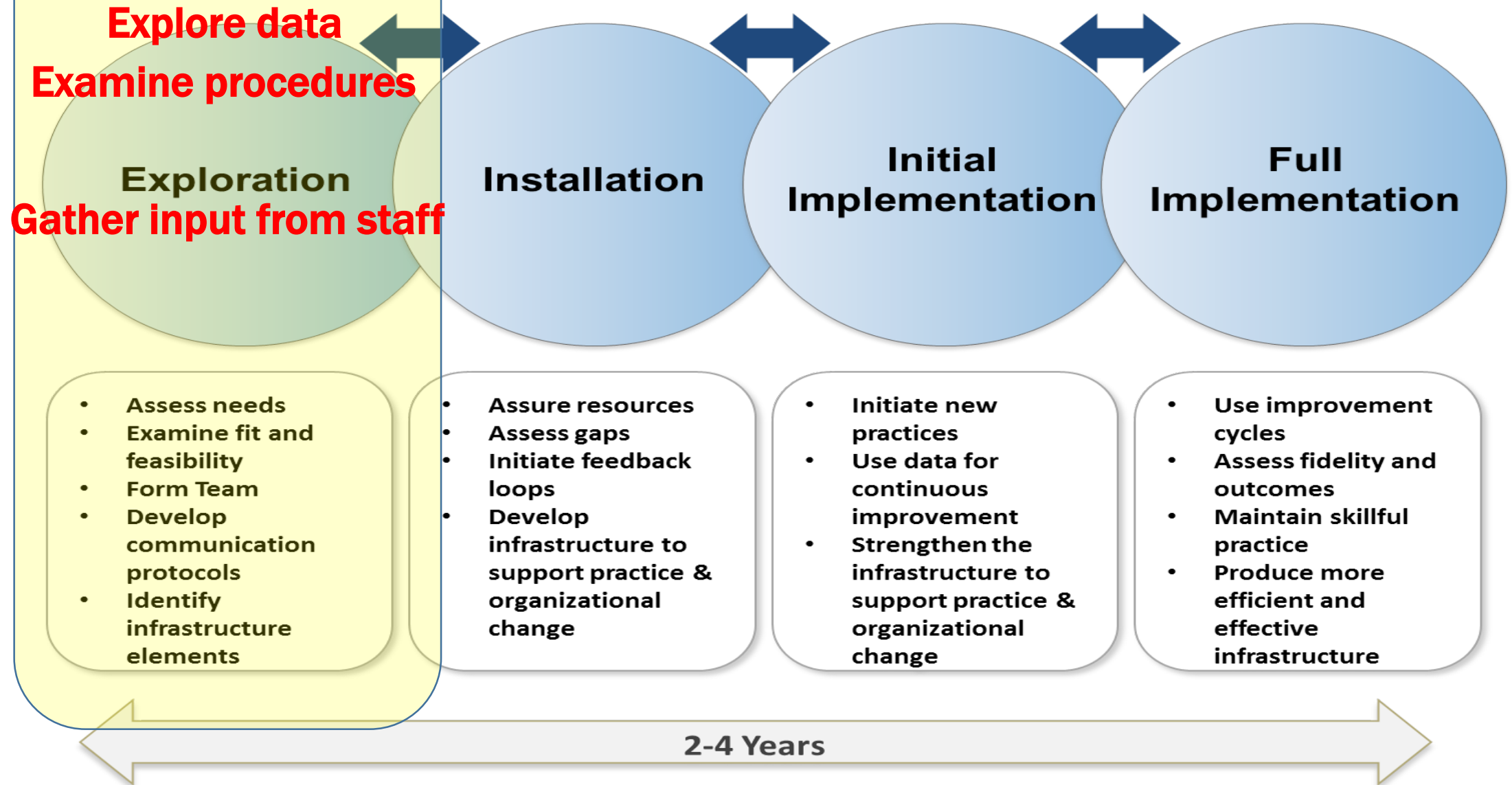
# Implementation Stages



What this often looks like at a grantee:

- When asked about implementation stages or changes, staff often say “I think we’re supposed to do it like this now...” These answers may vary from person to person.
- When asked about the larger CQI plan, staff are unable to articulate the big picture

# Implementation Stages





# — Shift in Organizational Culture



Senior Leadership must champion the shift from compliance culture to CQI culture

Cultural shifts do not happen overnight

More than 50 years of compliance culture in EHS/HS

Most EHS/HS professionals have been socialized to a culture of compliance



# DATA CAPACITY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

- **How well does your organization use data?**
  - **Can you use your data for more than compliance?**
  - **Can you DEMONSTRATE this in practice?**



# EXAMPLE

**How long does it take to fill a slot after a child drops?**

- **Do you know the average number of days?**
- **Is the average the same for HS and EHS?**
- **Across all your partners?**
- **Across all your sites?**



# DATA CAPACITY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

- **How prepared are you to use data in your grant?**
  - Who do you go to in order to get data?
  - How do you know the data is accurate?
  - What data do you need?



# Data Capacity Exercise

**Area: Child Wellness and Safety**

**Question: Do all children who are flagged as needing follow-up on the ASQ3 receive it?**



# Data Capacity Exercise

**What data do you need (and where do you get it)**

- **School Readiness**
- **Family and Community Engagement**
- **ERSEA**
- **Child Wellness and Safety**





# STORYTELLING WITH DATA



# KNOW YOUR PURPOSE

- **Why are you writing this grant?**
  - **To get people to give you money – of course**
  - **Also, to make the lives of children and families in your community better**
- **This process may be mechanical and a bit clunky, but the goal is important and worth doing**



# KNOW YOUR WIREFRAME

- **Which grant are you writing?**
  - Baseline
  - Continuation
  - Competitive or non-competitive
  - Etc.



# KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- **Who is reading your grant?**
- **Under what conditions are they reading your grant?**



# AVOID THE DATA SHOTGUN TRAP

- There is a temptation to write the grant and throw in data here and there
- There is a temptation to stick data everywhere that you have it
- These are bad ideas



# STORYTELLING WITH DATA

- Be intentional with the use of data
- Make it easy on the reader of your grant



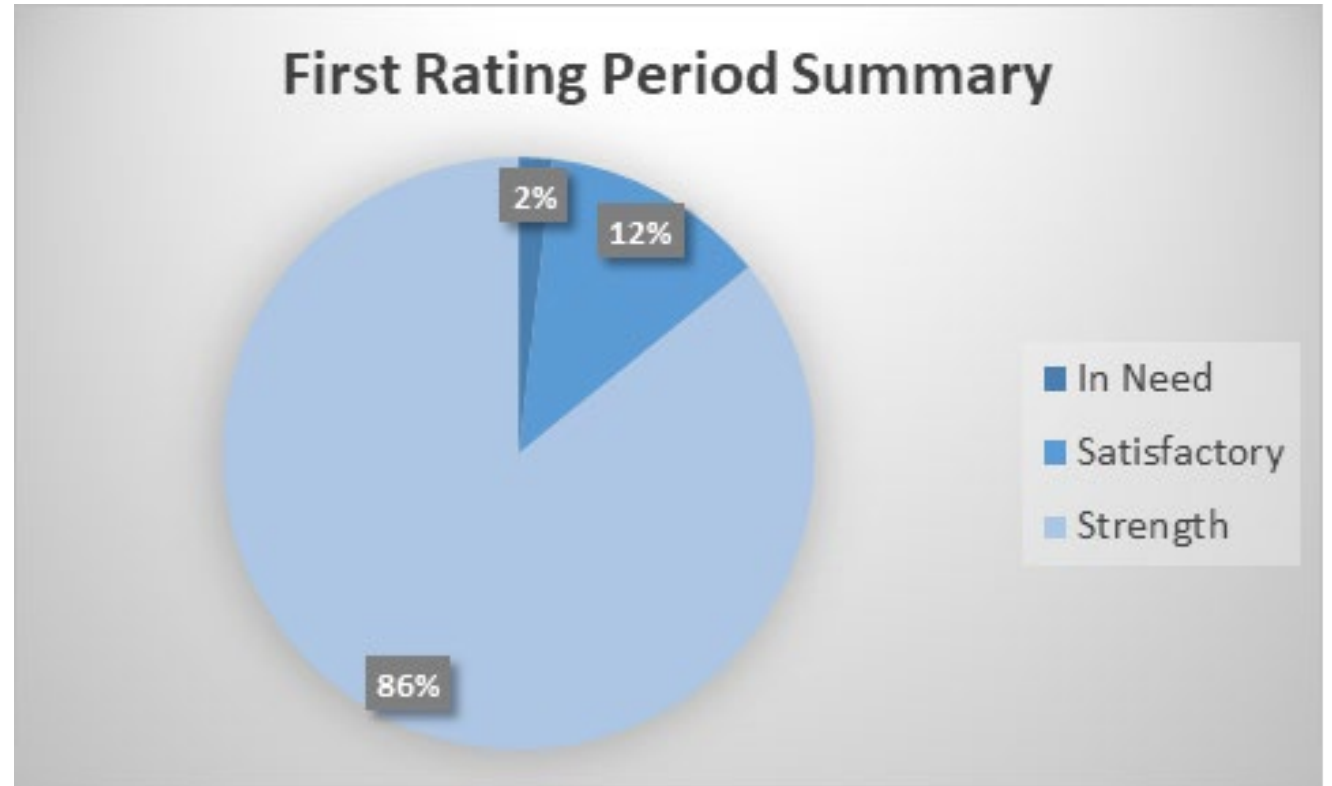
# STORYTELLING WITH DATA

- **Integrate the data with your narrative**
  - **Headline point**
  - **Short explanation**
  - **Use a visualization of the data whenever possible**
  - **Make sure the data tells the right kind of story**
  - **Keep it simple**



# EXAMPLE

We screened all of our families using the family outcomes screening tool in ChildPlus. These are the results of the screening.



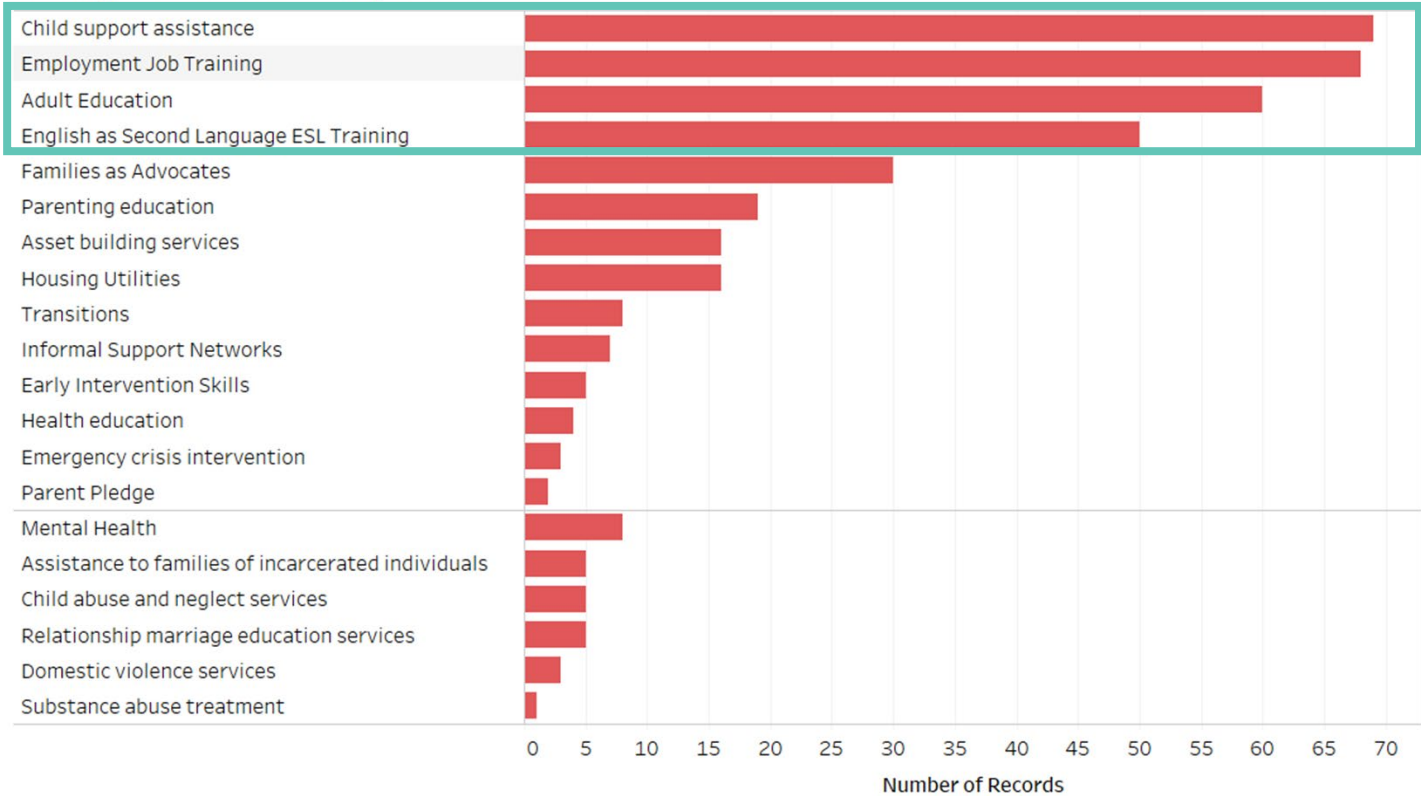




# EXAMPLE

We screened all of our families and identified the areas of greatest need. We are targeting the top four areas in our engagement efforts this year.

Strengths and Needs by Measure



Site  
(All)

Classroom  
(All)

Supervisor  
(All)

Caseworker  
(All)

Screening Result  
 Need



# **STORYTELLING**

# **IN THE GRANT APPLICATION**

- **Select the areas that are most suitable for using the best data that you have and can use**
  - Use data where your data capacity is strongest
  - Focus on the narrative where your data capacity is weakest
- **Tell your best stories with the data in the simplest, clearest way possible**



# STORYTELLING USING YOUR DATA

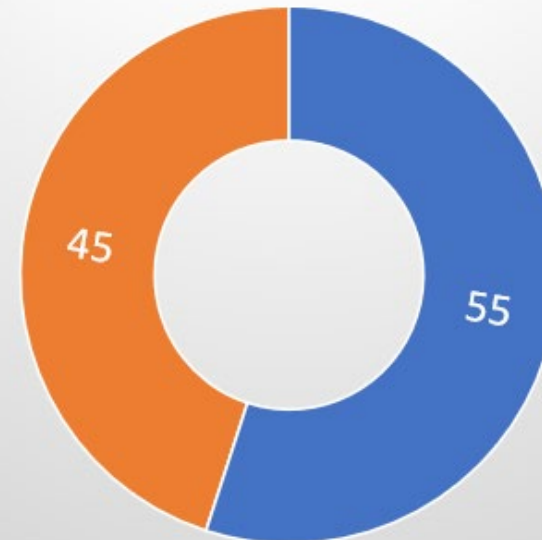
- **Headline**
- **Short narrative**
- **Visualization of the relevant data**



# Engaging and Empowering Dual Language Families

A new goal for our organization is to increase community engagement among the families of our dual language learners. They will be the focus of a series of outreach efforts in FCE and Child Wellness in the coming program year.

Dual Language Learners



■ English Only ■ Dual Language Learners



# Storytelling Exercise

**Think about your questions from the first exercise.**

- **What stories could be told in those areas in your grant?**
- **What kinds of data would support those stories**
- **How would you visualize that data?**
- **Can your organization access the data and visualize it for your grant?**



# DATA IN THE V.3 GRANT



# USING DATA IN YOUR GRANT

- You have limited space
- There is no specific area set aside for demonstrating the effective use of data
- Some areas are more data-friendly than others



# THINK HOLISTICALLY

- **Think of the grant as a whole**
  - **Some areas have tight requirements**
  - **Some are more flexible**
  - **Stories with data can help in several areas**





# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- **In theory, Head Start requires SMART goals**
  - **Specific**
  - **Measurable**
  - **Achievable**
  - **Relevant**
  - **Time-Bound**



# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- **Timing is imposed on you: the grant cycle**
- **Relevance comes from your narrative:**
  - “Our self assessment, community assessment, and other work shows why Goal X matters”
- **Achievability and measurability can be supported by your data**



# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- **Data can show that your goals are within reach**
  - **If you have picked the right goals**
- **What data you collect now, and what you will collect in the future show that you will be able to measure your outcomes**



# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**All of this depends on selecting the right kind of goals and objectives**

**And picking objectives and measures that you can use in practice**



# EXAMPLE

**Unrealistic goal:**

**“Through our efforts, we will end homelessness in our community.”**

**Realistic goal:**

**“All homeless families will receive a referral to local homeless transition services in our community.”**



# EXAMPLE

**Weak statement of objectives and measures:**

**“We will provide each family with literature explaining available services in the community.”**



# EXAMPLE

**Strong statement of objectives and measures :**

**“All families with an identified need in homeless services will have the need recorded in ChildPlus using family events.**

**Each Family Advocate will record follow-up actions in ChildPlus along with the outcomes of these efforts.**

**A custom report has been created to monitor these events and actions. On a quarterly basis, the FCE team will review these reports and evaluate the number of families that actually connected to services.”**



# DATA FRIENDLY SECTIONS

- **Section 1, Subsection A – Goals**
  - Data supports the selection of goals
  - Data supports the measurable objectives
- **Section 1, Subsection B – Service Delivery**
  - Numerous areas ask for summary data related to program decisions
  - Numerous program decisions can be supported with appropriate data





# Selecting Data Stories Exercise

**Review Section I, Subsections A and B.**

**Looking at the required sections:**

- **Where could you use the data questions and stories from the earlier exercises to support the grant?**
- **Considering your organization's goals and objectives, what question and data story would be good to add to your grant?**



# INTEGRATING CQI INTO YOUR GRANT



# **CQI CROSSES**

# **PROGRAM YEARS**

- **Past CQI informs the current grant & current CQI**
- **Present CQI efforts inform the future**
- **Plans for future CQI depend on planning today**



# **CQI CROSSES PROGRAM YEARS**

**This makes integrating CQI different from past annual grants focused wholly on compliance**



# **CQI INTEGRATION STARTS WITH A PLAN**

**A well-constructed CQI Plan includes:**

- **Alignment to Goals and Objectives**
- **A plan for the collection and analysis of data about the included project**
- **A clear mechanism for assessing the success of the plan**



# **CQI INTEGRATION STARTS WITH A PLAN**

**This sounds familiar:**

**Section I, Sub-Section A, Paragraph 1:**

**“What are your Program Goals, Measurable Objectives, and Expected Outcomes for the project period?”**



# **STORYTELLING** **ABOUT YOUR CQI**

**Section I, Sub-Section B has many areas where CQI efforts can be described**

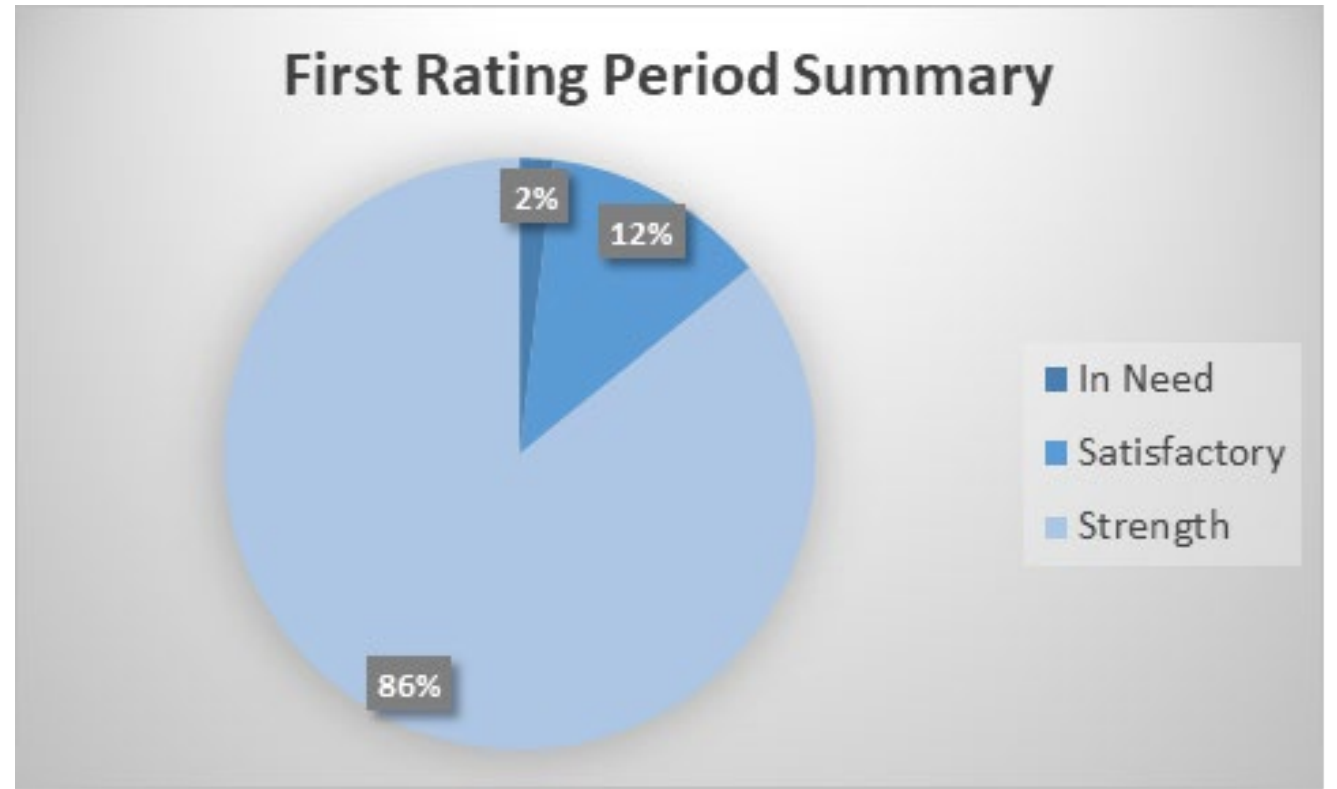
- **Curriculum Fidelity**
- **Health Screenings and Referrals**
- **Program strategies for family engagement**
- **Several questions on process efficiency**
- **Etc.**



# EXAMPLE

**Remember this?**

**Staff were not  
rating families as  
in need**







# EXAMPLE

## *Section I, Subsection A, Paragraph 1*

### Program Goal:

Provide services to our families that are aligned to the demonstrated needs of the community

### Measurable Objective:

Use information on needs derived from the family assessment to determine the top four areas of need. Target these areas with interventions to strengthen families in these areas.



# EXAMPLE

## Data, Tool, Method:

Standard Family Outcomes tool in ChildPlus

Reduced need measured by reduced number of families with the “In Need” rating in the Spring compared to Fall

## Expected Outcome:

Families will be stronger

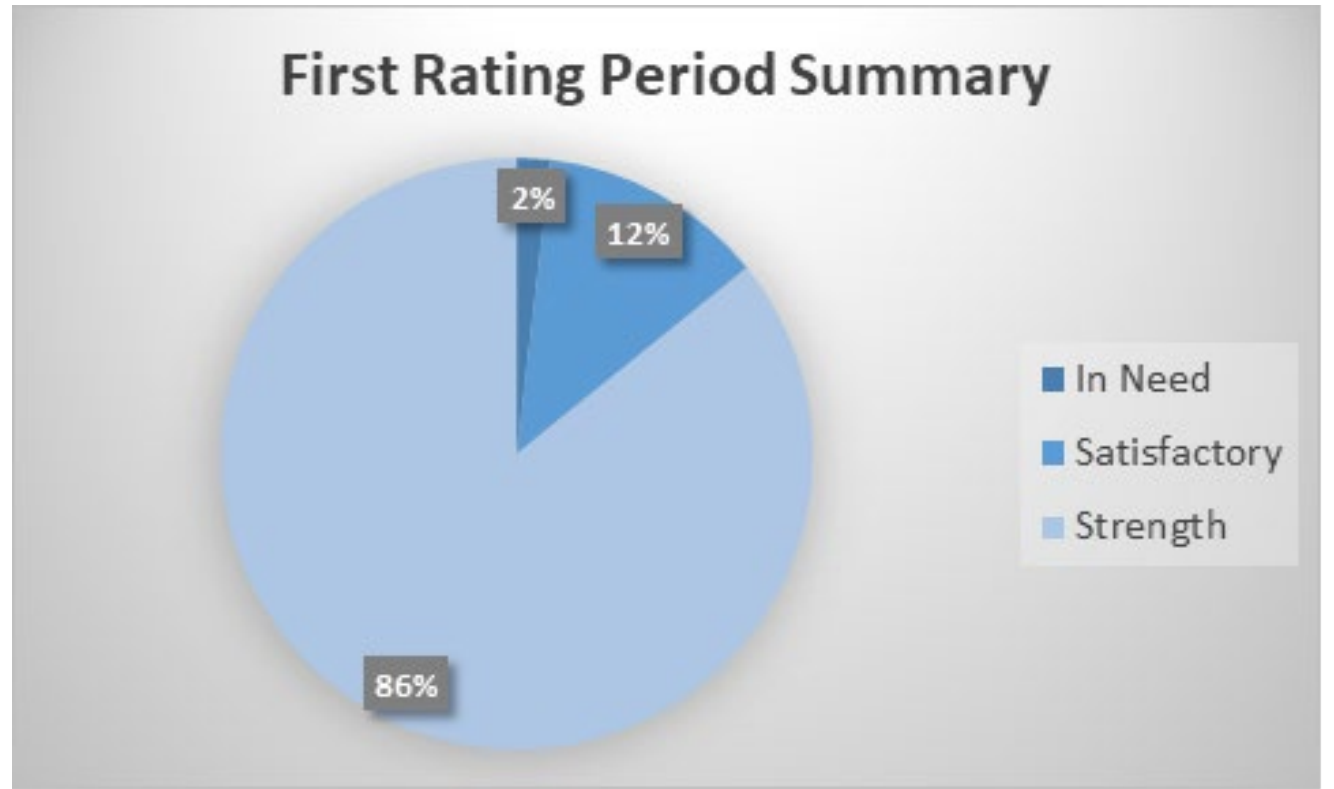


# EXAMPLE

## Challenge:

The tool says no one is in need

(You discovered this in “exploration”)





# EXAMPLE

## CQI Project:

Train staff to use the family outcomes tool appropriately to identify needs

Pilot group will be trained and their ratings compared to the standard group.



# EXAMPLE

**In the grant:**

**Subsection A, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph c.ii:**

- **Multi-year pilot to implementation description as “Data, Tools, or Methods”**

**Subsection B, Paragraph 8, Subparagraph d.i:**

- **The pilot, control group, and related trainings are procedures explained here**



# Bring it all Together

**Using the work so far, consider your data literate grant:**

- **What are the stories that align best to what you are already doing in the grant?**
- **Do you have the data to support these stories?**
- **How does the holistic approach weave these into different sections of the grant?**



# Bring it all Together

**How can you use what you are doing now as a foundation for future years?**



Questions?







# — Tools for visualizing data

- Excel: The old standard does a fine job at the basics, plus you probably already have it
- Microsoft PowerBI: Challenging to learn, but you can get a demonstration version for free that will create image files and PowerPoint slides. Gets expensive if you want to deploy it across an organization.
- Tableau: Expensive, but powerful. Big learning curve.



# — Two Books to Check Out

## Data visualization basics

- *Storytelling with Data*, Knaflic, Cole Nussbaumer (2015)

## CQI basics with lots of simple examples

- *The Spirit of Kaizen: Creating Lasting Excellence One Small Step at a Time*, Maurer, Robert, PhD (2013)