

Sustaining and Scaling/Expanding Pyramid Model High-Fidelity Practices: **A Resource Brief**

This brief provides information about and links to resources for state, community, and program leaders to support your efforts to sustain, scale, and expand high fidelity Pyramid Model practices. Also included are additional considerations related to fidelity, leadership, and equity.

Existing Resources

[Considerations for a Written Sustainability and Scale-Up Plan](#)

This resource provides a sample of the items and activities that should be present in a sustainability and scale-up plan. The resource is written with a focus on state work but can easily be adapted for community or program planning. Topics include: cross-sector implementation and integration, succession and turn-over planning, budgeting for scale-up, policy development, and maintaining fidelity.

[State Leadership Team \(SLT\) Checklist of Sustainability Features](#)

This free downloadable resource is comprised of features or characteristics of the SLT that contribute to sustainability.

[Roadmap to Statewide Implementation of the Pyramid Model](#)

This free downloadable resource outlines key activities, structures and strategies for implementation, sustainability, and scale-up of the Pyramid Model.

[The Statewide Implementation Guide \(SIG\)](#)

The SIG is a free, interactive process and guide for implementing evidence-based practices statewide including considerations for scale-up and sustainability of the practices.

[A Guide to the Implementation Process: Stages, Steps, and Activities](#)

This free resource is an interactive guide to implementation science from an early childhood perspective including all the stages of implementation including sustaining and scale-up.

[Active Implementation Hub \(AI-Hub\)](#)

The Active Implementation Hub is a free, online learning environment for use by any stakeholder—practitioners, educators, coaches, trainers, purveyors—involved in active implementation and scaling up of programs and innovations. The site goal is to increase the knowledge and improve the performance of persons engaged in actively implementing any program or practice.

[NCPMI Statewide Implementation webpage](#)

This web page includes resources on state implementation of the Pyramid Model including scale-up and sustainability resources.

[NCPMI Pyramid Model State Work webpage](#)

This web page is comprised of entries from Pyramid Model State Leadership Teams and includes some entries related to sustaining and scaling.

[For State Leaders, By State Leaders webinar series](#)

This series of webinars about sustaining and scaling the Pyramid Model provides experiences and resources from Pyramid Model State Leadership Teams and addresses topics such as sustainability and scale-up resources, policy, funding, equity, and data. Look for the *For State Leaders, By State Leaders* titles in the archived webinars on the NCPMI website.

Key Terms

Scale-up: The term “scale-up” refers to state and community level work to implement the Pyramid Model with more children and families. At the state level, scale-up activities focus on taking the initiative statewide. The SLT will plan for and provide the infrastructure needed to support new communities and implementation programs, while maintaining and supporting existing communities and programs. At the community level, scale-up refers to existing Community Leadership Teams increasing the number of implementation programs while sustaining support to existing programs to sustain fidelity and prevent drift. Key to scale-up is ensuring sufficient budget and staffing to provide continuing support (e.g., Program Implementation Coaching, training, communication, expanded data collection and analysis capacity) to early adopters in full implementation while supporting new adopters in the early stages of exploration and installation. See [Sustaining and Scaling/Expanding Pyramid Model High-Fidelity Practices: Sequence of Events](#).

Expansion: The term “expansion” is often used to refer to scale-up efforts at the *program level* by the Program Leadership Team in existing implementation programs to increase the number of practitioners, classrooms and/or early intervention programs using the practices with fidelity so that more children and their families have access to effective interventions and supports. This effort includes planning for and providing an expanded infrastructure (e.g., practitioner coaching, expanded data systems) to support additional practitioners, classrooms and/or home visiting sites to achieve full implementation while maintaining support to existing practitioners to sustain fidelity and prevent drift.

Sustainability: This term “sustainability” means maintaining high fidelity implementation at the state, community, and program level. This requires constant monitoring of current fidelity data at all levels (state, community, program) while expanding to new sites. Thus, sustaining at current sites while beginning the exploration and installation stages with new sites. At the state and community levels, leadership teams foster sustaining the Pyramid Model efforts by facilitating policies and budgets that will sustain Pyramid Model implementation over many years. Additionally, integrating the Pyramid Model with similar state initiatives will support durable and sustainable Pyramid Model work.

According to the [AI-HUB](#), sustainability planning and activities need to be an active component of every implementation stage from the beginning, with attention to both financial and programmatic sustainability.

Financial sustainability: This refers to established, adequate, and sustainable funding streams for implementing the practices.

Programmatic sustainability: This refers to an established, reliable, effective, and durable implementation infrastructure. The infrastructure needed to ensure continued quality implementation includes plans and activities for: 1) continuing to provide timely and effective training, coaching, and fidelity measurement processes making data-driven decisions for continuous improvement and problem-solving; and 2) ensuring that policies and procedures continue to support and facilitate full implementation.

Succession Planning: According to the [State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality](#), State Leadership Teams employ a plan for ongoing support and resources for the Program Implementation Coaches, demonstration sites, implementation sites and communities to ensure high-fidelity implementation and sustainability. Such support includes planning for turn-over and succession of key individuals. The State Leadership Team has a plan specific to ensuring it's team members will be succeeded by individuals who are prepared for and enthusiastic about Pyramid Model implementation. Supports for succession planning may include communicating with teams about challenges, reviewing data and responding to concerns, and careful hiring/selection practices (e.g., new employees and partners understand and are excited about implementing the Pyramid Model). Leadership succession is key to sustaining Pyramid Model implementation. This includes planning for continued support from new State Leadership Team members, as well as community and program administrators and leaders (e.g., directors, board members, funders).

Buy-In: Staff buy-in of the Pyramid Model is a critical component of implementation and sustainability. The [Leadership Team Implementation Manual](#) provides examples of strategies for measuring staff interest of using Pyramid Model, gathering feedback, and building buy-in through conversations over time. AI-HUB provides additional examples of sustainability practices on their Voices from the Field Page (Voices from the Field Video Series (Sustainability) | NIRN (unc.edu)).

The goal of sustainability is to reach a depth of change that the Pyramid Model “is what we do!” In other words, the implementation of the Pyramid Model is so engrained in the mission, values, work, and infrastructure that everyone knows and accepts what is needed and expected to maintain high fidelity of implementation.

Other Key Terms, Concepts, and Resources: Fidelity, Equity, and Leadership

Fidelity: In the NCPMI Data Roadmap, a distinction is made between *implementation fidelity* and *intervention fidelity*. **Implementation fidelity** refers to “the degree to which coaching, in-service training, instruction, or any other kind of evidence-based professional development practice is used as intended...,” while **intervention fidelity** refers to “the degree to which evidence-based intervention practices are used as intended...” (Dunst, Trivette & Raab, 2013, p. 89¹). For a program to implement an innovation, both implementation and intervention fidelity are critical to achieving meaningful outcomes.

NCPMI has provided the following guidance to state teams about how to define and measure Pyramid Model fidelity in classroom or center-based programs.

Implementation fidelity is measured by the Early Childhood Program-Wide PBS Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BoQ) (or similar measure) and classroom practice (intervention) fidelity is measured by the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool for Preschool Classrooms (TPOT) or Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS). For example, a high-fidelity program might have:

- ▶ all critical elements on EC-BoQ partially or fully in place, with 80% fully in place (implementation fidelity)
- ▶ TPOT and/or TPITOS average of key practices across all teachers who have received coaching of 80% or higher with no red flags and 100% of teachers are showing growth (intervention fidelity)

When developing your criteria for establishing a high-fidelity program, consider the following:

- ▶ Fidelity must be informed by multiple sources of data.
- ▶ When using a practice fidelity tool (i.e., TPOT, TPITOS), if a teacher only has 1 score from one observation (i.e., new to the program or coaching), their score should not be included in the average of key practices across all teachers.
- ▶ State teams should develop a process to re-assess the fidelity status of a program that has been identified as high-fidelity as turnover in personnel and other factors can affect implementation over time.

1 Dunst, C. J., Trivette, C. M., & Raab, M. (2013). An implementation science framework for conceptualizing and operationalizing fidelity in early childhood intervention studies. *Journal of Early Intervention, 35*, 79–84

Fidelity Resources

[Evaluation of State and Program Implementation of the Pyramid Model: Suggested Data Elements](#)

[Tip Sheet Series: Evaluating the Implementation of Evidence-based Practices](#)

[Establishing a Fidelity Threshold](#)

[Roadmap: Data Decision-Making and Program-Wide Implementation of the Pyramid Model](#)

Equity: Equity in access to and experience with the Pyramid Model are essential components of sustaining and scaling efforts. NCPMI is dedicated to providing services and resources that:

- ▶ promote the social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes of all young children
- ▶ eliminate the use of biased and inappropriate discipline practices, including suspension and expulsion
- ▶ promote family engagement
- ▶ use data for decision-making
- ▶ integrate early childhood and infant mental health consultation
- ▶ foster full inclusion, access, and participation of all children

To this end, NCPMI has developed many resources that programs and state leaders can use. One of these is the State Leadership Team Equity Inventory.

State Leadership Team Equity Inventory: The inventory is designed principally for the State Leadership Team (SLT) to foster awareness, discussion, and ongoing action to maximize equity during Pyramid Model statewide implementation. Its purpose is to assist in ensuring the Pyramid Model structures and services are serving all populations equitably—such as equity in how programs are selected and funded; diverse SLT membership; strategies for supporting more diversity in all essential structures; eliminating harsh and disproportionate discipline practices, (e.g., suspension and expulsion); as well as supporting inclusionary and high-quality learning for children identified with disabilities or dual language learners (DLLs).

Behavior Incident Report System (BIRS): The BIRS provides early care and education programs and classrooms with a system to collect and analyze behavior incidents in their program. The system provides an efficient mechanism for gathering information on elements related to behavior incidents that is used analytically to make decisions about providing support to teachers and children within the program. These data provide summative information on the frequency of behavior incidents over time and an analysis of potential equity issues by calculating disproportionality related to race, ethnicity, IEP status, gender, and dual language learners.

“Readiness” vs. capacity building: In scaling up the Pyramid Model, SLTs need a process and tools for bringing on new communities and programs for Pyramid Model implementation. We caution SLTs not to adopt a “readiness” approach as all communities and sites are ready for something. The key is having a process for identifying what those supports are. For instance, some states use a process that uses the [“Hexagon” tool](#) to help potential new sites identify what supports they need to begin either exploration or installation of the Pyramid Model practices. That process is then followed up with supports that will build the sites’ capacity to move to the next implementation stage.

Leadership: The AI-Hub discusses the importance of recognizing [two kinds of leadership](#) needed for changing systems and creating change: 1) technical leadership, and 2) adaptive leadership as described by Ron Heifetz and the importance of using the right kind of leadership to match the type of challenge. The AI-Hub provides many resources and examples of these

two types of leadership. The website includes the following explanations of the type of leadership associated with the type of challenges that implementation, sustainability, and scale-up will present.

Technical challenges: Technical challenges are those characterized by pretty clear agreement on a definition of the dimensions of the problem at hand. And there is agreement that the problem would be defined similarly by the groups impacted by it and engaged in addressing it. Technical problems also have clearer pathways to solutions. That is, we can be reasonably certain that given the agreed upon problem and the dimension of the problem, if we engage in a relevant set of activities we will arrive at a solution—not necessarily quickly or easily but the challenge and path to a solution are largely known. Technical challenges can be managed. The leader can form a team, make a plan, make decisions, hold people accountable, and execute the solution.

Technical leadership: This might be thought of as good management. The leader is engaged, quick to recognize and respond to issues that arise, organizes groups to solve problems, and regularly produces desired results. Technical leaders work in the zone where there is substantial agreement about what needs to be done and reasonable certainty about how to do it.

Adaptive challenges: These challenges aren't "solved" through traditional management approaches, because adaptive challenges involve legitimate, yet competing, perspectives—different views of the problem and different perspectives on what might constitute a viable solution. The definition of the problem is much less clear, and the perspectives on the "issue" at hand differ among stakeholders. Viable solutions and implementation pathways are unclear and defining a pathway for the solution requires learning by all. This "all" means that the primary locus of responsibility is not a single entity or person. These types of challenges require a different type of leadership and often require leadership at many levels.

Adaptive leadership: Adaptive leadership is needed to solve complex problems that do not have obvious solutions or widespread agreement about what should be done. Adaptive leadership includes skills that foster systems thinking and builds collaboration and consensus among the people who are expected to use the new innovation or practices.