

STARS to Quality Coaching Manual: A Guide for STARS Coaches and Agency Leadership

Section 1.....Page 2

What is Coaching

Overview of Practice-Based Coaching

Section 2.....Page 3

STARS to Quality Coaching

Hiring Guidance

On-Going Support

Coaching Defined

STAR Coaching Caseload

Virtual Coaching

Group Coaching

Technical Assistance, TA vs Coaching

Qualified Coaching Hours

Section 3.....Page 15

Preparing Child Care Programs for Coaching

What is Practice-Based Coaching and how can it benefit the program?

What will it be like to participate in STARS coaching?

What are roles and responsibilities of the STARS coach, the coachee, and program leader?

What are the differences between coaching and supervision?

How can overall program goals be supported through coaching?

The content of coaching: What effective practices can be supported by the STARS Coach?

Program choice

The implementation of Pyramid Model practices

Practices found in the Environmental Rating Scale-3 tools

Practices learned in STARS to Quality trainings

Instructional leadership skills and engaging in the coaching process

Other Researched-Based Practices

Section 4.....Page 20

Steps to coaching success: an overview of the new expectations and procedures for STARS coaches

Section 1

What Is Coaching?

Coaching is a collaborative process that uses goal setting, observation, reflection, and feedback to increase the use of effective practices.

Coaching as defined by The National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC:

“The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines coaching as a relationship-based process that is led by an expert with specialized early learning and adult education knowledge and skills. Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors. It is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or a group.”

The goal of coaching is to increase the use the effective practices.

Overview of Practice-Based Coaching

Practice-based coaching, PBC is an evidence-based model that supports the use effective teaching practices (Hemmeter et al., 2016, Snyder et al., 2015). PBC involves a collaborative process for guiding practitioners’ use of evidence-based practices, such as those of the Pyramid Model, to promote positive child outcomes. PBC can be implemented in diverse settings including center-based programs (e.g., Head Start, public pre-k, child care) and family/group child care homes. The goal in all settings is to collaborate with and support the implementation of effective practices, which lead to achieving positive outcomes for the children and families. It involves a cyclical process that includes:

- (1) Conducting a needs assessment,
- (2) Identifying shared goals, and developing an action plan to implement the target practice,
- (3) Conducting a focused observation of the implementation of action plan goals
- (4) Debriefing about the observation using reflection and feedback.

Each component in the cycle is designed to inform the actions taken by a coach or coachee during the subsequent component (or throughout the coaching process). The cyclical nature of PBC emphasizes that the expectations and desired outcomes of coaching are regularly reviewed and updated.



Section 2

STARS to Quality Coaching

Hiring a STARS Coach

Coaches must obtain a **Level 4** on the Montana Early Childhood Project, ECP Career Path or meet the expectations for one of the alternate pathways within the first year of employment.

For information regarding the ECP Career Path click the below link.

<https://mtecp.org/pdfs/2019%20Updated%20Career%20Path.pdf>

	Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3
ECP Career Path	Level 4 or higher	At least Level 2	At least Level 2
Post-Secondary Education		Minimum of a bachelor's degree in any field	None
Required Training		Complete 60-hour MT Infant Toddler Caregiver Education course (CITC) and the 60-hour MT Certified Preschool Teacher course (CPTC)	Complete 60-hour MT Infant Toddler Caregiver Education course (CITC) and the 60-hour MT Certified Preschool Teacher course (CPTC)
Experience in EC		Minimum of 500 hours working in an Early Childhood setting (as required for Level 2)	Minimum of five years working in an Early Childhood setting as a director or lead teacher
On-going Training		As required for ECP Career Path and employment	As required for ECP Career Path and employment

Coaches are **not** required to act as trainers and would not have to participate in the Montana Professional Development Framework (PDS I-III). If an agency wishes a coach to train on the Pyramid Model. It would be helpful for them to achieve the PDS III level, which requires a **Level 6** on the ECP Career Path. Without achieving the PDS, a coach, wishing to train, would be considered a Specialty Trainer. Agencies would need to identify an Oversight Trainer (PDS II or III) to complete training approval applications and provide oversight when the coach is training.

Additional training requirements for STARS coaches must be completed within 90 days of hire (Agency will incur the cost for the below trainings):

- **STARS Essentials (CCT online course)**
- **Pyramid Model Practices (Online ePyramid Model Modules w/out facilitation)**
- **Practice-Base Coaching (source TBD)**

Other helpful, **optional** trainings:

- Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) Reliability
- Teaching Pyramid Infant Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) Reliability
- Environmental Rating Scales: ECERS-R, ECERS-3, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R
- Montana Early Learning Standards (MELS)
- Building Skills and Safe Spaces
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire, ASQ
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire Social/Emotional, ASQ-SE.

Whichever pathway is selected for a new coach, verification of ECP Level, education, and course completion should be gathered and sent through the MT ePass system to the State Coaching Coordinator.

Allowing ample time to complete coach qualifications, should eliminate the need for training plans. However, if a training plan is needed, Coach Supervisors should submit the coach’s plan one month before the timeline of a year is up. Training plans should be emailed to the State Coaching Coordinator for approval. Coaches currently on training plans should review the alternate pathways to determine if their training plan is still needed. If not, verification documents should be sent.

In addition to the above consideration, when identifying a coach, an agency should consider the below coaching qualities and competencies. Other desired employee competencies, such as professionalism or communication abilities will be determined and evaluated by the agency. Because coaches work directly with early care staff in the early childhood environment, candidates with successful experience working with young children and their families is of critical importance.

Coaching Qualities and Competencies:

- Demonstrates the skills needed to facilitate each step of the Practice-Based Coaching Model
 - Demonstrates respect and cultural responsiveness
 - Can promote safe, engaging interactions with provider staff
 - Can maintain professional boundaries while working in programs
 - Can collaboratively determine needs and set goals
 - Collect and analyze data to determine needs and measure progress
 - Understands key components of effective goal writing and action planning
 - Can demonstrate (model) effective practices within the child care setting
 - Can facilitate learning through positive, strength-based feedback
 - Can receive and provide constructive feedback appropriately to support learning
 - Understands the growth/change process
 - Can apply motivational strategies

On-going Support

Because coaches come to the STARS Coach role with a variety of experiences and needs, agencies will want to provide on-going support to coaches through training (see options listed above) and practice opportunities.

It will be important for coach supervisors to build their own knowledge of the coaching process (the Coaching Manual is a helpful resource), to meet regularly with coaches, and observe

coaching sessions, a minimum of twice a year, to ensure coaches are attaining the skills needed to meet the expectations of a demanding role.

STARS Coaching GOAL: Using the Practice-Base Coaching Model to fidelity, all coaches will provide high quality coaching to identified early childhood staff on a variety of effective practices which lead to growth and development.

To achieve the STARS coaching goal, coach supervisors may benefit from a clearer picture of fidelity. The table below notes observable behaviors a supervisor might see during a coaching visit. The information is not exhaustive, but provides a description of key behaviors which represent the PBC coaching model at different points in the cycle.

PBC Cycle	Possible Observable Behaviors
Collaborative Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coachee appears to understand the coaching process A team approach is used, fostered by back and forth conversations Coach exhibits good listening skills Coachee appears comfortable Coach focuses on strengths Coach’s questions are effective
During Shared Goals and Action Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach provides information or resources related to the practice/s Coach or coachee revise or create a goal and action plan related to the practice Coach and coachee decide together what the coach will observe during the focused observation
Focused Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach observation is related to the goal and action plan Coachee is aware of the focus of the observation
Reflection and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach asks reflective questions related to the goal or action plan Coach gives positive feedback based on the observation Coach gives suggestions or feedback, based on the observation, There are conversations about changes or adjustments which could be made

Coach Surveys

Many of the behaviors in the table above are also described in an online survey called [The Practice-Based Coaching Fidelity Survey](#). This optional survey is available to coach supervisors and coaches. At any point in the coaching process, the survey link can be given to a coachee to gain his/her perspective on the coach’s use of the PBC coaching model. The coach and coach supervisor could initiate the use of the survey jointly to guide goal setting for continued quality improvement. If a coach elects to work with the state coaching coordinator, they too, may wish

to use the fidelity survey. Results from the survey will go directly to the local CCR&R agency. The fidelity survey should always be used to support growth and not as a form of evaluation. Below are a few sample survey questions from The Practice-Based Coaching Fidelity Survey. A survey link will be sent to each agency.

- *My coach provided feedback based on an observation, video clip, or data.*
- *My coach gave me feedback about things I could change or adjust to support my implementation.*
- *What is the date of your next scheduled coaching visit?*

Coaches are required to send the State Coaching Coordinator the name and email of every coachee at the completion of coaching or following 16 coaching cycles. At which time, [The Coaching Survey](#) link will be sent to the coachee to receive feedback about the coaching experience. To support the consistent gathering of data, the State Coaching Coordinator will regularly review the Cycled Coaching Log. Coaches will inform their coachees of this protocol and strongly encourage the completion of this short online survey. Aggregated information from [The Coaching Survey](#) will drive state quality improvement, informing the state of the benefits and effectiveness of coaching in the STARS to Quality system. It will also help to evaluate, in part, the impact of coaching, to answer the question, “Did coaching increase the use of effective practices?” [The Coaching Survey](#) data will go directly the State Coaching Coordinator for review. On a regular basis, relevant data will be shared with agency staff to support profession growth.

Below are a few sample survey questions from [The Coaching Survey](#).

- I would describe the communication I had with my coach as:
 - Always clear, responsive, and reciprocal
 - Often clear, responsive, and reciprocal
 - Sometimes clear, responsive, and reciprocal
 - Not usually clear, responsive, and reciprocal
 - Never clear, responsive, and reciprocal
- When my coach observes me, I’m most often doing...
- How would you summarize your coaching experience?

The goal of [The Progress Monitoring Coaching Survey](#) is to gather experiential information earlier in the coaching process to evaluate the coachee’s satisfaction. This survey is optional, but can be used by a coach following at least 4 coaching cycles. Some coachees may not feel comfortable expressing their desires directly to their coach. With data from the survey, the coach can make modifications to the coaching process to meet the coachee’s learning needs. [The Progress Monitoring Coaching Survey](#) is shorter but will give the coach helpful information to engage in conversations with the coachee related to individual expectations. The responses from the survey will go directly to the local CCR&R agency for review. Survey questions found on The Progress Monitoring Coaching Survey are a small sample directly from The Coaching Survey.

Coaches are required to complete and keep current The Cycled Coaching Log which provides an at-a-glance overview of the coach's work. This excel document, which will be on-going documentation, should be updated within 2 days of each coaching visit. It will be reviewed, completely updated, and uploaded to a shared site, **which is still to be determined**, on the 5th of every month. The State Coaching Coordinator and each Coach Supervisor will review entries at least monthly and use the information during on-going meetings with coaches. This information will support the coach's continued quality improvement and fidelity to the Practice-Based Coaching model.

The Cycled Coaching Log can be used to answer the following questions:

- Which programs are receiving support from the STARS Coach?
- Who, within a program, is receiving individual support?
 - Coaching or TA
 - In-person, virtual, or combination
 - Expert or group
- When did coaching begin and end?
- How many coaching cycles have been completed?
 - What is the content of coaching?
 - What coaching strategies have been offered?
 - How much time is spent in a program or with an individual coachee?

Coaches rely heavily on written action plans to move through the coaching cycle. These plans provide the on-going records for both the coach and coachee, so work can continue smoothly from one visit to the next. Each coach will need to develop a system of record keeping, so each coachee's plans are updated (within 2 days of the visit). The coach supervisor or the State Coaching Coordinator may ask to see a coach's record keeping method to ensure action plans are up to date and supportive of the coaching process.

As coaches engaged in quality improvement work with the coach supervisor or State Coaching Coordinator, it can be beneficial to review together completed action plans to build an understanding of the coach's strengths and areas of growth. Action plans are not shared with other agency or state staff and not required to be uploaded to a shared site.

Coach supervisors are always welcome and encouraged to participate in state sponsored learning opportunities for coaches. They may also reach out to the State Coaching Coordinator for guidance and direction.

The State Coaching Coordinator will support of the STARS Coaches by providing:

- Monthly coaching calls (content is based on need)
 - Possible format (community of practice or group coaching)
 - Develop effective coaching practice lists
- Monthly review of Cycled Coaching Logs

- Quarterly review of coaching survey data
- Facilitation of two in-person training/meetings a year
- One-on-one coaching calls or in-person visits as needed
- Collaborative communication with the state CCR&R Contract Manager, the Best Beginnings Lead Specialist, and other state staff to support the implementation of the coaching goal.

Coaching Defined

STARS Coaching GOAL: Using the Practice-Base Coaching Model to fidelity, all coaches will provide high quality coaching to identified early childhood staff on a variety of effective practices which lead to children’s growth and development.

Fidelity means consistent movement through PBC cycles, which focus on identified effective practices. As we strive for fidelity, we may need to engage in creative problem solving to overcome barriers that arise within coaching. In short, fidelity means we do what we say we’re going to do, COACH.

STARS will be gathering data to determine the frequency and duration of coaching, whether the model is being implemented to fidelity, and whether coaching leads to change which results in improved early experiences for children and families within the child care settings.

To reach the STARS Coaching goal, everyone will need to understand and support the goal.

So, what makes coaching – coaching?

- Coaching is a professional development strategy which is focused on implementation (application of knowledge or skill)
- Coaching involves utilizing authentic environments and experiences to create opportunities for coachees to practice and/or refine new skills, engage in reflection and plan for next steps
- STARS coaching will begin with the review and signing of the STARS Coaching Plan and Agreement. The agreement provides an overview of PBC, defines roles and responsibilities, and allows for the discussion and selection of coaching content (practices of focus)
- In the Practice-Base Coaching Model, coaching starts with a set of “practices” and a tool (such as the Inventory of Practices) to document the coachee’s strengths, areas of growth and coaching priorities
 - Practices are specific, observable actions or behaviors which support positive outcomes. Practices can occur across multiple settings and times of day. A practice often requires refinement and is **not** an activity that can simply be checked off as complete.

- The practices selected should align with program goals and lead to positive outcomes and experiences for children and families
- There is language within the agreement which guides each signee to appropriate next steps in the event the agreement obligations are not being met
- Coaching is part of a thoughtful professional development plan and not a quick fix or a band-aid
- Coaching happens optimally every two weeks and not more than a couple days should pass between a focused observation and the reflection/planning visit
- Coaches will set up measures of progress throughout the coaching process so coachees can see their growth over time
- Coaches will be organized and maintain documentation, so they are prepared for every coaching event
 - All documentation will be updated within 2 days of the coaching visit
- Coaches will discuss with coachees the PBC model and the number of coaching cycles recommended, this estimate can be adjusted (the discussion will help focus efforts toward outcomes of the coaching work)
- After 16 cycles or fewer, coaching will pause to review progress, evaluate the accomplishment of goals, and coachees will complete The Coaching Survey.
 - Coaches are required to send the State Coaching Coordinator the name and email of every coachee at the completion of coaching or following 16 coaching cycles. At which time, [The Coaching Survey](#) link will be sent to the coachee to receive feedback about the coaching experience.
- Following this review, coaching can:
 1. Continue with the same practices and focus areas
 2. Continue with new practices
 3. Pause until a later time, based on readiness for coaching
 4. End
- A coaching agreement will last up to 16 cycles, however, the agreement can be re-dated if the coaching process doesn't need to change
- An agreement can be signed for less than 16 cycles

STARS Coaching Caseload

- A full-time coach will have between 12-15 individual coachees (not 12-15 programs)
- Once coaching is established, focused observations will take **an average** of 15-90 minutes depending on the content of the observation, which is described in the action plan
- Reflection and planning visits will take **an average** of 30-90 minutes
- Based on time averages from monitoring reports and coach feedback, coaches will need **an average** of 1.4 hours of prep-time for every hour of coaching. This average may change as more data is collected.

- If TPOT/TPITOS or another assessment are used in coaching work, additional time may be needed to conduct and review the assessment(s) (these assessments are no longer required by STARS to Quality)

Virtual Coaching

- In-person coaching has been most often used in STARS to Quality, but there is a plan to explore virtual coaching options more fully in the upcoming year. Coaches and agencies can individually consider and use a virtual coaching method, but in doing so, should keep in mind the following:
 - The state is exploring and may, for consistency, prescribe a virtual coaching platform
 - Virtual coaching must still follow the PBC cycle
 - Virtual coaching is considered only when in-person coaching is a hardship due to distance or other challenging circumstances
 - When virtual coaching is used efforts should be made to facilitate occasional in-person visits, especially at the beginning of coaching
 - Virtual coaching **must accommodate a focused observation**
 - During planning and reflection, participants should be able to see each other (video and audio capability)
 - Technology comfort and ability should be considered and supported

Group Coaching

Group coaching, following PBC cycles, is scheduled as a topic of discussion and training for STARS Coaches. This coaching format has exciting potential to support entire programs to implement effective practices. Program staff can become motivated and energized by the group's work. However, it can be challenging. It requires slightly different coaching skills. The facilitation is harder, there is more documentation, and participating program staff must have built mutual trust and respect within the program, to even consider group coaching. Coaches using a group coaching format may spend approximately 12 to 15 hours a month preparing for group meetings, facilitating group meetings, and having individual meetings or observations with practitioners.

The State Coaching Coordinator plans to create a virtual, group coaching experience among the STARS Coaches in the next year. In doing so, we hope to discover the benefits and challenges of this approach together and, at the same time, work on coaching competencies. Through training and exploration, we hope to build consistent delivery related to both virtual and group coaching.

Technical Assistance, TA

Technical Assistance, Coaching, and Practice-Based Coaching Table:

Technical Assistance	Coaching	Practice-Based Coaching,
<p>Technical Assistance is the provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients.</p> <p><i>-NAEYC and NACCRRA Training and Technical Assistance Glossary</i></p>	<p>Coaching is a relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). 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.</p> <p><i>-NAEYC and NACCRRA Training and Technical Assistance Glossary</i></p>	<p>Practice-based coaching (PBC) is an evidence-based model that supports the use of effective teaching practices.</p> <p><i>-(Hemmeter et al., 2016, Snyder et al., 2015)</i></p> <p>PBC involves a collaborative process for guiding practitioners' use of evidence-based practices. It involves a cyclical process that includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Conducting a needs assessment, (2) Identifying shared goals, and developing an action plan to implement the target practice, (3) Conducting a focused observation of the implementation of action plan goals (4) Debriefing about the observation using reflection and feedback.
Focus		
<p>-Supports the reflective processes that professionals need to translate the theories and information learned through education and/or training into best practices</p> <p>-Strategies include: mentoring, consultation, professional development, advising, and peer-to-peer technical assistance</p> <p>-Should be embedded in the recipient's broader professional development plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the development of specific skills and practices; it is focused on a performance-based outcome(s) • Should be embedded in the recipient's broader professional development 	<p>-Supports the implementation of effective practices</p> <p><i>Practices are specific, observable actions or behaviors which support positive outcomes. Practices can occur across multiple settings and times of day. A practice often requires refinement and is not an activity that can checked off as complete.</i></p> <p>-Whenever possible practices, should align with programmatic goals</p>
Relationship		

<p>-Most TA methods are relationship-based; they benefit from the building of positive, trusting, and respectful relationships</p> <p>-May be delivered by an individual or a team, to one individual or a group</p>	<p>-Requires interactions that build trust and respect</p> <p>-A person may select a coach, be assigned to a coach, or the coach may be assigned to an individual or group</p> <p>-Should be distinguished from supervisory processes</p>	<p>PBC happens within a collaborative partnership and is not linked to supervision. Coaches establish a safe environment.</p>
<p>Process</p>		
<p>-May include combinations of information and resource dissemination and referrals, mentoring, consultation, and professional development advising, peer-to-peer TA, as well as other forms of support</p>	<p>-Begins with a collaborative agreement between the coach and the individual to set the guidelines and goals</p> <p>-Includes various combinations of questioning, listening, observation, reflection, feedback, prompting, modeling, and practice</p> <p>-Likely to occur through planned onsite contacts</p> <p>-Concludes when the specified goal has been achieved</p>	<p>PBC coaching begins with a plan, which includes duration and frequency (optimal 2-week cycles), a list of effective practices, and a signed agreement (coach, coachee, program director). Each complete coaching cycle has, shared goal setting and action planning, a focused observation, and reflection/feedback. Coaches will set up measures of progress throughout the coaching process, so coachees can see their growth overtime.</p>
<p>Duration</p>		
<p>-Levels, intensity, and duration vary greatly, depending on needs, responses, and resources</p>	<p>-Can occur one time or in a series of sessions, dependent upon the successful achievement of the goal</p>	<p>Coaches discuss the number of coaching cycles recommended to meet the coachee’s goals. After 16 cycles or fewer, if goals are met, coaching will pause to review progress and evaluate the accomplishment of goals. Following this review, coaching can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue with the same practices and focus areas -Continue with new practices -Pause until a later time, based on readiness for coaching -End
<p>Delivery</p>		
<p>-May be provided face-to-face or through distance, technology-based, or hybrid methods</p>	<p>-May be provided face-to-face or through distance, technology-based, or hybrid methods</p>	<p>PBC Coaching in STARS to Quality will most often be in-person, but could also be delivered virtually or a combination. Almost all</p>

		coaching in STARS is delivered individually by a STARS Coach, but coaching can happen in a group format, still following a PBC cycle.
Content		
Requests, instructional in nature, may be supported by a coach for a limited time to establish future coaching. Possible TA conten: -Classroom environment set-up and support -Lesson planning -Appropriate classroom activities -Child assessments (observation-based, on-going, progress monitoring) -Challenging child behaviors -Curriculum implementation -Development of individualized instruction or behavior plans -Program director as instructional leader	Varied based on coaching goals and coaching model.	Effective Practices in the classroom might be: -Encouraging effort -using positive, descriptive feedback for children's skills, behaviors and activities -Scaffolding -respond to children's comments and ideas by asking questions and making comments -Positive affect, smiling -Using math vocabulary -reading with children -Repetition and extension of a child's language

When TA requests are made, Provider Services staff need to thoughtfully consider, with a clear understanding of each role, who within Provider Services should fulfill the requests. It is important for Provider Services staff to meet regularly to discuss TA requests, review program services and supports, and plan for program quality improvement while adhering to the expectations of each role-type. For example, a coach may have an interest or skill in marketing, but if the coach provides TA to a program leader related to social media marketing, they create role confusion, set a precedence for work they can't continue within the program or region, and cut into coaching time. The coach could discuss strategies for marketing with the consultant and allow the consultant to carry out the TA. In this way agencies can capitalize on individual interests and skills, without perpetuating role confusion.

Coaches **can provide limited TA**, adhering to the following priorities and considerations:

Priorities:

- **Priority 1** – Provide and establish cycled coaching
- **Priority 2** – Provide cycled coaching with **slightly** less frequency (optimally every two weeks)

- **Priority 3** – TA requests which connect to the work of a coach and have potential to lead to cycled coaching (1-3 requests/program/year to establish relationships and promote cycled coaching)

Considerations:

- All TA requests should be reviewed by Provider Services staff to determine who, when and how the request will be met. The below information may act as general guidance.
 - Instructional Requests – Coach
 - *See above table*
 - STARS Requirements, Business/Management Requests – Consultant
 - Understanding the Benefits of STARS to Quality
 - Submission process
 - STARS Criteria
 - ERS (interpretation of results, assessment expectation and process)
 - PAS/BAS
 - QIP Process
 - Family Engagement Requests – Family Engagement Coordinator
 - Family/Community Partnerships within the STARS Standards
 - Family engagement
 - Developmental screening
- Consider first whether virtual TA would be a feasible option
- Establish, with the provider, a plan and goal for the TA
- The plan should include:
 - Frequency
 - Duration

Qualified Coaching Hours

Included within the STARS Coaching system is Qualified Coaching. Qualified Coaching is a coaching agreement that is considered specialized training designed to meet an individual’s professional development goals and to increase the use of effective practices.

Qualified Coaching events are submitted through the TA Module in the STARS Application site, approved through the Early Childhood Project Professional Development Approval System, and recorded on an individual’s Professional Development Record within the Registry.

Individuals working in STARS to Quality programs, who complete 16-coaching cycles and complete The Coaching Survey are eligible for 16 hours of Qualified Coaching.

Individuals may receive Qualified Coaching hours one time every 3 years.

Section 3

Preparing Child Care Programs for Coaching

Program leaders and coachees must be prepared for coaching. Responding to the below questions, which are common for programs engaging in coaching, will promote better participation and communication through the coaching process.

What is Practice-Based Coaching and how can it benefit the program?

- Coaching has been a STARS to Quality benefit for providers at STAR Levels 3-5. Now coaching is available to, but not required for all providers, Pre-STAR through STAR 5. Those in STAR levels 1-5 should have preference, but if a coach's time allows, coaching at the Pre-STAR level might support a program to take the next step and apply.
- Providers will be given information about coaching and supported to understand how it can lead to the implementation of effective practices. Providers should be afforded the opportunity to meet their consultant and coach and discuss coaching during a program staff meeting. Coaches can use a developed PowerPoint or one-page flier found on the shared site to discuss STARS coaching with program staff. These resources highlight PBC and explain the benefits of coaching in ways that meet the needs of providers. The resources are located on a shared site (TBD).
- A coach workgroup is developing some additional resources to highlight the benefits of coaching. They will be working on the resources through the fall and will make them available to all coaches to support communication with program staff. There will be short video vignettes of teachers and directors in STARS to Quality, who have valued coaching and would like to encourage other programs to access this STARS to Quality benefit.

What will it be like to participate in STARS Coaching?

What are roles and responsibilities of the STARS Coach, the coachee, and program leader?

- Coachees may need support to build skills to interact effectively with the coach and use any needed coaching equipment (e.g. videotaping and/uploading videos) or documentation that will be used in the process.
- For effective communication every program leader and coachee will review and sign the STARS Coaching Plan and Agreement and discuss coaching practices to be supported. The STARS Coaching Plan and Agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of the coach, coachee and program leader.

What is the differences between coaching and supervision?

- The message must be clear that participation in coaching is most effective when coachees enter voluntarily with an openness to growth and change. The PBC cycles are meant to be a time to learn, try out, and expand the use of effective practices. **Coaching**

is not to be used as part of performance evaluations. Coaching is not designed to remediate employee performance issue which are best handled by the coachee's supervisor, such as tardiness, attendance issues, or unwillingness to team with other staff. Coachees should feel safe to learn and grow. STARS Coaches should include a time for coachee questions and reassuringly communicate the coaching process is supportive and nonevaluative.

How can overall program goals be supported through coaching?

- Coaches will become aware of a program's individual desires for growth and improvement. Coaches will be able to readily access this information by reviewing a program's Quality Improvement Plan, QIP. The QIP Action Plan, guides programs to set annual focus goals. Programs are, further, required to have goals for all ERS and PAS/BAS subscales which fall below identified score thresholds (e.g. ERS scores below a 3.0 for programs at STAR Level 3). Coaching should align with and support a program's efforts to meet annual goals. STARS Consultants will be trained to highlight the benefits of coaching and be and on the lookout for coaching opportunities related to program's annual goals as they interact with program staff.
- Coaches will be trained on how to access research-based practices and offer this aligned coaching opportunity to programs

The content of coaching: What effective practices can be supported by the STARS Coach?

STARS coaching can support:

- Program choice
- The implementation of Pyramid Model Practices
- Individual instruction and behavior plans
- Practices found in the Environmental Rating Scale-3 tools
- Practices learned in STARS to Quality trainings
- Instructional leadership skills and engage in the coaching process
- Other researched-based practices

Program staff will need to be informed that coaches within STARS to Quality are no longer exclusively coaching on Pyramid Model practices. Their title change, STARS Coach, does not eliminate coaching on these important practices. However, providers will need to understand their scope of work has broadened. It will be important to inform new and existing programs of the coaching goal. Discuss how goal attainment with change coaching and what will stay the same. Along with clear communication about the PBC model, the below information will help to describe the content options available to programs through coaching.

Program Choice

Coaches will commit to supporting programs to meet their professional goals. While STARS to Quality has set quality standards on which programs are bound to focus, there is ample choice, which should be honored. Coaches can gain insight from STARS Consultants, the QIP process, and by investigating together what the program deems most important.

Implementation of Pyramid Model Practices

Utilizing the TPOT/TPITOS in coaching:

The Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool for Preschool Classrooms (TPOT) and the Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) were developed, validated, and used to measure the implementation fidelity of the Pyramid Model Practices.

The TPOT/TPITOS helps to assess a teacher's current practice use and supports reflection of the current implementation of social emotional practices and could be used to point to valid practices for coaching.

How STARS Coaches can use these tools:

The TPOT and TPITOS can only be administered by coaches who have successfully completed reliability training and testing in these tools. If coaches have received this reliability training, then they can continue to use this tool to assess socially, emotionally supportive practices in the classroom and guide coaching on said practices. If coaches have not received this training, then there are additional options available:

- Engage in reflective self-assessment with coachee using social/emotional supportive tools such as:
 - [Practice checklists](#)
 - [Pyramid Model Inventory of Practice](#)
 - Similar checklists of social emotional best practices

Program-wide Pyramid Model implementation:

When supporting and assessing social/emotional supportive practices on a program-wide scale, the [Benchmarks of Quality](#) can be used by a program's Leadership Team. If a program is using the Benchmarks of Quality to set goals and write action plans, it can be helpful for a leadership team to receive the guidance and support of a coach in completing this tool.

The above-mentioned tools are tied to the [Pyramid Model](#) which is a framework for understanding and supporting social emotional development and wellness. This framework is focused on the prevention of children's use of challenging behaviors using research-based strategies that meet children's needs at the foundational social/emotional level. The [National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#) (NCPMI) houses Pyramid Model information and resources with focal points on:

- Promoting social/emotional, and behavioral outcomes of young children birth to five
- Reducing the use of inappropriate discipline practices
- Promoting family engagement
- Using data in decision-making
- Integrating early childhood and infant mental health consultation

- Fostering inclusion

Practices Found in the Environmental Rating Scale-3 Tools

A coach work group is developing effective practice lists based on the ERS-3 tools (ECERS-3, ITERS-3, and FCCERS-3). The ERS-3 has many practices, not found in the revised versions, which provide prime opportunities for coaching. The practices will be connected to individual items found in the ERS-3 tools, so coaches can easily offer coaching around effective teaching practices to program staff which align to specific ERS-3 subscales.

Within the QIP process, programs are asked to set an annual focus for all ERS subscales which fall below identified score thresholds. Coaching will be highlighted as a resource of support when subscales are selected.

Practices Learned in STARS to Quality Trainings (e.g. Pyramid Model, MT Infant Toddler Caregiver Education course, MT Certified Preschool Teacher course)

Coaching is about implementation. It's about taking what's known and putting it into practice, for the benefit of children and families. It will be important for coaches to know what practices are being taught in trainings offered through their agency and who's attending. Becoming aware will allow coaches to discuss the potential implementation of the specific skills and behaviors taught during the courses. Consultants and coaches can use training information to engage in conversations with training participants and program leaders about how coaching can support the implementation of learned practices. In some trainings, practices are already identified, but in others they're not. Identifying these practices will be the continued work of coaches in the upcoming year.

Instructional Leadership Skills and Engaging in the Coaching Process

For classroom coaching to be successful, it is imperative for program leaders to be informed and involved. A coach's interactions with leadership primarily centers on engaging leaders to understand and be involved in the cycled coaching happening with teaching staff.

Cycled coaching, following the Practice-Based Coaching model, could occur directly with leaders if:

- Cycled coaching is the best professional development strategy for achieving the leader's goals.
- A list of leadership **practices** is jointly created during the planning and agreement phase of coaching.
- There are opportunities to do focused observations of the leader performing identified practices.
- The coach and leader have agreed upon ways to measure the progress and completion of goals.

The following examples describe possible ways coaches may effectively interact with program leaders:

Example 1: STARS Coaches will become aware of programmatic goals and will work collaboratively to align classroom coaching with program goals.

Example 2: The STARS coach will develop a clear written plan for coaching with the leader and teachers, which define coaching goals, formats, methods, duration, and frequency. This plan will be discussed with leadership as part of the agreement for coaching.

Example 3: Leadership will be regularly informed of coaching progress, number of cycles completed, and current goal focus, through the Cycled Coaching Log. Leaders may also benefit from conversations about classroom coaching, so they can support and guide classroom teachers to achieve their goals.

Example 4: Leaders will be informed if coaching plans change.

Example 5: Leadership may choose to be directly involved in group coaching, where all teaching staff are working on the same effective practice at that same time. Leaders may participate in the reflection and planning conversations with their staff.

Example 6: Coaches may also provide limited technical assistance, as directors fulfil their role as instructional leader, (1-3 requests/program/year)

Example 7: In family group programs, where a director may also be a teacher, coaching is mostly focused on effective teaching practices.

Other Researched-Based Practices

A coach may find the need to seek research-based practices outside those prescribe by the Pyramid Model, to meet a program request. There are several potential options, when a coach discovers their existing practice resources are not enough. Coaches may always contact the State Coaching Coordinator for assistance. Together they can find viable resources, develop an effective practice list, and review practices until the coach feels confident to use them in the coaching process. The newly developed research-based practice list can become content for discuss or training during monthly coaching meetings. Developing practice lists and making them available for all coaches will be on-going work.

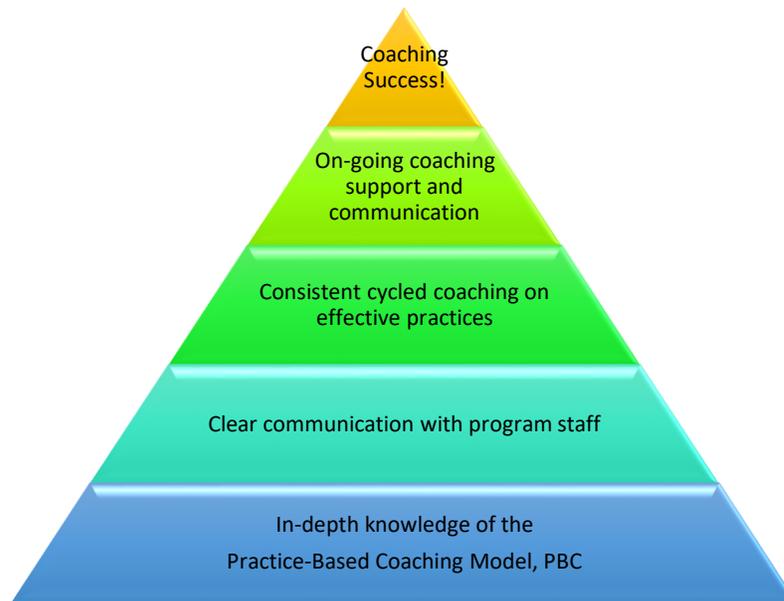
Potential resources for research-based practices:

- Classroom Assessment Scoring System, CLASS
- Teaching Strategies: Coaching to Fidelity resource
 - Preschool
 - Infant Toddlers and Twos
- Head Start's Effective Practice Guides found on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, ECLKC website

- <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/effective-practice-guides/effective-practice-guides>

Section 4

Steps to Coaching Success



Practice-Based Coaching Model, PBC

PBC is foundational to successful STARS coaching. Each agency and STARS coach is expected to have a comprehensive understanding of PBC. Coaches need to feel confident in the implementation of each PBC step.

Each agency supervisor will work in conjunction with the State Coaching Coordinator to support the coach's growth and development. Agencies are responsible for training new coaches in the PBC model. The State Coaching Coordinator will work with agencies to locate a high quality PBC offering and provide follow-up to new coaches. Coaches and agency staff can build their PBC knowledge by utilizing PBC resources located on the shared site. The state will sponsor a PBC training in 2020 for all STARS Coaches, specifically related to group coaching. The timeframe for this training is still to be determined.

Clear Program Communication

All program staff must fully understand what it means to engage in coaching. There must be clear, consistent communication to program leadership and coachees from the STARS Coach

and other agency staff related to the coaching process. No coachee will enter into coaching without a signed STARS Coaching Plan and Agreement. The plan will note the effective practices of focus and will be adhered to during the coaching process.

In addition to the STARS Coaching Plan and Agreement, STARS Coaches will have access to a “What is STARS Coaching” flyer and PowerPoint to guide communication efforts with programs. Other communication resources will be developed which highlight the benefits of STARS coaching.

Cycled Coaching

Consistent cycled coaching using the PBC model is the goal and expectation for all STARS coaches. The coach’s work will be monitored and supported through the on-going review of the Cycled Coaching Log. This tool will provide coach supervisors with regular feedback about coaching and will reveal the number of completed coaching cycles, at a glance, for any or all coachees. In the past, coaches have documented their coaching time, which will still be tracked in the coaching log, but the number of completed coaching cycles will be data point tracked and discussed moving forward.

Coach Support

Coaches will need time, guidance, and support to meet the new expectations and work effectively within the new procedures. Most of the support will come from the coach’s supervisor. Coach supervisor’s will have access to PBC information and resources to build their knowledge and skills. There is a section in the STARS Coaching Manual, specifically for supervisors, with guidance for hiring and supporting STARS coaches. In addition to the Cycled Coaching Log, supervisors will also have access to coaching survey data, which will reveal coachee feedback.

The State Coaching Coordinator will provide guidance and support to both coaches and coach supervisors, as needed, related to the new expectations. Extra support will be given during the pilot/soft rollout phase. The State Coaching Coordinator will also offer monthly coaching calls, one-on-one time (as requested), and annual coach trainings.