Indicator #15: Do you engage in efforts to ensure that stakeholder ideas and recommendations are actually implemented in a timely manner?

Background

- Quality assessment and improvement activities are recommended to be continuous and evolving in mental health care.

- Continuous quality improvement (CQI) recognizes the importance and value of incorporating stakeholder ideas and recommendations in a timely manner.

- No one wants to feel that they are meeting just to talk about their ideas. Talk is valuable, but action speaks louder than words.
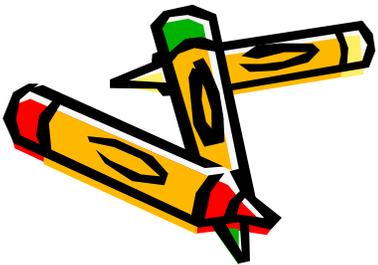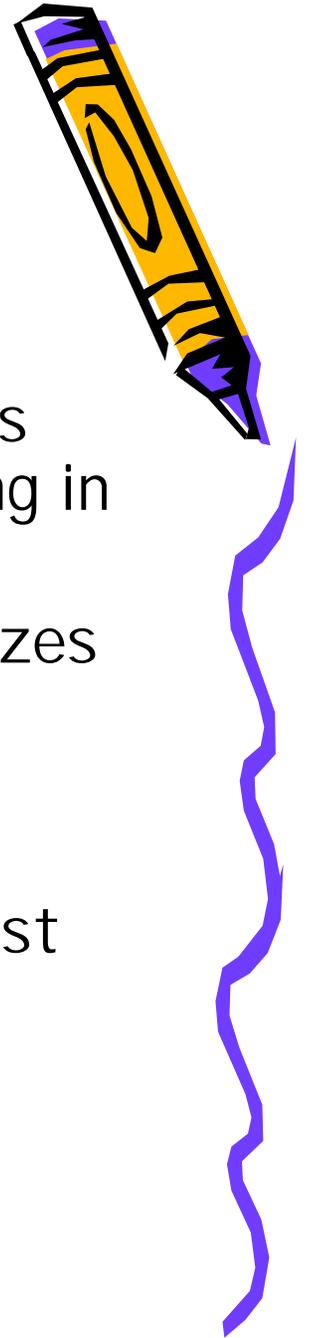
Background

- To help make sure that ideas are acted on, it is helpful to set up what are referred to as "maintenance plans" for continued collaboration. These plans can highlight how stakeholder ideas and recommendations will be translated into practice. The plans can outline desired goals, action steps, and timelines to achieve them.
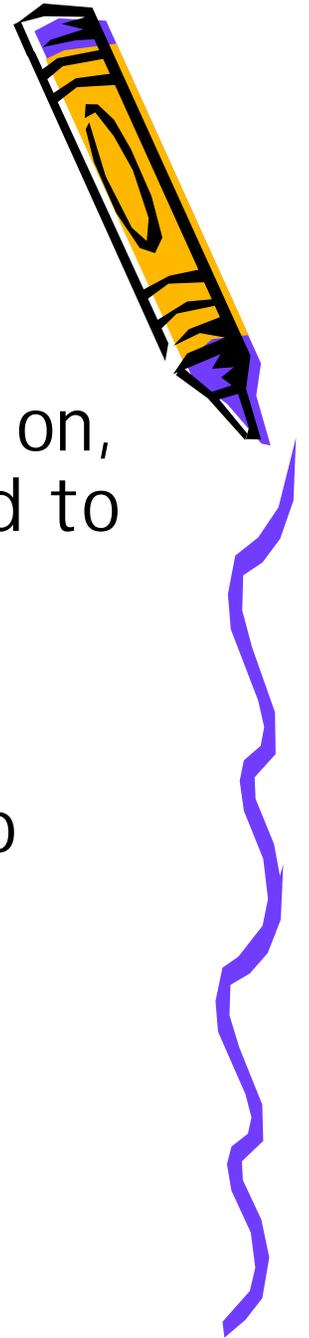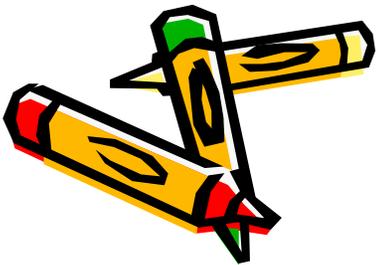
Background

- Maintenance plans provide some of the answers to and the details behind some of the following questions:
  - Will there be regular meetings of stakeholders?
  - How often and where will they meet?
  - What will be the purpose of the meetings?
  - What are the action goals for the group?
  - How will progress be measured?
  - What are the timelines and the steps to achieve goals?
  - How will this be reported back to the group?
  - What steps will be taken if progress is not being made on incorporating feedback into action?
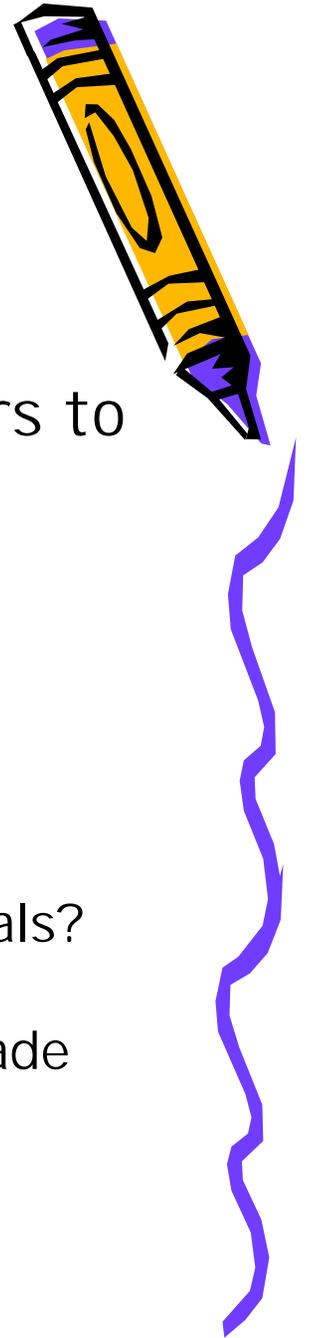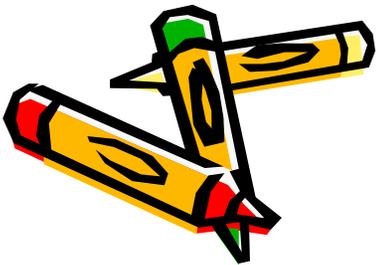
Background

- Failure to implement stakeholder feedback on a timely basis can lead to stakeholder disenchantment and loss of community support.

- Setting up clear objectives, timelines, and action plans and developing clear communication channels can increase the likelihood that stakeholder ideas will be implemented into the program.
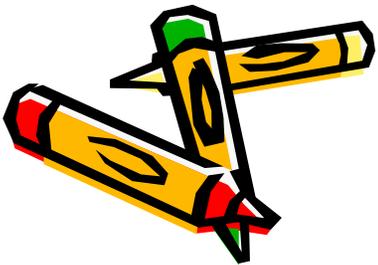
Menu of Suggested Activities

- Solicit informal feedback from key stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, parents, administrators, health staff) about how to improve school mental health services. Summarize in a document and develop an action plan for at least one of the suggestions.

- Create a regular forum (2-4 times per year) or embed it in other existing meetings for your school or program to have stakeholders share their ideas and recommendations about how to improve mental health in schools. Keep minutes and disseminate by mail, email, or newsletter. Provide updates on progress at each meeting.

- Set up a suggestion box about how to improve mental health services at your school. Post suggestions and responses in a public location in the school. Strive to implement some of the ideas and recommendations in a timely manner.

Menu of Suggested Activities

- Use the supervision time to brainstorm about how to best solicit feedback and follow-up with action. Review past positive and negative examples of how you have acted or not acted on recommendations. Consider what to do when suggestions and ideas are not realistic. How would you respond?

- Write down ideas for improvement from stakeholders and post on a large piece of paper in your office. Work with students, parents, teachers, and other school personnel to prioritize improvement goals and brainstorm about action plans.

- Create a media campaign in your school that will highlight that you are listening and open to hearing feedback and recommendations for improvement.
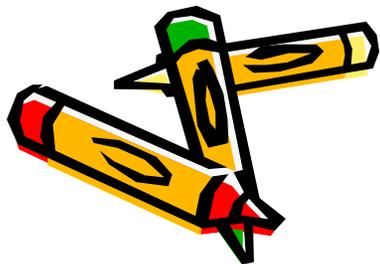
Helpful Hints

- Be sure to write down suggestions/recommendations that are made by stakeholders so that you do not forget them.
- Take the time to not only hear the recommendations, but brainstorm with stakeholders about how they think it would be best to achieve change.
- Join committees and participate in activities in the school that will allow you to interact with a diverse group of stakeholders and to learn about their perspectives on school mental health.
- Don't forget to learn from experiences of your colleagues. Find out about how they have been successful in responding to and acting on stakeholder ideas and recommendations.
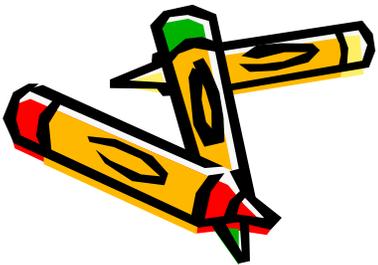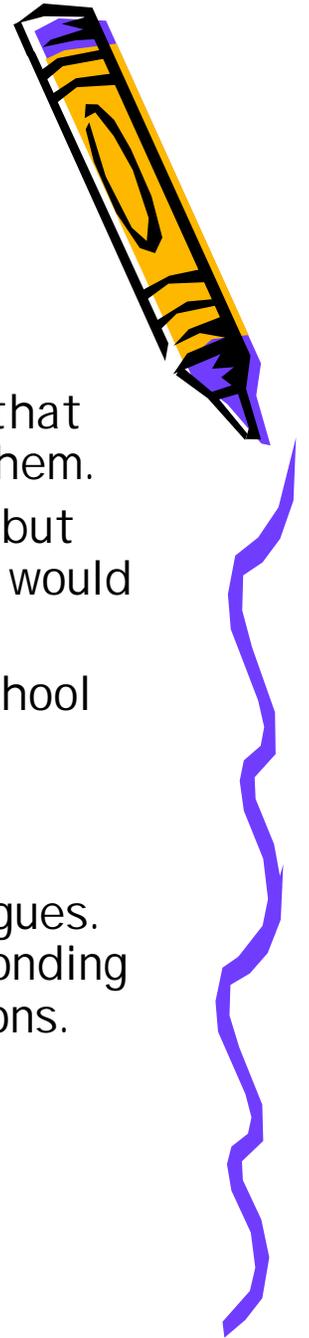
Helpful Hints

- Engage stakeholders to help you actually implement some of their ideas and recommendations.

- In implementing ideas from stakeholders, don't forget to give them credit for coming up with the idea.

- Be respectful and considerate of all suggestions of how to improve the program.

- Have a regular means of communication with stakeholders so that they can know about the program's mission and changes that occur over time. Consider using email, letters, newsletters, and fliers.
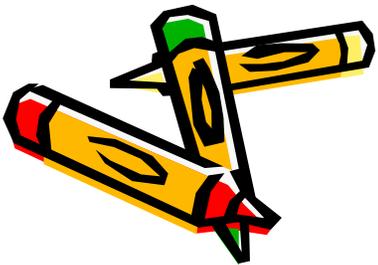
Web Resources

- Center for Mental Health in Schools, Organizational Facilitators: A Change Agent for Systemic School and Community Changes (http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/dbsimple2.asp?primary=1401&number=9999)

  Center for School Mental Health Assistance, Program Development Packet (http://.csmha.umaryland.edu)

- Coalition for Community Schools, Sustainability Planning Checklist); (http://www.communityschools.org)

- Community Toolbox, University of Kansas (http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/sub_section_main_1058.htm)

- National Center for Family Support (http://www.familysupport-hsri.org/resources/index.html)

- W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Evaluation toolkit.

  (http://www.wkkf.org/Programming/ResourceOverview.aspx?CID=281&ID=770)
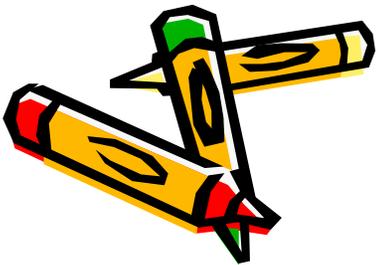
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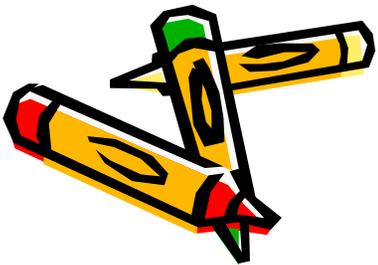
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- Coalition for Community Schools and Sustainability planning checklist. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from (http://www.communityschools.org/Checklist.PDF)

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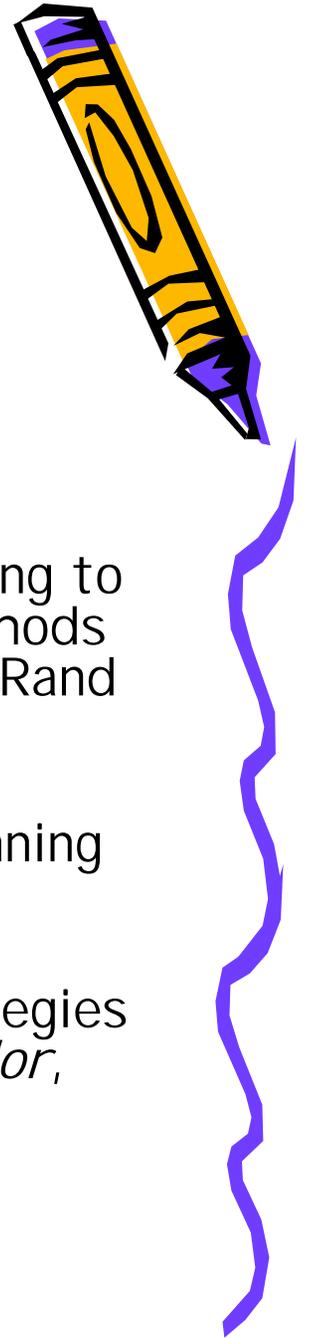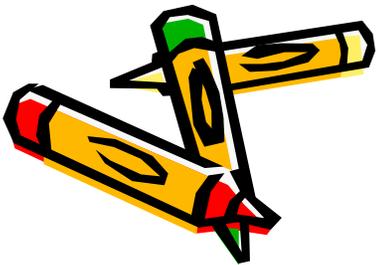
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