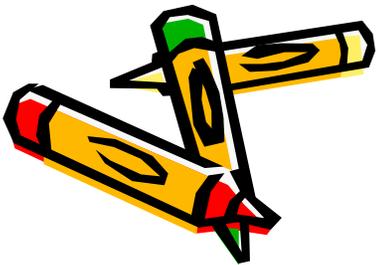


Indicator #17: Are your efforts and activities being guided by an active and effective quality assessment and improvement plan that other school mental health clinicians and stakeholders (school staff, families, community) are aware of?



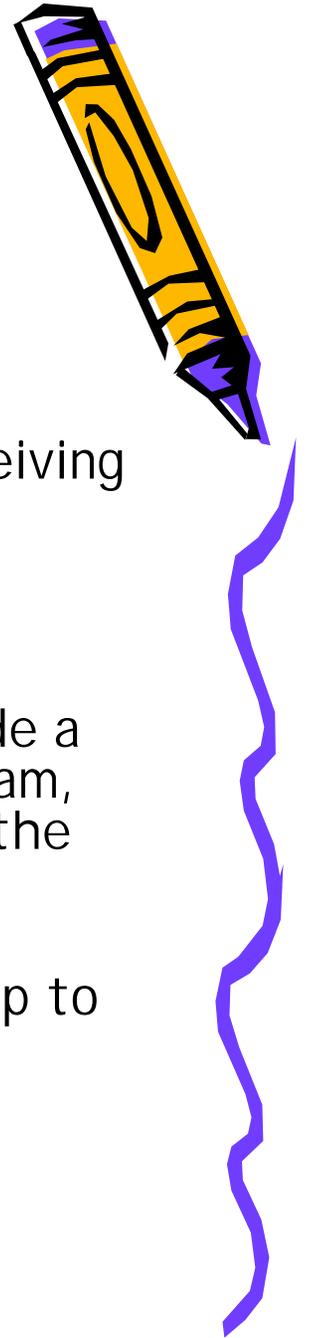
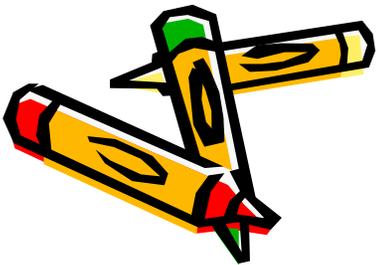
# Background

- Programs should be developed strategically and should be guided by an active and effective quality assessment and improvement plan.
- Plans should specify key components behind the program including mission statements, goals and objectives, and basic standards and procedures. In addition, a plan should outline how the program will be evaluated and improved on an ongoing basis. A defined strategy to regularly assess stakeholder needs and resources and how the program responds to meet these needs and to fill in gaps in care are also critical to the plan.



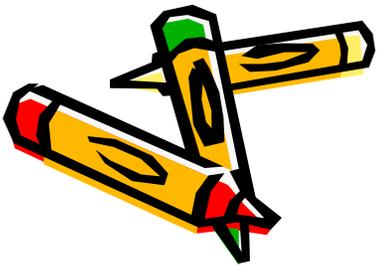
# Background

- The plan should be widely disseminated and the ESMH program should have clear mechanisms in place for receiving feedback and incorporating it back into plan and actual services.
- Each of the key components of a program should be evaluated to better understand the functioning of the program and how it can be improved. Plans should include a description of the procedures for evaluating the program, disseminating findings, and incorporating findings into the program.
- Sharing the plan and discussing key aspects of service delivery and evaluation with these stakeholders can help to reduce confusion over roles and services and can help enhance true collaborative efforts.



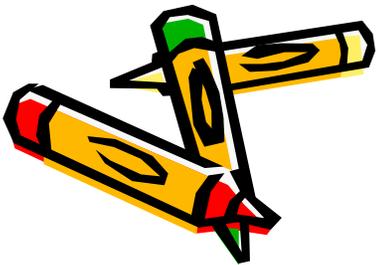
# Background

- Quality assessment and improvement plans should outline and describe the many quality assessment and improvement activities within a program. These activities include (Nabors, Lehmkuhl, & Weist, 2003):
  - 1) developing and refining mission statements and program standards
  - 2) selecting advisory board members and creating guidelines
  - 3) assessing stakeholder needs, assessing and mapping resources
  - 4) developing strategies to form collaborative partnerships
  - 5) developing and improving orientation activities, ongoing training and professional development
  - 6) monitoring and evaluating supervision
  - 7) conducting structural appraisal activities, examining therapy process indicators
  - 8) evaluating therapeutic outcome indicators
  - 9) assessing the relationship between process and outcome indicators
  - 10) summarizing and disseminating findings relevant to the program
  - 11) soliciting feedback on program activities and outcomes
  - 12) incorporating and translating stakeholder feedback into day to day functioning of the program.



# Background

- Purposeful activities to enhance program quality can benefit ESMH programs in many ways:
  - 1) increasing its acceptance in the school
  - 2) increasing support from others in the school and community
  - 3) improving effectiveness and satisfaction with services
  - 4) facilitating the documentation of positive outcomes
  - 5) providing accountability data that can assist with funding, advocacy, and outreach efforts



# How Clinicians Can Assist in Quality Improvement Activities

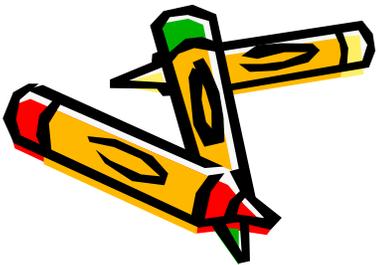
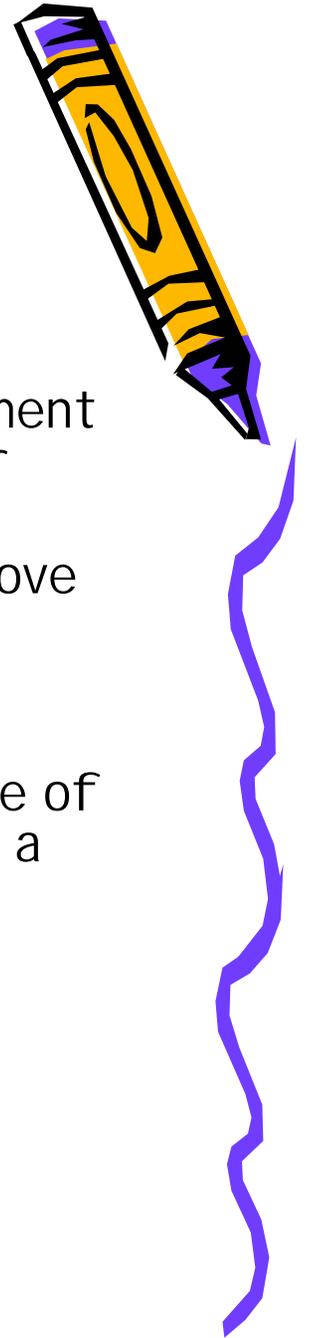


- You are helping right now by being a participant in a quality improvement study. Thank you.
- Be willing to support your program in needed data collection.
- Always strive to figure out how to improve the quality of your own services in your school and be willing to share this with others in your program.
- Develop your own plan each year for how you will improve the services you are providing.
- Don't forget that you are an Ambassador of your program. The work you do and the relationships you form are a reflection of the quality of your program.
- Serve as a member of your program's quality improvement team or as a representative on your program's advisory board.



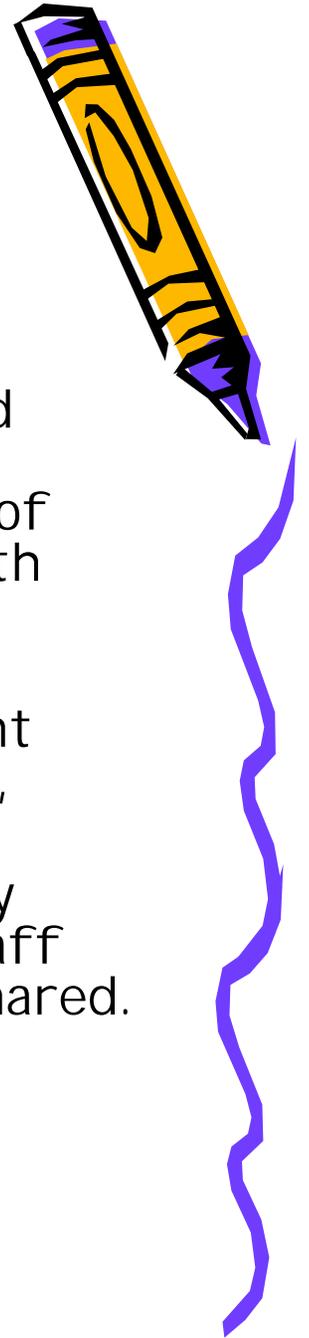
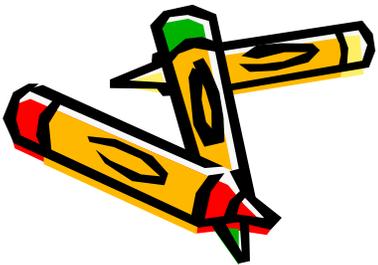
# Menu of Suggested Activities

- Review your program's quality assessment and improvement plan and discuss its relevance and effectiveness in your program.
- Use the group session to brainstorm about how to improve the quality assessment and improvement plan for your program. Write down suggestions and share with administrators.
- Review the mission statement and standards of practice of your program and discuss as a group if your practice as a clinician in the schools is meeting these descriptions. Suggest modifications in both the language of the statements and in your practice.



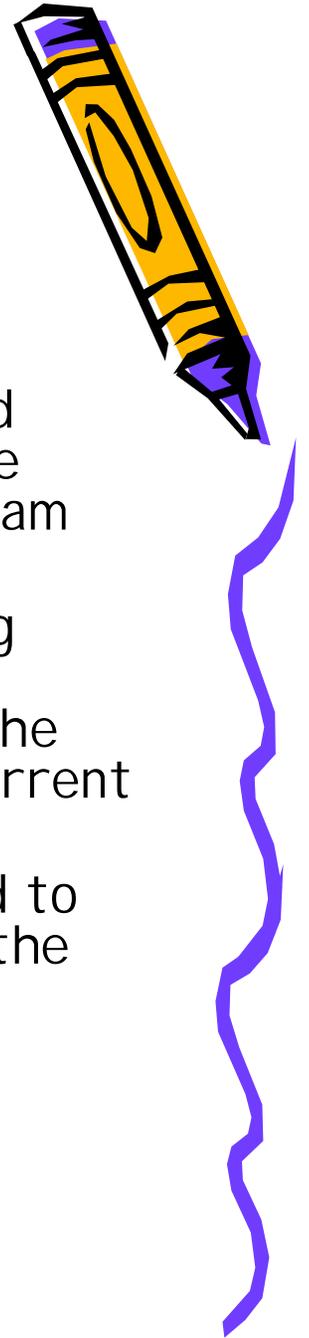
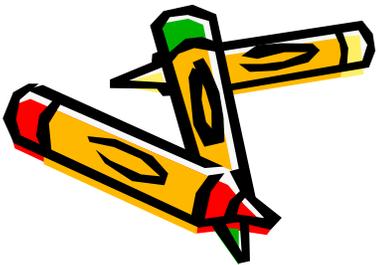
# Menu of Suggested Activities

- Set up a meeting to review the quality improvement and assessment plan with school-hired mental health staff, administrators, and teachers. Provide a copy for each of them and keep notes on their feedback and share it with ESMH administrators.
- Create a brief flier or brochure that highlights key components of your quality improvement and assessment plan and share it with school-hired mental health staff, administrators, and teachers.
- Brainstorm as a group about how to best share a quality assessment and improvement plan with school-hired staff and develop points of discussion for when the plan is shared.



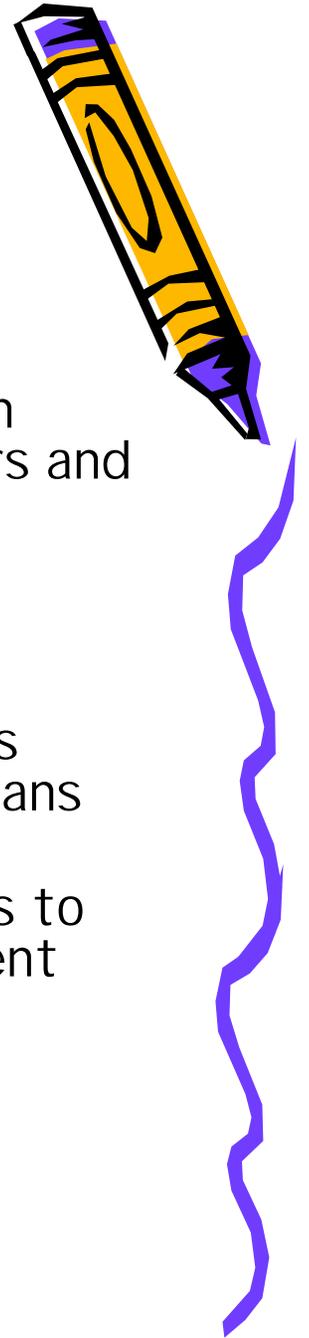
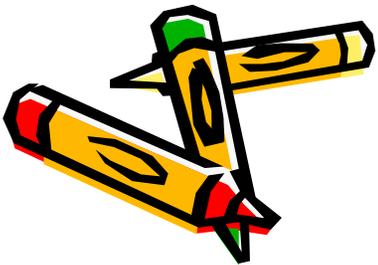
# Menu of Suggested Activities

- If your program does not have a quality assessment and improvement plan, brainstorm as a group what should be included in the plan and share your summary with program administrators.
- Brainstorm about how to improve and document training aspects of your program from orientation to ongoing professional development. Outline critical aspects of the training based on your discussion. Strive to improve current materials in the plan related to training.
- Create a brief quality improvement plan that is tailored to how you plan to improve the services in your school by the end of the school year.



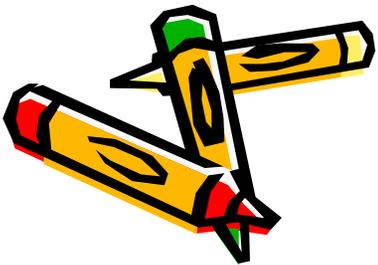
# Helpful Hints

- The program's quality assessment and improvement plan should be readily available to clinicians and stakeholders and should be updated each year based on feedback.
- The plan should be easy to read, with little jargon, and contain descriptions of each quality assessment and improvement activity.
- In developing quality assessment and improvement plans seek feedback from key stakeholders and provide a means for them to easily give feedback.
- Use down time in the summer or during school vacations to obtain feedback about how to improve quality assessment and improvement plans and strategize about how to incorporate these changes into daily practice of the program.



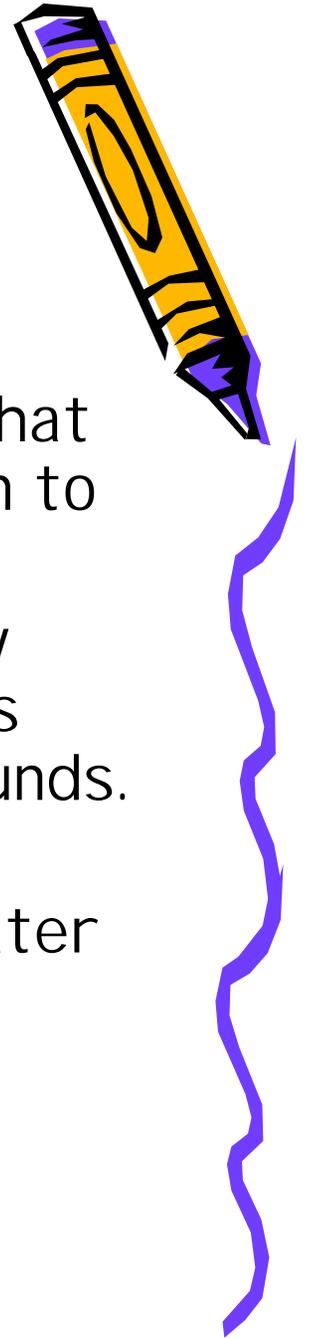
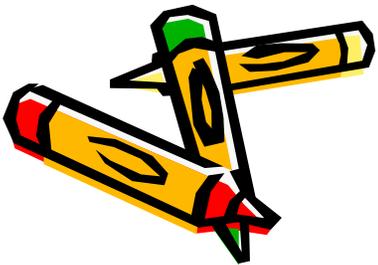
# Helpful Hints

- Even if you have worked in a program for years, it is helpful to look at the plan each year and then to consider how it will apply to your work.
- Share your experiences and suggestions with the administrators of your program to help make sure that the plan reflects clinician's perspectives.
- Informally discuss with students and families on a regular basis what services they are looking for and consider with them if you are meeting their needs.



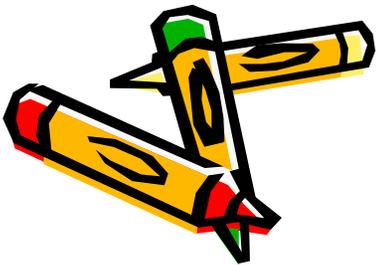
# Helpful Hints

- In discussing the plan, be sure to emphasize that the plan is a continuous and ever-changing plan to best meet the needs of students and schools.
- Make sure that the language in the plan or any shared materials is respectful of stakeholders and diverse cultural and professional backgrounds.
- Don't forget, the better the quality, the more effective the services, and hopefully the greater sustainability and support for your program.



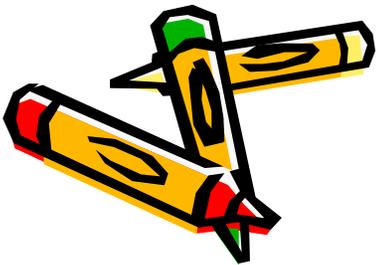
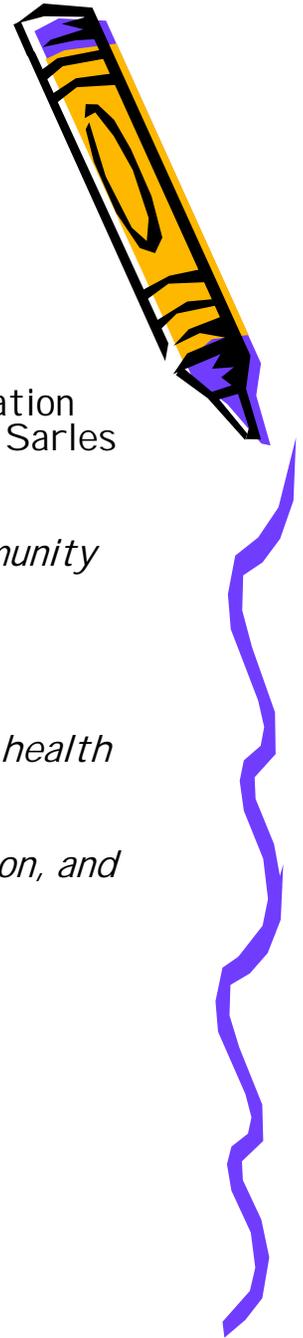
# Web Resources

- Center for School Mental Health Assistance; Program Development, Quality Assessment and Improvement ([http://csmha.umaryland.edu/how/res\\_packets.html](http://csmha.umaryland.edu/how/res_packets.html))
- Center for Mental Health in Schools, Evaluation and Accountability Related to Mental Health in Schools (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>)
- Community Toolbox, University of Kansas. Using Evaluation to Understand and Improve the Initiative ([http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/chapter\\_1047.htm](http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/chapter_1047.htm))
- The Evaluation Center. Checklist and Tools for Use in School Evaluations (<http://evaluation.wmich.edu/resources/schooleval/>)
- Rand Corporation. Getting to Outcomes (<http://www.rand.org/publications/TR/TR101/>)



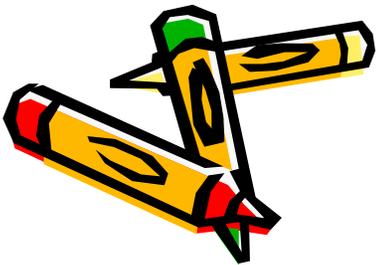
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