



# **Session 1: An Overview of Stakeholder Engagement**





# Stakeholders and Stakeholder Engagement

## Stakeholders

- can be internal *or* external to an organization/agency.
- are affected by the outcomes of a project or initiative.
- provide guidance on the progression of a defined scope of work.

## Stakeholder engagement

- is the use of stakeholders as participants in a collaborative process that guides the creation and execution of a defined scope of work.



# Selecting Stakeholders

- Ensure that multiple levels of an organization/system are represented in the stakeholder group
- Include a variety of viewpoints to contribute to comprehensive and responsive decision-making
- Seek stakeholders who can help the group achieve the benefits and desired outcomes of the initiative



# Benefits of Engaging Stakeholders

- Promotes buy in and ensures multiple voices are heard on key issues
- Provides creative and collaborative group problem solving
- Broadens the reach of the work
- Supports effective implementation and sustainability





# Principles of Effective Stakeholder Engagement

## Relevant to stakeholders

- Define and articulate purpose
- Specify desired outcomes
- Identify short and long term outputs/outcomes

## Relies on trust-based partnerships

- Establish an agreed upon group process
- Articulate expectations of stakeholder engagement



# Principles of Effective Stakeholder Engagement

## Emphasizes effective communication

- Establish consistent, responsive methods of communication
- Ensure accessibility of information to all stakeholders
- Address conflicts or dilemmas

## Requires shared ownership of problem solving

- Ensure all voices are heard
- Provide timely, reflective, and responsive decision-making
- Define the scope of stakeholder decisions



# Stakeholder Engagement Process

**Stage 1:  
Inform**

**Stage 2:  
Prepare**

**Stage 3:  
Act**

**Reflect**



# Stage 1: Inform

- Learn about the project's purpose and desired results
- Develop interest and motivation for the project's work
- Understand the benefits of the project







# Stage 2: Prepare

- Become empowered to share perspectives and opinions
- Participate as active, collaborative contributors
- Build relationships between and among all participants
- Recognize and value contributions of all participants
- Gain an understanding of the context of the project
- Learn about expectations for involvement (possibly articulated in a stakeholder engagement plan)

# Stage 3: Act

- Apply knowledge, skills, and strategies gained in previous stages (Inform and Prepare)
- Accomplish project's tasks to achieve desired outcomes
- Sustain open, trusting relationships among all participants





# Reflection

- Occurs throughout the stakeholder engagement process
- Guided by the principles of effective stakeholder engagement
- Serves as gauge to measure progress toward the project's goals
- Used to examine group dynamics and assess the quality of the group's functioning
- Involves celebration of milestones and successes



# Connecting to DaSy Technical Assistance

DaSy technical assistance providers are available to support you with stakeholder engagement-related activities in a variety of situations, including when you are:

- Strengthening your data systems within Part C or Part B 619
- Coordinating data system efforts between Part C and Part B 619
- Participating in Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems (ECIDS) initiatives
- Participating in P-20+ State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) initiatives



# Stakeholder Engagement

- Requires strategic and purposeful planning
- Should be grounded in the principles of effective stakeholder engagement
- Is a collaborative process that unfolds in stages – Inform, Prepare, Act – each involving ongoing reflection
- Benefits the knowledgeable, dedicated, and invested partners from all levels of an organization/system as they work together to achieve desired outcomes



The Center for IDEA  
Early Childhood Data Systems

