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Leadership Matters:

Applying the Maternal and Child Health Leadership Competencies to Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs



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Introduction

Leaders of MIECHV programs face many challenges. To lead these complex programs, they must understand everything from fiscal management to continuous quality improvement (CQI) to performance measurement, while supervising staff, overseeing local implementing agencies (LIAs), and integrating home visiting into their state or territory's early childhood system. To do this well, they must continue to develop their own leadership competencies.

The [Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes](#) describes leadership development as “an on-going process [that] involves complex skills and abilities related to establishing vision and direction, providing motivation and guidance, and promoting collaboration within and across agencies and programs.”¹ Because improving outcomes for young children and their families requires skilled and knowledgeable leaders, it is important to support home visiting leaders in strengthening their skills and competencies through leadership development.

There are many definitions of *leadership*. Merriam-Webster defines it as “the act or an instance of leading”² a group, organization, nation, etc. In *The Servant*, James Hunter defines leadership as “the skill of influencing people to work enthusiastically toward goals identified as being for the common good” (p. 28).³ In *Resonant Leadership*, Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee say that “leadership is the exercise of power and influence” (p. 6).⁴ Frances Hesselbein, former CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA and founder of the Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management, reminds us that “leadership is a matter of how to *be*, not how to *do*.”⁵

In 2007, HRSA's Maternal and Child Health Bureau developed 12 Maternal and Child

About MIECHV

The [Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting \(MIECHV\) Program](#) supports voluntary, evidence-based home visiting services for at-risk pregnant women and parents with young children up to kindergarten entry. The MIECHV Program builds on decades of scientific research showing that home visits by a nurse, social worker, early childhood educator, or other trained professional during pregnancy and in the first years of a child's life improve the lives of children and families. Home visiting helps prevent child abuse and neglect, supports positive parenting, improves maternal and child health, and promotes child development and school readiness. States, territories, and tribal communities receive funding through the MIECHV Program and have the flexibility to select the home visiting service delivery models that best meet their needs. The MIECHV Program is administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in partnership with the Administration for Children and Families.

Health (MCH) Leadership Competencies to support current and future MCH leaders. These competencies, updated in 2018, specify the knowledge and skills needed by MCH leaders; they define MCH leadership, describe how the competencies can be used, and provide a conceptual framework for how an MCH leader's development can progress.

1 Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes. (n.d.). *Leadership at ALL Levels—Advancing the Field Through Individual and Organizational Leadership*. Retrieved from <http://ceelo.org/resources/leadership-at-all-levels-advancing-the-field-through-individual-and-organizational-leadership/>

2 Merriam-Webster.com. (n.d.). *Leadership*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/leadership>

3 Hunter, J. (2008). *The Servant*. New York: Crown Publishing Group.

4 Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2005). *Resonant Leadership*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

5 Hesselbein, F. (2002). *Hesselbein on Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

The knowledge and skills needed by MIECHV leaders align with those needed by MCH leaders. Leaders of both types of programs must do the following:

- Understand the mission, values, and goals of the MIECHV Program
- Possess core knowledge of MIECHV populations and their needs
- Continually seek new knowledge and opportunities to improve their own abilities and skills
- Practice self-reflection and engage in critical thinking
- Demonstrate evidence-based leadership
- Demonstrate professionalism and ethical behavior in their attitudes and working habits
- Be responsive to changing political, social, scientific, and demographic contexts
- Demonstrate the ability to change quickly and adapt in the face of emerging challenges and opportunities⁶

The 12 leadership competencies identified by MCHB are:

1. Knowledge base/content
2. Self-reflection
3. Ethics
4. Critical thinking
5. Communication
6. Negotiation and conflict resolution
7. Cultural competency
8. Family-professional partnerships
9. Developing others through teaching, coaching, and mentoring
10. Interdisciplinary/interprofessional team building
11. Working with communities and systems
12. Policy



⁶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. (2018, May). *Maternal and Child Health Leadership Competencies, Version 4.0*. Rockville, MD: Author. Retrieved from https://mchb.hrsa.gov/training/documents/MCH_Leadership_Competencies_v4.pdf



These 12 competencies are embedded in three overarching components of leadership: **self**, **others**, and the **wider community**.

- **The self component emphasizes that leaders are lifelong learners.** Self-aware leaders continue to build their knowledge through ongoing professional development, reading, and, most importantly, self-reflection. They understand that leadership is a journey. Effective leadership development encourages leaders to reflect on their own leadership style, build on their personal strengths, and explore leadership tools and resources that complement their personal style.⁷ Leading one's *self* includes the leadership competencies of MIECHV leadership knowledge; self-reflection; ethics; and critical thinking.
- **The others component emphasizes that leaders expand their sphere of influence to others.** Relationship-building is at the heart of effective leadership. A relationship-driven leader empowers

others—including colleagues, those they supervise, and other MIECHV stakeholders—and considers empathy essential to creating strong, productive teams. Leading *others* includes the leadership competencies of communication; negotiation and conflict resolution; cultural competency; family-professional partnerships; developing others through teaching, coaching, and mentoring; and interdisciplinary/interprofessional team building.

- **The wider community component emphasizes that leaders extend their impact to the wider community.** Leaders bring systems thinking and a big-picture lens to their interactions with early childhood and health services organizations. Leading the *wider community* includes the leadership competencies of working in communities, systems, and policy development and implementation.

This resource is designed to enable MIECHV leaders to apply the 12 MCH Leadership Competencies to their MIECHV work. The fillable template that follows:

- States the working knowledge needed by MIECHV leaders for each competency
- Lists the applicable skills for each competency (under “MIECHV leaders will be able to . . .”)
- Invites awardee leaders to provide examples of how they demonstrate these skills themselves and how they help LIA leaders build them
- Provides reflection questions for leaders to consider as they develop action steps based on their self-assessment

⁷ National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations. (2014, April). *Head Start A to Z: Key Messages*. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/key-messages-new-leaders-version.pdf>

MIECHV Leadership Knowledge

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of MIECHV populations and the history and current structure of how MIECHV programs serve these populations, including the following:

- The services available, their limitations, and any gaps in services
- Key policies that affect MIECHV populations
- The underlying principles of data collection and analysis, and the strengths, limitations, and utility of the data they collect
- The synergistic relationship between programs that focus on particular populations or communities

| MIECHV Leadership Knowledge Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe MIECHV populations and understand how MIECHV programs support these priority populations • Describe and demonstrate the use of a systems approach in examining and understanding the interactions among individuals, groups, organizations, and communities, particularly around achieving MIECHV performance measures • Use data to identify issues related to MIECHV performance measures and to develop or evaluate policy • Describe health disparities within MIECHV populations, and offer strategies to address these disparities • Evaluate evidence-based programs and policies for the translation of research to practice • Understand the value of partnering with family- and community-led organizations to identify ways to engage families and community members in efforts to improve programs, policies, and practices • Assess the effectiveness of an existing program for specific MIECHV populations | | |

Self-Reflection

Self-reflection is the process of assessing the impact of one's personal values, beliefs, communication styles, cultural influences, and experiences on one's personal and professional leadership style.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- The impact of self-assessment and self-reflection on one's leadership style and interpersonal interactions
- Sources of personal reward, resilience, and rejuvenation, as well as signs of stress and fatigue
- The characteristics and utility of different leadership styles

| Self-Reflection Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize how one's personal attitudes, beliefs, and experience influence leadership style • Use self-reflection techniques to enhance program development, service delivery, community collaboration, teaching and research, and interpersonal communication • Identify a framework to obtain productive feedback from peers and members • Apply understanding of their own leadership style to promote cohesive, well-functioning teams with diverse and complementary styles | | |

Ethics

Ethical behavior in professional roles includes conduct consistent with generally accepted principles and values, such as honesty, responsibility, and cultural competency, as well as ethics specific to the MIECHV population.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the ethical and legal principles, values, and behaviors that underlie professional conduct within MIECHV.

| Ethics Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the ethical implications of health disparities within MIECHV populations and understand how they underlie their professional conduct.• Interact with others to solve problems in an ethical manner• Act as catalysts for discussion of ethical dilemmas and issues that affect MIECHV populations• Seek to understand the community's cultural values in order to ensure the delivery of culturally competent and ethical policies, programs, and practices | | |

Critical Thinking

Complex challenges faced by MIECHV populations and the systems that serve them necessitate *critical thinking*: the ability to identify an issue or problem, frame it as a specific question, consider it from multiple perspectives, evaluate relevant information, and develop a reasoned resolution.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- The cognitive hierarchy of critical thinking: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
- The levels of evidence used in the guidelines and recommendations of their professional organizations
- Basic statistics, epidemiology, qualitative and quantitative research, systemic review, and meta-analyses

| Critical-Thinking Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate various perspectives, approaches, and sources of information, and possible unintended consequences, when addressing an organizational, community-based, or research challenge • Use population data to assist in determining a population's needs and then designing programs, formulating policy, and conducting research or training • Formulate a focused and important practice, research, or policy question • Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze research | | |

Communication

Communication is the verbal, nonverbal, and written sharing of information. The communication process consists of a sender who develops and presents a message and the receiver who works to understand the message. Skillful communication includes the ability to effectively convey information to and receive information from others. It includes the essential components of attentive listening and clarity in writing or speaking for a variety of audiences.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- Principles of communication for all modalities, including verbal, written, and nonverbal, in various practice, policy, and research settings
- Approaches to overcome communication challenges, such as literacy levels, disability, cultural meanings, language differences, professional terms, and acronyms

| Communication Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share thoughts, ideas, and feelings effectively and with cultural and linguistic proficiency in discussions, meetings, and presentations with individuals and diverse groups • Write clearly, effectively, and with cultural and linguistic proficiency to express information about issues and services that affect MIECHV populations • Understand their own and others' nonverbal communication cues • Listen attentively and actively • Tailor and communicate information appropriately for an intended audience, purpose, or context • Demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly about MIECHV populations, issues, and services through effective presentations and writings • Employ a repertoire of communication skills that include disseminating information in a crisis, relaying difficult news, and explaining opportunities and risks for MIECHV programs • Summarize complex information appropriately for a variety of audiences and contexts | | |

Negotiation and Conflict Resolution

Negotiation is a cooperative process where participants try to find a solution that meets the legitimate interests of involved parties; it is a discussion intended to produce an agreement. *Conflict resolution* is the process of resolving or managing a dispute by sharing each party's point of view and adequately addressing their interests so that they are satisfied with the outcome. MIECHV leaders approach negotiations and conflicts with objectivity, an openness to new information, and the goal of long-term outcomes that foster relationship-building and development of trust.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- Characteristics of conflict, and how conflict is manifested in organizational contexts
- Sources of potential conflict in an interdisciplinary setting
- Theories pertaining to conflict management and negotiation among groups with differing interests
- Strategies and techniques useful for successful negotiation with various groups
- The potentially positive and/or catalytic role of conflict in the change process

| Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand their own point of view and their negotiation and conflict-handling styles • Demonstrate emotional self-awareness and self-regulation • Understand others' points of view, how various styles can influence negotiation and conflict resolution, and how to adapt to others' styles to resolve differences • Apply strategies and techniques of effective negotiation and evaluate the impact of personal communication and negotiation style on outcomes • Demonstrate the ability to manage conflict in a constructive manner • Navigate and address the ways culture, power, socioeconomic status, and inequities shape conflict and the ability to come to a resolution • Use consensus building to achieve common understanding, goals, and activities to solve problems | | |

Cultural Competency

Cultural competence is a developmental process that occurs along a continuum and evolves over an extended period. It broadly represents knowledge and skills necessary to communicate and interact effectively with people regardless of differences, helping to ensure that the needs of all people and communities are met in a respectful and responsive way in an effort to decrease health disparities and lead to health equity.

Becoming culturally competent is an ongoing and fluid process. MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- The influence of conscious and unconscious (implicit) biases and assumptions on individuals and organizations
- How ability, age, class, race, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation impact health equity
- How linguistic competence requires organizational and provider capacity to respond effectively to the needs of the populations served
- How multiple social and cultural disparities influence health and access to health care services

| Cultural Competency Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct personal and/or organizational self-assessments regarding cultural competence • Assess, without making assumptions, the strengths and needs of individuals and communities based on sensitivity to, and respect for, their diverse backgrounds, and respond appropriately • Incorporate an understanding and appreciation of differences in experiences and perspectives into professional behaviors and attitudes, while maintaining an awareness of the potential for implicit bias • Modify systems to meet the specific needs of a group, family, community, or population • Employ strategies to ensure culturally sensitive MIECHV services • Integrate cultural competency into programs, research, scholarship, and policies • Use data-driven tools to guide efforts toward health equity | | |

Family-Professional Partnerships

Family-professional partnerships at all levels of the system of care ensure the health and well-being of children, including those with special health care needs, and their families through respectful family-professional collaboration and shared decision-making.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- The definition of family-professional partnerships and the origin of the family-centered care perspective at the individual, organizational, and system levels
- The principles of family-centered care in MIECHV policies, programs, and practices

| Family-Professional Partnerships Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit and implement family input on the design and delivery of MIECHV services, program planning, materials development, program activities, and evaluation • Recognize the importance of providing training and mentoring to families and community members, as well as opportunities to lead advisory committees and task forces • Recognize the importance of seeking training and guidance from families and community members • Demonstrate family-centered philosophical constructs (e.g., families and professionals share decision-making; professionals use a strengths-based approach when working with families), and use these constructs to critique and strengthen practices, programs, and policies that affect MIECHV populations • Assess the social, educational, and cultural issues affecting the family, and tailor recommendations accordingly • Celebrate individual and family diversity, and provide an open and accepting environment • Recognize that organizational and system-level policies and practices may impact MIECHV children and families | | |

Family-Professional Partnerships (cont.)

| Family-Professional Partnerships Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish effective relationships with family-led organizations to build and deepen family involvement across all Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems • Use feedback from family and community members obtained through focus groups, surveys, community advisory boards, and other mechanisms as part of the program's CQI efforts and to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the program's family-professional partnerships • Ensure that family and community perspectives are included in MIECHV evaluations, practices, programs, and policies | | |

Developing Others Through Teaching, Coaching, and Mentoring

Teaching, coaching, and mentoring are the three primary strategies used to develop others. *Teaching* involves designing the learning environment, which includes developing learning objectives and curricula, providing resources and training opportunities, modeling the process of effective learning, and evaluating whether learning occurred. *Coaching* includes providing the guidance and structure needed for people to capably examine their assumptions, set realistic goals, take appropriate actions, and reflect on their actions (and the resulting outcomes or implications). *Mentoring* means influencing the career development and professional growth of another by acting as an advocate, teacher, guide, role model, benevolent authority, door opener, resource, cheerful critic, or career enthusiast.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- A variety of teaching strategies and tools appropriate to the learner’s goals, context, and needs
- Coaching as a professional relationship that offers tools for dealing with and leading change, working with others, and managing conflict
- Mentoring as a personal career-facilitating relationship involving private and confidential interactions to promote the mentees’ professional growth, enhance their skill set, and increase their knowledge of relevant resources

| Developing Others Through Teaching, Coaching, and Mentoring Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use instructional technology tools that facilitate broad participation • Give and receive constructive feedback about behaviors and performance • Cultivate active-listening skills (e.g., attending, clarifying, and confirming) • Identify appropriate mentor-mentee relationships, taking into consideration individuals’ backgrounds, disciplines, and other relevant factors • Clearly set boundaries and define expectations focused on specific tasks and projects in a mentoring or coaching relationship | | |

Developing Others Through Teaching, Coaching, and Mentoring (cont.)

| Developing Others Through Teaching, Coaching, and Mentoring Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a rapport so that the mentoring/coaching relationship facilitates the exploration of new and innovative ideas and an exchange of honest, constructive feedback and encouragement • Incorporate evidence-based pedagogy (e.g., universal design learning) • Consistently draw learners into active learning roles • Effectively facilitate learning in groups with individuals of varying baseline knowledge, skills, and experiences | | |

Interdisciplinary/Interprofessional Team Building

MIECHV is interdisciplinary/interprofessional in nature. *Interdisciplinary/interprofessional team building* means providing a supportive environment in which the skills and expertise of team members from different disciplines are acknowledged and are seen as essential and synergistic. Input from each team member (including a variety of professionals, MIECHV populations, and community partners) is elicited and valued in making collaborative, outcome-driven decisions to address individual, community-level, or system-level problems.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- The roles of various MIECHV stakeholders, and how each can contribute to a successful team
- Team-building concepts, including stages of team development, and practices that enhance teamwork
- Management of team dynamics

| Interdisciplinary/Interprofessional Team-Building Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately describe the roles, responsibilities, and scope of practice of team members, including other professionals, MIECHV staff members and stakeholders, and families • Actively seek and use input from people with diverse perspectives to make decisions • Identify and assemble team members with knowledge and skills appropriate to a given task • Facilitate group processes for team-based decisions • Articulate a shared vision, build trust and respect among team members, and foster collaboration and cooperation • Model curiosity about differences and appreciation for individual contributions • Identify and redirect forces that negatively influence team dynamics • Use shared outcomes to promote team synergy • Share leadership based on team members' strengths in carrying out activities and managing challenges • Use knowledge of competencies and roles for disciplines other than one's own to improve teaching, research, advocacy, and systems of care | | |

Working with Communities and Systems

Improving maternal and child health is a complex process because so many intersecting factors influence the MIECHV population. *Systems thinking* recognizes complexity and examines linkages and interactions among the components—norms, laws, resources, infrastructure, and individual behaviors—that influence outcomes. Systems thinking addresses how these components interact at multiple levels, including within individual organizations, among the collective stakeholders, and throughout the communities where families that receive MIECHV services reside.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- How organizations or practice settings function as systems, including business and administrative principles related to planning, funding, budgeting, staffing, and evaluating MIECHV programs
- How organizations function in relation to broader systems, including principles of systems thinking, features and issues of systems, principles of building constituencies and engaging in collaborative endeavors, implementation science concepts, and factors that influence the use of research findings in practice

| Working with Communities and Systems Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate the mission, vision, and goals of an organization to the broader system in which it belongs in order to facilitate shared understanding, responsibility, and action • Practice sound budget planning, effective resource use, control of standards, coordination of tasks, and problem-solving • Develop agendas and lead meetings effectively • Identify stakeholders and the extent of their engagement in the collaborative process • Interpret situations systemically (i.e., identify both the whole system and the dynamic interplay among its parts) • Assess the environment, determine goals and objectives for a new or continuing program, list factors that facilitate or impede implementation of evidence-based or -informed strategies, develop priorities, and establish a timeline for implementation | | |

Working with Communities and Systems (cont.)

| Working with Communities and Systems Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement accommodations aimed at increasing inclusion and accessibility for all • Manage a project effectively and efficiently, including planning, implementing, delegating, sharing responsibility, staffing, and evaluating • Use implementation science to promote the use of evidence-based or -informed practices • Develop proficiency in the business and administrative aspects of MIECHV finances and policy • Work with a strong stakeholder group and ensure their broad-based involvement in an environment of openness, inclusion, and trust • Build effective and sustainable coalitions to address specific outcomes • Use community collaboration models (e.g., collective impact) and leverage existing community improvement efforts to define a meaningful role for MIECHV | | |

Policy

It is important for MIECHV leaders to possess *policy* skills, particularly in changing and competitive economic and political environments. MIECHV leaders must understand the resources necessary to improve health and well-being for children, youth, families, and communities, and must be able to articulate those needs in the context of policy development and implementation.

MIECHV leaders will demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- Public policy-making processes at the local, state, and national levels
- Current public policies and private-sector initiatives that are especially relevant to MIECHV populations
- Appropriate methods for informing and educating policymakers about the needs of MIECHV populations and the impact of current policies on those populations
- Strategies for public communication on key MIECHV priorities

| Policy Skills | How I Demonstrate These Skills | How I Help LIA Leaders Build These Skills |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>MIECHV leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frame problems based on key data that affect MIECHV populations, including epidemiological, economic, political, and social trends • Use data and evaluative criteria in proposing policy change • Distinguish the roles and relationships of groups involved in the public policy development and implementation processes • Apply appropriate evaluation standards and criteria to the analysis of alternative policies • Analyze the potential impact of policies on diverse MIECHV populations • Formulate strategies to balance the interests of diverse stakeholders in ways that are consistent with MIECHV priorities • Effectively present evidence and information to a legislative body, key decision-makers, foundations, and the general public • Craft a convincing MIECHV story designed to motivate stakeholders and policymakers to take action | | |

Next Steps

Review the examples you provided for how you demonstrate the related skills and how you help LIA leaders build their skills.

Consider:

- Which competency areas are your strongest?
- Which ones were the most challenging for you to find examples for? What are your growth opportunities?
- Is there a correlation between your own competencies and those where you help LIA leaders build their skills?

Develop next steps:

- Select one leadership competency that you would like to focus on strengthening first in order to build your personal leadership skills. Reflect on these questions:
 - What resources are available to help you strengthen this competency?
 - Who can help you build this competency (e.g., supervisor, mentor, coach, or colleague)?
 - What short-term steps can you take?
 - What longer-term steps can you take?
 - How will you measure whether you have strengthened your skills in relation to this competency?

Compare your results with those of other MIECHV awardee staff:

- Which competency areas are strongest for your team?
- Which are the most challenging?
- What resources and professional development opportunities would help strengthen your team?

Select one leadership competency that you would like to focus on first to improve your support of LIA leaders. Reflect on these questions:

- What are some concrete actions that you can take to support LIA leaders?
- What resources can you provide?
- Who else on your team can support LIA leaders in building this competency?
- What professional development opportunities can you provide?
- How will you measure whether LIA leaders have strengthened their skills in relation to this competency?

Continue your journey toward improvement:

- As you progress through your plans for improvement for both your own leadership capacity and the support you provide to LIAs, revisit your reflections and identify additional action steps.
- Consider completing the interactive checklists annually as you continue to apply the MCH Leadership Competencies to your MIECHV work.

Leadership Resources

[2017 Early Childhood Education Leadership Development Compendium: A View of the Current Landscape](#): The updated third edition of this compendium answers four questions related to leadership in the early childhood education (ECE) field: How is the ECE field addressing its needs for leadership? What programs are available to support leadership development, and who is being served? What can be learned from the field's definition(s) of and approach to leadership development based on descriptions provided by participant programs? How has the ECE field evolved over the last decade in terms of its interests in and purposes for leadership development?

[Early Childhood Leadership Development Consortium: Consensus Statement](#): This consensus statement presents a conceptual framework for Early Childhood Education Leadership Development and can serve as a catalyst for dialogue and reflection.

[Leading With Equity](#): This report from the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Leadership Summit summarizes the discussions of the three-day meeting and looks at the next steps needed to advance equity and diversity.

[MCH Navigator](#): The Maternal and Child Health Bureau's online portal for pursuing continuous learning in MCH is designed to help emerging and established MCH professionals and students map professional growth pathways.

[A Practical Toolkit: Building State and Local Leadership for Early Childhood Education](#): Developed by the [Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes](#), the toolkit is designed to support state and local education professionals in developing and using their skills, knowledge, and behaviors to effectively lead and address the challenges associated with advancing high-quality early learning in a P-12 continuum. The toolkit provides materials and resources to help build leadership capacity.

[Principle-Centered Leadership in Early Childhood Education](#): This article, which appeared in *Dimensions of Early Childhood* from the Southern Early Childhood Association, emphasizes the difference between leadership and management and identifies and describes seven dimensions of principle-centered leadership.

[Smart Brief on Leadership](#): This daily newsletter is filled with interesting and informative articles about leadership.

[Transforming the Workforce for Children from Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#): This comprehensive report on the early childhood workforce from the [Institute of Medicine](#) and the [National Research Council](#) includes recommendations for early childhood leadership development.

[Whole Leadership: A Framework for Early Childhood Programs](#): This resource from the [McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership](#) includes a [framework for whole leadership](#) and identifies three domains of early childhood leadership: leadership essentials, administrative leadership, and pedagogical leadership.

Useful Leadership Websites

- [McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership](#)
- [Leadership Now](#)
- [Center for Creative Leadership](#)
- [The Center for Health Leadership and Practice](#)
- [Harvard Business Review: Leadership](#)
- [LeadChange](#)

