



From Data to Action:
Using CQI to Improve Early
Childhood Education and Care
in Illinois

Vision

Reimagining a more **equitable** Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) system that respects **family and community voice** and works to ensure it is **centered and prioritized** at every level of decision-making in Illinois.



Mission

To create a statewide regional infrastructure that will amplify input from communities in the development of policies and funding priorities.

We support the mobilization of communities to build and sustain equitable access to inclusive, high-quality Early Childhood services for all children and families in the state of Illinois.



Communication Gap

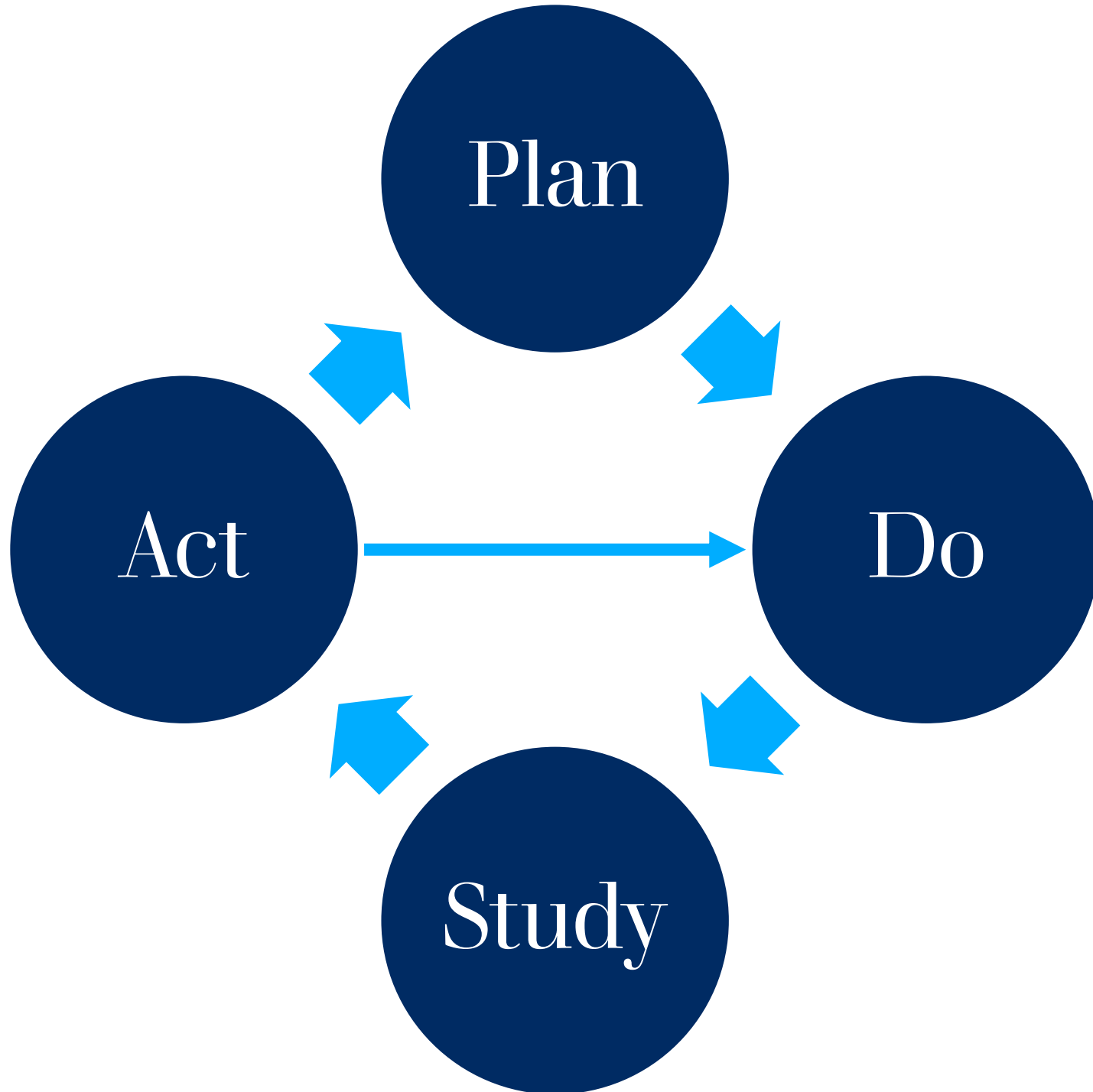
Families, Early Childhood
Professionals,
Communities, Local
Governments



State Agencies, Funders,
Policymakers

Bridging the Gap





Birth to Five Illinois uses a Collective Impact model, acting as the Backbone Organization to mobilize communities as they create sustainable, long-term changes to the Early Childhood Education and Care system.

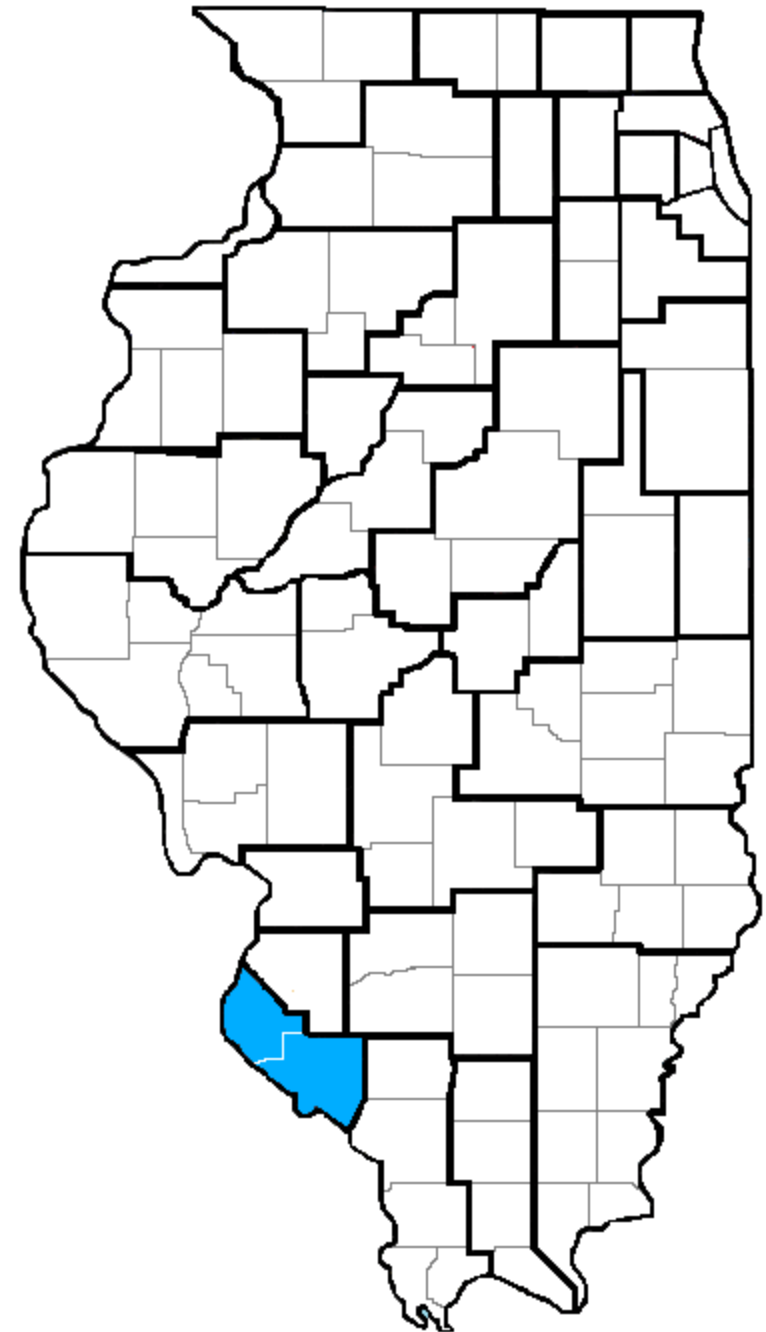
Action Plan

- Based on data collected through focus groups, interviews, publicly available resources, community partners
- Guide communities through Action Plan development using CQI process
- Regions used tool in a way that made sense to their community
- Template available in Whova app





Region 45:
Candace Gardner (she/her)
Monroe & Randolph Counties



Root Cause Analysis

Enables Early Childhood professionals to identify and address the fundamental issues that impact program quality, child development, and educational outcomes.



Root Cause Analysis

What is Root Cause Analysis?



Identifying Root Causes

What are the root causes of the gaps, barriers, and challenges in the Region?



Importance in Early Childhood Education and Care

What are the most important recommendations for the Region?



Implementing Community-Driven, Sustainable Solutions

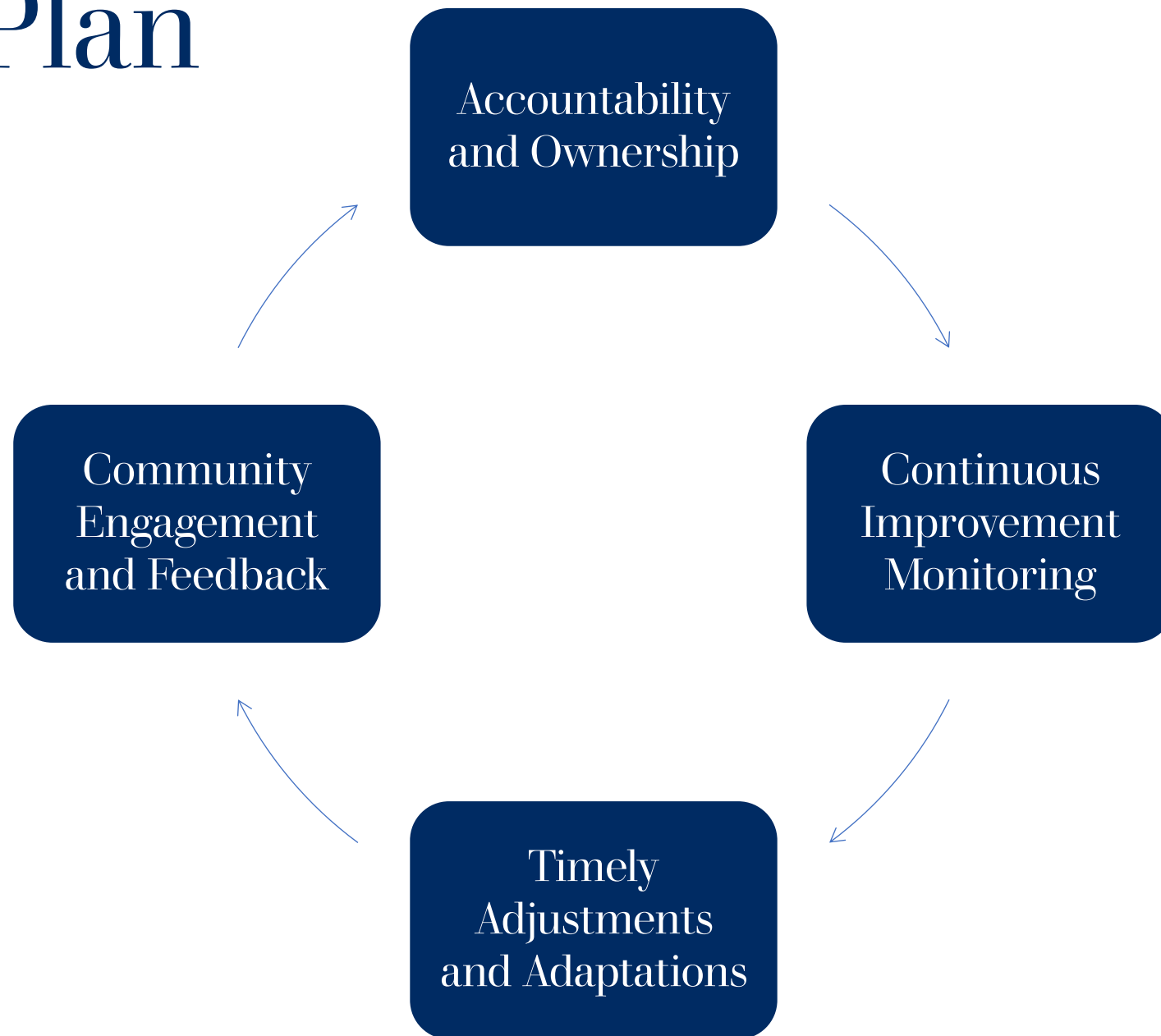
What are the steps to meet implement the recommendation?

Gaps, Barriers, and Challenges

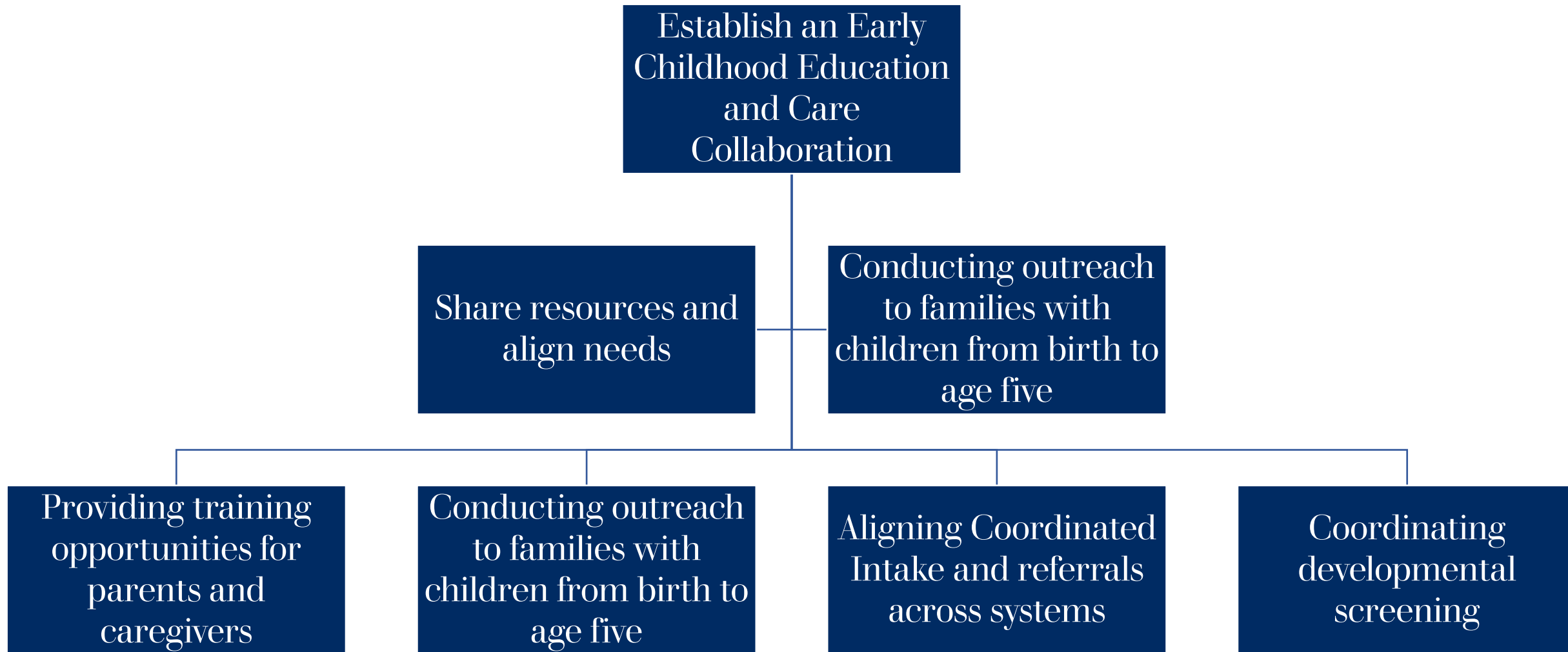
- Communication
- Fragmented Community Engagement
- Lack of Collaborative Structures
- Diverging Goals and Priorities
- Resistance to Change



Action Plan



Successes



Lessons Learned

- Identifying gaps and using structured tools like Root Cause Analysis (RCA) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Continuous monitoring and flexibility
- Effective communication, community engagement, and regular meetings foster collaboration
- Set SMART goals with a clear, feasible timeline

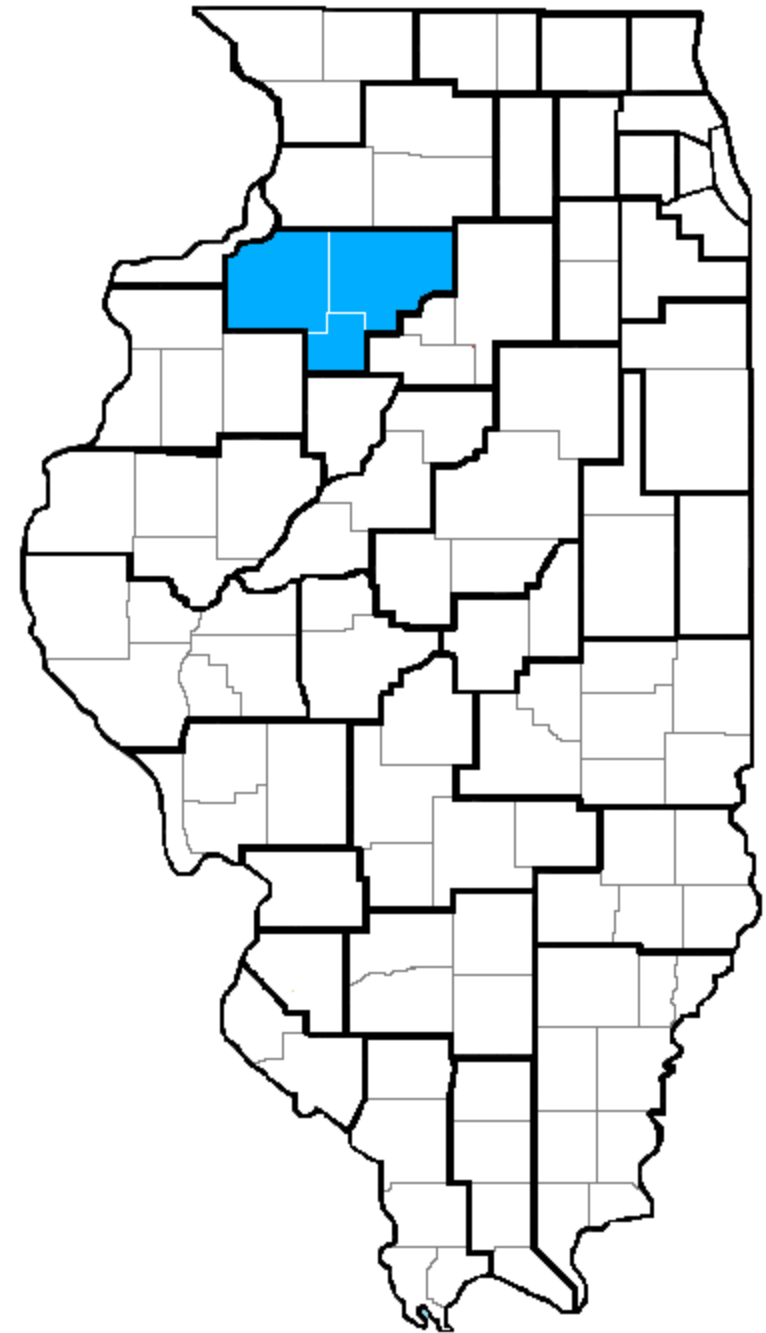




Region 28:

Dianna Saelens (she/her)

Bureau, Henry & Stark Counties



Action Plan Development



How does data inform the Action Plan?



What is known about the Recommendations?



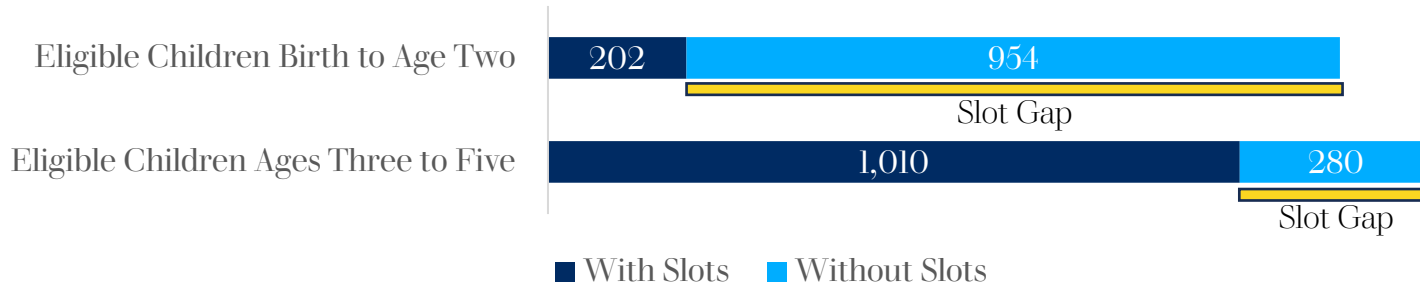
What do we need to learn?



What site visits or field trips would be helpful to better understand the gaps, challenges, and barriers?

Action Plan Data

Region 28 Publicly Funded ECEC Programs Slot Gap



Data from Early Childhood Regional Needs Assessment was used as basis of Plan, Do, Study, Act cycle

Program Type	Bureau		Henry		Stark	
	Sites	Capacity	Sites	Capacity	Sites	Capacity
PFA (Part Day)	7	380	6	380	2	85
PFA (Extended Day)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Head Start	1	18	2	100	1	17
Early Head Start	0	0	0	0	0	0
PI (Center Based)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Experiential Learning in Action Planning

- Visit to different models
 - Expanded district facility
 - Community partnerships
- Examined empty community spaces
- Provided:
 - New perspectives
 - Qualitative data about program challenges



Final Recommendations

1. Develop community-level Collaborations to enhance Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) service offerings for children and families
2. Improve agency-level awareness of marketing and funding opportunities to expand service support for families in underserved communities



Successes

- Development of district-community collaborative Pre-K marketing materials
- Addition of two new community sites
- Increase of Pre-K spots by 18% in the county



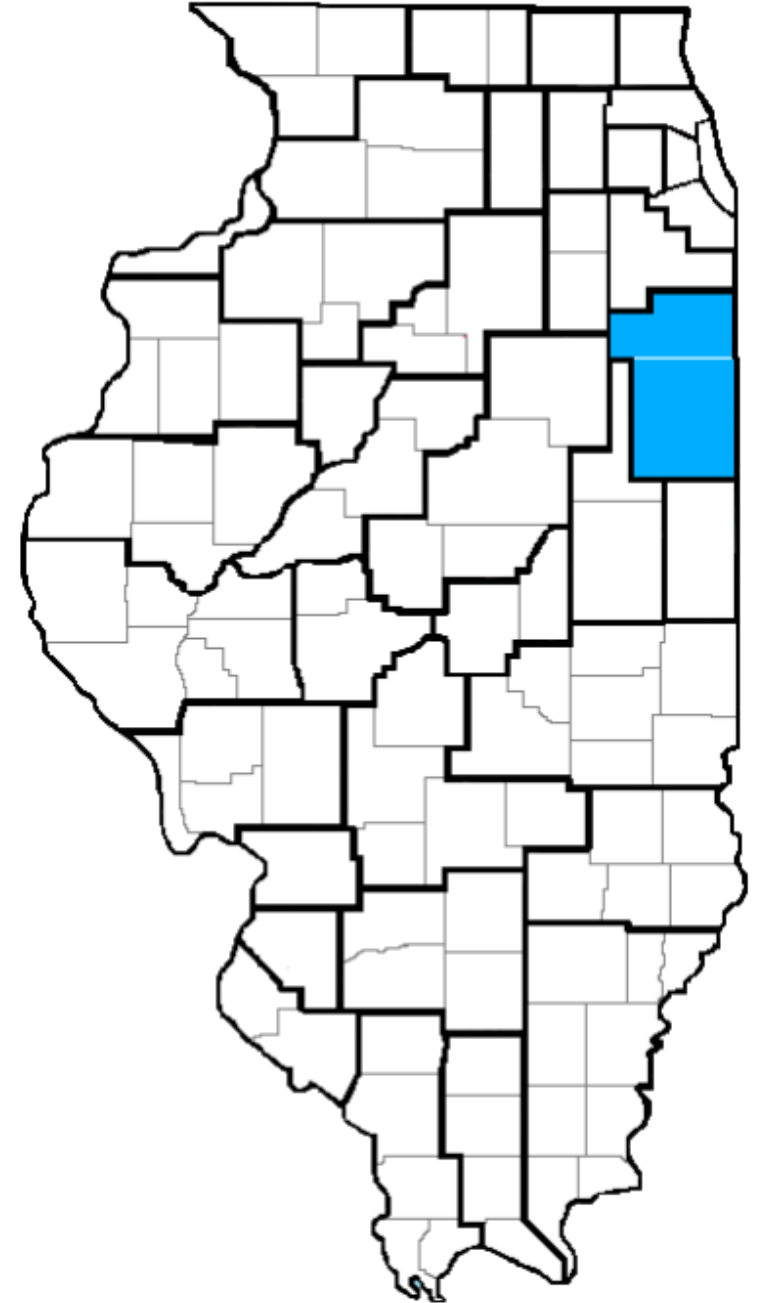
Lessons Learned

- Before you move forward, reflect on what did not work in the past
- Seek out others who have been where you are
- Even small steps are progress





Region 32:
Liz Gibson (she/her)
Iroquois & Kankakee Counties



Recommendations

- Pinpoint specific areas where performance can be improved or where issues have been observed
- Use data, feedback, or performance metrics to highlight these areas



Building on Community Partnerships

- Map current processes to understand how they work and where there might be inefficiencies or issues
- Use tools like flowcharts, cause-and-effect diagrams, or SWOT analysis
- Use a template that allows for all parties to contribute, have access to at any time, is easy to navigate, and allows for shared parties to work to meet the goals for each recommendation



Action Plan

- Look at efforts to increase awareness for the Kan-I-Help website and 211 database
- Develop steps to increase this resource throughout the community, with additional marketing measures, and through increased social media campaigns
- Work with partner organizations to see what supports they could offer to address the need for wrap around services in our community



Successes

- Increased relationships with community partners
- Increased collaboration with community stakeholders
- Local stakeholders were awarded a Birth to Five Illinois funding to support Action Plan
- Community partner meetings to add onto existing Action Plan steps



Lessons Learned



- Maintain clear boundaries: Ensure that each party respects their defined roles and responsibilities
- Support rather than impose: Work alongside community partners to develop action steps collaboratively, rather than dictating them
- Avoid assumptions: Engage in open dialogue to clarify needs and perspectives, rather than presuming understanding
- Engage collaboratively: Foster strong partnerships with key community stakeholders to enhance shared goals
- Prioritize effective communication: Emphasize clear communication and relationship-building to strengthen collaboration and improve outcomes

Wrap-Up

- Train and support CQI within the organization
- Take stock of what is negotiable and what is non-negotiable
- Allow for people to leverage their skills and strengths
- CQI must be embedded internally and externally



Q&A



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Thank you!

