

# Virtual Lab School



Quality and Continuous Improvement



# Quality or Compliance

Quality results from a systematic continuous improvement process in which management, resources, caregiving, training, and measurement systems align and function in such a way that continuous improvement and compliance are inescapable outcomes.



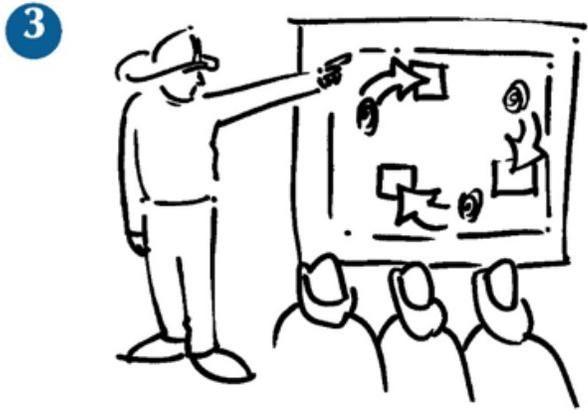
# Moving beyond Fighting Fires



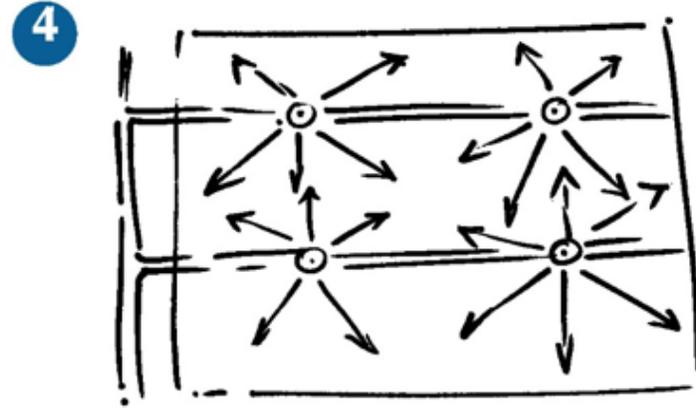
**Reacting to the problem (0–5%)**  
Run with the hose and put out the fire.



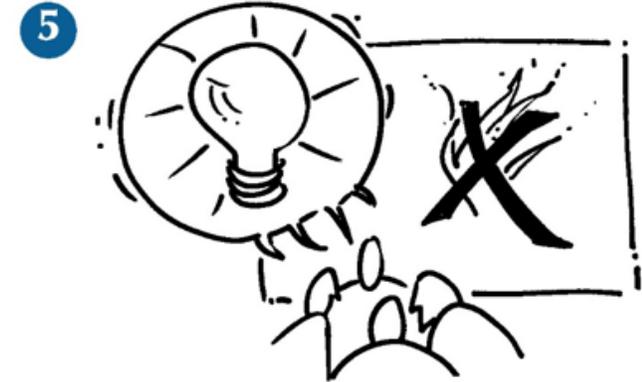
**General improvement orientation (10–25%)**  
Install more fire hoses to get to the fires quickly and reduce their impact.



**Systematic evaluation and improvement (30–45%)**  
Evaluate which locations are most susceptible to fire. Install heat sensors and sprinklers in those locations.



**Learning and strategic improvement (50–65%)**  
Install systemwide heat sensors and a sprinkler system that is activated by the heat preceding fires.



**Organizational analysis and innovation (70–100%)**  
Use fireproof and fire-retardant materials. Replace combustible liquids with water-based liquids. Prevention is the primary approach for protection, with sensors and sprinklers as the secondary line of protection. This approach has been shared with all facilities and is practiced in all locations.



# Indicators of a Culture of Continuous Improvement

- **Curiosity**

- asking the “how” and “why” questions about children and families in your program and about those who work in the program

- **Reflection**

- continuously reviewing program policies and seeking feedback, applying when necessary

- **Tolerance of failure and vulnerability**

- recognizing when things aren't working and making appropriate course corrections

- **Use of feedback**

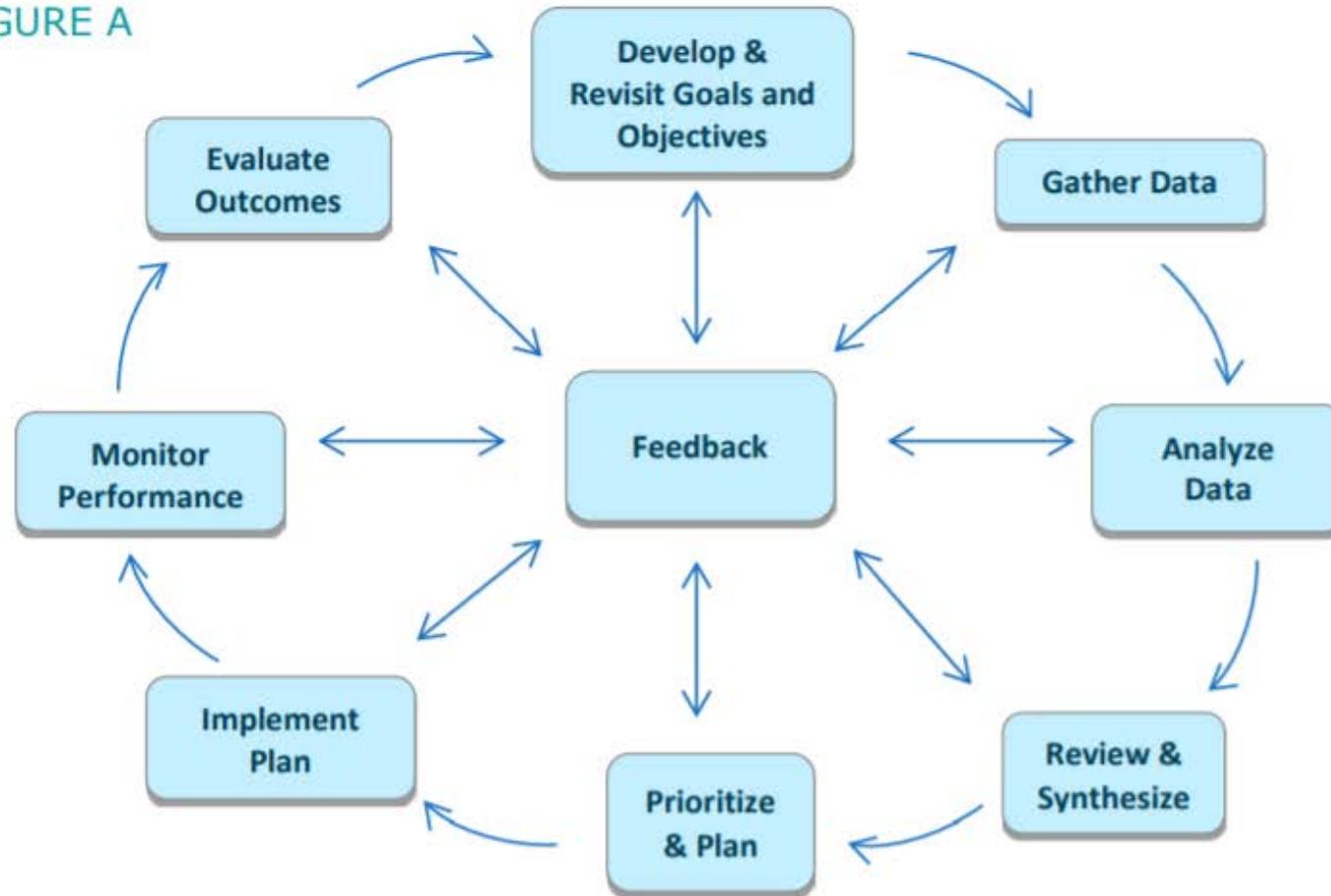
- using data to assess whether or not strategies or programs are making a difference for children and families; this is similar to Reflection

- **Systems thinking**

- stepping back and considering the broader context in which programs operate and understanding that change is incremental.



FIGURE A



Source: Derrick-Mills, Teresa, Sandstrom, H., Pettijohn, S., Fyffe, S., and Koulish, J. Forthcoming. *Data Use for Continuous Quality Improvement: What the Head Start Field Can Learn From Other Disciplines, A Literature Review and Conceptual Framework*. OPRE Report # 2014-77. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.



# Data, Information, Knowledge, & Wisdom

*Data* are the raw facts and figures.

*Information* is data that has been collected and organized.

*Knowledge* is information which has been systematized through processes of filtering, testing, comparing, analyzing, and generalizing in order to create understanding.

*Wisdom* involves uniting the information and insights of knowledge with the fruits of experience in a way which can usefully guide action.



# Focus on Quality



# Reflecting: Continuous Improvement

- When you think about your program, what are you doing really well and how do you know?  
What could you improve?
- If someone asked your employees, “What would you like to improve here?”, what would they say?
- When you think about the well-being of your staff, what ways have you used to promote well-being and a healthy environment?

