Implementing Evidence-Based Practices: A Staged Approach
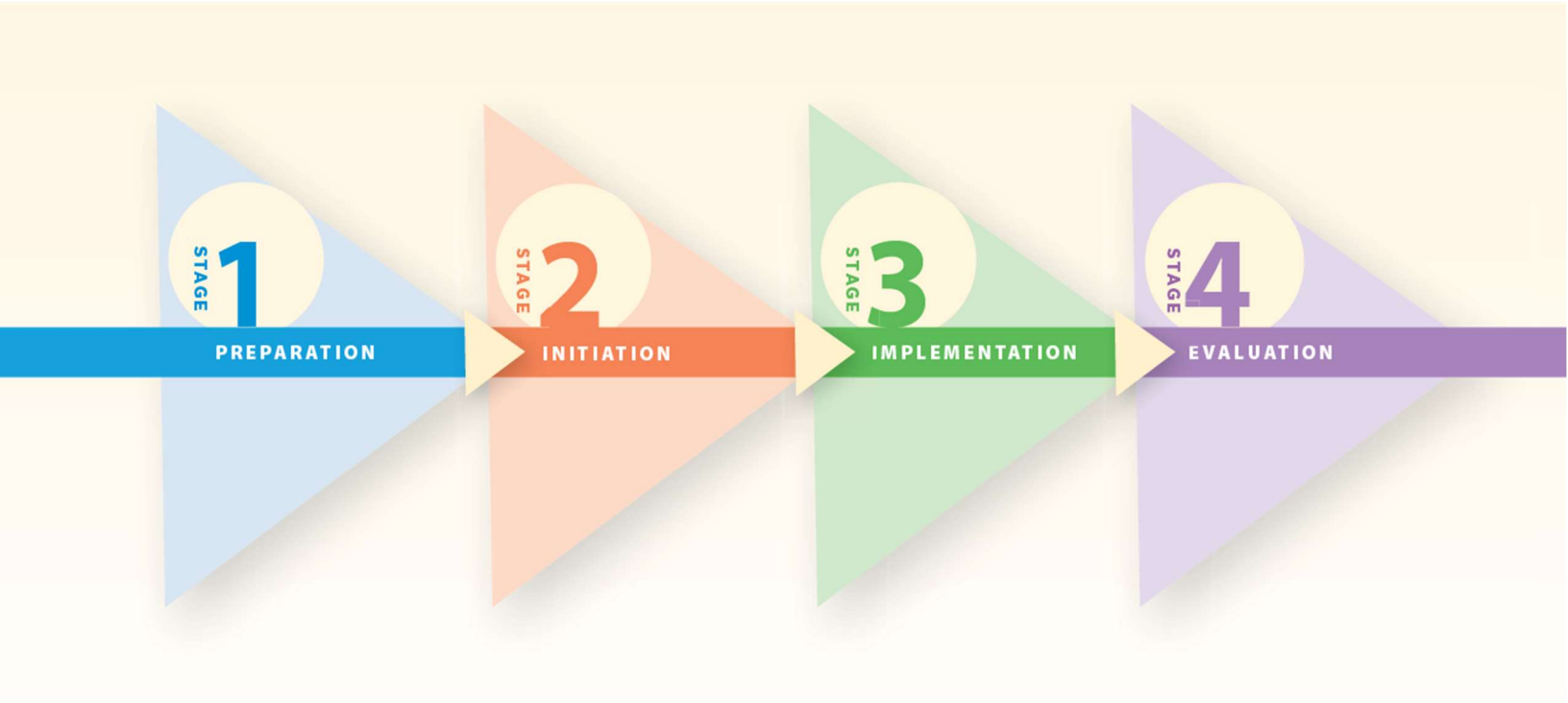
Introduction and Stage 1

PPCJI — Pennsylvania Partnership for Criminal Justice Improvement

Introduction

In June 2019, the Pennsylvania Partnership for Criminal Justice Improvement (PPCJI) published the *Blueprint for EBP Implementation*. The Blueprint provided agencies with a framework, consisting of four discrete stages, for implementing evidence-based practices.
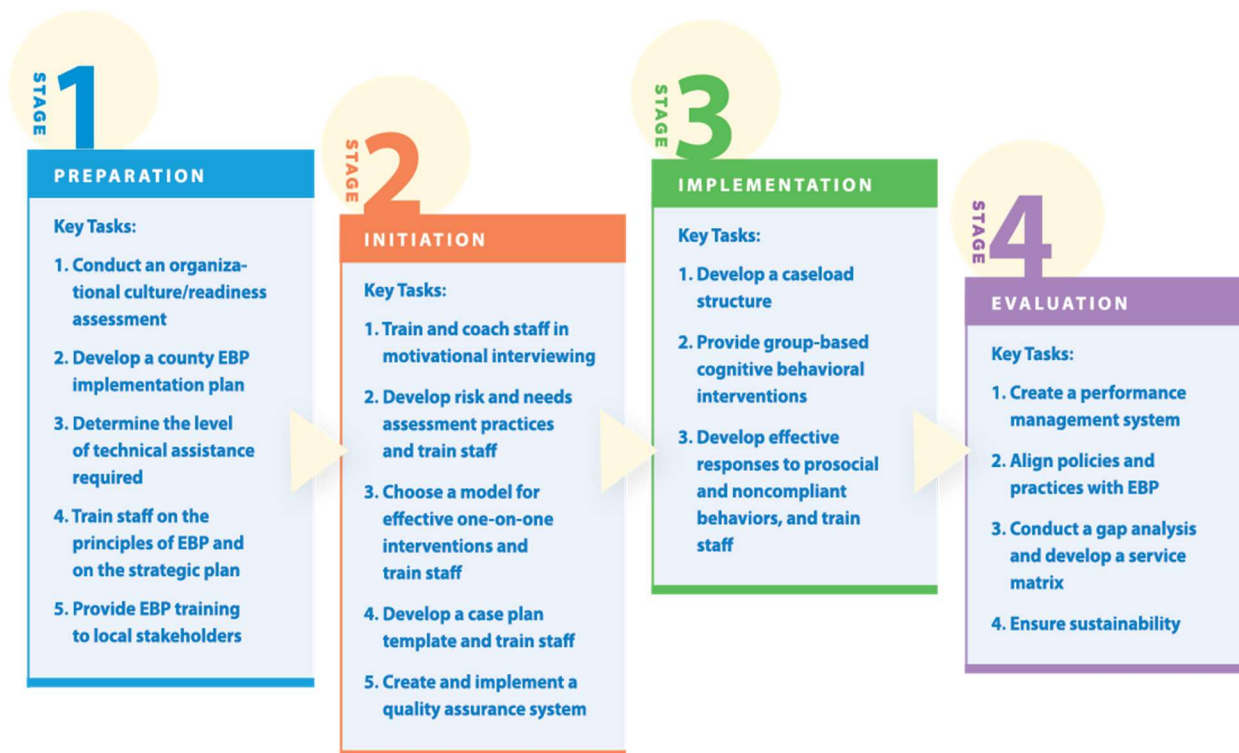
The sequencing of the stages is deliberate, addressing the core, foundational components first and then building on them. Even though agencies are encouraged to follow the sequence, the staged model is designed to be flexible—responsive to agencies' barriers, opportunities, and diversity.

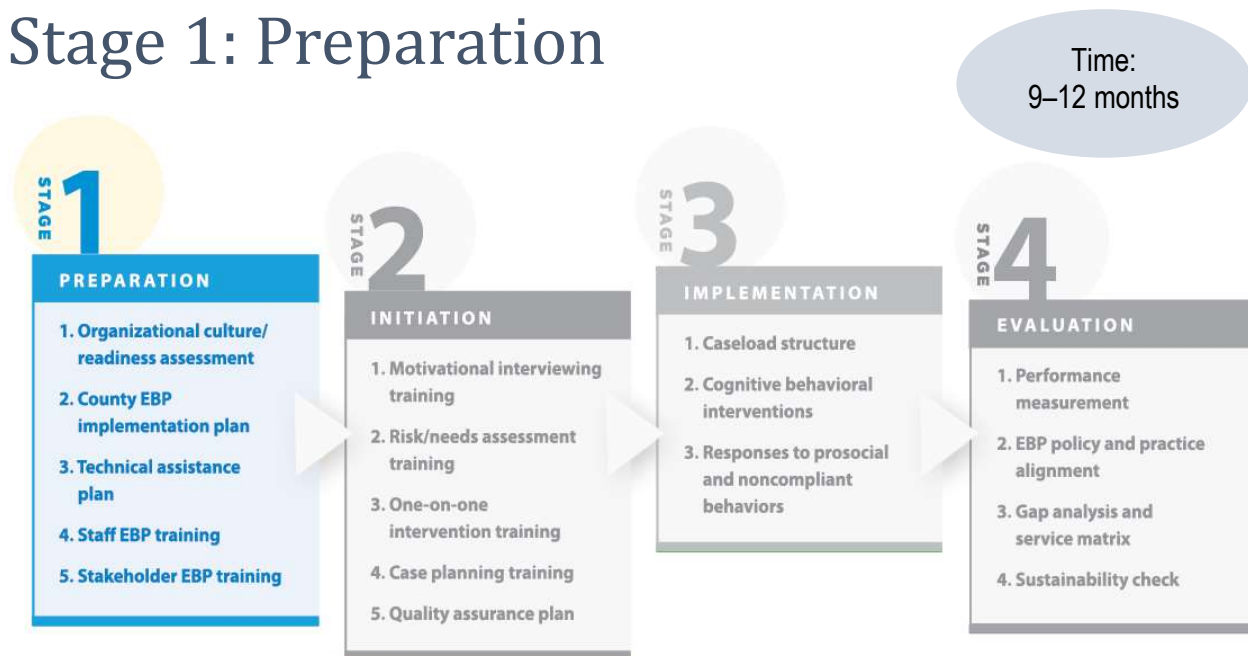Each of the four stages involves a number of key tasks, as shown below.

WHY STAGES?

Dividing larger projects into manageable stages:
- minimizes overwhelm and resistance
- allows agencies—some of which may be early adopters of EBP, have one component of EBP in place, or not have begun to implement EBP—to evaluate where they are in the process, enter the sequence where appropriate, revisit previous steps that they may have missed, and develop a plan to move forward
- provides opportunities to obtain feedback, assess quality, and make adjustments prior to moving to subsequent tasks
- offers opportunities to recognize and celebrate success

STAGE 1 PREPARATION

Key Tasks:

1. Conduct an organizational culture/readiness assessment
2. Develop a county EBP implementation plan
3. Determine the level of technical assistance required
4. Train staff on the principles of EBP and on the strategic plan
5. Provide EBP training to local stakeholders

STAGE 2 INITIATION

Key Tasks:

1. Train and coach staff in motivational interviewing
2. Develop risk and needs assessment practices and train staff
3. Choose a model for effective one-on-one interventions and train staff
4. Develop a case plan template and train staff
5. Create and implement a quality assurance system

STAGE 3 IMPLEMENTATION

Key Tasks:

1. Develop a caseload structure
2. Provide group-based cognitive behavioral interventions
3. Develop effective responses to prosocial and noncompliant behaviors, and train staff

STAGE 4 EVALUATION

Key Tasks:

1. Create a performance management system
2. Align policies and practices with EBP
3. Conduct a gap analysis and develop a service matrix
4. Ensure sustainability

Stage 1: Preparation

Time:
9–12 months

This document includes the following to assist with implementation of stage 1:

- The **overview** includes a chart with the stage's key tasks, subtasks, implementation tips, and resources.

- The **implementation plan template,** organized by key task, lists the various subtasks and provides space for the implementation committee to fill in the start and end dates, lead person, others responsible, and resources/partners needed for each subtask.

- The **cost–benefit analysis worksheet** allows agencies to evaluate the costs (human, materials, and data systems) and benefits of the stage.

- The **fidelity and quality assurance checklist** enables agencies to evaluate their current strengths and identify areas for improvement.

Overview

The following chart provides and overview of stage 1: its key tasks and subtasks, implementation tips, and helpful resources.[1]

Key Tasks	Subtasks	Implementation Tips	Resources
1. Conduct an organizational culture/readiness assessment	1a. Use a structured assessment to gauge the organizational climate and culture 1b. Summarize the findings 1c. Develop and implement a plan to address areas of concern 1d. Conduct an organizational culture/readiness assessment annually 1e. Monitor trends	• Gather feedback from a cross-section of staff and leadership • Be prepared for direct and sometimes unfavorable feedback	• Obtaining Organizational Buy-In* • Conducting an Organizational Readiness Survey** • Organizational Readiness Survey** • Organizational Readiness Survey: The Key to Implementing Change webinar and slides** • The Organizational Readiness Survey: Tips for Effectively Using Results**

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[1] Resources marked with * can be found at https://ccappoap.com/ebp-resources/ebp-briefs/. Resources marked with ** can be found at https://ccappoap.com/ebp-resources/ebp-stakeholder-resources/.

Key Tasks	Subtasks	Implementation Tips	Resources
2. Develop an agency EBP implementation plan	2a. Form an EBP implementation committee 2b. Identify key EBP components 2c. Assess the agency's status with respect to EBP implementation 2d. Develop a deliberate, systematic EBP implementation plan 2e. Monitor and update the plan regularly	• Involve a cross-section of leadership, staff, and key stakeholders • Focus on what is realistic and achievable	• Obtaining Organizational Buy-In* • Blueprint for EBP Implementation**
3. Determine the level of technical assistance required	3a. Identify training, coaching, and technical assistance needs 3b. Identify trainers, coaches, and technical assistance providers 3c. Explore training, coaching, and technical assistance funding opportunities	• Consider internal and external training and technical service providers • Explore opportunities to partner with other agencies • Investigate funding opportunities through government and justice system organizations	• List of agencies, identified by the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania, that have volunteered to mentor other agencies on key topics (found on the members-only section of the CCAPPOAP website)

Key Tasks	Subtasks	Implementation Tips	Resources
4. Train staff on the principles of EBP and on the strategic plan	4a. Identify/develop a standard training curriculum 4b. Train supervisors and staff 4c. Assess and revise the training as needed 4d. Develop a plan for future trainings on specific aspects of EBP 4e. Make EBP messaging to staff positive, clear, and consistent 4f. Involve staff in EBP implementation	• Train supervisors before staff • Provide opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback • Collaborate with staff to identify meaningful ways they can participate in EBP implementation	• Changing Probation and Parole Practices* • EBP Overview Video**

Key Tasks	Subtasks	Implementation Tips	Resources
5. Provide EBP training to local stakeholders	5a. Identify key stakeholder groups 5b. Identify/develop curricula tailored to key stakeholders' interests and concerns 5c. Train key stakeholders 5d. Assess and revise the trainings as needed 5e. Develop a plan for future stakeholder trainings 5f. Make EBP messaging to stakeholders positive, clear, and consistent	• Identify stakeholders who can champion the effort • Engage and educate stakeholders on an ongoing basis	• Collaboration* • Defense Attorneys* • How Communities Can Impact the Justice System* • How EBP Applies to Law Enforcement* • Judges' Role in an Evidence-Based System* • Prosecutors* • Victim Service Providers* • EBP Overview Video**

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EBP Implementation Plan Template

Purpose: Developing and monitoring a clear, realistic implementation plan is critical to ensuring the successful implementation of EBP.

Instructions: It is recommended that the Chief Probation Officer establish an implementation committee consisting of internal staff (managers, supervisors, probation officers, and support staff) as well as key stakeholders. For each of the key task's subtasks, the committee should assign realistic start and end dates, delegate a lead person and others responsible for achieving the subtask, identify needed resources and possible partners, and list potential barriers and strategies to overcome them.

Date: _____

Key Task 1: Conduct an Organizational Culture/Readiness Assessment

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
1a. Use a structured assessment to gauge the organizational climate and culture				
1b. Summarize the findings				

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
1c. Develop and implement a plan to address areas of concern				
1d. Conduct an organizational culture/readiness assessment annually				
1e. Monitor trends				

Potential Barriers	
Strategies to Address Barriers	

Key Task 2: Develop an Agency EBP Implementation Plan

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
2a. Form an EBP implementation committee				
2b. Identify key EBP components				
2c. Assess the agency's status with respect to EBP implementation				
2d. Develop a deliberate, systematic EBP implementation plan				
2e. Monitor and update the plan regularly				

Potential Barriers	
Strategies to Address Barriers	

Key Task 3: Determine the Level of Technical Assistance Required

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
3a. Identify training, coaching, and technical assistance needs				
3b. Identify trainers, coaches, and technical assistance providers				
3c. Explore training, coaching, and technical assistance funding opportunities				

Potential Barriers	
Strategies to Address Barriers	

Key Task 4: Train Staff on the Principles of EBP and on the Strategic Plan

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
4a. Identify/develop a standard training curriculum				
4b. Train supervisors and staff				
4c. Assess and revise the training as needed				
4d. Develop a plan for future trainings on specific aspects of EBP				

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
4e. Make EBP messaging to staff positive, clear, and consistent				
4f. Involve staff in EBP implementation				

Potential Barriers	
Strategies to Address Barriers	

Key Task 5: Provide EBP Training to Local Stakeholders

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
5a. Identify key stakeholder groups				
5b. Identify/develop curricula tailored to key stakeholders' interests and concerns				
5c. Train key stakeholders				
5d. Assess and revise the trainings as needed				

Subtasks	Start Date/ End Date	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resources/ Partners Needed
5e. Develop a plan for future stakeholder trainings				
5f. Make EBP messaging to stakeholders positive, clear, and consistent				

Potential Barriers	
Strategies to Address Barriers	

Cost–Benefit Analysis Worksheet

Purpose: An agency that makes a commitment to align its practices with research evidence in order to reduce recidivism will likely experience significant pressure to shift how it invests its resources. Personnel requirements (numbers of staff, qualifications, assignments, caseload/workload), activities, policies, and practices will likely change. The cost–benefit analysis worksheet is designed to help administration weigh the costs (human, materials, and data resources) of EBP implementation against its benefits.

Instructions: It is recommended that the Chief Probation Officer complete the cost–benefit analysis worksheet in conjunction with a team of agency representatives (managers, supervisors, probation officers, and support staff). Each representative will examine the items on the worksheet from their own perspective, based on their work experience, and provide insights into possible implications. If the agency is just beginning to embark on an EBP implementation process, it may not be able to assess some of the costs or benefits. If this is the case, the agency is urged to reach out to other agencies for assistance.

Rather than using quantifiable measures, this worksheet uses the subjective measures of "None," "Some," and "A lot." Each agency will need to determine what these terms mean to them. A possible interpretation is provided below.

Cost (Human, Materials, and Data Systems)	Benefit (to Mission Outcomes)
None: Can be done with existing resources	**None:** No real benefit
Some: Will take some, but not a significant amount of, additional resources	**Some:** Benefits can be articulated but are not significant or are difficult to quantify
A lot: Will require a considerable amount of additional resources	**A lot:** Benefits are significant

The cost–benefit analysis team should reach consensus on the cost and benefit of each task. After the worksheet is completed, the team should discuss how it might revise its approach to proceed with EBP implementation in a more cost-effective way and to plan for the upcoming costs.

Date: _____

Key Tasks and Subtasks	Additional Cost			Anticipated Benefit		
	None	**Some**	**A lot**	**None**	**Some**	**A lot**
1. Conduct an organizational culture/readiness assessment						
1a. Use a structured assessment to gauge the organizational climate and culture						
1b. Summarize the findings						
1c. Develop and implement a plan to address areas of concern						
1d. Conduct an organizational culture/readiness assessment annually						
1e. Monitor trends						
2. Develop an agency EBP implementation plan						
2a. Form an EBP implementation committee						
2b. Identify key EBP components						
2c. Assess the agency's status with respect to EBP implementation						
2d. Develop a deliberate, systematic EBP implementation plan						
2e. Monitor and update the plan regularly						
3. Determine the level of technical assistance required						
3a. Identify training, coaching, and technical assistance needs						
3b. Identify trainers, coaches, and technical assistance providers						
3c. Explore training, coaching, and technical assistance funding opportunities						

Key Tasks and Subtasks	Additional Cost			Anticipated Benefit		
	None	Some	A lot	None	Some	A lot
4. Train staff on the principles of EBP and on the strategic plan						
4a. Identify/develop a standard training curriculum						
4b. Train supervisors and staff						
4c. Assess and revise the training as needed						
4d. Develop a plan for future trainings on specific aspects of EBP						
4e. Make EBP messaging to staff positive, clear, and consistent						
4f. Involve staff in EBP implementation						
5. Provide EBP training to local stakeholders						
5a. Identify key stakeholder groups						
5b. Identify/develop curricula tailored to key stakeholders' interests and concerns						
5c. Train key stakeholders						
5d. Assess and revise the trainings as needed						
5e. Develop a plan for future stakeholder trainings						
5f. Make EBP messaging to stakeholders positive, clear, and consistent						

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What is needed to accomplish stage 1?

Human Resources_____

_____

_____

Materials _____

_____

_____

Data Systems_____

_____

_____

Fidelity and Quality Assurance Checklist

Purpose: A fidelity and quality assurance checklist helps agencies to assess whether they are implementing tasks and subtasks and to monitor performance over time.

Instructions: Each agency is at a different phase of EBP implementation. Even early adopters often learn that they have either skipped an important step or that they could take additional steps to increase fidelity and quality assurance. Regardless of where an agency is on their EBP implementation journey, this checklist will assist in identifying the next steps.

It is recommended that the Chief Probation Officer complete the checklist in conjunction with a team of agency representatives (managers, supervisors probation officers, and support staff). Each representative will examine the items on the worksheet from their own perspective, based on their work experience, and provide insight. Items highlighted in green should be the primary focus for those early in implementation.

Date: _____

Key Tasks and Deliverables	Implementation Status			
1. Conduct an organizational culture/readiness assessment	**Completed**	**Partially**	**Not Started**	**Revisit**
1a. A structured assessment is used to gauge organizational climate and culture				
1b. Assessment findings are summarized				
1c. A plan to address areas of concern is developed and implemented				
1d. An organizational culture/readiness assessment is conducted annually				
1e. Trends are monitored				

Key Tasks and Deliverables	Implementation Status			
1f. Policies and procedures are revised to reflect the administration of an organizational culture/readiness assessment				
2. Develop an agency EBP implementation plan	**Completed**	**Partially**	**Not Started**	**Revisit**
2a. An EBP implementation committee is formed				
2b. Key EBP components are identified				
2c. The agency's status with respect to EBP implementation is assessed				
2d. A deliberate, systematic EBP implementation plan is developed				
2e. The plan is monitored and updated regularly				
2f. Policies and procedures are revised to reflect the development of the agency EBP implementation plan				
3. Determine the level of technical assistance required	**Completed**	**Partially**	**Not Started**	**Revisit**
3a. Training, coaching, and technical assistance needs are identified				
3b. Trainers, coaches, and technical assistance providers are identified				
3c. Training, coaching, and technical assistance funding opportunities are explored				
3d. Policies and procedures are revised to reflect the determination of training and technical assistance needs				

Key Tasks and Deliverables	Implementation Status			
4. Train staff on the principles of EBP and on the strategic plan	**Completed**	**Partially**	**Not Started**	**Revisit**
4a. A standard training curriculum is identified/developed				
4b. Supervisors and staff are trained				
4c. The training is assessed and revised as needed				
4d. A plan for future trainings on specific aspects of EBP is developed				
4e. EBP messaging to staff is positive, clear, and consistent				
4f. Staff are involved in EBP implementation				
4g. Policies and procedures are revised to reflect supervisor and staff training on the principles of EBP and on the strategic plan				
5. Provide EBP training to local stakeholders	**Completed**	**Partially**	**Not Started**	**Revisit**
5a. Key stakeholder groups are identified				
5b. Curricula tailored to key stakeholders' interests and concerns are identified/developed				
5c. Key stakeholders are trained				
5d. Trainings are assessed and revised as needed				
5e. A plan for future stakeholder trainings is developed				

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Key Tasks and Deliverables	Implementation Status			
5f. EBP messaging to stakeholders is positive, clear, and consistent				
5g. Policies and procedures are revised to reflect stakeholder training on the principles of EBP				

Based on your answers, identify the top three things you want to do in order to make further progress in building and sustaining an EBP agency, and the steps you will take to get there.

Action Planning Worksheet		
Areas in Need of Work	**Action Steps**	**Notes**