

INTERNAL COACH GUIDANCE

As programs have participated in Pyramid Model training and coaching, they may be interested in moving towards program-wide implementation and/or sustainability. Having an Internal Coach may be one way a program has considered moving forward. There are many considerations and this document was created to assist in community decision making.

GUIDING QUESTIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

Timing:

Helping a program identify and train an Internal Coach should ideally come after the identified Internal Coach has participated in a full round of Pyramid Training and coaching, either as a provider or as a coach. Communities should consider Rooted support (outlined below) and if that will influence having the Internal Coach start coaching in July, to match with Rooted's current cycle (i.e. data collection, observations, training, etc.)

Rooted Support:

Rooted in Relationships funding in your community can help support Internal Coaches in a multitude of ways. Below are examples of how other communities have helped to support Internal Coaches in programs using Rooted funding:

- o Paid for veteran Rooted provider to go through Early Childhood Coach and Pyramid Coach trainings
 - Additional support can be given after this where the identified Internal Coach is part of the community's Rooted coaching team, but Rooted does not pay them for coaching time in their own program
- o Allow other providers that are not involved in Rooted, but are receiving Internal Coaching, to attend Pyramid Module trainings that are paid for with Rooted funds
- o Sponsor Internal Coaches to attend the Pyramid Modules Training of Trainers (ToT), such that they can be a Pyramid trainer
 - Note: Trainers must be approved and have gone through the Pyramid ToT in order to train Pyramid Modules, therefore, Internal Coaches should not train on their own until they have completed the ToT
- o Allow the Internal Coach and providers to be included in your community's data collection and evaluation structures
 - These providers can be counted as typical Rooted providers and receive observations, data collection, training, etc. Community coordinators can work with programs on budgeting; who pays for what can be individualized between programs and communities. Your Rooted TA and Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI) evaluators can help work out the details of how to best integrate these providers into the observation and data collection.

Feasibility and Planning:

These are some questions to consider as you determine the feasibility and plan for an Internal Coach in a program.

1. Does the program have staff members who do coaching as part of their current job responsibilities?
2. Does the program have the staff capacity for a current position to take on coaching responsibilities?
3. Will the program establish a new position that will include, or be exclusively, coaching?
4. What are the characteristics and competencies a coach needs to implement Pyramid Model Coaching effectively and support implementation of the Pyramid Model?
 - a. See The Nebraska Early Childhood Coaching Guidebook: Competencies for Professional Practice for more information on coach competencies.
5. How many providers will the coach be expected to work with at one time?
6. Will the entire program go through training and coaching together, will only new staff need coaching, or will it be some veteran and some new staff?

Identifying an Internal Coach:

Pyramid Coaching is conducted within the context of a collaborative partnership between the coach and the teacher. It is essential that coaches have strong interpersonal and communication skills as well as experience working with young children. The following characteristics and competencies might be beneficial when selecting an Internal Coach:

- o Successful experience working with young children and/or families —it helps if coaches have “been there.”
- o Experience being coached around Pyramid for several years (either as a provider or a director)
- o Extensive knowledge of Pyramid Model practices and social-emotional development.
- o Understanding of adult learning principles and collaborative teaming.
- o Ability to facilitate teacher learning through positive and constructive feedback.
- o Ability to identify when they need assistance or additional information and have knowledge of the professional who will be able to help answer their questions (e.g., community of coaches or supervisors).

The Internal Coach should have expertise in early childhood education, be well versed in the Pyramid Model framework, and have received professional development and training in coaching practices.

Coaching/Supervising:

While it is desired to separate supervision responsibilities from coaching, some programs might not have sufficient personnel to assign coaches who are not also serving in roles as supervisors. If a supervisor needs to also take on the role of the coach, the coaching time must be clearly defined and separate from supervision activities. Observations or debriefings should only relate to Pyramid Model implementation; conversations related to other topics should happen at different times. The collaborative partnership needs to be nurtured and maintained for the coaching process to be effective. If the program has multiple supervisors or leadership positions, consider training more than one to be an Internal Coach. This can assure that the provider is not receiving coaching by their *immediate* supervisor.

Training Needs and Support for an Internal Coach:

There are several Nebraska Coach Trainings that the identified Internal Coach can attend in preparation of becoming their program’s Internal Coach.

These trainings can be supported by the community’s Rooted in Relationship funding.

NEW COACH TRAININGS	
Required Training:	Recommended Training:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Must be completed before Rooted coaching begins: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Early Childhood Coach Training • Pyramid Coach Training o Must be completed within first 3 years of coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective Consultation training • Nebraska Early Childhood Coach Guidebook Intro-overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Nebraska Early Childhood Coaching Guidebook – A Closer Look o Coach Boosters o TPOT and TPITOS training o Pyramid Training of Trainers o Coach Collaboration/Collective impact training (in development)

OPTIONAL REGIONAL TRAINING / SUPPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Coaching to Success (previously offered as Strengths-Based Coaching) o Initiative Coach Meetings o Regional Early Learning Connection – Coach Consultant (ELC-CC) Cadres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including the new coach cadre o Varied small group opportunities consisting of coaches with similar coaching experience o 1-on-1 meetings with your regional ELC-CC

Coaches are encouraged to attend ongoing professional development, as well as connect with their local Early Learning Connection (ELC) Coach Consultant. For more information about training or coaching support opportunities in your area, contact your ELC - Coach Consultant:

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