



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON  
**Program Management  
and Fiscal Operations**

# Head Start A to Z *Program Governance*



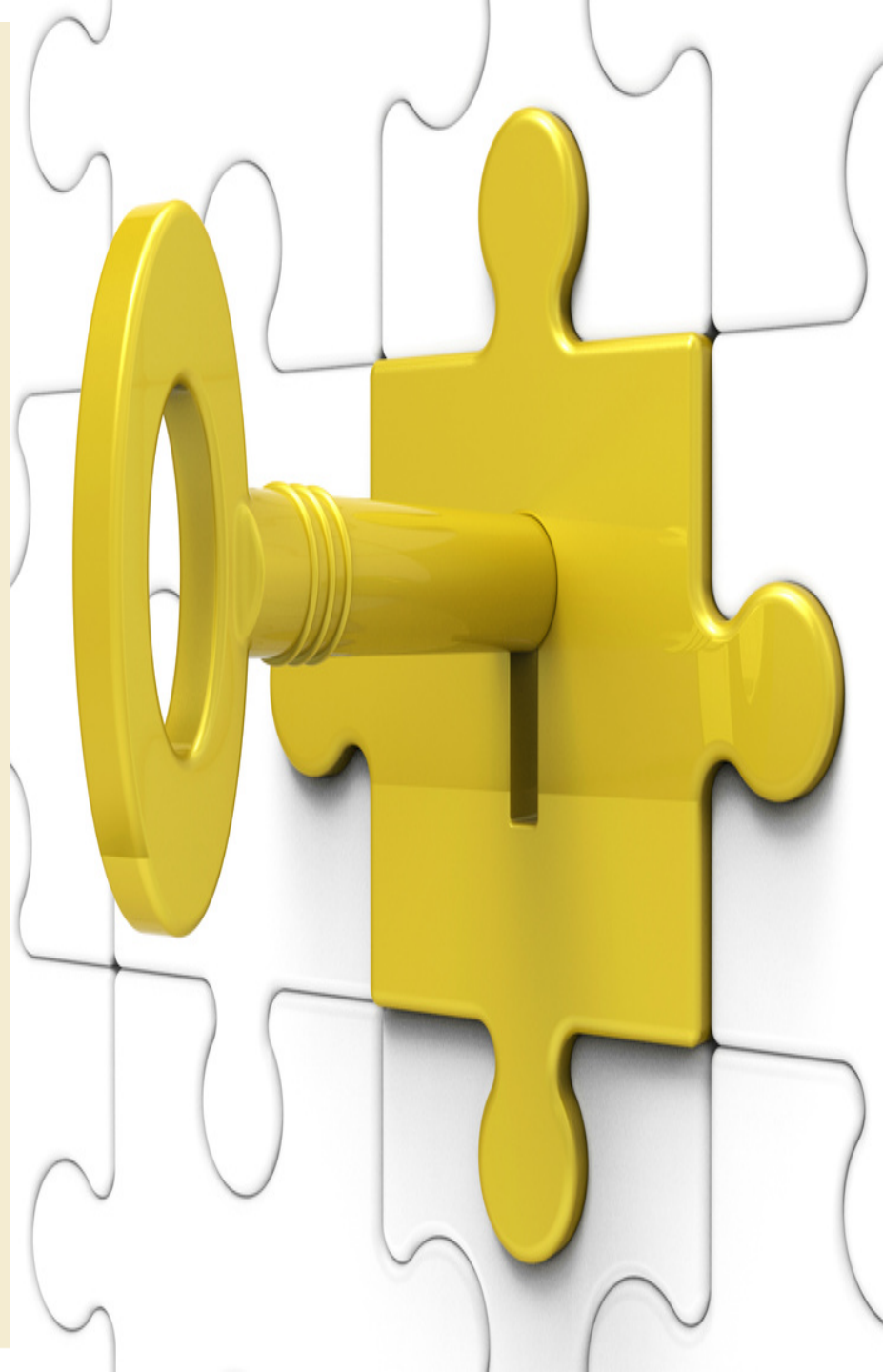
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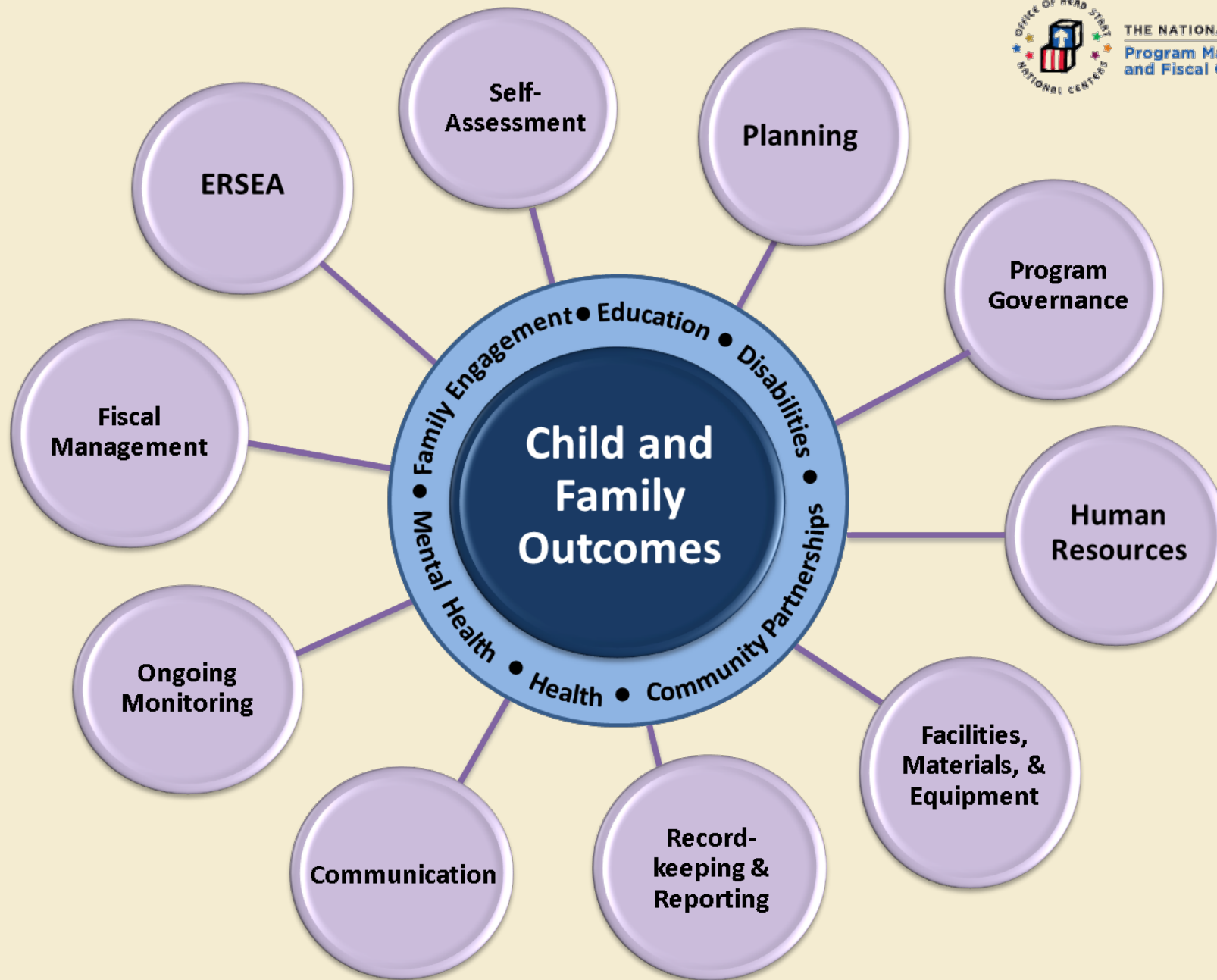
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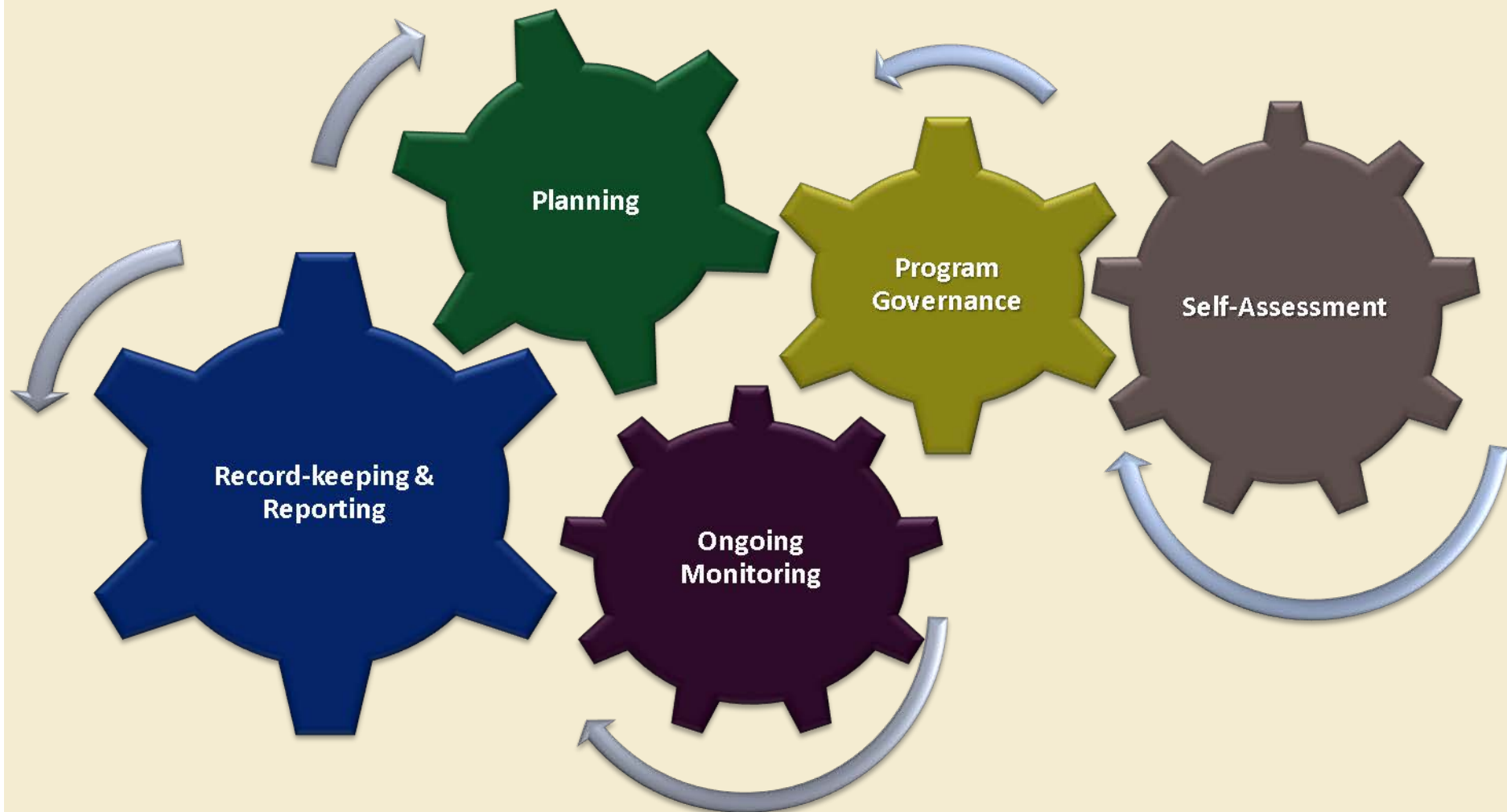
## Key Message

Relationship building  
is at the heart of  
effective leadership.





# Systems Are Linked



# Head Start/Early Head Start Program Governance

- The Head Start Act of 2007 describes the **composition and roles and responsibilities** of Head Start/Early Head Start agency governing bodies and Policy Councils with regard to **program design, planning, monitoring, and oversight**.
- The Act, in conjunction with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, describes performance expectations regarding program governance.
- This is Head Start ***governance***.

# Head Start Governance and Management Composition



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## Governing Body/Tribal Council

*The governing body shall be composed as follows:*

- Not less than 1 member shall have a background and expertise in fiscal management or accounting.
  - Not less than 1 member shall have a background and expertise in early childhood education and development.
  - Not less than 1 member shall be a licensed attorney familiar with issues that come before the governing body.
- Additional members shall—
- reflect the community to be served and include parents of children who are currently, or were formerly, enrolled in Head Start programs;
  - are selected for their expertise in education, business administration, or community affairs.

## Policy Council

The policy council shall be elected by the parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program of the Head Start agency.

*The policy council shall be composed of—*

- parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program of the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency), who shall constitute a majority of the members of the policy council; and
  - members at large of the community served by the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency), who may include parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the Head Start program of the agency.
- In addition, parents of children currently enrolled in all program options must be proportionately represented on established policy groups.

## Management Staff

*May include:*

- Executive director
- Chief financial officer
- Head Start director
- Key HS management staff

# Head Start Governance and Management Responsibilities



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## Governing Body/Tribal Council

Assumes Legal and Fiscal Responsibility for Head Start and the Safeguarding of Federal Funds

Adopt practices to ensure active, independent and informed governance:

- Governing body bylaws
- Procedures for accessing and collecting information
- Written standards of conduct, including conflicts of interest and complaints
- Procedures for selecting Policy Council members
- Advisory committees

\*Reports that are generated and used by management, then shared with and used by Policy Council and governing body:

- HHS secretary communication
- Financial statements
- Program information summaries
- Enrollment
- USDA
- Financial audit
- Self-Assessment
- Community assessment
- PIR

## Policy Council Assumes Responsibility for Head Start Program Direction

### Take Action:

- Hire/terminate Head Start Director and other lead staff
- Establish impasse procedures

### Provide Legal Oversight:

- Ensure compliance with federal laws and state, tribal, and local laws

## Management Staff Assumes Operating Responsibility for Head Start Day-to-Day Functions

April 22, 2014



# Head Start Governance and Management Responsibilities

## Governing Body/Tribal Council Assumes Legal and Fiscal Responsibility for Head Start and the Safeguarding of Federal Funds



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### Adopt practices to ensure active, independent and informed governance:

- Governing body bylaws
- Procedures for accessing and collecting information
- Written standards of conduct, including conflicts of interest and complaints
- Procedures for selecting Policy Council members
- Advisory committees

### Select:

- Delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies

### Establish:

- Procedures and criteria for recruitment, selection, and enrollment

### Review:

- All funding applications and amendments
- Results and follow-up activities from federal monitoring

### Review and Approve:

- Major policies and procedures, including Self-Assessment, financial audit, and personnel policies
- Progress on implementing the HS grant, including corrective actions
- Major expenditures
- Operating budget
- Selection of auditor
- Actions to correct audit findings

### Receive and Use:

- Annual, monthly, and periodic reports\*

\*Reports that are generated and used by management, then shared with and used by Policy Council and governing body:

- HHS secretary communication
- Financial statements
- Program information summaries
- Enrollment
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- Financial audit
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### Take Action:

- Hire/terminate Head Start Director and other lead staff
- Establish impasse procedures

## Policy Council Assumes Responsibility for Head Start Program Direction

### Approve and submit to the governing body decisions regarding:

- Activities for parent involvement/engagement
- Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities
- Funding applications/amendments
- Budget planning, including reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities
- Policy Council bylaws
- Head Start program personnel policies and decisions, including criteria for employment and dismissal of program staff
- Policy Council election procedures
- Recommendations on delegates/service areas

### Receive and Use:

- Annual, monthly, and periodic reports\*

### Provide Legal Oversight:

- Ensure compliance with federal laws and state, tribal, and local laws

### Provide Leadership and Strategic Direction:

- Focus on Self-Assessment
- Develop, plan, and evaluate the Head Start program

## Management Staff Assumes Operating Responsibility for Head Start Day-to-Day Functions

### Take action:

- Implement policies
- Develop procedures
- Provide T/TA to governing body and Policy Council
- Supervise staff
- Monitor compliance
- Generate and use annual, monthly, and periodic reports\*
- Share reports with Policy Council and governing body\*

April 22, 2014



# Governing Body Reminders

Because governing bodies need to demonstrate their ability to oversee the Head Start program, they much embrace their:

- *Legal* responsibility for ensuring that grant activities respond to regulations, terms and conditions of the grant
- *Fiscal* responsibility for ensuring that funds are used prudently and according to regulations
- Responsibility to be engaged and knowledgeable about the program's five-year goals, progress towards achieving those goals, and outcomes for children, families and the community

# Policy Council Reminders

- The Policy Council is a unique aspect of Head Start program governance; it supports active parent engagement in the design of the Head Start program.
- The governance structure and processes ensure that the Policy Council is involved in decision-making in a meaningful way.
- Policy Council members provide leadership and help shape the future of the Head Start program