

**ARIZONA**

***Number of Sites in the state: 14***  
***Number of QA staff: 4***

Healthy Families Arizona (HFAz) is administered by the Department of Economic Security (DES). The Child Abuse Prevention Fund (Arizona's Children's Trust Fund) developed two pilot projects in 1991: one urban and one rural. An outside evaluator was contracted at the same time to determine the efficacy of the replication of Hawaii's Healthy Start program in Arizona. The success of these two pilot programs was documented with the intent to request that the legislature fully fund the program. In 1994, the state legislature established the program in continued pilot project status pending the outcome of the evaluation conducted by the evaluation team established in 1991 and the state Office of the Auditor General) The legislature granted the program permanent status in 1998. To help ensure that its sites are in compliance with program policies and procedures, DES contracts with an evaluation firm to provide quality assurance, technical assistance and database management. Specifically, quality assurance/technical assistance staff visit sites at least twice a year to review participant files for accuracy. This firm also collects and maintains all program data from each site and is responsible for testing this data to ensure that it is reliable and accurate.

HFAz's Quality Assurance Team developed its first Quality Assurance Plan during its expansion year in 1995. Since initial implementation, the plan has been reviewed annually and is considered to be a continuously evolving document. The QA team continually asks sites for feedback and ideas to ensure the support provided to them meets their needs.

The statewide training, technical assistance, and quality assurance system in Arizona includes three primary methods of monitoring: site visit observations, a review of participant files, and statewide surveys. A team is responsible for completing two site visits per year to monitor and review the program assessment and home visiting and supervision process (including the support of supervisors/program managers by their respective organization) for its sites. In partnership with the statewide coordinator and a Credentialing Committee, the training and QA team complete an annual written review to monitor staff qualifications, staffing patterns, staff turnover, and cultural competence of program services.

In 2002, the Office of the Auditor General wrote legislation that removed the Office from the evaluation of the HFAz program due partially to the central administration system that offers quality assurance activities. Currently, there is one annual evaluation that consists of both aggregate and site-specific data. In addition, process data is shared with the sites and central administration on a quarterly basis. The 14 program sites determine the content of the quarterly reports and have input to the annual evaluation plan. HFAz has a contract with LeCroy & Milligan Associates, who have been the outside evaluators of the program in Arizona since 1991. All data is managed by LeCroy & Milligan Associates.

The sites send all required data to the QA team for correction and review. Sites are given, and may request, interim data specific within a two-week turn-around period. The original 34 databases developed for HFAz based on length of time in the program with more than 3,000 data points was reduced to 17 databases with 600 data points in

1998. There are also thirteen Excel cohorts. The evaluation teams can run infinite cross references of the data points per site, per individual, per staff member, per demographic information, etc. The formal partnership between quality assurance and evaluation began in July of 1998 and has greatly increased the capacity for interim data reports, site requested data, and quality improvement information.

Data is collected monthly from each of the sites. There are specific intervals when certain data points are due. Every site is given a series of Data Tracking Forms which are used by the sites to determine what data needs to be submitted. The forms are provided for each site by the state so that all data forms are identical. Ongoing training regarding the definition of data points and completion of data forms is provided by the supervisor, TA/QA team, and the administrative assistant, and occurs during site visits by the TA/QA Team.

The Arizona TA/QA system monitors performance goals of its sites as identified in the HFA Site Self-Assessment Tool. Prior to the partnership between the TA/QA team and evaluation, most data was reported in annual evaluation reports. Data was usually presented in an aggregate format. Thus, sites were unable to use the data during the year to make changes. Because the data was “state” data, it did not have as much meaning to the sites since they could not see where they stand or where they needed to make improvements. Sites now receive specific data reports and printouts are available to sites at their request. Arizona sees this partnership as greatly enhancing the ability for sites to continuously improve areas of their programs and develop better services to their families.

The statewide system has a variety of methods to provide feedback to sites regarding their adherence to the HFA standards. The QA team provides individual sites with feedback in the following ways:

- A site-visit follow-up form is left with the site at the end of each semi-annual site visit. It details the technical assistance provided, quality assurance issues identified, strengths, and any follow-up action required by the site (immediate feedback).
- An in-depth report summarizing the findings of a site visit. This report provides detailed feedback in all areas of QA (received within one month of the site visit).
- Telephone support – sites can call with questions at any time and TA will be provided.
- E-mail messages requesting TA with written response (response time is usually within 24 – 48 hours of e-mail receipt).
- Requests for data printouts from the evaluation team (response time is within 3 weeks).

Information related to the site’s performance as it relates to the rest of the multi-site/state system is provided in the following ways:

- Quarterly supervision meetings (every three months)
- E-mail (list serve, immediate feedback to an issue facing the state)\
- Quarterly site-specific reports
- Website reports
- Evaluation reports (annually).

TA needs are identified by the TA/QA Team, primarily during the TA/QA site visits. If areas of improvement are identified during the site visit, a follow-up action plan is left with the site supervisor, indicating items that need to be mailed to the QA team within one month. The second method for determining TA needs is through the TA requests made by supervisors and staff either prior to or during site visits. Finally, TA needs are identified through feedback from the training institutes (held twice a year), and through feedback from evaluations.

Technical assistance is provided through the following groups/individuals:

- TA/QA Team (all are state trainers)
- Training Team (4 home visitor, 1 family assessment, 3 supervision)
- Department of Economic Security
- Excellence Committee (a statewide multi-disciplinary team that focuses on specific issues including child development, infant mental health, supervisory advanced training, etc.)
- Credentialing Committee
- Evaluators

Arizona has an integrated system in that the QA team members are both trainers and are active members on all committees. Information always flows both from QA to sites as well as from sites to QA. The QA team takes issues to every appropriate committee and to every level of the Statewide System.