

# But We're Too Busy to Evaluate!



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# Session Plan

- ▶ Evaluative Thinking Overview
- ▶ Evaluation Cycle Walkthrough
  - ▶ Case Study Examples
  - ▶ Time to Plan
- ▶ Share Out
- ▶ Q & A

# What Is Evaluative thinking?

It is a mindset - just like curiosity and critical thinking

- ▶ Examining assumptions and goals
- ▶ Asking questions
- ▶ Making decisions based on evidence/data



# Evaluative thinking



Purpose - get the best results

- ▶ Implement the program correctly
- ▶ Problem-solve along the way, make necessary adjustments
- ▶ Make progress toward goals achievement

# Case Study: Testing Assumptions

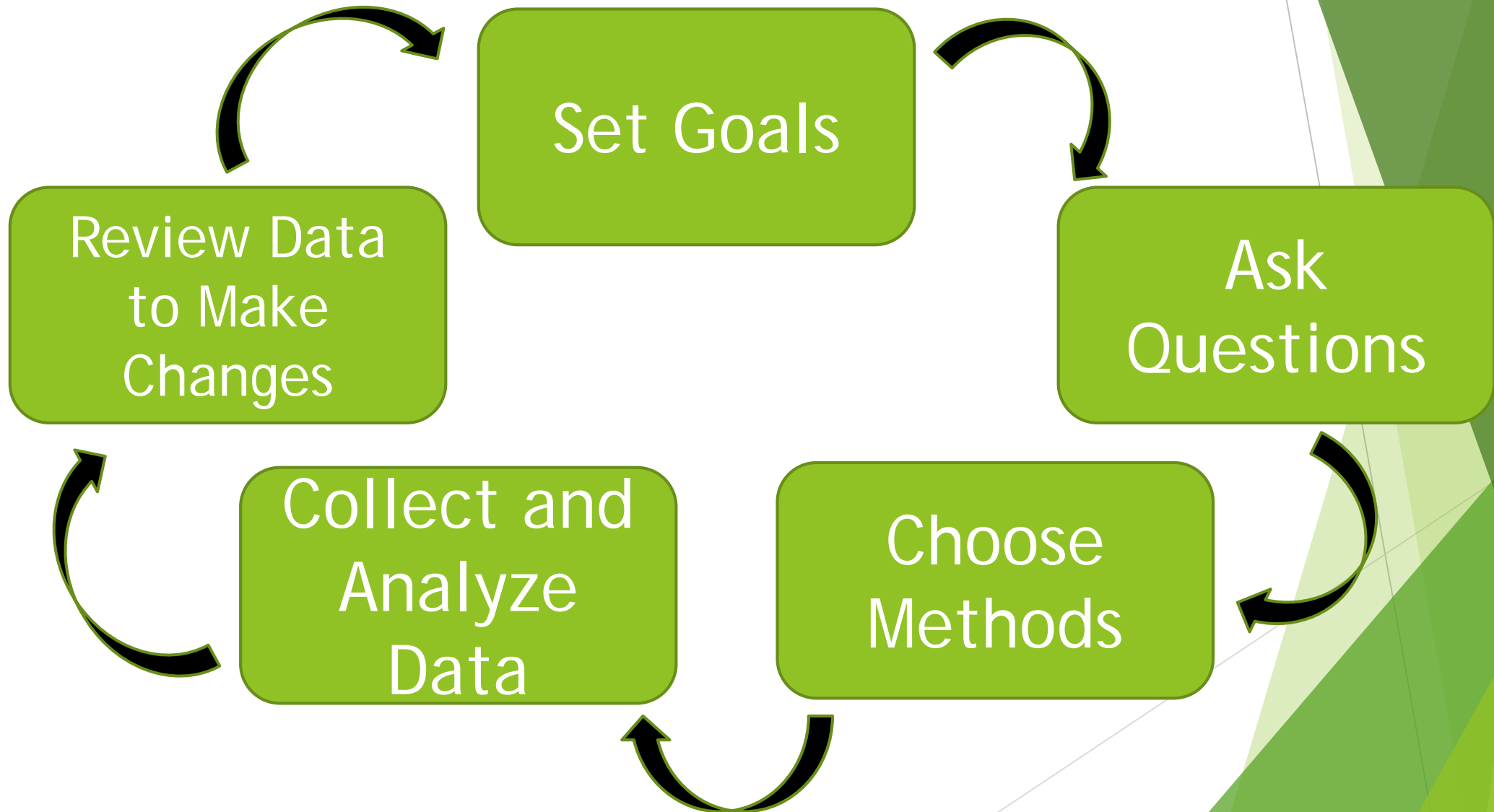
Explora & the New Mexico Autism Society  
*Experiential Science for Families Affected by Autism*

Initial Assumption: Creating a more inclusive experience at Explora could help prevent summer learning loss for children with ASD.

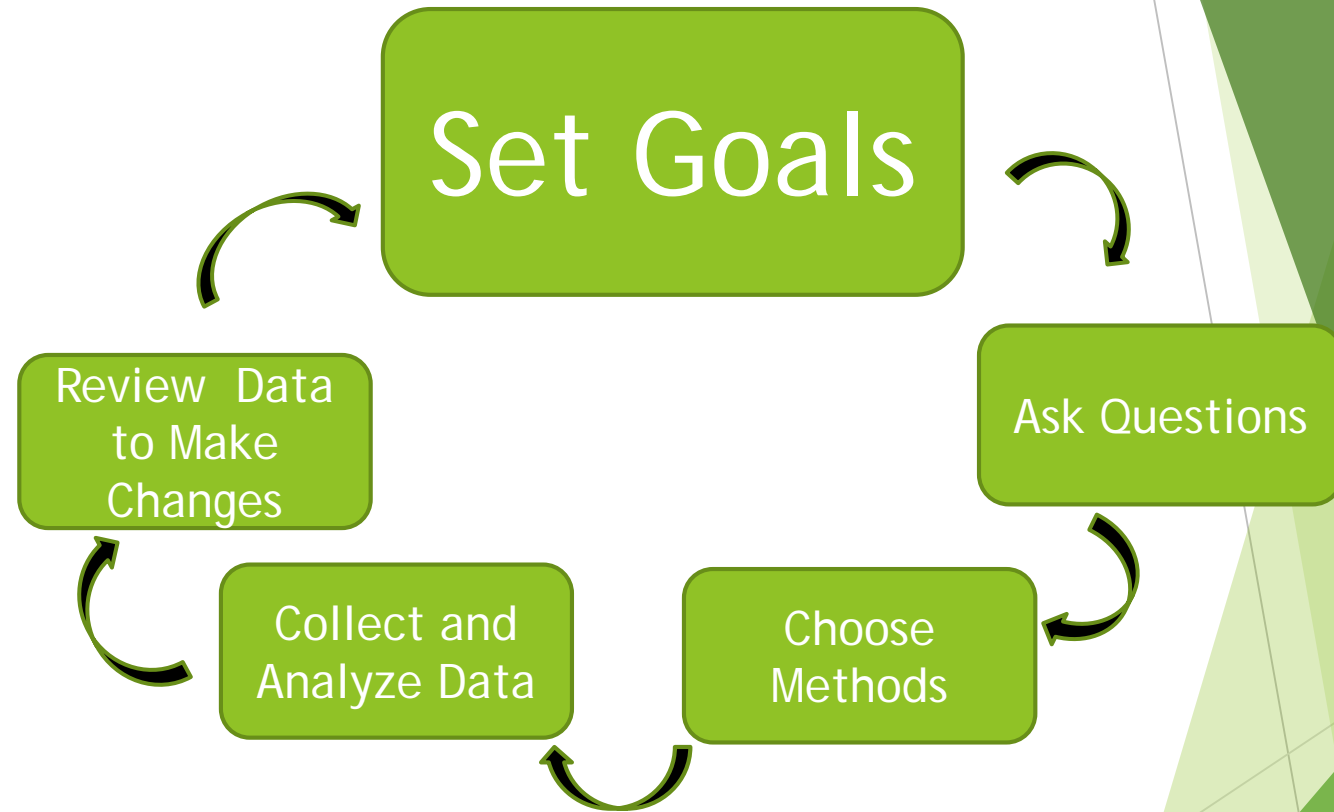
Revision: Help children with ASD build resilience through participation in Explora programs.



# Evaluation for Program Improvement



# Set the Right Goals

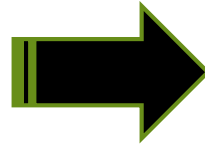


- What do you want to accomplish?
- Personal Goals vs Shared Goals

# Case Study: Autism-Specific Camp Goal Setting

Hold welcoming, safe, and educationally meaningful camps in which campers, families, and camp staff (all adults in the room) would (want to participate again).

*Handwritten notes:*  
- "educationally meaningful" has a note: "leave w/ a passion for science & learning"  
- "families" has a note: "support to help them at home"  
- "again" has a note: "w/ a desire to return" and "or -> jump starts interest"  
- "expanding community" is written in green  
- "describe & remember camp as a positive experience" is written in green



EXPLORATIONS CAMP SUMMER 2018  
GOAL:  
Hold ~~safe~~ welcoming, safe, and educationally meaningful camps that are inclusive of *the autism* community, in which campers, families, and staff describe and remember camp as a positive experience.



# Practice

Think of a program at your site...

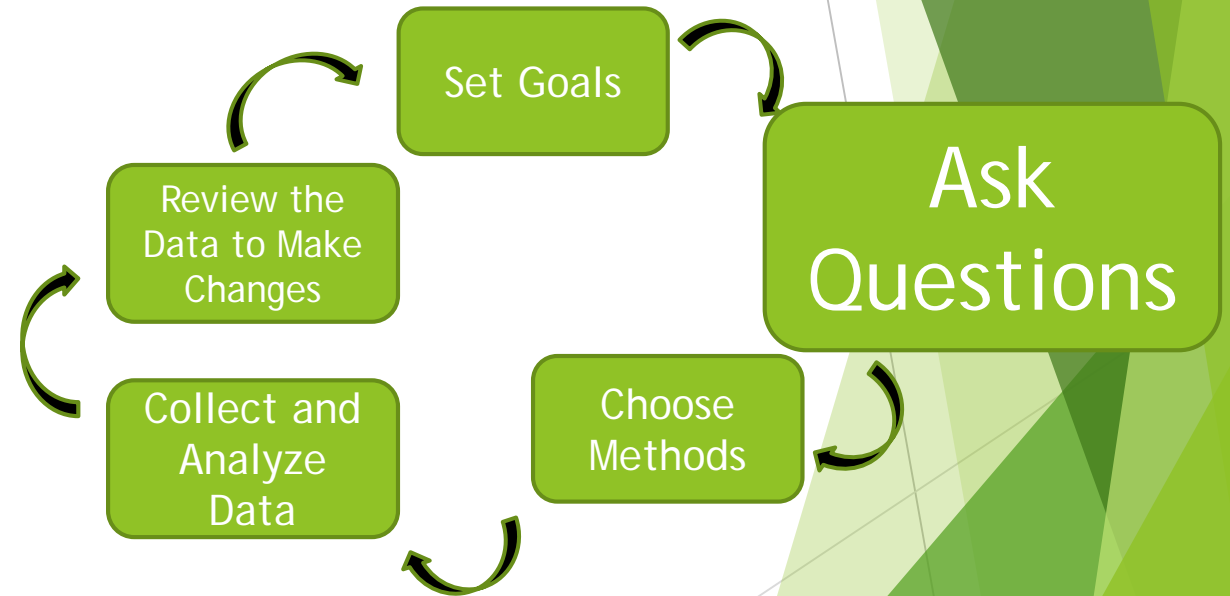
- ▶ What are your or your team's goals for the program?
- ▶ What do you want to have happen as a result of your program?
- ▶ Don't forget to test your assumptions!

# Ask the Right Questions

“Having the right answer is not always important. Asking the right question is always essential.”

- Stafford Hood

- Relevant & related to goals
- Help understand the program
- Identify obstacles and find solutions
- Explore whether the program will produce desired outcomes



# Case Study: Autism-Specific Camp Experience



“Which curriculum elements, schedule choices, classroom supports, and staff behaviors best support camper engagement?”

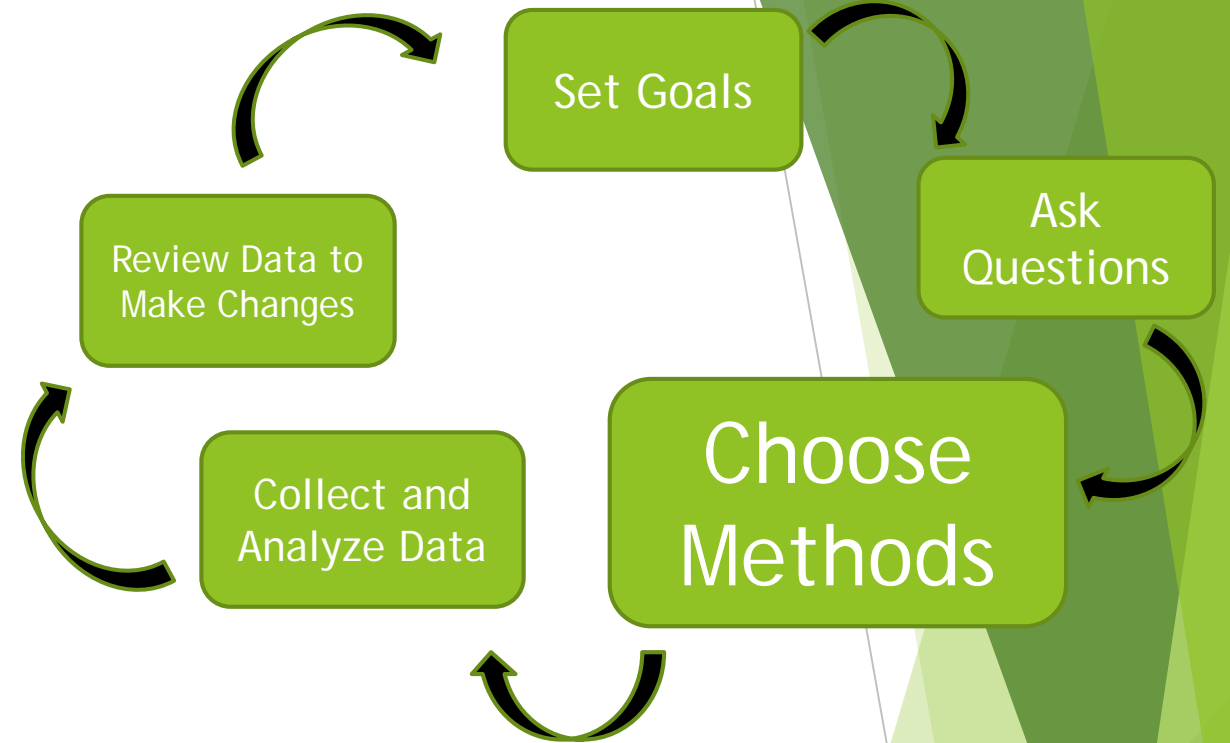
# Practice

## Based on Your Site's Program Goals...

- ▶ Which program components are most critical to success?
- ▶ Where do you most need to learn and grow?
- ▶ Remember to test your assumptions!

# Choose Methods

- ▶ Examine implementation and fidelity to program design
  - ▶ Keep track of attendance
  - ▶ Documenting procedures
  - ▶ Track outputs, such as meeting notes, day-to-day feedback, flyers, etc.
- ▶ Assess if goals are being achieved
  - ▶ Collect feedback from stakeholders
  - ▶ Observations



# Case Study: Daily Camp Debriefs

## Staff Debrief Framework

- Share how you're feeling using one word.
- What stood out for you today?
- What went well?
- What could have been better?
- What is the plan for tomorrow?
- What changes do we want to make based on what happened today?

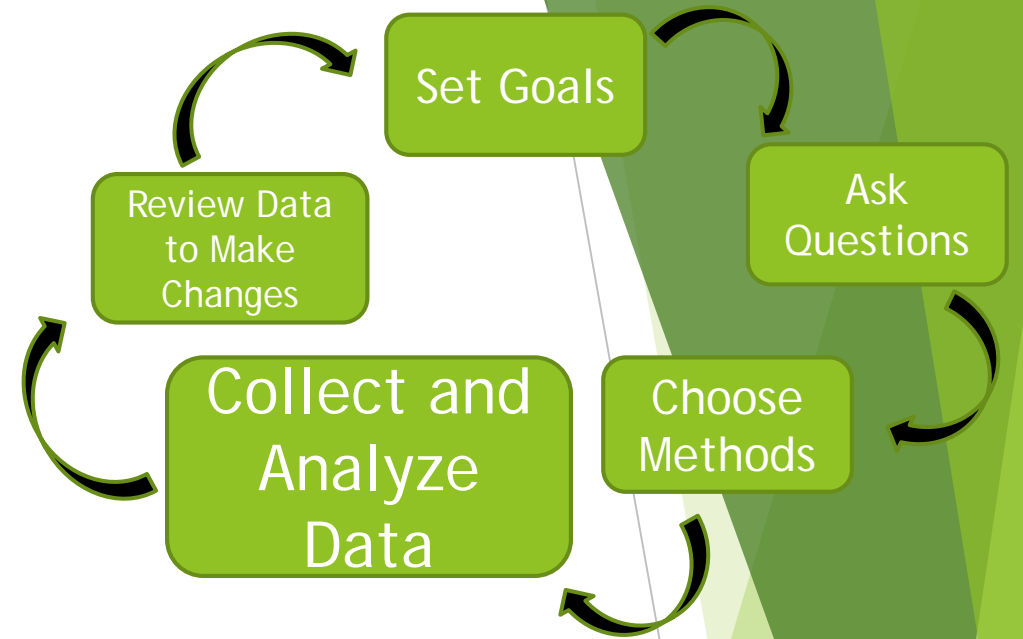


# Practice

## Based on Your Site's Right Questions...

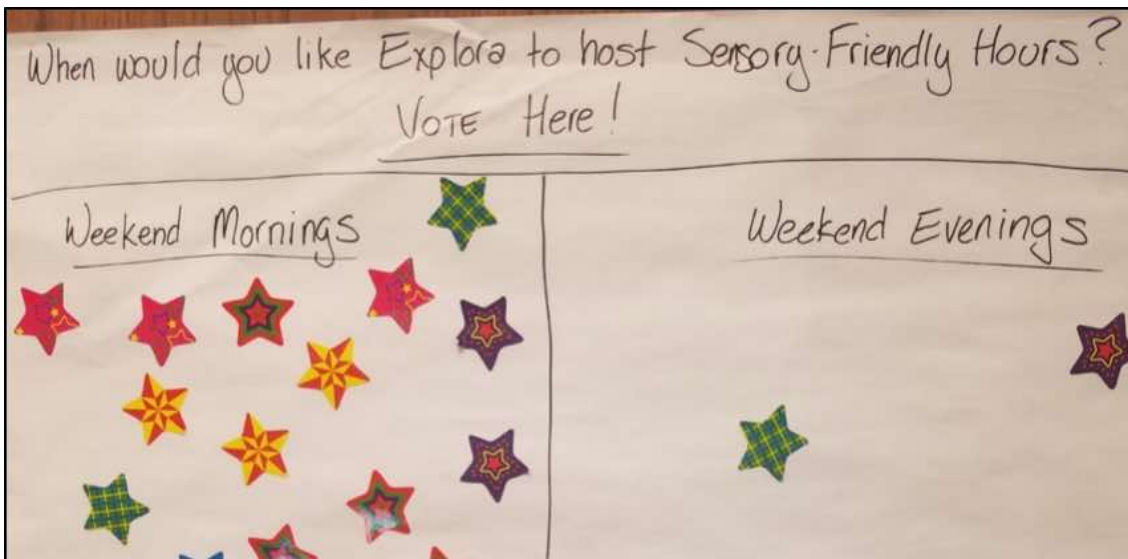
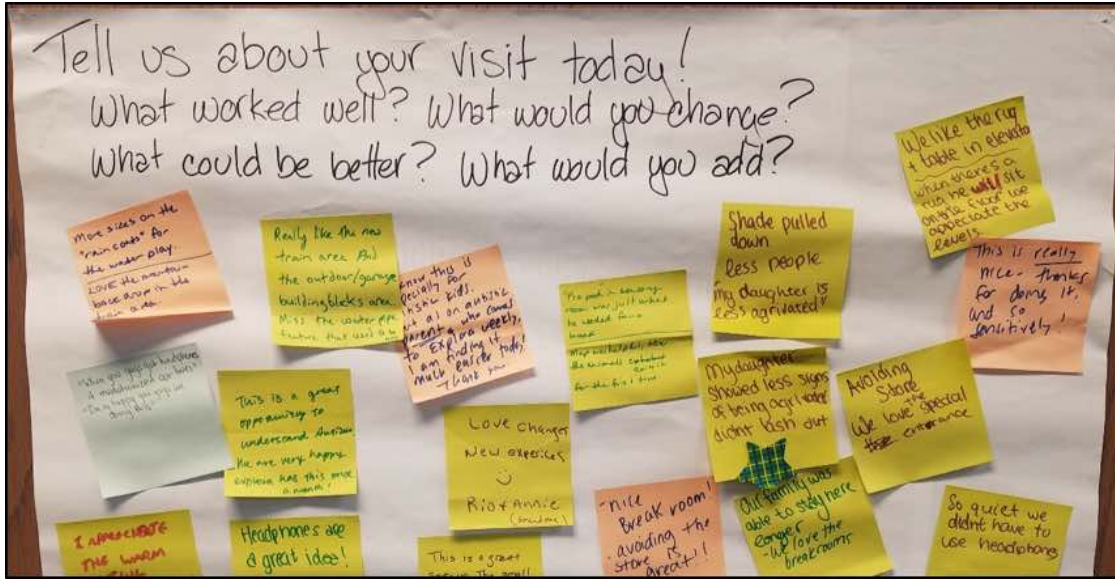
- ▶ Which program components are most critical to success?
- ▶ Where do you most need to learn and grow?
- ▶ Who has that information?
- ▶ What is the best way to collect the information?
- ▶ Make sure to collect data you will use!

# Collect and Analyze Data





# Case Study: Visitor Resource Review



# Practice

## Based on the Methods You've Chosen...

- ▶ Who will collect the data? How will it be collected?
- ▶ How will it be shared?
- ▶ How will you make sense of the data? Who will do that with you?

# Review Data to Make Changes

- ▶ Create a learning loop
- ▶ Act with purpose
- ▶ Gather the data, then use the data



# Big Points to Chew On

- ▶ I can make lasagna.  
Does that mean I can make manicotti? :  
Check your assumptions.
- ▶ Check the pantry before you shop:  
Don't collect data that already exists.
- ▶ Avoid food waste: Collect only the data you will use.
- ▶ Are you hosting a banquet or a picnic? :  
Choose data collection modes that fit your program and participants.
- ▶ Are there any food allergies? : Know your participants, the evaluation is for them.



Share Out

Q & A

# Thank You!

## Contact Information

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