

Fidelity refers to implementing a program with adherence to the program model that was designed by the developer. A number of research studies have clearly linked program fidelity with positive program outcomes and have identified criteria such as adherence to program components, exposure (i.e., number, length, and frequency of sessions), quality of the program delivery, and participant responsiveness as areas to measure when assessing program fidelity. Some programs may have fidelity measures already built into the program delivery process. However, not all programs have fidelity measures. The following questions can help guide professionals in assessing what fidelity factors or criteria that need to be addressed.

Factors that Influence Fidelity

Program Adherence	Yes	Somewhat	No
1. Do the program outcomes align with the outcomes you desire to impact?			
2. Is the program delivered in a setting that is similar to the delivery setting (e.g., school, after-school, community) that was documented in the research or recommended by the program developer?			
3. Is the program delivered to the population that the research or program developer indicates it is intended to target?			
4. Is a program fidelity assessment (e.g., observation or checklist) available to use?			
5. Do the program facilitators receive feedback on the program delivery process?			
6. Is a process in place for continuous quality improvement (i.e., a process utilized to gather and analyze data related to program delivery, in order to improve processes)?			
7. Have any changes been made to the program content or delivery by anyone other than the program developer (e.g., leadership from your organization)?			
8. Has a sustainability plan been developed to ensure the program can be implemented successfully over time?			
9. Will outcomes data be analyzed with fidelity data?			
10. Has communication been established with the program developer or technical assistance providers to prepare for and address program implementation issues as they occur?			

Participant Responsiveness	Yes	Somewhat	No
1. Is the population recruited for participation interested in enrolling in the program?			
2. Has community buy-in been generated for the program from funders, referral sources, community leaders etc.?			
3. Are the participants responsive to the information taught and making the suggested behavioral changes?			

Quality of Delivery	Yes	Somewhat	No
1. Do the program facilitators have the characteristics and qualifications (e.g., Bachelor's degree in Psychology) recommended by the program developer?			
2. Have the facilitators been trained to deliver the program as recommended by the program developer?			
3. Is the program delivered using the scope (i.e., program content and components) and sequence (i.e., number and length of sessions) recommended by the program developer?			
4. Are the implementation materials (e.g., program manual, preparation documents, fidelity checklists) crafted by the program developer being utilized to deliver the program?			
5. Are additional materials and supplies (e.g., participant worksheets or handouts, posters, video clips) outlined as necessary by the program developer being utilized?			
6. Do the program facilitators have opportunities to develop skills to assist with program implementation (i.e., booster trainings, coaching or technical assistance, peer networking, reflective supervision)?			
7. Has a solid infrastructure been developed for program coordination for tasks such as hiring and training facilitators, scheduling program sessions, and recruiting participants?			
8. Are program facilitators motivated to deliver the program as designed?			
9. Do the program facilitators and stakeholders understand the relationship between implementing a program with fidelity and reaching the intended participant outcomes?			



Exposure or Duration	Yes	Somewhat	No
1. Has the delivery organization prioritized time for program delivery (e.g., dedicated time for program lessons has been set aside in a school schedule)?			
2. Are program coordination and delivery supervised?			
3. Has the delivery organization prioritized time for skill development opportunities for program facilitators and staff (i.e., scheduled time for coaching, peer networking)?			
4. Are participants receiving the recommended dosage (i.e., number and length of sessions) of the program?			



Did you answer most of the questions with a Yes?

Congratulations! It is likely that you are implementing with fidelity! Remember to conduct regular reviews of the program model and curriculum content with facilitators to diminish program drift. Use fidelity assessments to provide feedback to facilitators to promote facilitation growth and guide future model adherence.



Did you answer any of the questions with a No?

A lack of adherence to the program model may result in the program not reaching the intended outcomes for the program participants. In order to improve program fidelity, develop actions steps for the questions you answered with a No.

Based on your answers to the questions above, briefly summarize the questions you answered “no” to in the Fidelity Criteria Column. Next, describe action steps to address those areas. Be as specific as possible. When appropriate, include an intended completion date for each action step and an individual or group assuming responsibility for each step. Please see the example below:

Example Action Step:

Fidelity Checkpoints	Fidelity Criteria	Action Steps
<i>Quality of Delivery</i>	<i>Additional materials (participant workbook) outlined as necessary by the program developer are not being used</i>	<i>John Smith will contact the program developer to obtain pricing information and to order the 10 workbooks needed for the program within the week.</i>



Fidelity Checkpoints	Fidelity Criteria	Action Steps
Program Adherence		
Participant Responsiveness		
Quality of Delivery		
Exposure or Duration		

We at the Clearinghouse have Technical Assistance (TA) Specialists available who can help by offering support and guidance through the program selection, implementation, and evaluation process and also provide possible strategies to help you identify fidelity measures for your program. Our TA Specialists are available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST/EDT Monday through Friday. Use the information below to contact us!

Please Note: *This tool was developed based on the review of Literature and Tools related to program fidelity and adherence.*

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