

Five Leadership Principles in Implementing a New Program

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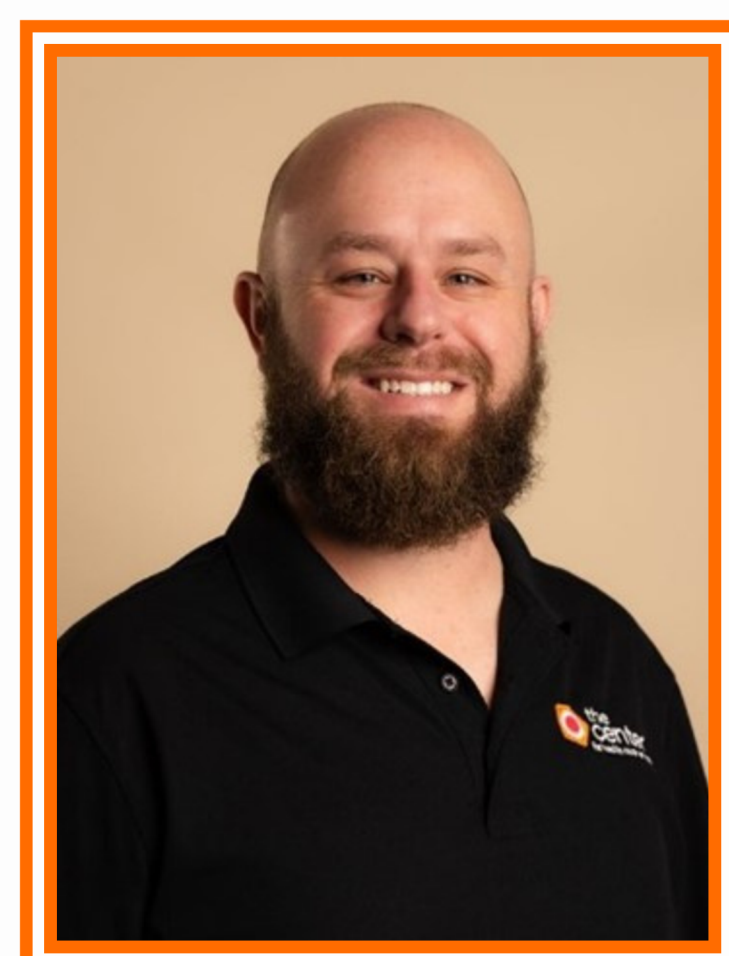
The Center for Health Care Services, San Antonio, TX



Background

Launching a new program comes with both opportunities and challenges, and strong leadership plays a critical role in achieving success. In 2023, The Center for Health Care Services launched the Community Awareness in Adolescents and Teens (CHAAT) program and later secured \$1.2 million in funding through a Texas Health and Human Services Commission SMART Grant.

As CHAAT celebrated key accomplishments and navigated obstacles, the team relied on five essential leadership principles to drive successful implementation. Discover how these principles can help programs thrive—even in the face of adversity.



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Nickolas Raczek—known to friends and colleagues as Nick—is a high-energy Licensed Professional Counselor and the Clinic Administrator for CHAAT at The Center for Health Care

Services (CHCS), where he is currently spearheading a revolution in mental health care!

1 Visionary Selection

While experience matters, it is just as important to choose someone who is genuinely passionate about the program's objectives.

Effective leaders inspire through both passion and experience. Sometimes, you may need to consider candidates outside your team.

- Clearly articulate the purpose and long-term goals of the program.
- Paint a compelling picture of the future so your team understands the “why” behind their work.

2 Values Create Creativity

Establishing program core values is essential for building a cohesive team and advancing the organization's mission. When we launched the CHAAT program, we identified four foundational values and refined these values to align with Patrick Lencioni's three characteristics of an effective team player: humility, hunger, and people smarts.

Trust: Cultivated through humility

Respect: Rooted in humility

Innovation: Driven by hunger to grow and continuously improve

Care: Demonstrated by strong interpersonal skills and a commitment to positive collaboration with others

3 Empower an Audacious Attitude

Create a culture where team members feel trusted, valued and encouraged to take initiative, share ideas and contribute confidently toward achieving bold goals.

- Delegate responsibilities and trust your team's expertise.
- Recognize and celebrate contributions to build morale and ownership.

4 Resilient Mindset

Stay flexible when plans shift due to unexpected challenges. Embrace feedback and adjust strategies without losing sight of the program goal.



5 Community Collaboration

Effective teamwork is the foundation of organizational success. By bringing together diverse skills and perspectives, teams foster innovation, strengthen problem-solving, and improve efficiency. Shared responsibility promotes accountability, reduces burnout, and builds trust—leading to greater productivity and lasting impact.

Closing

The CHAAT program demonstrates that successful implementation requires more than a good idea, it requires intentional leadership. These principles provide a practical roadmap for navigating challenges and achieving meaningful community impact.