PLANNING FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE)

EDUCATION MODULE: IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

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Prepared by:

Planning and Community Health Program

American Planning Association

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

In 2016, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) released the *Choose Safe Places (CSP) for Early Care and Education Guidance Manual* and began funding 25 cooperative agreements with states to begin building the CSP programs. Following the devastation of the 2017 hurricane season, ATSDR began the mission of creating the CSP *Disaster Recovery Supplement* to aid in the disaster recovery efforts for Early Care and Education (ECE) programs and facilities.

In December 2018, the American Planning Association began a new project in collaboration with the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) and Region II Head Start Association. Through disaster recovery funding from ATSDR, these groups began working together on the CSP initiative to help inform and educate decision-makers and professionals about the proper siting of the ECE programs.

About the Education Module: The focus of this *Implementation Guide* is on the education module – *Planning for Early Care and Education: Siting Considerations to Promote Environmental Health*. This module is aimed specifically for planners to help locate ECE programs on sites that would reduce children's exposure to harmful chemicals. The goal is to build the capacity of planners by educating them about ways they can promote environmental health in their work. The educational module is divided into four sections, and there are two ways that a planner can refer to this module: 1) PDF Format (insert links): Print and read it as reference material, and, 2) StoryMap Format (insert links): Interactive way to access the education. When using story maps format, the user can evaluate a section and take a knowledge test using the link inserted at the end of each section. When using pdf format, they can use the following links to evaluate and test their knowledge (insert four links, one for each section). Since evaluation and knowledge test are online, StoryMap format is the preferred way to use the education module. The education module is specifically created for planners.

PURPOSE OF IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE:

The purpose of this implementation guide is to outline the steps involved in piloting the education module with local planners.

This implementation guide provides direction to the state Department of Health (DOH) to disseminate the education module to planners across the state and evaluate the change in knowledge by asking knowledge-test questions at the end of each module. We want to thank you in advance for your hard work and for investing your time to pilot this module in your region. The users will be able to provide feedback, which will help us improve this product and future implementation efforts.

In the sections below, we provide suggested methods to pilot this tool. The task is to find practicing planners who would take this course and provide feedback to improve it. We recognize that each community is different, so please change this process to best suit your region and purpose.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

This section explains the steps to be taken to pilot the educational module.

Step 1: Identify the state-level networks to contact:

Disseminating this module through appropriate planning networks is important to reach the right audience. Collect relevant contact information from the following state-level organizations/agencies/associations. Please disseminate the education module through the following channels.

- State Planning Departments (if your state has a planning department)
- APA State Chapter
- Major accredited planning programs in the universities. Please contact the department head/director of all the universities in your state. There is a possibility that they could use this module in their classes.
- State Associations of Counties (Please click the accordion "State Associations" to get the list)
- State and Local Government Management Association

In addition to these organizations/associations, identify planning contacts whom you know and believe may be able to help. These individuals could be working with state or local agencies or with local non-profit organizations.

Step 2: Contact these State Organizations:

Once the contact list has been created, you may wish to contact them first via email. If unsuccessful, reach out via phone. The purpose is to ask for their help in outreach efforts. They can use communications tools at their disposal, such as newsletters, webinars, and conferences to reach the audience. Below is an email template you can use to contact these organizations/associations.

Email Template

Dear XXX,

My name is XXX, and I work for XXX. My organization is seeking feedback on an educational module developed by the American Planning Association (APA) in collaboration with the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) and the Region II Head Start Association. This tool, *Planning for Early Care and Education: Siting Considerations to Promote Environmental Health* was created to educate planners about the role of siting Early Care and Education (ECE) programs in promoting children's environmental health. It is available in the pdf (insert link) as well as more interactive story map format (insert link).

We are looking to pilot this module with planners interested in learning more about site planning to protect children from polluted air, contaminated water and soil, and other environmental hazards. After going over the module, the users will be able to evaluate the module, provide feedback, and take a knowledge test. APA will use that feedback to improve the module.

Your members play a crucial role in improving community well-being and health, and it would be extremely helpful if you are willing to disseminate the education module through your communications channels such as newsletter, listservs, social media, and webinars. Would you be willing to disseminate this module to your network? If you are willing, we can share a short blurb with you to pass along to your members.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this effort in more detail, please contact me via email (insert email) or phone (insert phone number).

Sincerely,

XXX

Short Blurb

Use the following blurb for social media and other places where short description is needed:

Are you interested in learning more about protecting children's environmental health? Please use this education module (insert link) created by the American Planning Association to help you site Early Care and Education Facilities on safe, healthy locations, and provide feedback on how to improve the module. If you need more information, please contact (insert email).

Long Description

There may be opportunities to include long descriptions in communications materials such as a newsletter. In such cases, use the following description:

The American Planning Association (APA) in collaboration with National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) and Region II Head Start has created an education module, *Planning for Early Care and Education: Siting Considerations to Promote Environmental Health*. The module was created to educate planners about the role of siting Early Care and Education (ECE) programs to promote children's environmental health. It is available in a pdf format (insert link) as well as more interactive StoryMap format (insert link).

Please use this education module and give feedback. APA will use that feedback to improve the module. If you are interested and want more information, please contact (insert email).

Phone Script

Perhaps in your jurisdiction, the easiest way to connect is by phone. If this is the case, please consider using the following script:

Hi,

My name is XX and I work for XX. We have developed an education module that may be helpful to educate planners about the role of siting Early Care and Education (ECE) programs in promoting children's environmental health. I would like to discuss with you or someone else in your organization the possibility to disseminate this module to your members. Who would be the most appropriate person to contact regarding this tool?

[If the person on the phone believes that you should contact someone else in the organization (can be president, communications person, administrative staff), ask the person on the phone for that person's contact information and/or offer to leave your contact information. Then follow-up with the new person at a later date.]

[If you reach the right person— use the above email template to describe the guide and purpose. Once described, ask if he/she is interested in helping with the dissemination. If the person is interested, then thank that person and provide with the links to the tool and the evaluation tool via email. Also, ask them that if they could notify or cc you once they have disseminated the information. If the person is not interested, thank them for their consideration, mark it in your notes and move on to the next organization].

[Irrespective of the person being interested or not interested in disseminating this information, ask if he/she can give information or contact information of other organizations or people that may be worth contacting to disseminate this information.]

Step 3 (optional): In-person Education Event:

Hosting an in-person education session is another way to educate the planners and get their feedback on the module. Since this method is resource consuming, please use it only if necessary. If you decide to use this method, it would be helpful to have a lunch and learn type of event and/or provide an incentive to attract more users. Please use the following email template to contact the organizations identified in Step 1 for the in-person event.

Email Template

Dear XXX,

My name is XXX, and I work for XXX. My organization is seeking feedback on an educational module developed by the American Planning Association (APA) in association with the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) and the Region II Head Start Association. This tool, *Planning for Early Care and Education: Siting Considerations to Promote Environmental Health,* was

created to educate planners about the role of siting Early Care and Education (ECE) programs to promote children's health. It is available in the pdf (insert link) as well as an interactive StoryMap format (insert link).

We are looking to pilot this module with planners interested in learning more about site planning to protect children from polluted air, and contaminated water and soil. **We are organizing an in-person convening on (insert date and time) at (insert location) to help planners learn more about this issue.** At this convening, the learning exercise will be followed by a discussion session (draft agenda attached). Participants will also get an opportunity to provide their feedback to improve the module. (Insert information about incentives for participation, if applicable).

Your members play a crucial role in improving community well-being and health, and it would be extremely helpful if the interested members could attend this convening. Would you be willing to disseminate the information about this convening through your communications channels such as newsletter, listservs, social media, and webinars.? If you are willing, we can share a short blurb with you to pass along to your members.

Please contact me via email (insert email) or phone (insert phone number) if you have any questions or would like to discuss this effort in more detail.

Sincerely,

XXX

Short Blurb

Use the following blurb for social media and other places where short description is needed:

Are you interested in learning more about protecting children's health? Please join us for an in-person convening to study an education module (insert link) created by the American Planning Association. The module will help you site Early Care and Education Facilities on safe locations. If you need more information about this event, please contact (insert email). Lunch will be provided!

Draft Agenda

Following is a draft agenda for a 150 minute in-person event. Feel free to alter it based on your requirements, available time and resources, or any other considerations.

- 40 minutes: Explore Section 1 and Section 2 of the education module and take the knowledge test (6 multiple-choice questions).
- 10 minutes: Break
- 40 minutes: Explore Section 3 and Section 4 of the education module and take the knowledge test (6 multiple-choice questions).

- 60 minutes: Lunch and Discuss
- End: Evaluation

Step 4: Collect Feedback:

In order to obtain information on the usefulness and usability of the Educational Module, we are asking for your feedback. Please use this questionnaire (insert links) to complete an assessment of the educational module and take a knowledge test. If using StoryMaps, then the link is inserted at the end of each Section. Consider that some individuals or organization may decide to use the tool without notification, so it would be beneficial to check the evaluation data often.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The email template and the phone script may need to be modified based on the organization or the person you are contacting. If you do not receive a response to an email, follow up after seven business days via email. If you still do not get a response, wait one week before calling them.

The educational module is available in English and Spanish at this link (insert link). Use this link (insert links) to evaluate the guide in Enligh. The evaluation is also available in Spanish (insert links). If the evaluation in a paper-based format, we ask that you transfer the information from the paper-based form into the online form, so that the data can be easily obtained to analyze. We will not be able to process any findings that are not transmitted via electronic format.

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APPENDIX A: IMPLEMENTATION IN PUERTO RICO

Use the following information to pilot this tool in Puerto Rico. For best outcomes, the work should be done in collaboration with American Planning Association and Planners for Puerto Rico group. Before contacting the following people or organization, it would be helpful to have a call among APA, NEHA, Region II Head Start, and key members of Planners for Puerto Rico to prioritize the list.

Step 1: Identify the state-level networks to contact:

There are no action items for Step 1. APA has identified the following organizations and people to be contacted for piloting the design charrette. These organizations can use their local knowledge and communications tools such as newsletters, webinars, and conferences to disseminate the education module.

- Puerto Rico Planning Society
  - Federico Del Monte Garrido: fdelmontegar@gmail.com
  - David Carrasquillo: djcarrasquillo@gmail.com
  - Marisol Rodriquez: marisolrodz@gmail.com
- University of Puerto Rico, Graduate School of Planning
  - Norma Pena Rivera norma.pena1@upr.edu
- Planning Board (certification program)
  - Joselle Vazquez <jvazquez@estado.pr.gov

Step 2: Contact these State Organizations:

Follow steps identified in the above implementation guide.

Step 3 (optional): In-person Education Event:

Follow steps identified in the above implementation guide.

Step 4: Collect Feedback:

Follow steps identified in the above implementation guide.