

## Chapter 6 : Staffing Resources

# Coach Practice Profile

The goal of this role is to provide coaching related to quality service delivery, fidelity to the OhioKAN program model, and performance improvement strategies when indicated. The Coach is expected to provide technical assistance to OhioKAN sites, onboard and train OhioKAN site staff in the program model on an ongoing basis and contribute to continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities at the regional level. Engaging and supporting families is rooted in the six key principles of the Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access (IDEA) Framework, which includes the continued analysis of historical factors and inequities; prioritization of solutions that balance power and promote social justice for families; elevation of inclusion and community voice; confrontation of all forms of discrimination and exclusion; understanding intersectionality and the sustained commitment to advance equitable realities both internally and for families.

In addition to being proficient in the skills and practice behaviors expected of the Navigator role, the Coach's role includes the following skills and practice behaviors.

### Core Practice Skills

#### Engagement

Engagement with Navigators begins at first encounter and is established through an honest, respectful, and empathetic approach. We create a place for the Navigator to share practice experiences by actively listening, maintaining transparency, and communicating humbly. Through this dynamic coaching relationship, we partner with the Navigators to strengthen their practice and improve outcomes for children and families. The purpose of engaging with Navigators in this way is twofold: to build trusting strengths-based coaching relationships and to model behavior that will strengthen their practice and improve outcomes for children and families.

Genuine engagement with children, families, and community members involves building relationships that are founded on trust and respect. It requires intentional examination of our own biases and active listening to understand and honor each person's unique experiences, perspectives, strengths, and challenges.

**Inclusion**

Coaches and Navigators work together and routinely have one-on-one discussions to develop an inclusive practice that begins in partnership with children, families, and caregivers. The families that we serve are the experts on their own circumstance and the decision-makers about which services and supports they need. We actively center their voice, experience, and needs through appreciative inquiry and open-ended questions throughout service delivery. During conversations, we respond to discrimination and experiences with oppressive systems and practice by actively listening, validating, and asking what you can do to help and how to be of support moving forward.

We continuously work to develop self-awareness of how our own identities and biases shape our behaviors, beliefs, and opportunities. We use humility to be the bridge of awareness and accountability to one another and the families we work with. We continually learn about intersectional identities and the ways in which those identities are affected by social service systems to better understand a family's experience working with OhioKAN, as well as the Navigator's experience working with families and their colleagues.

**Collaboration**

We collaborate with Navigators to define the coaching relationship and create an effective, synergetic team. We intentionally partner with supervisors to provide Navigators with the tailored support they need to implement the OhioKAN program with fidelity and serve OhioKAN families.

We partner with Navigators to build a diverse and collaborative coalition of stakeholders, including youth and families with lived experience, from a cross-section of our community. This community collaboration will help us connect families to the services and supports they ask for, identify both practice and service gaps, and develop new service capacity to support the identified needs of kinship and adoptive families. In alignment with the systems analysis principle in the IDEA framework, Coaches actively partner with Navigators to gather practice knowledge to inform community-level collaborations and coalition building to bridge service gaps and provide better, more equitable services for families.

As the needs of kinship and adoptive families expand and evolve in our community, we coordinate with Navigators and Regional Advisory Councils to build new and innovative collaborations and enhance existing partnerships to meet their needs. Furthermore, we aggregate and elevate common direct practice challenges to the Regional Director, CQI Process Teams, and Learning Collaboratives with the goal of working together to find common solutions.

**Active  
Listening**

We actively listen to Navigators as they share their experiences working with kinship and adoptive families and implementing the OhioKAN program. By actively listening, we improve our understanding of the Navigators' strengths, growth areas, and needs, which enables us to identify appropriate supports, training, and skill development opportunities. Active listening includes asking open-ended questions, summarizing, checking for understanding, and asking permission to offer solutions. Our commitment to an active listening style is grounded in our core value of believing families and the knowledge that families, partners and staff are the experts of their own experiences. We believe the experience of Navigators working with families and reflect this belief with active listening.

**Goal Setting**

We jointly develop goals with Navigators that clarify the focus of the coaching relationship. The goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based and facilitate the Navigator's performance and fidelity to the OhioKAN program.

The Coach is responsible for structuring the process for the Navigator to monitor progress towards goals. The goal setting and tracking process is designed to build the Navigator's capacity and confidence over time. The OhioKAN model of coaching towards goals includes segmenting larger goals, identifying next steps to achieve those goals through joint action planning, developing strategies to foster growth in individual practice, and guiding the Navigator's learning, skill adoption, and competency in role responsibilities.

**Observation**

Coaches and Navigators work together to create a safe space for observation. We observe Navigators in action through direct and indirect methods to provide positive and constructive feedback to ensure fidelity of the OhioKAN program and equitable service delivery. Through observations, we build a deeper trusting relationship with Navigators to support continuous growth and learning, centered around the enhancement of both the Navigator's strengths and areas for refinement.

Specifically, we accompany Navigators on visits with kinship and adoptive families to directly observe their practice, glean additional practice insights during coaching sessions, and review case record documentation. Observations provide a space to gain greater insight into the systems that kinship and adoptive families experience daily to inform continued analysis of systems through the IDEA framework.

**Modeling**

Coaching is the Navigator's primary resource for support and transfer of learning. We model behaviors, core practice skills, and effective rapport-building techniques to promote Navigators' ability to implement the OhioKAN program equitably and with fidelity. Modeling takes place in structured learning opportunities during coaching sessions, and we also embody OhioKAN behaviors and values whenever we engage with Navigators, other OhioKAN staff, families, and community members. This builds Navigators' understanding of the program and supports their effective engagement with kinship and adoptive families.

We model the active embodiment of the six IDEA principles, data and CQI practices to build evidence and contribute new knowledge to both the OhioKAN program and the broader field of kinship and adoption navigator programs.

**Feedback**

We provide structured, timely, constructive feedback to Navigators about their practice strengths and skill development based on our observations and practice expertise. We provide feedback in a way that accounts for and respects a difference in perspective, learning styles and approaches to the work. We incorporate motivational interviewing techniques and principles to deliver feedback in a strengths-based and affirming manner. We encourage Navigators to also share feedback about strengths and growth areas about their coaching relationship and we respond to this feedback in a way that is appreciative and accepting, which affirms our commitment to continuous learning. We value the Navigator's perspective to strengthen the coaching dynamic and believe it contributes to a trusting environment. This bidirectional feedback informs the coaching process to effectively support the Navigator in their learning, practice improvement, and service delivery ability.

**Reflection**

We foster a safe environment that encourages, affirms, and models vulnerability so that Navigators feel comfortable discussing areas where they may be struggling and need coaching support. We reflect in a way that is safe for all involved, allowing reflection and discussion about topics that the Navigator would like to speak about. We explicitly discuss power dynamics and the complexity of the network of relationships Navigators are establishing.

We support the Navigator's development in building awareness of how their own background and biases impact interactions with families, staff and partners. We create safe spaces to cultivate best practices for culturally humble customer service, naming issues related to IDEA. We facilitate reflection with Navigators by actively listening and asking questions, considering how it relates to their goals and the OhioKAN theory of change, and identifying strengths and growth areas. We debrief practice experiences with Navigators to prompt self-reflections and assess progress towards achieving goals.

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Coaching Sessions**

*When I engage with the Navigator and partnering supervisor and collaboratively set goals,*

- During the initial coaching session, establish expectations for the coaching relationship by explaining your role as the Navigator's support resource and guide. Ask the Navigator if they have experiences with a Coach and whether they have any questions or requests to tailor the coaching dynamic. Ask the partnering supervisor how they would like to be involved during these sessions. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Periodically throughout the coaching relationship, check in with the partnering supervisor to ensure that they are participating in the coaching dynamic in the way you believe is necessary and is upholding OhioKAN's mission. Their involvement may evolve over time. Reach out to your Regional Director for more support on relationship management or clarity when needed. (Collaboration)
- Collaboratively set goals with the Navigator. Encourage the Navigator to share their perspective on how they feel their role contributes to the OhioKAN program and what they hope to achieve in their role. This will help you understand their role expectations and motivations. Discuss how their goals relate to the community-level initiatives within each Regional Advisory Council, best practices in service delivery with families, and the six IDEA principles. Remind the Navigator that their coaching sessions are flexible to support them in their ability to effectively partner with OhioKAN families and can be tailored to meet their

needs. (Collaboration, Goal Setting, and Active Listening)

- Explain the core practice goals that all Navigators must work on as part of the fidelity monitoring and CQI strategies. Remind the Navigator that while their set of goals will include these core practice goals, they may also add individualized, tailored goals to meet their needs. Refer to the goal setting worksheet to record goals. Let the Navigator know that you are their support to achieve their goals and will help them monitor their progress. (Goal Setting)
- Remind the Navigator that as the coaching relationship and their skill development evolve, their goals may need adjustments and new goals may be added. (Goal Setting and Collaboration)
- Check for understanding of the Navigator's core practice skills, responsibilities, procedural activities, and program components they implement. Offer to demonstrate any elements that the Navigator has questions about. (Engagement and Modeling)

*When I prepare to meet with the Navigator and partnering supervisor for a coaching session,*

- Prior to first coaching meeting: reach out to the Navigator to establish a weekly coaching session day and time and schedule the observation cadence (how often the Coach will observe the Navigator as they partner with families and how often the Coach will review service episode documentation). (Engagement)
- Use notes from the observation rubric to identify strengths and growth areas for the Navigator's practice and skill development. Cite specific examples of when the Navigator performed well in their direct engagement with OhioKAN families and case documentation and specific instances where the Navigator could have improved their practice. Gather the necessary learning materials to share with the Navigator. (Observation and Feedback)
- Ask the Navigator to communicate their needs related to what a safe space looks like for reflections on practice, including places where the Navigator may feel stuck such as difficult areas within practice or cultural understandings. Through discussion, develop suggestions and identify strategies to build the Navigator's skills in delivering family-centered and strengths-based service. (Feedback)
- Prepare the coaching session agenda using the standard coaching session agenda template and share with the Navigator in advance to ask for their input on additional agenda items. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Reach out to the partnering supervisor to invite them to the coaching session if they do not already regularly participate. (Collaboration)

*When I facilitate reflections with the Navigator and partnering supervisor,*

- Facilitate reflections with the Navigator on their practice, service delivery, and progress towards their goals. Remind the Navigator that the coaching session is a learning environment for them to hone their practice, ask questions, and feel comfortable sharing and discussing areas where they are struggling and need support. (Reflection)

- Ask the Navigator to share their individual thoughts on their practice strengths, growth areas, and challenges. Actively listen to the Navigator when they describe their experiences and any challenges they've encountered. Use guiding questions (outlined below) to prompt reflections (Reflection and Active Listening)
  - Which aspects of your interactions with OhioKAN families do you feel most confident about?
  - Which aspects of your interactions do you feel least confident about?
  - What's something you wish you had done differently/plan to do differently in the future?
  - Which aspects of your interaction and engagement with families do you feel need a bit more practice or familiarity?
  - Were there any portions of your calls you found particularly sad or disturbing? (Prompt to encourage processing of secondary trauma when relevant)
  - Were there any parts of your interactions that made you feel uncomfortable or uneasy? If so, why?
  - Where did you see the potential for bias (positive or negative) to influence your decisions?
  - Were there any apparent community system barriers that we could elevate to the Regional Advisory Councils?
- Ask the partnering supervisor to share their reflections on the Navigator's practice (Reflection and Collaboration)
- Debrief complex service episodes and strategies for selecting referrals. Ask the partnering supervisor for their consultation on more challenging service episodes. Ask follow-up questions that help the Navigator learn from past practice, identify strategies for improvement, and understand how the support they provide to OhioKAN families is contributing to program outcomes. Provide your Navigator with a supportive environment and be aware of any secondary trauma stress responses they might display. (Active Listening and Reflection)
- Listen for themes across your Navigators' reflections to inform how best to support them and whether challenges are community-based and could be experienced by more than one Navigator. (Active Listening)

*When I provide and discuss feedback with the Navigator,*

- Based on observations, provide feedback to the Navigator using a structured, strengths-based approach. Clarify understanding of Navigator core practice skills and OhioKAN program procedures, such as eligibility requirements, screening decision-making criteria, service selection and referral provision, and case management process. Ask the Navigator if they have any questions about the core elements of the OhioKAN program. Gently remind the Navigator that you are their primary resource and partner as they implement the program. You are available to demonstrate or review elements covered in the Navigator's training to reinforce



their learning and understanding of the program. (Feedback and Modeling)

- Emphasize the Navigator's positive contributions to the OhioKAN program outcomes by identifying their strengths. Discuss the positive behaviors, practices, and performance you observed and provide clear examples. Link the positive practices observed to the Navigator's goals and progress towards achieving them. (Feedback)
- Share practice concerns using an empathetic, compassionate approach. Let the Navigator know that you recognize their ability to engage with OhioKAN families and that they are knowledgeable about their families' service needs. Identify the Navigator's growth areas you observed and provide specific examples of how they can improve. Ask for their feedback on your observation and affirm that they understand your reasons for identifying the growth areas. Remind the Navigator that you are specifying growth areas to strengthen their ability to serve OhioKAN families and contribute to positive outcomes for families. (Feedback)
- Pulling from the Navigator's direct practice you observed, model alternative strategies, techniques, and behaviors for engaging with and supporting OhioKAN families. In doing so, you are building the Navigator's capacity to serve a range of families who may need different approaches to facilitate positive engagement. (Modeling)
- Suggest strategies and guidance on ways the Navigator can address their growth areas and improve their practice. Provide additional training resources and learning materials that can aid their development. Ask if they have additional ideas on ways to improve. (Feedback)
- Check in with your Navigator to see whether they have any unmet needs you can support them with as well as any feedback for ways to improve the coaching relationship. (Active Listening, Feedback, and Engagement)
- Following feedback, jointly plan next steps and strategies to address identified concerns and growth areas with the Navigator. This may entail adjusting and amending established goals. (Goal Setting and Collaboration)

*When I Coach a Navigator on direct practice with families,*

- Model OhioKAN CARES values, the six IDEA principles, the Navigator's core practice skills, behaviors, and characteristics through my language, demeanor, and attitude when engaging with Navigators, community members, and kinship and adoptive families. (Modeling)
- Model and demonstrate engagement and facilitation techniques that Navigators can apply in their own engagement with OhioKAN families. (Modeling)
- Reinforce role development and application of core practice skills by using role playing exercises to prepare the Navigator to support families with basic or complex needs. (Modeling)
  - Practice answering and screening hotline calls, conducting the BASICS Assessment, making service selections and referrals, completing service episode documentation, facilitating caregiver/family meetings, and closing a service episode
- Be mindful of trends and challenges in the community, as well as interpersonal challenges, that may affect a Navigator's ability to support OhioKAN families; actively seek solutions and

supports when needed. This includes having an awareness of current systemic barriers and cultural context that a family may be dealing with and incorporating that awareness in practice with families. Incorporating this awareness includes the ability to actively listen, collaborate and observe how families are describing their experiences to better inform our service delivery. (Active Listening, Collaboration, and Observation)

*When I coach a Navigator on working in the community,*

- Discuss and co-plan with Navigators about the different opportunities and strategies to educate system partners about the unique needs of K&A families and how they can best be served and supported. (Inclusion & Collaboration)
- Reflect and work with Navigators on how to build upon their advocacy skills to support the development and increased accessibility of needed supports and services within the community and for families. (Engagement, Reflection & Collaboration)
- Be aware that there may be times when Navigators connect with system partners that display discriminatory or exclusive behavior, encourage Navigators to continue to advocate for the family in these situations. Touch base with Navigators often and if needed, find the time and space to reflect on experiences and discuss concerns and next steps together. (Collaboration, Inclusion and Reflection). If discrimination continues, work to contact and refer the family to services that are respectful and inclusive of all families. (Inclusion & Collaboration)

### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action within the CQI Process**

*When I observe a Navigator directly in action and practice and indirectly through documentation,*

- For observing the Navigator's direct practice with OhioKAN families each month, shadow the Navigator by accompanying them when meeting with a family or listening to a call when they answer the OhioKAN phone line. Reassure the Navigator that you are participating as an observer and support. Let them know that you may model alternative approaches and techniques for handling the situations you observe during your coaching sessions to improve and strengthen their practice. Use the observation rubric to assess quality practice and ensure fidelity to the OhioKAN program. (Observation and Modeling)
- For observing the Navigator's indirect practice with OhioKAN families, review service episode documentation (call notes, service referrals, Support Plans, BASICS Assessment, Collaborative Assessment, written communication with families) for each week's new service episodes. Use case note review guiding questions (outlined below) to assess quality practice and fidelity to the OhioKAN program. (Observation and Engagement)
  - Are all required data points entered for the service episode's documentation?
  - Was the referral packet sent within 24 hours of completing the BASICS?
  - From the case notes, how did the Navigator demonstrate core practice skills of engagement, collaboration, and active listening during their engagement with the family?

- Were the provided service referrals appropriate to meet the needs identified in the BASICS Assessment? Are there other referrals the Navigator could have provided?
- Was post-referral follow-up conducted in a timely manner (within ten business days of referral distribution)?
- For Collaborate Service Level episodes: Were the service referrals provided in the Support Plan appropriate to meet the needs identified in the Collaborative Assessment?
- For Collaborate Service Level episodes: Is the frequency of contact appropriate to effectively engage and collaborate with the caregivers and families?
- Monitor trends in Navigators' practice and skill development. Listen for common themes in your Navigators' challenges. This can inform your coaching and teaching approach as it points to skills and areas to focus transfer of learning activities. These challenges may be trends in other regions that can be further discussed at your cohort's Learning Collaborative or CQI Process Team. (Active Listening and Observation)
- Support Navigators in preparing for quarterly CASP reviews by critically reflecting on their practice and ability to provide timely and appropriate referrals for Collaborate families during coaching sessions. Co-facilitate quarterly reviews with Navigators and families and model key practice skills and behaviors as needed. (Reflection and Modeling)

*When I facilitate a Learning Collaborative,*

- Discuss trends in practice observed, service needs, referrals, and common themes across Navigator engagements with OhioKAN families as identified by the CQI Process Team with the Learning Collaborative. Prompt Learning Collaborative members to reflect on these trends and how they relate to their individual experiences. Engage members of the Learning Collaborative in reflection and discussion on how to uplift and build on inclusion in our spaces. (Reflection, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- Share observations on how OhioKAN is implemented and suggest general growth areas for program fidelity. Encourage Learning Collaborative members to provide feedback on these growth areas, revise them as needed, and build consensus for them. (Observation and Feedback)
- Guide the Learning Collaborative through the CQI process, especially with activities that occur during the Plan, Do, and Study phases. (Modeling)
- Create opportunities for members to frame challenges in their own words, support them in elevating areas of concern, and listen to their experiences engaging with OhioKAN families. (Active Listening, Feedback, and Collaboration)
- Co-design small tests of change within the Learning Collaborative based on members' feedback and contributions and follow up on their implementation with Navigators during coaching sessions. (Collaboration and Reflection)
- Build member consensus on key issues to share with the CQI Process Team for their feedback and reflection. Collaborate with members to identify important issues collectively, ensuring

that all members' voices are heard by periodically summarizing, consolidating, and repeating issues they raise. (Collaboration)

*When I participate in the CQI Process Team,*

- Prior to CQI Process Team meetings: Regularly review regional CQI indicator data reports, observation rubrics, and general observations of staff practice to identify trends, disparities and challenges in practice, service needs, referrals, and common themes across Navigator engagements with OhioKAN Families in my region. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Share observations on my region's OhioKAN implementation, strategies for improvement progress, and main takeaways from my cohort's previous Learning Collaborative session. (Observation and Engagement)
- Actively listen to peers as they share their observations on practice trends, service needs, referrals, and challenges in their regions. (Observation and Engagement)
- Collectively identify growth areas for program fidelity and general program implementation with the CQI Process Team. Be mindful that my voice is not the only voice heard and make efforts to encourage all members to contribute their thoughts. (Active Listening and Engagement)
- Co-design Learning Collaborative session agendas with CQI Process Team members that incorporate challenges discussed. (Active Listening, Collaboration, and Engagement)
- Delegate time-sensitive, CQI-related tasks to regional coordinators and promote collaboration across the CQI Process Team. Clarify needed support and assistance with regional coordinators to ensure understanding. (Collaboration)

### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action with Regional Advisory Councils**

*When I engage with a Regional Advisory Council,*

- Discuss trends, with a focus on disparate impact on communities marginalized by systems, in service needs, community providers available, and common themes across Navigator engagements with OhioKAN Families with the Regional Advisory Council.
- Discussion of trends is rooted in the six IDEA principles to proactively address systemic racism and system barriers faced by OhioKAN families and the larger Ohio community. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Share observations on how the OhioKAN program is being implemented and identify general growth areas for program fidelity. (Observation and Engagement)
- Create opportunities for direct practice experts to frame challenges in their own words and support them in elevating areas of concern within the Regional OhioKAN team and to the Regional Advisory Councils in partnership with the Regional Director. (Engagement and Collaboration)

### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Reflection**

*When I reflect,*

- When you feel uncomfortable, get curious about it. Reach out to your Regional Director, peers or someone you trust to debrief. (Reflection, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- When you realize you may have hurt or offended someone by what you have done or not done, apologize and take steps to make amends and improve. (Reflection and Active Learner)
- When someone comes to you about how you may have hurt or offended them – listen and ask questions to make sure you understand, thank them for bringing this to your attention, take accountability and apologize. Reflect after the conversation on ways you can prevent a situation like this in the future. (Reflection and Active Learner)
- Identify your own strengths, biases, areas of growth, and places where you need to ask for help. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Continually examine your own power and privilege and how you are using it. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Reflect on how your intersectional identities are similar and different than those of your colleagues. Even if you have shared experiences, differentiate your own experiences from the experiences of your Navigators or other colleagues. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Questions to ask myself as I reflect (Reflection, Inclusion, and Engagement). In what ways...
  - Did I support inclusion?
  - Did I create opportunities for a family or Navigator to be vulnerable?
  - Did I respond to vulnerability?