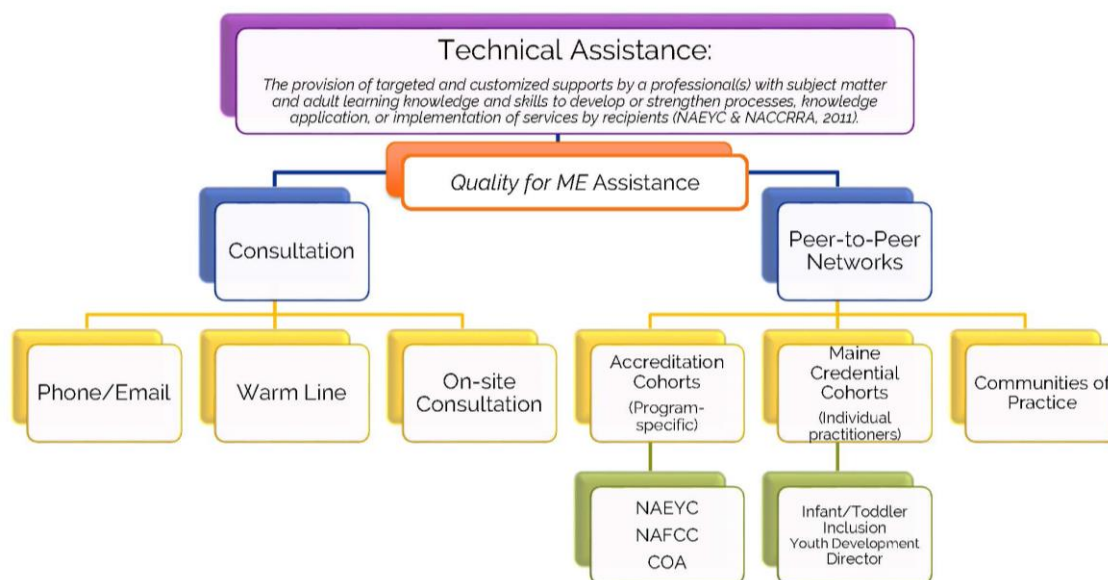


MRTQ PDN Technical Assistance System

Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network has created a statewide system to offer technical assistance (TA) services to early childhood and out-of-school time programs working to improve program quality. The TA System supports the reflective processes that practitioners need in order to apply the theories and information learned through education and/or training to improve or sustain best practices. The next two pages will describe in detail the different parts of this system and how the pieces can support you and your program with a wide variety of services.

To begin, the illustration below shows the structure and components of the TA System and how the pieces relate to each other. The top box, under "Technical Assistance," gives the definition of TA that MRTQ PDN uses throughout the system.

Technical Assistance System 2019



Under the definition of TA is a box labeled "Quality for ME Assistance." The *Quality for ME* standards are the foundation of all TA offered by MRTQ PDN. Programs not already enrolled with *Quality for ME* will be encouraged to complete an application as part of the TA process, **specifically for on-site consultation**.

Recognizing the individual aspects and goals of early childhood and out-of-school time settings, the MRTQ PDN TA System includes a variety of approaches tailored to meet the unique needs of each setting. The next level of the graphic – the orange boxes – are the two broad categories of TA offered by MRTQ PDN. Let's look at each separately.

The category of "**Consultation**" includes the following:

- **Phone and email support**, as well as the MRTQ PDN **website resources**. Phone and email support can be requested by calling 1-888-900-0055 or emailing mrtq.contact@maine.edu. Staff are available to answer questions during business hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm. Messages will be returned as soon as possible. The MRTQ PDN website is available at: <https://mrtq.org>.
- The **Warm Line** serves as the first step in providing practical, accurate information to support the successful inclusion of children with special health needs, disabilities, mental health concerns, or challenging behavior.

A warm line provides preventative and non-emergency person-to-person support and resources. The MRTQ PDN **Warm Line** is jointly staffed by professionals with expertise in inclusive practices, disabilities, children's health, social and emotional development, behavior, and early childhood mental health. You can contact the **Warm Line** at (toll free) 1-844-209-5964 or by emailing mrtq.warmline@maine.edu. Calls and emails will receive a response within one business day. Learn more at: <https://mrtq.org/warmline/>.

- **On-site consultation** involves individualized, on-site support to programs using a partnership approach. Trained consultants are available statewide to assist programs with a wide variety of topics, including *leadership* (e.g. policies, procedures, staff wellness, professional development) and *teaching* (e.g. curriculum, assessment, environment, challenging behaviors). Program owners or directors can request **on-site consultation** using our online form, located on our website: <https://mrtq.org/technical-assistance/>. The partnership element of **on-site consultation** is key – this means that a commitment of time and effort is required on the part of the owner/director and program staff receiving **on-site consultation**.

"The one-on-one conversations were very helpful. Sometimes having a person specifically observing our behavior, language, etc. as a teacher can be intimidating, but the conversation afterward – and the entire process – were very helpful!"

Practitioner receiving on-site consultation

The category of "**Peer-to-Peer Networks**" offers

opportunities for practitioners to learn from and with each other by problem-solving and sharing resources and

strategies. Peer-to-peer networks involve attendance at regular meetings (either in-person, via phone, or online) and participating in the peer community. Peer-to-peer networks include:

- **Communities of practice (CoPs)** generally meet monthly, for approximately two hours at a time. Regional and topical groups meet in all regions of Maine and are open for new members any time. **Communities of practice** are a type of professional development where the content of the discussion is driven by the needs of the participants. MRTQ PDN-sponsored **communities of practice** receive support from a trained facilitator. For more information, visit our website: <https://mrtq.org/cops/>.
- **Accreditation cohorts** are groups that meet around the specific topic of national accreditation. MRTQ PDN offers support for programs pursuing NAEYC, NAFCC, or COA accreditation.
- **Credential cohorts** are groups for individuals looking for additional support in pursuing one of the Maine credentials – Infant Toddler, Youth Development, Director, or Inclusion. You can read more on our website: <https://mrtq.org/mainecredentials/>.

All of the TA services described here are provided **free of charge** and can be accessed by any person or program providing child care and early education services in Maine. Child care centers, family child care programs, out-of-school time programs, Head Start, license-exempt providers, and nursery schools are eligible.

If you have questions or would like more information about any of the services described here, please explore the web links listed above or contact us directly at 1-888-900-0055 or mrtq.contact@maine.edu. We look forward to working with you!