

Educators gain a Head Start in compliance with 1Place software.

As regulators increasingly call on education providers to make data-driven decisions, electronic monitoring is no longer a matter of 'if' but 'when'. Here's how 1Place software is helping Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start agency "fill the gaps" in education compliance.

Head Start is a nationwide federally-funded program that takes a multi-generational approach in preparing children for school. Head Start aims to raise participants' standard of living through the provision of education, health services and working with their families to set goals and promote self-sufficiency.

Mid-Florida Community Services, Inc. delivers Head Start programs to more than 1200 children in 22 learning centers across Florida State. Quality Assurance Manager Jeff Heyne is responsible for providing the Officer of Head Start and stakeholders with data that illustrates whether their school readiness program is working.



Education compliance a class of its own

Before finding 1Place, Jeff says the agency was "pretty far advanced" in using technology in the areas of health and family partnerships. Their education department, however, was transitioning towards being paperless, making it difficult for the agency to identify trends and measure the effectiveness of their education programs.

He knew they needed to bring education compliance online, not only to increase efficiency but because Head Start is a data-driven program.

"Regulations require us to use data to make decisions on a daily basis. We have very extensive goal-setting processes and, without data, it's very difficult to report on our progress," says Jeff.

But classrooms have a unique set of requirements and Jeff wanted a software solution that understood the specific needs of an education environment.

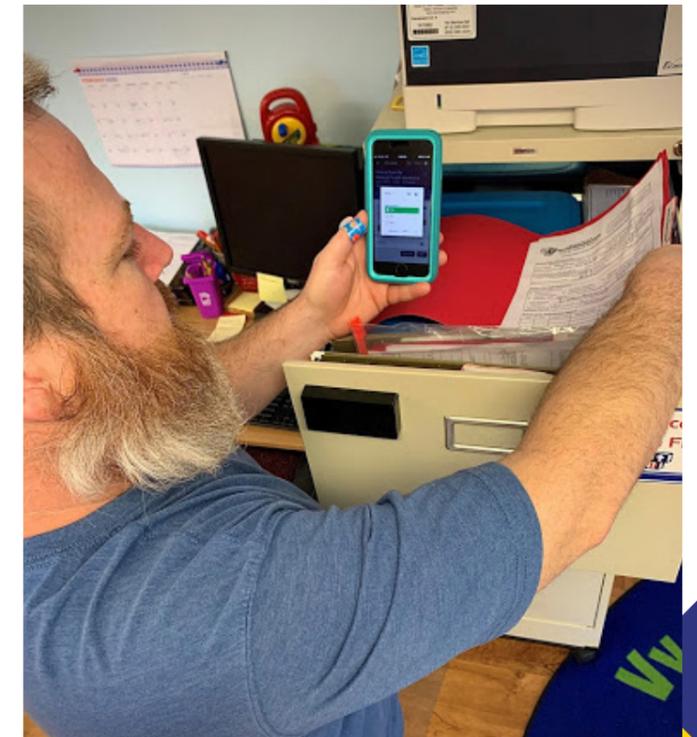
"1Place is a good fit because it does things that other software won't do," he says, citing the software's versatility, automation and features such as signature capturing and ability to include photographs in reports.

"We need portability so we can be connected to Wi-Fi from a playground, and also communication processes that suit the environment too.

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JEFF HEYNE,
QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER



Flexible software for holistic implementation

Embedding new technology doesn't come without challenges it takes time to roll out across the agency, and train staff to use it.

Jeff says the 1Place team has provided support every step of the way, working with the agency to iron out issues and set up new checklists and functions strategically.

Critical file reviews are a recent addition, allowing the agency to monitor health forms for children on medication or those with nutritional issues or allergies.

"We can now review the status of medications and their administration, including signatures. It's much easier than using the paper process."

Long-term, the agency plans to have the technology in every classroom with center-specific checklists available for staff to carry out regularly.

They plan to make the maintenance process more efficient too, by allowing tickets to be resolved and closed within 1Place, cutting out the days-long process that relied on phone calls.

"Once fully implemented, maintenance tickets will be closed within 24-hours or even quicker if it's urgent."

Food acceptance logs and vehicle maintenance checks are also in the pipeline.

As the software collects more data, Jeff is looking forward to identifying trends to "see things that have never before been visible."

"If we have a playground that's more prone to safety concerns, we'll be able to identify where injuries occurred, why, and minimise the issues.

"I anticipate we'll start to see trends that will be helpful in professional development too, so we can meet our objectives."



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1Place automation fills the gaps in internal monitoring

It didn't take long for the agency to see the benefits of adopting 1Place.

Head Start initially used the software centrally to monitor and report on environmental safety, a task that must be carried out at every center at least three times a year.

Using 1Place's specially-curated checklists, quality assurance staff can easily monitor and collect data on the safety of every learning environment - including classrooms, playgrounds, and paths - taking photos where necessary.

While they were already monitoring this electronically, Jeff says 1Place's automated reporting is its big advantage.

Staff receive the easily digestible reports directly and, as a result, have become more enthused about the monitoring process.

"It's improved their responsiveness and they now have more input in improving the things we monitor."

Jeff says 1Place's automation has also made their maintenance and supply monitoring processes more efficient.

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