

Lynn Wenger

The Compliance Alliance
President & Founder



Ronnae Williams

State Lady &
Culturally Yours Consulting

Compliance Without Chaos

Staying Inspection Ready

Prepared for Playground

How to run a Best in Class

Child Care Program



The Compliance Alliance ~ Business Ally Spotlight

- & -



Who is ready for a roadtrip??

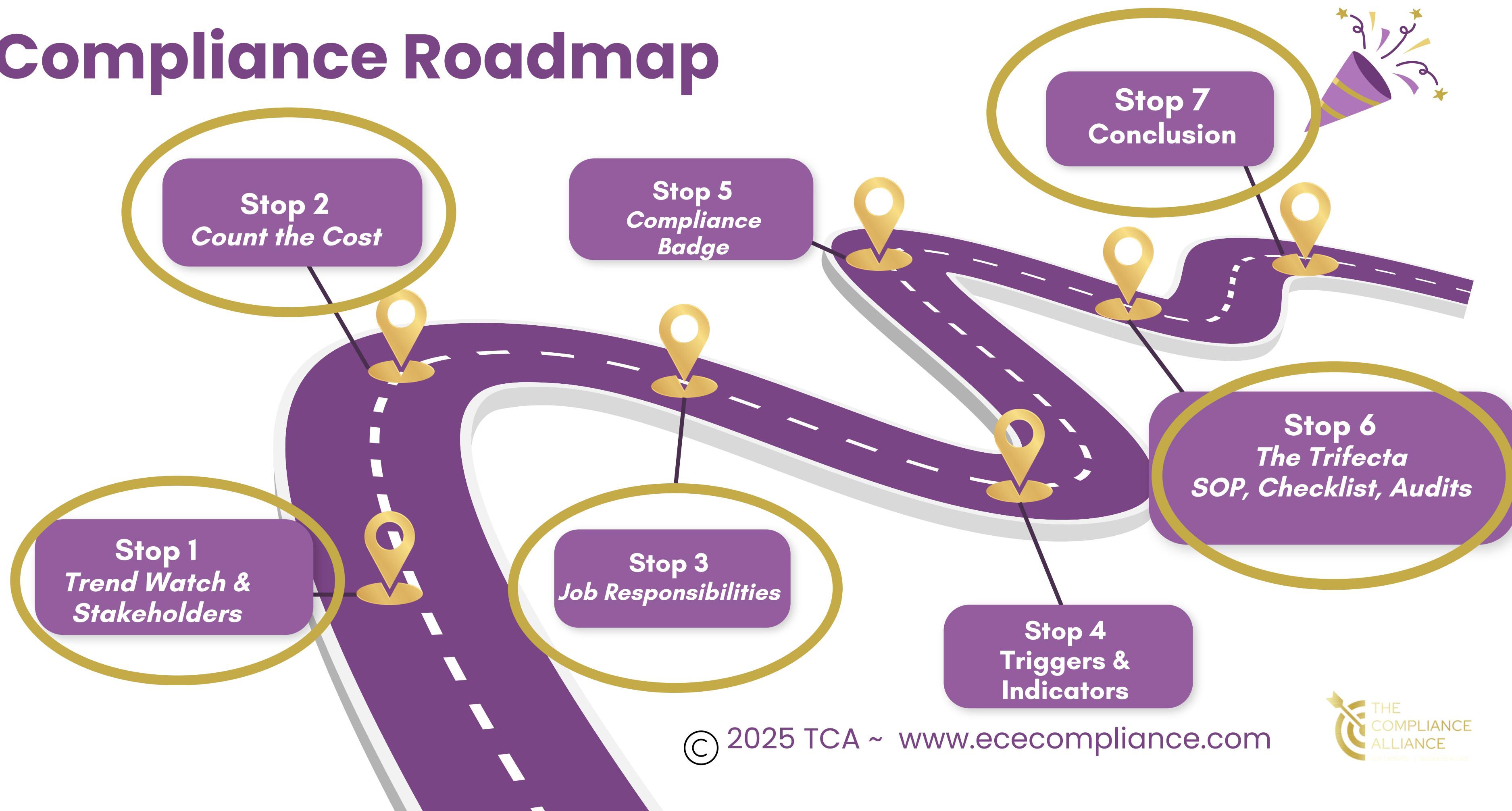


In this session, you'll learn:

- ✓ ***Compliance – Why Now? Trends Alert***
- ✓ ***TCA Business Ally – State Lady Shares All***
- ✓ ***The 3 to succeed: Compliance Trifecta (SOP, Checklists & Audits)***
- ✓ ***Downloads: Practical compliance tools***



Compliance Roadmap



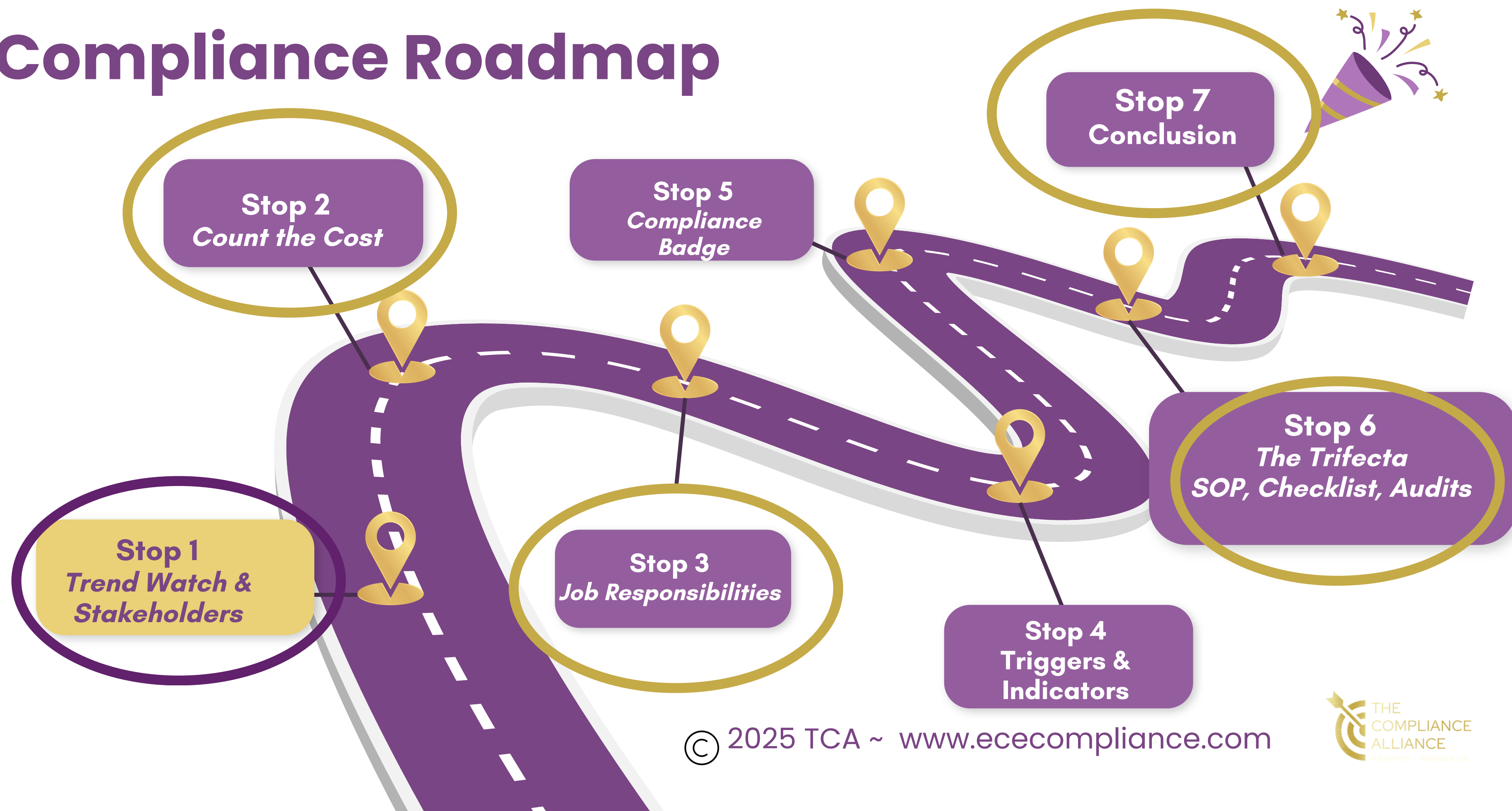
Poll

Compliance Preparedness

Do you have a defined compliance framework with roles and responsibilities in place?

- ✅ *Yes – we have a clear set of processes, clear roles and a system of audits & accountability*
- ⚙️ *Somewhat – we manage it informally but have started to build a process*
- ⚙️ *Not really – it's handled as needed (usually triggered by a licensing visit or citation)*
- 🤔 *Honestly... it feels intimidating or unclear; unsure how to implement compliance practices*

Compliance Roadmap

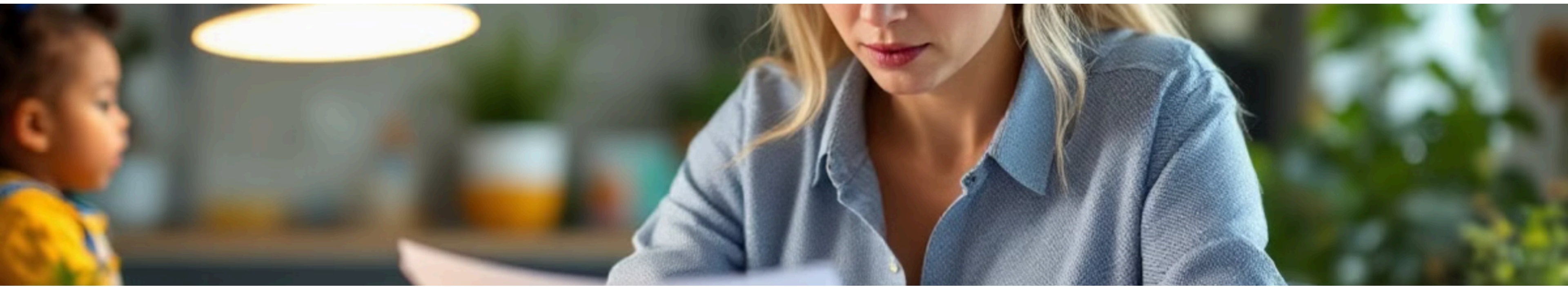


ECE COMPLIANCE STAKEHOLDERS



2025 Top 5 Compliance & Risk Management Trends

-  LineLeader 2024 Benchmark Study
-  Insurance Renewal Increases or Eligibility
-  Legal Liability & Exposure
-  Parent Research
-  Investor/Banking Risk Due Diligence



Challenges and Business Priorities* Compliance Ranking

11th Annual Early Childhood Education Benchmark Report

59%

2023 Providers prioritizing compliance

71%

2024 Providers prioritizing compliance

*“Compliance is increasingly becoming a top priority for ECE providers.
Yet many struggle to move from best intention to best practice.”*



Pressing Insurance Challenges*

*“From January 2024 to January 2025, all of our insurance premiums increased and our liability **increased by 64%**”*

Jonathan Pearce, President of Sugar ‘n Spice Children’s Academy, Louisiana

**Bipartisan Policy Report on Insurance*



Increase in frivolous lawsuits - *“I’m calling my lawyer!”*

Fact: Law firms are creating **legal guides** and **checklists** encouraging lawsuit if a child is hurt while in care.

Your best defense is a well established history of safety, audits, and proactive corrective measures
“Control the Narrative”



Investor Risk Due Dilligence

*Infusion of Cash **or** Your Future Exit Strategy **or** Your Expansion Acquisition*

Due Dilligence = Licensing Review & Risk Assessment – what is my risk?

- *Analyze licensing visit history*
- *Evaluate corrective actions and compliance trajectory*
- *Classify citations and risk severity*
- *Assess if citations are a people issue or process issue*



Parent Research – Starts Online

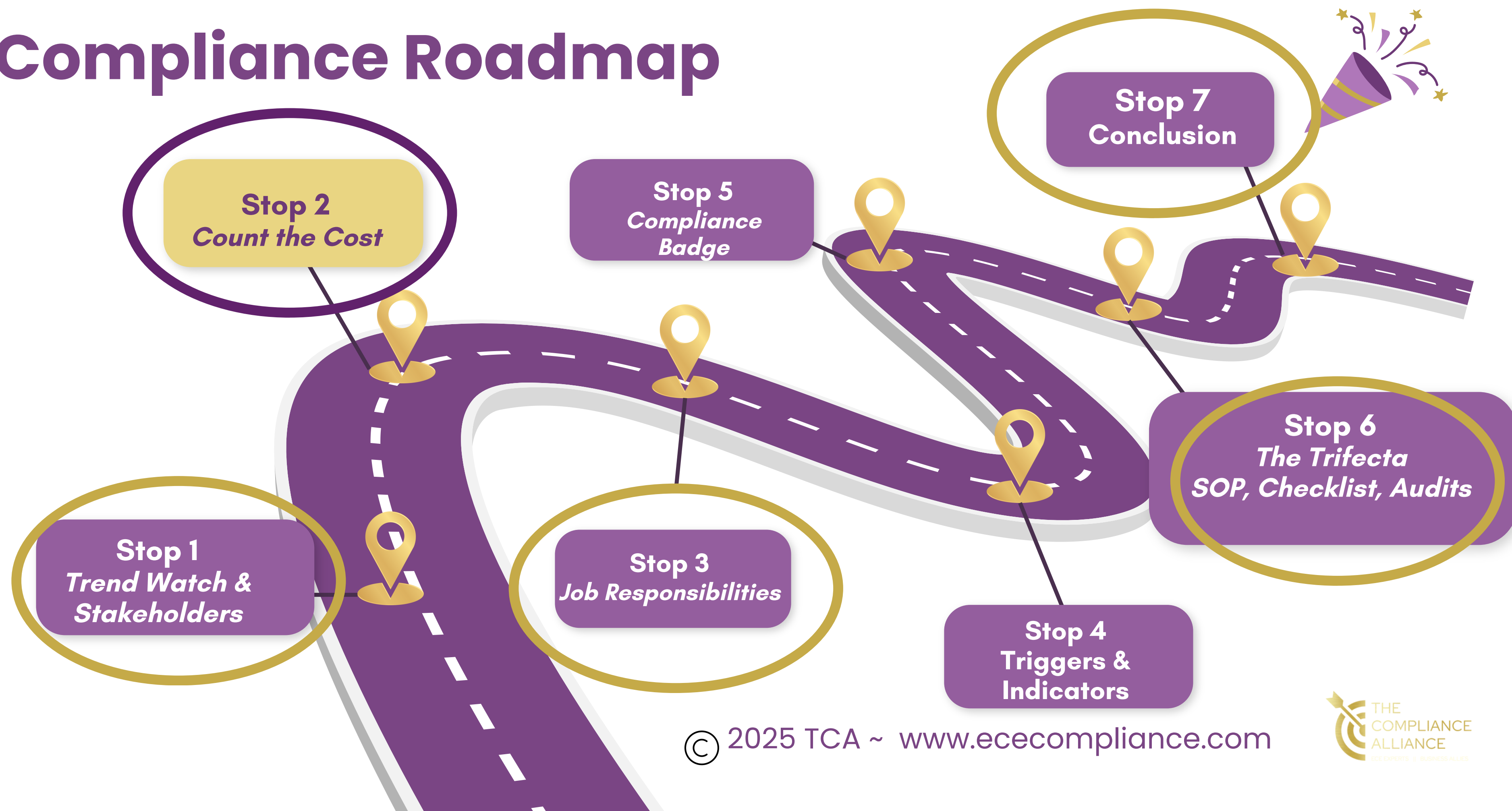
“Safety is our #1 Concern”

Author’s Advice: Source – Care.com

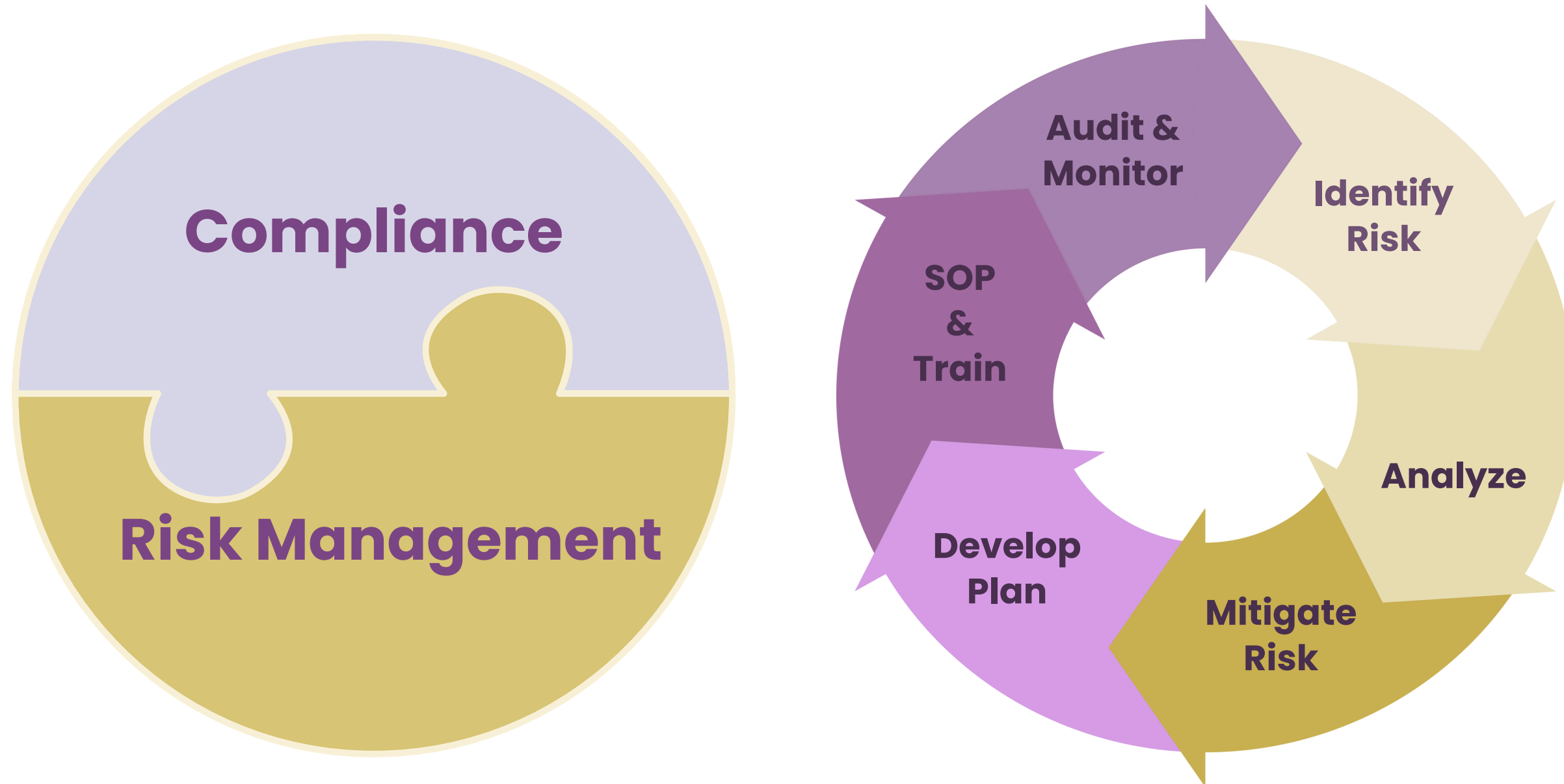
“Read reviews, perform research on each business, review licensing history.

Contact your state’s department of licensing to learn more.”

Compliance Roadmap



The Power of Compliance & Risk Management



Do not reinvent the wheel ~ leverage it!

Keeping it Simple – Risk Management



Key Variables – Identify and Evaluate Known Risks

- **Severity:** how serious could the risk be?
- **People Impact:** what is the potential harm? (children, staff)
- **Rank:** what is the relative risk (H, M, L)
- **Probability:** how likely is it to occur?
- **Financial Impact:** what are the financial costs

Risk Matrix ▾				
1	Tt Risk Category ▾	Example Risks ▾	Risk Level ▾ (H/M/L)	Likelihood ▾ (1–5)
2	Supervision & Staff Practices	Unattended children, ratios, distracted supervision		
3	Medication & Allergies	allergies, medication errors, proper handling		
4	Physical Environment	Trip hazards, unsafe playgrounds, fire safety issues		
5	Behavior Management	Improper Discipline, lack of behavior documentation		
6	Emergency Preparedness	outdated emergency plans, poor staff training		
7	Facility & Equipment Maintenance	Broken furniture, poor cleaning		
8	Transportation & Field Trips	Improper car seat use, missing driver checks, name-face		
9	Staffing & Child Records	Incomplete background checks, expired certifications		
10	Communication & Documentation	Missing incident reports, poor parent communication		
11	Security & Access Control	Unlocked doors, no visitor log, missing access controls		

- Abuse/Molestation - Male employee had improper contact with several children - **\$2,874,978**
- Child slid down slide with rope around his neck, rope got caught and choked him - **\$1,504,572**
- Mother of a child attending party slipped & Fell on bubbles from bubble maker - **\$863,447**
- 8 month old infant found unresponsive while taking a nap, pronounced dead at the hospital - **\$846,157**
- 10 month old child was burned when he reached and pulled a bottle warmer on himself - **\$575,000**
- Child was suffocated under a bean bag while playing hide and seek - **\$515,000**
- Employee handled 2 year old roughly, hit the child, and force feeding - **\$121,969**
- Staff was changing child's diaper on changing table, turned to get powder, and the child rolled off, broken arm - **\$109,687**
- Child Fell from the playground slide and broke her eye socket - **\$102,382**



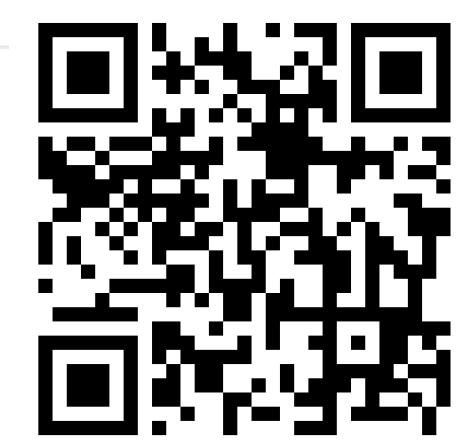
book a free confidential



Overview

A proactive compliance strategy helps ensure the safety and well-being of children, fosters trust with families, protects the financial health of the organization. By addressing potential risks before they escalate, compliance becomes a cornerstone of cost avoidance, safeguarding against significant monetary and reputational losses.

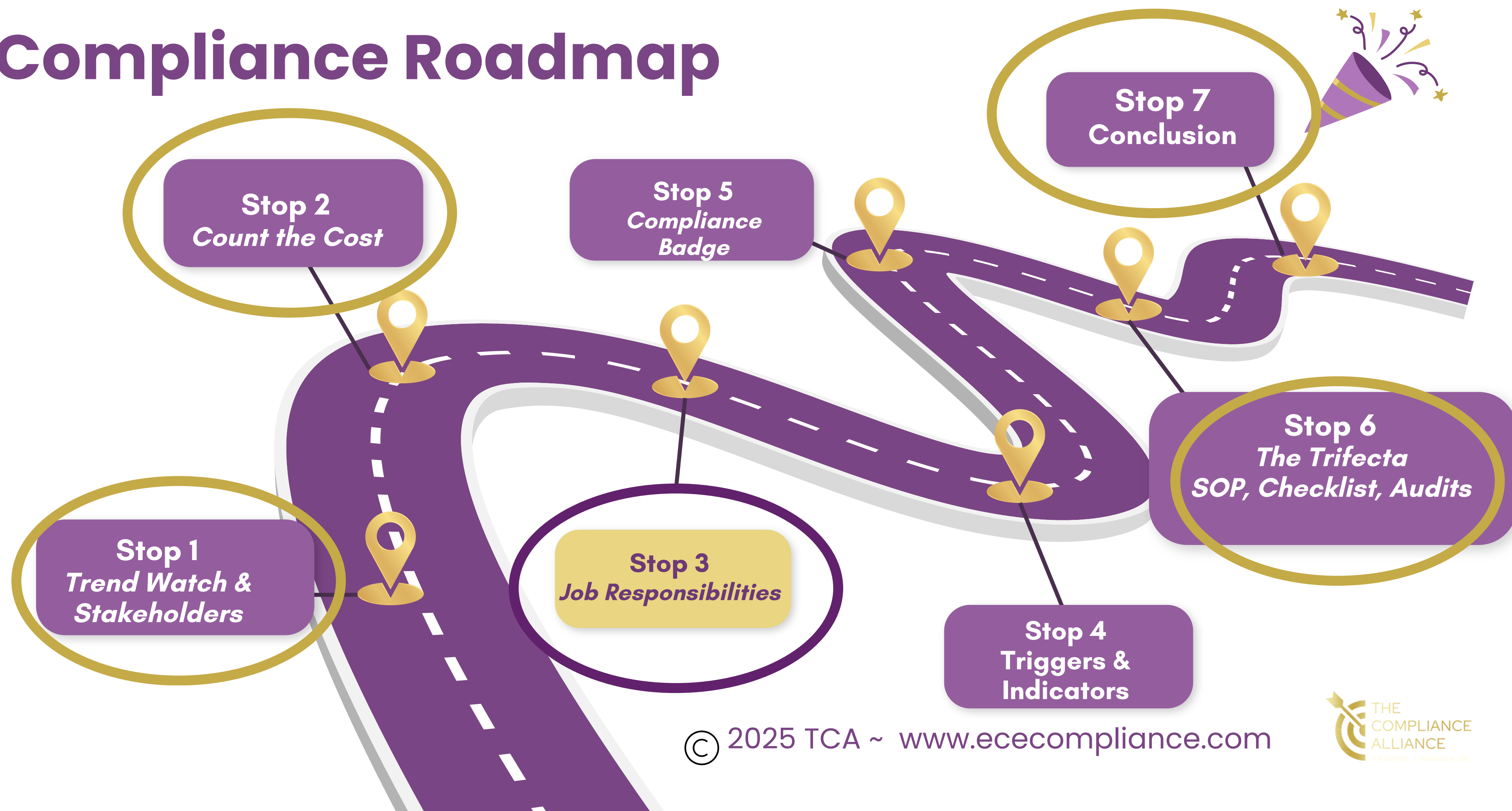
“Do I need a risk management practice? Does risk management apply to early education? Should this be a priority?”



Executive Overview

As an early education leader, you may be asking yourself these questions and the short answer is, yes, all businesses, regardless of size or industry, should have some form of a risk management practice. Effective risk management helps organizations identify, assess, and address potential threats or uncertainties that could impact their operations, finances, reputation, or compliance with regulations.

Compliance Roadmap



Compliance –Related



Responsibilities Worksheet

- Who, When: by job title or role?
- How is it implemented?
- Is it budgeted?
- Is it measured?

**SOP &
Systems**

**Train &
Educate**

**Monitor &
Report**

Communicate

Free Download Compliance Job Responsibilities

Submit your info below for this free resource!

First Name

Last Name

Email



Get It Now!

Compliance Job Responsibilities

SOP & Systems

Operating Procedures Development:

Develop, implement, and update standard operating procedures to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations governing early childhood education.

Budget Management:

Manage the budget for compliance-related activities, including training, audits, tools, dashboards, and any necessary upgrades or improvements to facilities and programs.

Regulatory Compliance Oversight:

Monitor and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations governing early childhood education, including licensing requirements, health and safety standards, quality and educational guidelines.

Train & Educate

Continuous Improvement:

Conduct training sessions and workshops to educate staff on compliance requirements, best practices, and protocols for maintaining a safe and nurturing environment for children.

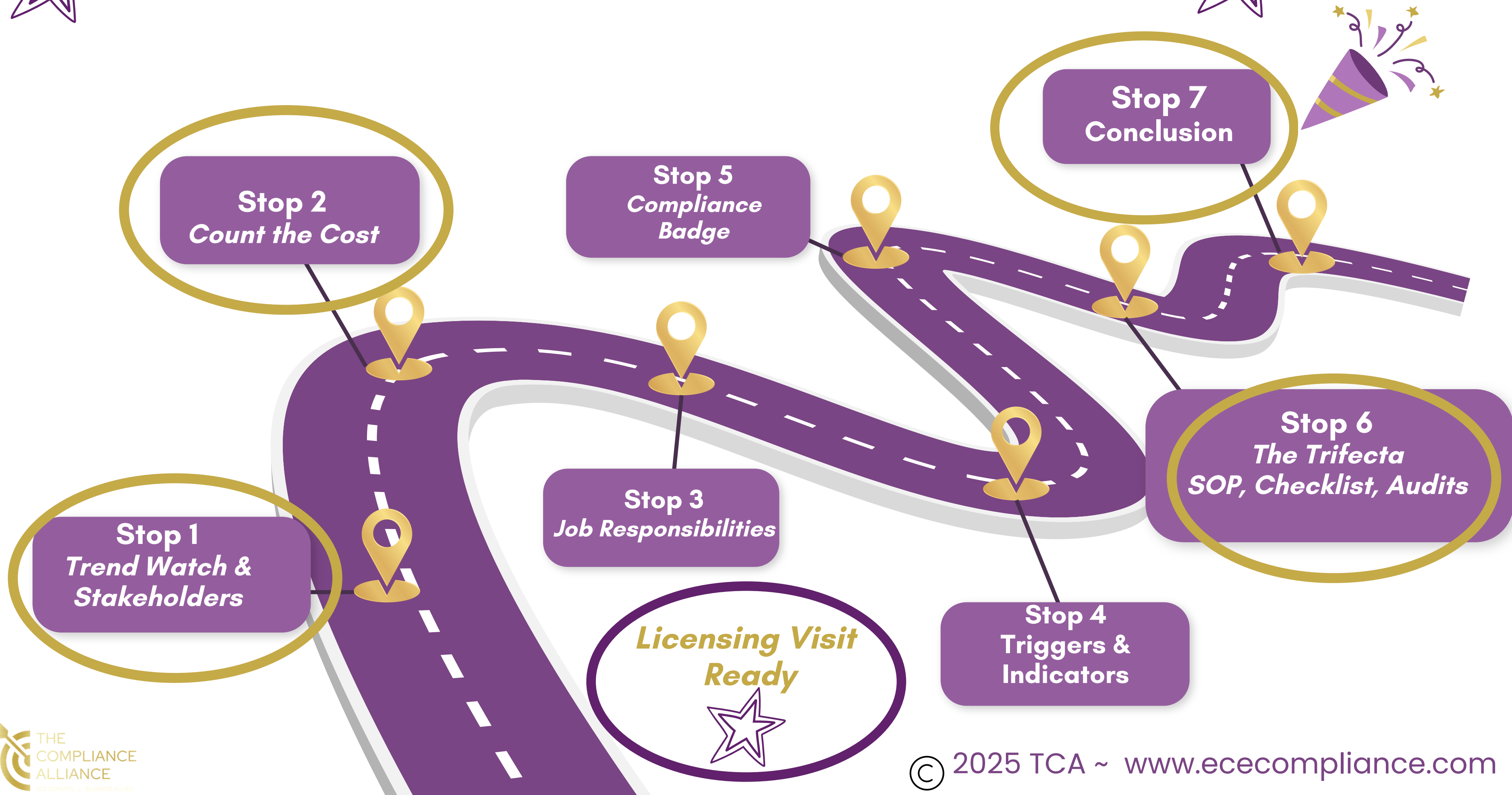
Quality Assurance and Improvement:

Establish quality assurance processes to assess program effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and implement corrective actions.

Risk Management:

Identify potential risks and hazards within the early childhood education environment and develop strategies to mitigate them effectively.

★ Special Stop – Licensing Inspection! ★





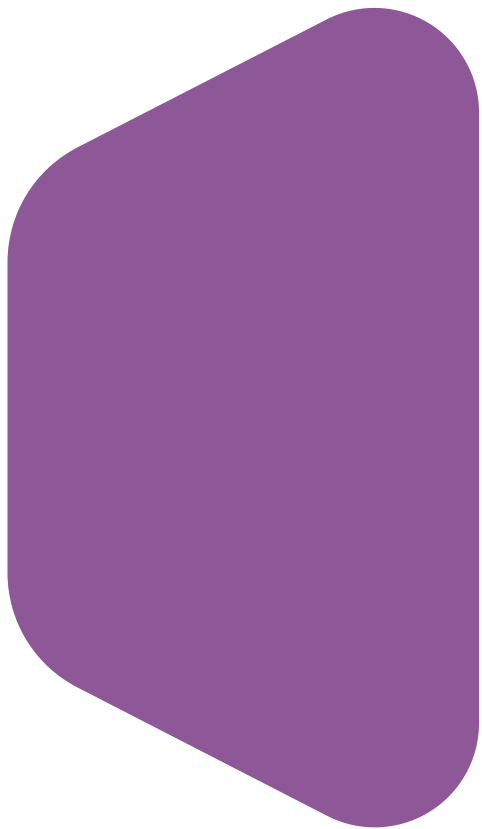
Poll

Audits & Mock Inspections

How often do you complete mock audits or and/or licensing inspections?

- ☐ **weekly**
- ☐ **monthly**
- ☐ **quarterly**
- ☐ **we aren't conducting routine mock inspections (but want to)**

Knock, Knock – Licensing is here – *Unannounced Visits!*



<https://ececompliance.com/licensing-visit-sound-familiar-with-ronnae-williams-of-culturally-yours/>

Building Confidence BEFORE Your Licensing Inspection

Mock State Inspection ~ Walk Throughs

- A walk-through of your facility that mirrors/mimics a state inspection
- Identifies possible violations/deficiencies/ issues BEFORE licensing arrives
 - Also is aware/identifies past issues
 - Helps staff prepare for inspection day
 - Reduces Stress

Completing Mock State Inspections

Who should do them?

- Owner/ Director/ A Hired Consultant
 - requires someone knowledgeable of the rules
- Designated Staff
 - Compliance/ Health and Safety Coordinator
- Shadowing
- Rotating Staff

Unbiased review of classrooms and facility

***State Compliance affects Work Place CULTURE,
compliance is a TEAM effort, NOT a solo project.***



What is included in a Mock Inspection?

Facility Walk Through- Inside

- Search for hazards
 - Hazards, Unlocked Cabinet
- Ratios
- Various times of the day

Facility Walk Through- Outside

- Search for rule violations
 - Hazard, broken equipment, biting stinging insects
 - Ratios

Review of Files

- Staff Records
 - Training
- Children Records
 - Only Required forms/doc
- Transportation/Field Trip Forms

Follow Up

- Review of items previously cited
- Revisit training as needed

Conducting The Mock Inspection

- Should be done *Regularly*
 - Monthly/Bi Monthly
 - Varies based on size of program
and
 - Violations found
- Unannounced to Staff
- Document occurrences



What to look for during a Mock Inspection



Health and Safety

Are staff using safe practices?
Handwashing, diaper changing
procedures, is the classroom
“clean”?



Accessible Hazards

Are materials age appropriate?
In good repair?



Supervision/ Ratios

Are staff watching children? How
many children are present with
staff? Are there any barriers
prohibiting staffs ability to see
children?

Supervision vs Ratios

Supervision

- active, intentional, and ongoing observation of children by staff
- requires being close enough to see, hear, and respond to children's needs immediately.

Ratios

- required number of adults supervising a specific number of children, as determined by licensing rules.

What to look for Continued...

Staff and Children's File

- Files should be complete at enrollment
 - No blanks
 - Reviewed regularly while enrolled
- Reviewed by someone who did not complete them
- Organized for review



What to look for Continued...

Transportation/ Field Trip Documentation

- Files should be complete prior to transporting
 - No blanks
 - Reviewed regularly while enrolled
- Ensure Vehicle is checked
 - Ensure restraints are in good repair
 - Ensure NO CHILD is left behind



Medication Forms



- Ensure you have authorization to dispense
- Ensure medication is stored in a locked cabinet/inaccessible
- Ensure medication is labeled
 - Ensure medication is not expired
 - Age appropriate for child

Erasing the Excuse: ***“We don’t have time!”***



You don’t have time NOT to do them.

**“If you don’t have
time to do it right,
when will you have
time to do it over?”
— John Wooden**



Time to share the inspection findings

1

Discuss areas of concern with leadership team.

2

Discuss the violations/areas of concern with your staff.

3

Discuss findings and create a Plan of Improvement with team

***coaching session
NOT Punishment!***

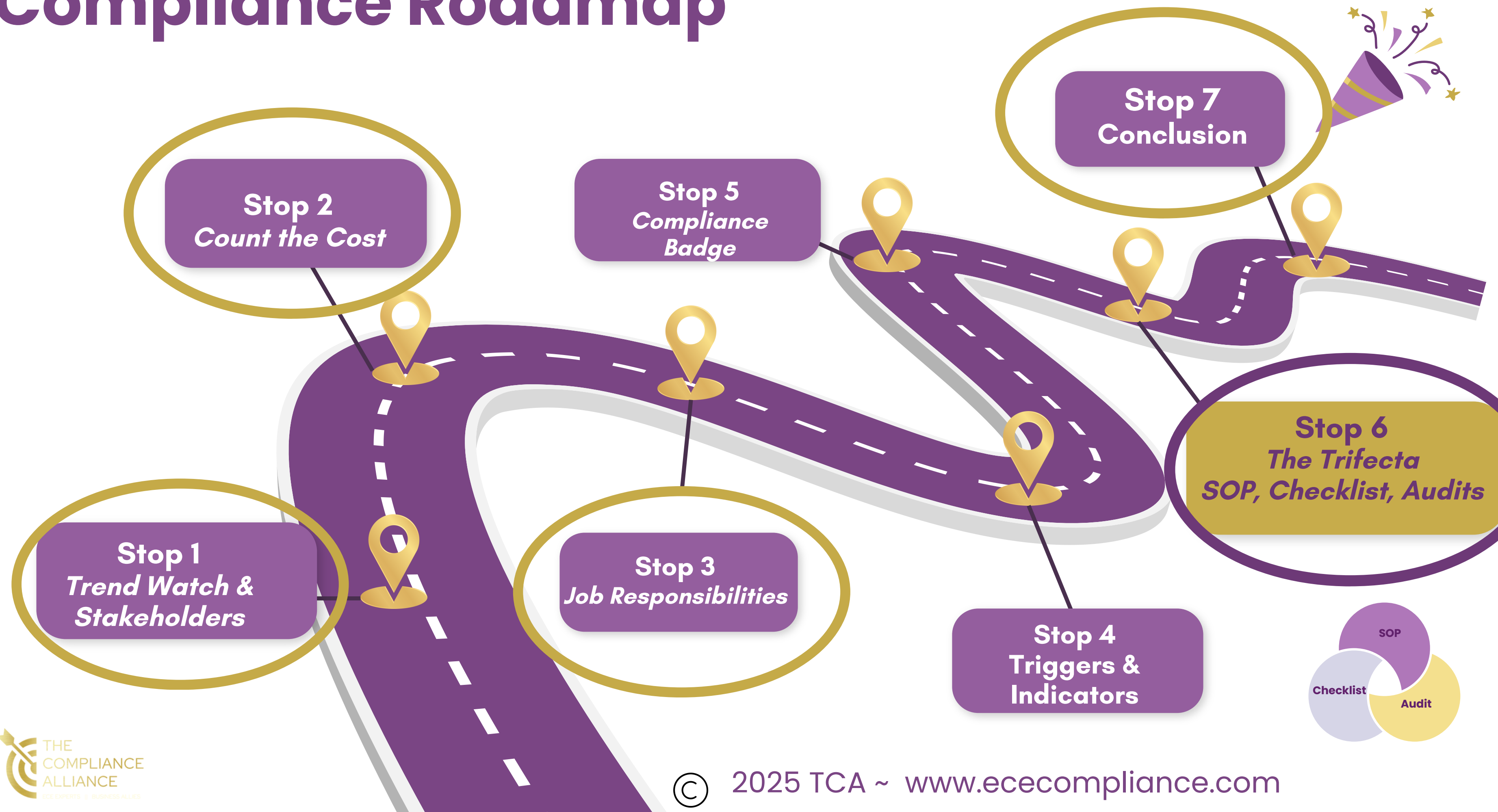
See something Say something



Let's talk about your **Licensing Consultant** – Myth Busting



Compliance Roadmap



Mock Licensing Visit **vs** Compliance Risk Audit

Mock Licensing Visit

Purpose:

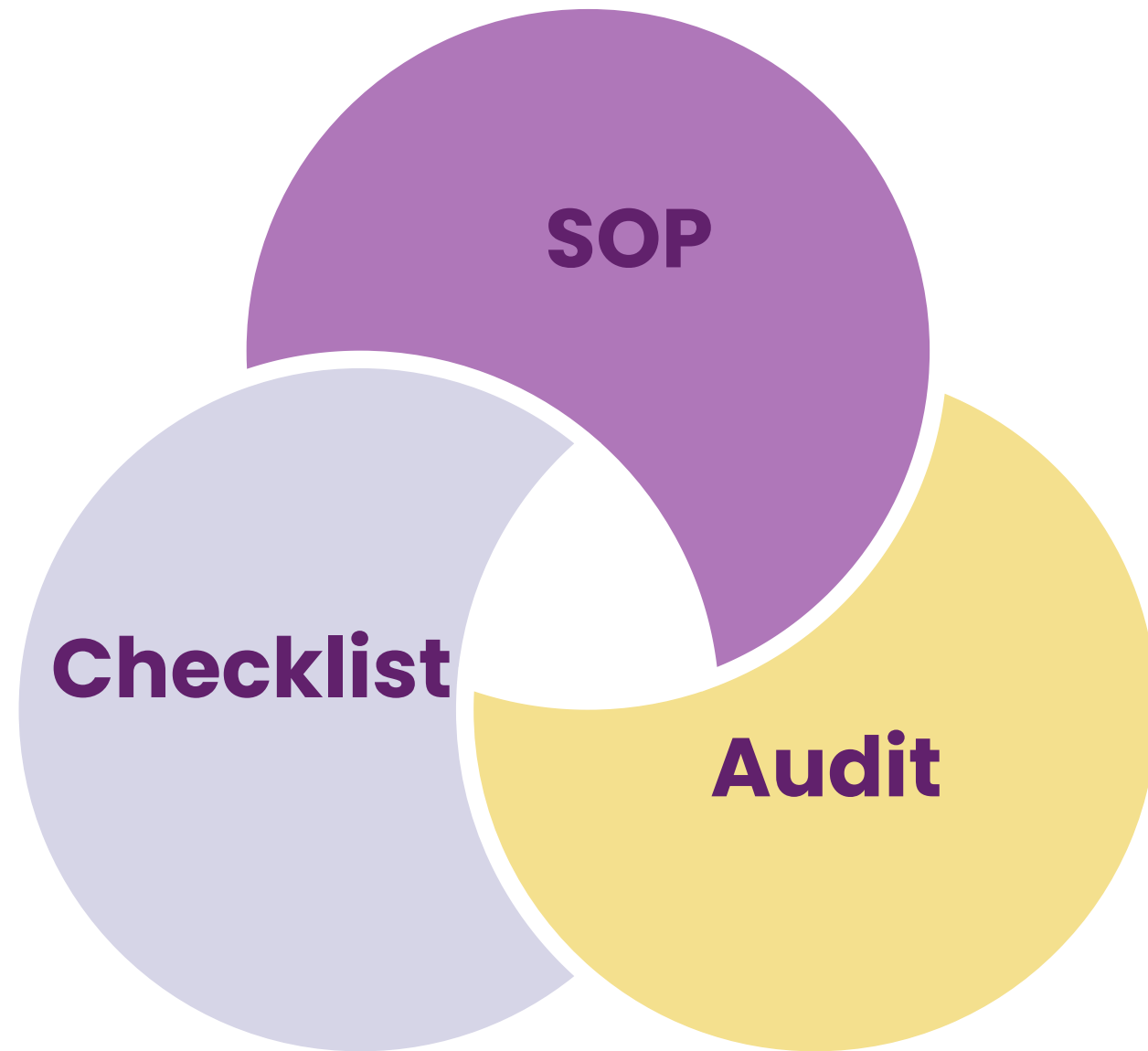
A Mock Licensing Visit simulates a real state licensing inspection. The goal is to prepare programs for actual licensing visits by identifying immediate compliance issues and ensuring readiness for announced and unannounced visits.

Compliance Risk Audit

Purpose:

A Compliance Audit is a strategic review of operational systems, standard operating procedures and overall program risks. The goal is to evaluate compliance and risk exposure. Each audit generates a risk score with action items.

Trifecta for Compliance & Risk Management



- + SOPs as the **Foundation**
- + Checklists as **Execution Tools**
- + **Audits** for Accountability

=

The Compliance Trifecta



KPIs for Continuous Improvement

Poll

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Which of the options best describes your current relationship with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)? Select one (1)

 *“We live by them—every step is SOP-approved, teams are fully trained and SOP routinely updated.”*

 *“We have them... somewhere. It’s been awhile since weve updated them...”*

 *“They're mostly in my head. It's on my to-do list!”*

TCA SOP Manual Format

Health and Safety Policies

Active Playground Supervision

Sample

Section:	Policy:	Effective:	Last Revision:	Reason for Revision:
Outdoor H&S	Active Playground Supervision			

Purpose

To ensure that children are actively supervised at all times while on the playground to prevent injuries, promote safe play, and ensure timely responses to any incidents or emergencies. Proper supervision also facilitates smooth transitions and fosters a safe and enjoyable environment for children.

Administrative Procedure

SOP Includes:

- Purpose
- Components
- Administrative Procedure
- Administrative Observation
- Staff Procedure

As Appropriate – Add

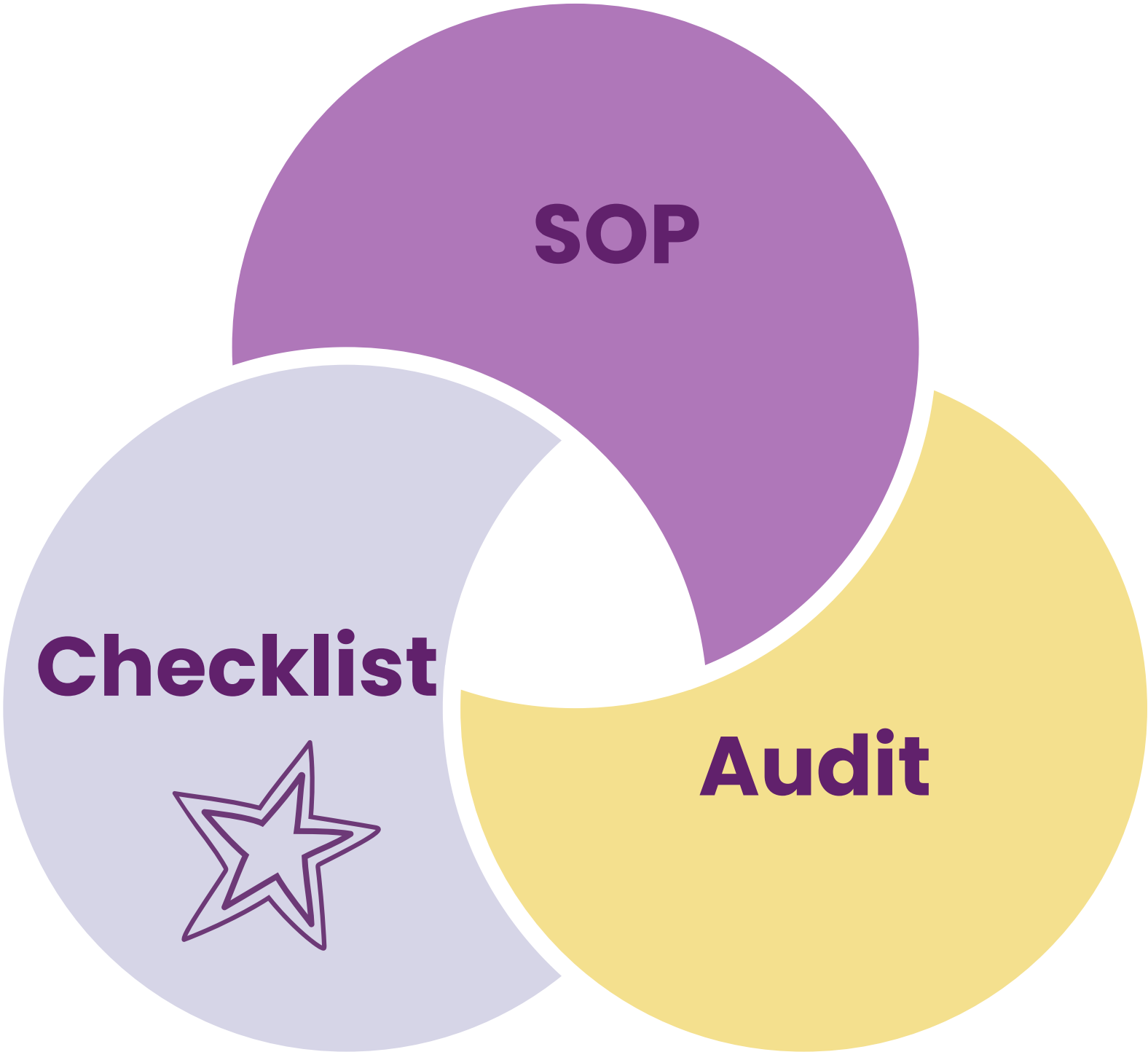
- Checklist (Admin and/or Staff)
- Documentation Requirements
- Training Plan
- Corrective Action Plan

SOP Effectiveness – Check Up!



- Are SOPs **documented** and **up-to-date**?
- Are both initial and refresher **SOP training provided** to all staff? Documented training?
- Are your SOPs **centrally located** and easily accessible?
- Is SOP adherence part of **performance feedback**?

Trifecta for Compliance & Risk Management

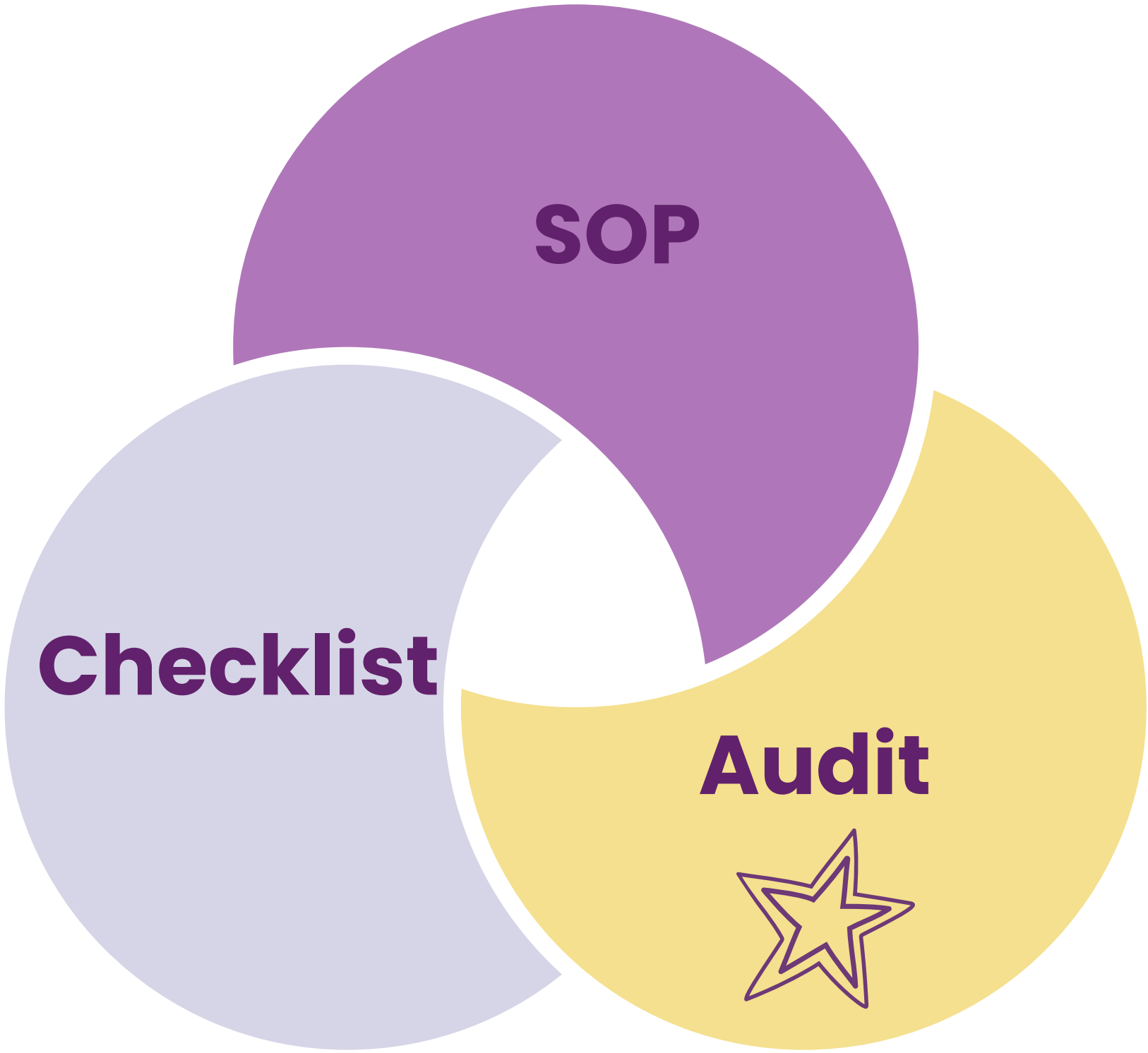


Components of a Solid Checklist



- Documented with purpose
 - Goes beyond Yes or No
 - Tied to SOP
 - Incorporates weighted values
-
- Trust and Verify
"inspect what you expect"
 - Promote a culture of continuous improvement

Trifecta for Compliance & Risk Management



What is a Compliance Audit?

Scheduled, Systematic, Documented Review of Operations

- **Evaluates** practices, procedures, and records
- **Measures** alignment with standards & policies
- **Identifies** risks, corrective action plans
- **Strengthens** consistency & accountability



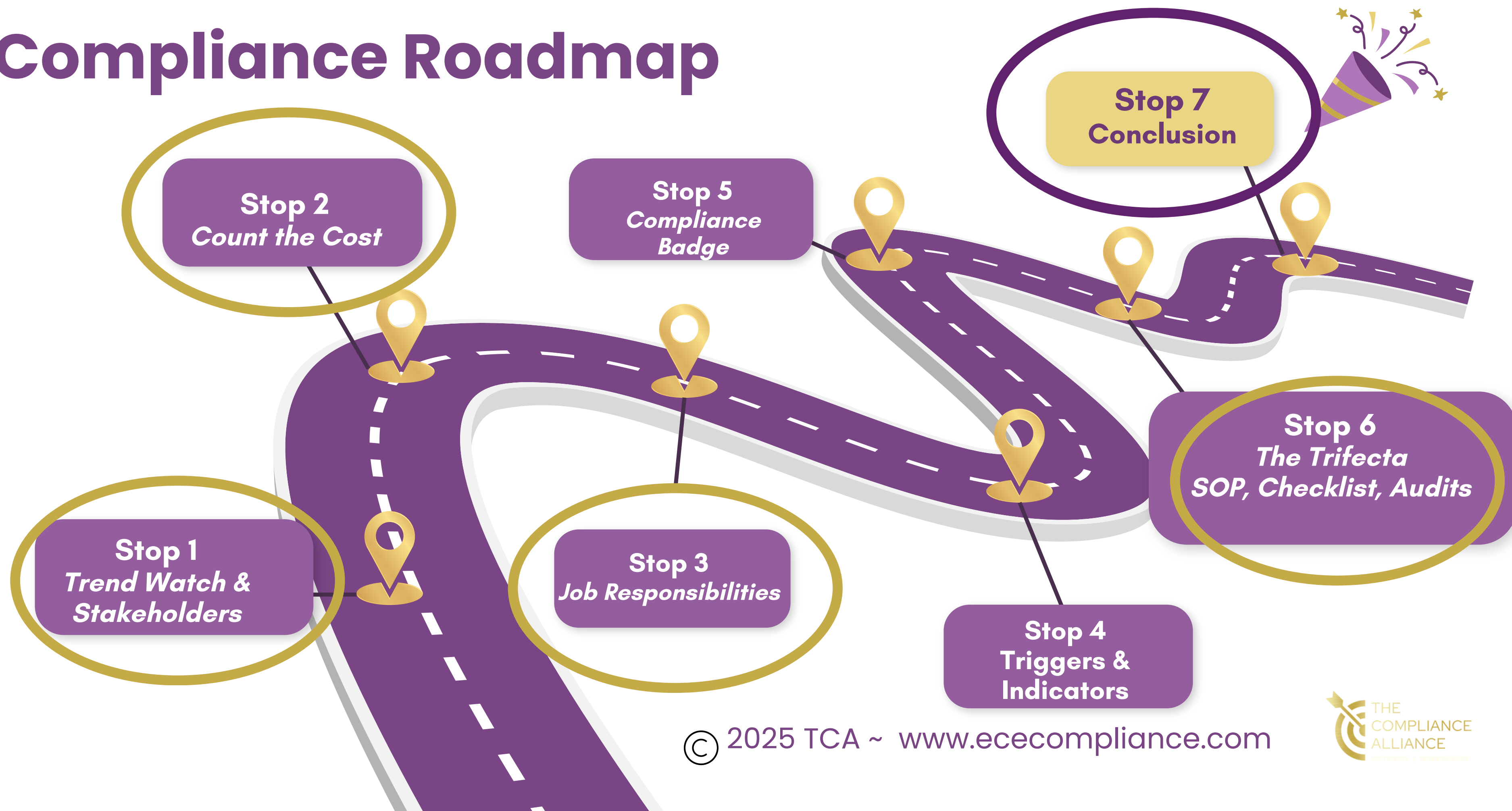
Compliance Audits & Checklist – TCA Audit Library

Daily Supervision 14	Playground Assessment 30
Classroom Health & Safety 30	Building Postings 12
Staff Files 12	Building Assessment – Exterior 13
Child Files 10	Building Assessment – Interior 13
Medication Management 7	Licensing Binder/Documentation 9
Red Flag School/Corrective Action 13–20 x 4 weeks	Emergency Preparedness 12

The Power of A Score

A	B	C	
Date:			
Industry Average Risk Score 1 = low risk deficiency 2 = medium risk deficiency 3 = high risk deficiency *Risk level (1, 2, or 3) has been pre-determined by TCA	Topic	Level of Risk Assessment Instructions: Option 1: Select "0 – No Deficiency" if the topic has been evaluated and no deficiencies are identified. Option 2: Select "1, 2, or 3 – Deficiency Present" if the topic has been evaluated and a deficiency is present. The specific risk level (1, 2, or 3) has been pre-determined by TCA. Please note: The dropdown menu provides only these two options to ensure consistency in data entry.	Notes
1	Surfaces around playground equipment have adequate amount of wood chips, mulch, sand, pea gravel, or have mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials	0 ▼	
2	Protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. Slide exits are clear from all equipment / objects.	0 ▼	
3	Play equipment more than 30 inches high are spaced at least 9 feet apart.	0 ▼	

Compliance Roadmap



Poll

Actionable Takeaways

What is your #1 takeaway you wish to implement before the end of the year - specific, actionable, measurable

- ☐ ***Revisit my compliance related SOP manual - compare and identify gaps***
- ☐ ***Conduct routine, documented audit walkthroughs - make it comfortable***
- ☐ ***Share a licensing report at our next staff meeting (ok to use a competitor's too)***
- ☐ ***Revisit who owns compliance - roles and responsibilities***



Library of Downloadable Assets Free Tools



www.ececompliance.com

Navigate : Resources ›

Blog & Recordings›

Guides

Who is Lynn?



My story – Foundation of Systems, Process, Tools

- Career Mom, 2 girls, Wife
- C-suite leader for 2 International Software Startups
- Owner/Operator x 2

ECE Adopted Me – 2018 my “Gotchya Date”

- 160 school project
- Global Expansion
- System and Process Project Architect

The Compliance Alliance – Founded/Soft Launch 2023

- Compliance resource hub & professional services partner for ECE providers
- First ever ECE Compliance Risk Audit System including 80+ SOP to support compliance operations

About Me

Hi! My name is Ronnae Williams, also known as **The State Lady**, your go-to expert in the Early Childhood Education. With over 15 years of experience in child care, licensing, and compliance, I've dedicated my career to helping childcare facilities THRIVE.

My background includes:

- Bachelors of Science in Child and Family Development
- Masters in Business Administration, with an emphasis in Management.
- Lead GA Pre-K teacher
- Child Care Center Management
- State Child Care Licensing Consultant
- Regional Manager and Marketing Project Manager for a nationally recognized child care franchise
- Strategic Partnership Sales Manager and so much more...

My experiences within the early childhood industry along with my education, has allowed me to support hundreds of child care facilities across the U.S. with licensing compliance, local accreditation, licensing investigations assistance, support with civil actions, franchising, and so much more.



Who is
Ronnae?