

Issues in Adoption & Implementation of EBPs in Early Childhood Programs





SSIP Interactive Institutes

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Jacksonville, FL; May 12-13, 2015
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Format for the Session

- Brief overview of key issues related to EBPs, including definitions, selection issues, and challenges of implementation
- In-depth conversation with participants related to the key issues, including concerns and problems they are encountering
- Wrap up with attention to additional needs of states around this topic and other issues that were not addressed today

Best Practice

- A method or technique that has been proven to help organizations reach high levels of efficiency or effectiveness and produce successful outcomes
- Evidence-based and proven effective through objective and comprehensive research and evaluation

Broad Definitions

- Evidence-based practices:
 - An approach, framework, collection of ideas or concepts, adopted principles, and strategies supported by research
- Evidence-based programs:
 - Programs comprising a set of coordinated services/activities that demonstrate effectiveness based on research. Criteria for rating as such depend on organization or agency doing the rankings
 - EBPs may incorporate a number of evidence-based practices in the delivery of services.

Evidence-Based Practices

- “In the health care field, evidence-based practice (or practices), also called EBP or EBPs, generally refers to approaches to prevention or treatment that are validated by some form of documented scientific evidence.”
- “Evidence-based practice stands in contrast to approaches that are based on tradition, convention, belief, or anecdotal evidence.”

(SAMHSA, What is Evidence Based?)

Evidence-Based Programs

- Programs recognized as evidence-based have demonstrated the highest level of evidence of effectiveness based on the following criteria:
 - Effectiveness demonstrated in rigorous scientific evaluations
 - Effectiveness demonstrated in large studies with diverse populations or through multiple replications
 - Significant and sustained effects

****Caution:** *Not All Programs Lists Have Stringent Inclusion Criteria*

(from Penn State EPIS Center)

Promising Practice

- A method or technique that has been shown to work effectively and produce successful outcomes
- Supported, to some degree, by subjective data (e.g., interviews and anecdotal reports from the individuals implementing the practice) and objective data (e.g., feedback from subject matter experts and the results of external audits)
- Not validated through the same rigorous research and evaluation as best practices

Innovative Practice

- A method, technique, or activity that has worked within one organization and shows promise during its early stages for becoming a promising or best practice with long-term, sustainable impact
- Must have some objective basis for claiming effectiveness and must have the potential for replication among other organizations



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Selection and Adoption

Selecting EBPs

- What should be considered?
 - Referral characteristics
 - Location of services
 - Fit to child and family needs
 - Fit to workforce and agencies using the EBPs
 - Costs of implementation & sustaining

Selecting EBPs

- What are barriers?
 - Workforce issues
 - Family/child issues (language, culture, etc.)
 - Agency size
 - Costs
 - Availability of organizational support

Selecting EBPs

- Planning must include
 - Organizational buy-in
 - Family/community input
 - Provider input
- Must consider the desired outcomes

Issues in Selection & Adoption

- **WHO** is selecting?
- **HOW** is selection being made?
- **WHY** are specific programs being considered?
- **WHERE** is the program to be implemented?
- **WHEN** will implementation happen?
- **WHAT** are the important issues affecting implementation?

Challenges of Implementation

- What are you encountering to date in terms of selection?
- What are some of the implementation issues you anticipate?
- How will you train your workforce?
- What impact will workforce attrition play in outcome measurement?
- How will you measure outcomes?

Controversies

- **Language** in which EB Program was originally developed and used
- **Cultural applicability**
- **Family Choice** — perfect fidelity to a program model may mean that parents have less input about how and with whom they and their children work.
- **Family responses to model** — Do EBPs have treatment engagement strategies as a critical precursor to treatment? What works for each family?
- **Clinician acceptance**
- **Fidelity issues vs adaptation** to fit family and community needs

Considerations & Concerns

- Phrase “proven program” is not appropriate, as programs are only “relatively demonstrated”
 - Important because policymakers want packaged programs, but the replication of demonstrated programs is always a myth
- With the rigid adoption of evidence-based programs, one concern is that some agencies serving the under-three population — especially those that are small and/or minority run — may go out of business or shift to serving older children.

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Fidelity & Usability Testing

Additional Issues in Implementation

- The implementation of an EBP requires an effective way to assess the performance of individuals using the model (i.e., fidelity) in addition to ‘usability testing’ (i.e., how a practice ‘fits’ in the place where it is being used).

Fidelity Issues

- Meaning of fidelity
- How is it maintained and measured?
- Information re adaptations for special populations
 - How are such adaptations reported, measured, and evaluated?

Fidelity and Clinician Expertise

- Restrictive nature of some EB Programs
- Tensions exist between community desires to customize programs to their own circumstances and researchers who want strict adherence to program integrity.
 - Documenting and replicating every element – staff experience, caseloads, types of children served, culture of families, rural or urban settings, etc. – is all but impossible.
- Have key elements been adequately described?
- What is critical to maintain in a manualized program?

Fidelity and Clinician Expertise (Cont.)

- The more often an evidence-based program is used, the more likely it is that faithfulness to each component will get sloppy.
- What set of principles is likely to lead to program effectiveness?
- What level of flexibility is acceptable?
- How can a program be created that fits with the environment and can be implemented within reasonable principles?
- If all components are not specified, is the practice truly evidence based?

What Works in Implementation?

Effective intervention practices

+

Effective implementation practices

=

Good outcomes for consumers

Summary

- We are attempting to implement evidence-based programs with non-evidence-based procedures.
- We should build decision-making frameworks that address the realities of resources, personnel, community needs, implementation concerns, and fidelity to standards.

Next Steps/Needs

- What are other issues that we have not touched on today?
- What are some next steps in your state process?
- What are other needs you have related to understanding, adopting, and implementing EBPs?

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