Evidence Based Practice in Child Welfare in the Context of Cultural Competency

June 11, 2007
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Our Purpose Today

- In Child Welfare
  - What works for children and families...
  - ...of diverse populations?

Through Today's Discussion We Seek to Establish:

- What do we know and...
  - what do we need to know?
- Where are we now and...
  - where do we need to go?
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We Will Focus On:
- Research
- Practice
- Policy

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Conceptual Approach to the Day
- Foundation:
  - Definitions & EBPI Cultural Competence in Child Welfare
  - Conceptual Framework
- Implementation Panels
- Informational Discussion
- Build for the Future: Group discussions

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Note on Things Familiar and Unfamiliar
- Because you are experts in your fields – we have asked you to come and share your experience, your questions and your ideas
- At the same time, some topics or terms may be new
One Resource: The Meeting Book

- Standard items – for example, agenda, bios, roster, maps of building and area
- Structured guidelines for group discussion
- Legislative information, a preliminary bibliography, copies of PowerPoints
- Examples of participants’ ongoing projects

A Preliminary Review Has Found…

- Many studies underway & not published
- Most of the Literature is on
  - EBP
  - OR
  - Cultural Competence

Preliminary Review (continued)

- Some research on EBP includes race or ethnicity as a factor in the clients’ experience and effectiveness
- Very few studies attend to EBP and cultural competence from the inception of the question; those are mostly in health and mental health
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Definitions First – Evidence Based Practice

In practice we use:

- Most recent valid and reliable information that
- Results in change for children and families

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How Do You Know What is the Cause of Observed Changes?

- **Association** between Cause & Effect
- **Time order**: Cause Comes Before Effect
- **Eliminate** Alternative Explanations
  - For example,
    - Did something else cause the effect?
    - Would it have happened anyway?

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Association and Time Order
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Alternative Explanations

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Solution: Randomized, Controlled Trials

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So, How Trustworthy are Our Observations?
- Clinical experience & case studies
- Observed associations between intervention and outcome, but without
  - comparison group or random assignment
  Continued
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**How Trustworthy are Our Observations? (continued)**

- Randomized control group designs (peer reviewed and publicly reported)
- Replication – measure the same intervention and outcomes with different groups in different places over time
- Meta-analysis

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**Next: Applied in Realistic Settings?**

- Applicability of outcome findings
  - Efficacy
  - Effectiveness
- Are outcomes sustained over time?

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**The Best Interventions**

- Culturally competent
- Well-researched, standardized (manualized)
- Appropriate to the:
  - Population
  - Agency mission and services
  - Assessment results
  - Purpose of the intervention
The Best Interventions (continued)

- Used by a well-trained clinician who can:
  - Conduct an expert assessment
  - Discern the appropriate interventions and variations needed
  - Provide the intervention in an expert manner

When Well-used, EBP is Responsive to:

- A family’s race, ethnicity and culture
- A family’s specific needs and circumstances
- The recognition of diversity within cultures

Evidence Based Practice (EBP) in Child Welfare

- Very few controlled studies
- Rarely attend to race, culture, ethnicity in the question & design
- Outcomes measured are not always helpful
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EBP in Child Welfare (continued)

- Intervention used not measured or not reproduced faithfully (with fidelity)
- Positive findings not easily transferred from one place to another
- Transfer often doesn’t consider race, culture or ethnicity

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Some Studies to Think About - Practice: Therapeutic Interventions

- Abuse-focused cognitive behavioral therapy
- Parent-child interaction therapy
- Functional family therapy

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Some Studies to Think About - Practice: Parenting*

- Parent Management Training ($318/family)
- The Incredible Years ($600/parent)
- Parent-Child Interaction Therapy ($3,638/family)

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Some Studies to Think About: Practice: Prevention

- Family Connections
  - Community centered
  - Quasi-experimental design
  - Child welfare target population
  - Currently being replicated

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Some Studies to Think About: Policy

- Illinois' Subsidized Guardianship Project and other Title IV-E Waivers
- Michigan’s Case Management Project with Children’s Research Center
- Minnesota’s Alternative Response

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Barriers to EBP in Child Welfare*

- Funding
- Lack of advocacy or consumer demand
- Lack of incentives linking reward to client outcomes

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Barriers to EBP in Practice*
- Gulf between research and practice communities
- Search for the magic bullet
- Attitudes about EBP or Practice


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Suggestions*
- Change funding to support and reward outcomes-based practice
- Fund implementation grants
- Increase EBP emphasis in graduate schools
- Improve marketing of EBP


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Suggestions (continued)*
- Foster a continual evaluation feedback loop in public agencies with a positive climate
- Demonstrate EBP as a practitioner friendly support and tool
- Increase advocacy & demand for best practices

EBP and Cultural Competence*

- Communities of color must be included in planning and development of EBPs
- Cultural competence must be defined and required for EBPs
- Practice based evidence must be a critical component of EBPs


Process of developing and credentialing EBPs needs to be inclusive of communities of color

Process of implementing EBPs in communities of color must be supported with resources

*Isaacs et al., 2005.

And Now, A Conceptual Model for EBP in the Context of Cultural Competence…

Dr. Bell
References


References (continued)


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