

Participants' Workbook



Reflection on Concerns and Vision

1. My concerns about the social emotional development and behavior of the young children in my community are:

2. My vision for the social emotional development and behavior of the young children in my community is:

Challenges to Using Evidence Based Practices to Promote Children’s Social Emotional Development and Address Challenging Behavior

Focus groups of early childhood training and technical assistance providers, direct service personnel, program leadership, and family members revealed challenges to using evidence based practices to promote young children’s social emotional development and address challenging behavior. The categories of challenges and corresponding examples are listed below.

Category of Challenge	Examples of Challenge
<p>Lack of Knowledge/Skill</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited awareness of evidence based practices/resources by staff/consultants • Insufficient preservice and inservice training for early childhood educators, staff, pediatricians, and mental health professionals in topics such as positive behavior support or developmentally appropriate practices • Inconsistent beliefs about what works • Referrals/expulsions that could have been avoided with more knowledge/skills • Confusion over roles/responsibilities among programs, staff, consultants • Confusion about terms: mental health, challenging behavior, social emotional development, intervention, prevention, promotion, etc. • Lack of trained providers • High turnover in staff • Inadequate parent materials and education opportunities • Inappropriate use of medications • Lack of a diagnostic, assessment, referral, intervention link • Poor quality of programs resulting in challenging behavior • Lack of understanding about link between literacy and social emotional skills • Insufficient administrative support for evidence based practices (priorities, knowledge, infrastructure) • Lack of attention to social emotional development in programs • Lack of supervision (follow-through, etc.) • Lack of supervisor training information in evidence based practices and supervision skills • Inadequate and inaccessible professional development mechanisms • Lack of knowledge by mental health providers about young children • Lack of understanding that social development needs to be taught • Lack of resources for substitute teachers, etc. • Inappropriate use of mental health consultants • Lack of effective teaming skills

Category of Challenge	Examples of Challenge
<p>Beliefs and Attitudes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate expectations for young children; personal beliefs about children, families, behavior • Stigma of labels • Inconsistent beliefs about what works • Referrals/expulsions that could have been avoided with more knowledge/skills • Confusion over roles/responsibilities among programs, staff, consultants • Inappropriate use of medications • Insufficient partnering with parents • Lack of administrative support for evidence based practices (priorities, knowledge, infrastructure) • Lack of attention to social emotional development in programs • No long-range commitment to improving practice and systems • Inappropriate blame placed on children and families • Lack of understanding that social development needs to be taught • Inappropriate use of mental health consultants
<p>Lack of Adequate Fiscal Resources and Procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient staff development resources • Insufficient money and time • Insufficient resources in the community for children and families • Ineffective reimbursement/payment procedures • Too many families in poverty and not enough resources and supports for them • Restricted access to high-quality programs for families • Lack of resources for substitute teachers, etc.
<p>Lack of Collaboration within the Program, with Families, and within the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of collaboration in the community resulting in gaps and duplication • Lack of a single point of entry and a collaborative system for families • Inadequate partnering/coordination between programs/agencies, staff and families, forms, procedures, etc. • Staff not participating in decision making

Leadership Strategies for Addressing Challenges to Using Evidence Based Practices to Promote Young Children’s Social Emotional Development and Address Challenging Behaviors

You can use the following strategies to help overcome challenges that may prevent you from implementing an evidence based practice. Evidence based practices are important because they promote young children’s social emotional development and address challenging behaviors.

Challenge: Lack of Knowledge and Skills

Strategies

- Identify resources on evidence based strategies
- Develop staff development plans
- Provide ongoing supervision and mentoring
- Implement collaborative training and TA with staff families, consultants, trainers, and leadership
- Develop vision and commitment to using evidence based practices and resources

Challenge: Beliefs and Attitudes

Strategies

- Conduct frequent, structured meetings to discuss beliefs and attitudes
- Enlist the support of someone proficient in facilitating discussions about beliefs
- Ensure that concerns are not tied to misunderstanding of terms (establish consensual terms)
- Recognize that beliefs are affected by information
- Provide resources and opportunities to talk with people who have implemented the practice
- Provide incentives and recognition for attempts at using evidence based practices

Challenge: Inadequate Fiscal Resources and Procedures

Strategies

- See “Administrator’s Essentials” (<http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices/adminessen.pdf>)
- Establish resource-sharing with other programs to reduce duplication
- Establish community-wide collaboration to address resource and fiscal policy issues (see below)

Challenge: Need for Collaboration with Programs, Families, and Communities

Strategies

- Implement Collaborative Planning Model (Smith, 2003). Use stakeholder teams to make program decisions—include staff, families, etc.
- Engage in collaborative planning with the community
- Develop a community-wide system of care for young children and their families
- Action Planning Form

Action Planning Form

Team Members: Sarah, John, Mary and Brenda

Challenge to be addressed: Confusion re: Meaning of “evidence based practice”

Objective/ Strategy	Action Steps to be Taken	Date to be completed & Persons Responsible	Resources & Supports Needed	Date Accomplished	Impact
1a. Establish a definition	1a. Definition used by The Center for Evidence-based Practice used to establish our definitions: Level and type of evidence to support a practice (considerations: research data, published in peer-reviewed journal, etc.)	3/06- Sarah will coordinate	Sample Definitions	3/06	Program has a definition and focus for staff development options; need to meet with trainers and consultants to share definition and resources
1b. Identify resources that meet definition	NAEYC Accreditation criteria, DEC Recommended Practices, CSEFEL (www.csefel.uiuc.edu), Center for Evidence-based Practices (www.challengingbehavior.org)	4/06- John will coordinate	Time to explore resources	4/06	

Group Meeting Record: Notes

Date: 2/10/06 **Status:** team meeting, reviewed concept of “evidence based practice,” reviewed materials

Date: 2/22/10 **Status:** team meeting, decided on a definition and next steps for resources

Date: 3/12/10 **Status:** team meeting, reviewed resources and other places to look

Date: 4/2/10 **Status:** team meeting, prepared a packet on the definition and resources to share

Action Planning

Identifying Challenges

- Follow steps of Collaborative Planning Model (commitment, team, vision, etc.).
- Develop Team Definitions and Philosophy (Evidence based, Promotion, Prevention, Intervention, etc.).
- Brainstorm the statement: “We’d like to use evidence based practices to promote social emotional development and address challenging behavior, but...”
- List the challenges that emerge from brainstorming
- Transfer to Action Planning Form as appropriate
- If a challenge is believed to be a written policy or procedure...GET A COPY! *Don’t believe it ‘til you see it!* Many perceived policy barriers are in fact misinterpretations of the policy!

Identifying Strategies

- Establish criteria for trying possible strategies (ease, timelines, durability, etc.).
- For each challenge, brainstorm this statement: “We could remedy this challenge by...”
- Select strategies from the brainstorming.
- Transfer to Action Planning Form as appropriate.

Other Steps

- List the steps to be taken to achieve the **strategy(ies)**.
- Estimate the **dates the steps and strategy will be accomplished** and **who will coordinate the work or strategy**.
- List **resources** needed to carry out the steps and strategy (e.g., coordination, training, materials, etc.).
- List the **date the strategy was accomplished/put** into place.
- Describe the **impact** of the strategy (Did it overcome the challenge? Other?).

Action Planning Form

Team Members: _____

Challenge to be addressed: _____

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Date: _____ **Status:** _____

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Action Planning Form

Team Members: _____

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Action Planning Form

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Date: _____ **Status:** _____

Date: _____ **Status:** _____

Date: _____ **Status:** _____

Individual Growth Plan

AREA	GOAL	
Activities	Evaluation	Resources Needed

Take-Home Activities

- I. Draft an action plan that would address two challenges (one administrative, one skill development/supervisory).
 - Challenge:
 - Strategies:
 - Team Members:
 - Action Plan (use blank form in this packet)

- II. Write steps for establishing a community collaborative planning team for developing a system of care to support young children's social emotional development and address challenging behavior.
 - Steps:
 - Team Members:
 - Purpose:
 - How to get started:
 - Others: