Participant's Workbook

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Reflection on Concerns and Vision

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

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

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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
Lack of Knowledge/Skill	- Limited awareness of evidence-based practices/resources by staff/consultants - Need more effective 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 could be avoided with more knowledge/skills - Confusion over roles/responsibilities among programs, staff, consultants - Need clarity of terms: mental health, challenging behavior, social/emotional development, intervention, prevention, promotion, etc. - Lack of trained providers - High turnover in staff - Need parent materials and education opportunities - Inappropriate use of medications - Lack of a diagnostic, assessment, referral, intervention link - Poor quality of programs results 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.) - Supervisors need training/information in evidence-based practices and supervision skills - Need better and more accessible professional development mechanisms - Mental health providers often don't have knowledge of 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 - Effective teaming skills

Category of Challenge	Examples of Challenge
Beliefs and Attitudes	• Inappropriate expectations for young children; personal beliefs about children, families, behavior • Stigma of labels • Inconsistent beliefs about what works • Referrals/expulsions could be avoided with more knowledge/skills • Confusion over roles/responsibilities among programs, staff, consultants • Inappropriate use of medications • Need to partner more with parents • Lack of administrative support for evidence-based practices (priorities, knowledge, infrastructure) • Lack of attention to social/emotional development in programs • Need long range commitment to improving practice and systems • Kids and families are blamed • 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 Adequate Fiscal Resources and Procedures	• Insufficient staff development resources • Not enough money and time • Insufficient resources in the community for children and families • Ineffective reimbursement/payment procedures • Lack of supervision (follow through, etc.) • Supervisors need training/information • Families in poverty and not enough resources and supports to them • Restricted access to quality programs for families • Lack of resources for substitute teachers, etc.
Lack of Collaboration within the Program, with Families, and within the Community	• Lack of collaboration in the community results in gaps and duplication • Need single point of entry and a collaborative system for families • Need long range commitment to improving practice and systems • Better partnering/coordination between programs/agencies, staff and families, forms, procedures, etc. • Staff needs to feel a part of decisions

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
- Supervision and mentoring (ongoing)
- 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 "Administrators' Essentials" (http://www.dec-sped.org/pdf/recommendedpractices/adminessen.pdf)
- 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.)	3/03- Sarah will coordinate	Sample Definitions	3/03	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)	4/03- John will coordinate	Time to explore resources	4/03	

Group Meeting Record: Notes

Date: 2/10/03   **Status:** team meeting, reviewed concept of "evidence-based practice," reviewed materials

Date: 2/25/03   **Status:** team meeting, decided on a definition and next steps for resources

Date: 3/15/03   **Status:** team meeting, reviewed resources and other places to look

Date: 4/5/03   **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 misinterpretation 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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Group Meeting Record: Notes

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Action Planning Form

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Action Planning Form

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Action Planning Form

Team Members: _____

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Date: _____ **Status:** _____

Date: _____ **Status:** _____

Date: _____ **Status:** _____

Date: _____ **Status:** _____

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 addressing challenging behavior.

- Steps:

- Team Members:

- Purpose:

- How to get started:

- Etc.