

Appendix 2-A

Evidence Based Programs, Practices and Principles Support Children, Youth, and Families

Appendix 2-A: Evidence Based Programs, Practices and Principles Support Children, Youth, and Families

Best practices, science-based practices, proven programs, promising programs...what do they all mean? These terms identify programs, practices, and principles that have been demonstrated to be effective in achieving desired, positive results for children, youth and families. The use of multiple terms to mean essentially the same thing confuses program planners, staff, legislators, policy-makers, and citizens. This paper reviews several resources on **evidence-based** practices and the related ideas.

Evidence-based programs, practices, and principles are processes or procedures that are shown to reliably produce measurable and sustainable improvements in productivity, efficiency, or effectiveness.

There are three important ideas in this definition of evidenced-based approaches.

First evidence-based approaches include successful

- **Programs** - such as First Steps or Healthy Start, that are *comprehensive approaches* to a problem or issue
- **Practices** - such as the most effective recruitment strategies for Latino families, and
- **Principles** - such as responding to diversity, that are the foundation for developing and implementing successful programs and practices.

Second, an "evidence-based" program, principle or practice produce

- **Measurable and sustainable** effects.
- **Reliable or predictable** effects.

Thus, when implemented **with fidelity** across settings, similar effects can be expected.

Third, evidenced-based approaches have positive effects, showing improvements in

- **Productivity** - such as increasing the number of families seen,
- **Efficiency** - such as reducing the cost per family served or the "wait-time" for service
- **Effectiveness** - such as increasing the number of families served who achieve positive, sustainable outcomes

Why use these terms? The term "evidence-based programs, practices and principles" is recommended by a national network of research institutions and foundations, including: the Colorado Foundation, Family Investment Trust, Foundation Consortium, Georgia Academy, and RAND. See www.promisingpractices.net

On the following pages more information is provided on Evidenced Based Programs, Practices and Principles:

- Page 192: How Are Evidence-based Programs, Practices, and Principles Identified?
- Page 193: Some Websites for Evidenced-based Family Programs, Practices and Principles
- Pages 194 & 195: Some Evidenced-Based Principles for Child, Youth and Family Programs

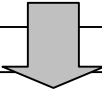
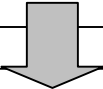
Definition: Evidence-based Programs, Practices and Principles

A set of processes, procedure, and principles that, when implemented, have been shown to reliably produce a measurable and sustainable improvement in productivity, efficiency, or effectiveness.

Evidence - Based Guiding Principles: The INTEL Chip of Effective Programs

Evidence-based concepts underlie all effective programs and practices. Evidence-based guiding principles:

- Are reliable over time and across diverse programs and settings
- Reflect sound theory, research, and practice
- Should guide the development and application of promising and proven programs in new settings or with new target groups
- Guide creation of innovative programs when no promising or proven approach exists.



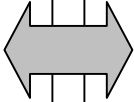
Exemplary or Proven Programs and Practices

Proven programs and practices are shown to be successful against the *highest scientific standards*; generally this means being tested in *randomized controlled trials*. This means that these programs have been tested under the following experimental conditions:

- Random assignment of similar people to treatment and no-treatment control groups;
- Evidence of significantly more positive outcomes for program participants compared to control group members, and
- Long-term stability of the outcomes for program participants compared to the control group members.

Because such studies are very expensive, very few programs are proven using these high standards.

Program Fidelity: *To achieve similar outcomes in new settings, key principles and elements of a proven program must be carefully reproduced.*



Model or Promising Programs and Practices

Model or promising programs and practices are supported by substantial evidence that they achieve positive outcomes. However, these models have not been assessed against the most rigorous standards.

Model or promising programs and practices are:

- Based on evidence-based principles, and/or
- Based on ideas from proven programs and practices, and/or
- Demonstrated to be successful in reaching desired outcomes for participants.

Promising program model is the first step in developing program models that can eventually be assessed in randomized controlled trials.

Program Fidelity: *To achieve similar outcomes in new settings, key principles and elements of a model program must be carefully reproduced.*

Some Website Resources for Evidenced-Based Child, Youth and Family Programs, Practices and Principles

<u>WebSite</u>	<u>Resources</u>
http://www.promisingpractices.net	<p>Information from 5 partners: RAND, Colorado Foundation, Family Investment Trust, Foundation Consortium, Georgia Academy</p> <p>Three categories of programming: Proven, promising and under evaluation. Lists programs under each category that affect benchmark indicators</p>
http://www.childtrends.org	<p>Click on "What Works" and you will find:</p> <p>Paper: For school readiness, describes "What Works" using three categories: Best bets, Mixed Reviews, What doesn't work</p>
http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org	<p>This is the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) site for best practice <i>family</i> strengthening programs. Uses four categories, depending on level of evaluation and replication: Exemplary I, Exemplary II, Model, and Promising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exemplary I has randomized control condition, plus replication ▪ Exemplary II has randomized control but no replication ▪ Model has experimental or quasi-experimental design, no/few replications ▪ Promising has limited research, non-experimental design
http://www.bluehen.ags.udel.edu/strength/best/	<p>This site includes two resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A research paper identifying best practices in parent education: <i>Recommended Practices on Parent Education and Support</i> ▪ A questionnaire entitled: <i>Measuring the Fit with Best Practices: A Guide for Program Planners, Program Implementers and Proposal Writers</i>
http://www.pew-partnership.org	<p>Click on Healthy Families and Children to find research papers on:</p> <p><i>Family Development and Support – Principles of Effective Family Support Programs</i></p> <p><i>Parent Education and Support – Principles of Successful Parenting Programs</i></p>

Eight Evidenced Based Guiding Principles for Successful Programs and Practicesⁱ

1: Address multiple environments.

Recognize and respond to the multiple environments that influence children, youth and families. These environments include family, peers, schools, neighborhoods, community, and media and society. Most effective programs involve more than one environment.

2: Respond to developmental and risk level.

Effective prevention and intervention programs match the developmental and experiential level children, youth, and families. At-risk children, youth and families have the different needs than lower risk populations. One approach will not serve all developmental and need levels.

3: Reduce risks and increase protective processes.

Risk processes are cumulative; when multiple risks exist, vulnerability is greatest. Protective processes reduce vulnerability to risks. Risk processes are reduced and protective processes are increased by early, ongoing, comprehensive support that addresses specific needs.

4: Build developmental assets.

Developmental assets are important to all individuals, not only those who are at-risk. More assets contribute to more positive development and outcomes. Continuity of caring relationship over time is essential to building assets for children, youth and families.

5: Respond to diversity.

Gender, culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and peer group membership are all important sources of diversity. Programs and practices must recognize and respond to diversity in order to offer effective support.

6: Create a continuum of support and care.

The idea of a continuum of support and care builds on the other five guiding principles. One size does NOT fit all. A continuum of support and care provides what is needed, when it is needed. The higher the level of risk demands more intensive and long-term support.

7: Intervene to create and sustain desired behavior.

Behavioral change is not easy to achieve or sustain. Psychological and educational research have established that if behavioral change is to occur and be maintained, interventions should:

- Target and build specific behavioral skills as well as build knowledge
- Address personal, social and other environmental factors that affect the desired behavior
- Reward the desired behavior and reduce rewards for undesirable behaviors
- Modify behavior sequentially, rewarding small incremental changes
- Train in naturalistic conditions and settings; practice in naturalistic conditions and settings
- Teach simple and specific cognitive principles that can guide behavior in new settings
- Provide support over time to assure and sustain behavior
- Attribute change to individual/family – not to leader or settings: *I did it!*

8: Use sensitive, professional discretion.

Drawn from juvenile corrections, the principle of professional discretion states that: "The professional reviews risk, need, and responsiveness of a particular case under particular circumstances, and makes decisions that best reflects ethical, humanitarian, legal, and effectiveness considerations. *Other principles of treatment, no matter how solid the research base, must be applied thoughtfully by a sensitive professional.*"ⁱⁱ

Some Links between General Principles and Specific Program Practices

General Guiding Principles¹	Some Specific Practices in Drug Use Prevention Programs Young Peopleⁱⁱⁱ
Address multiple environments.	<p>Programs should include a parents' or caregivers' component.</p> <p>Community programs... are more effective when are <i>accompanied</i> by school and family interventions.</p>
Respond to developmental and risk level.	<p>Be age-specific, developmentally appropriate, and culturally sensitive when addressing drug abuse problems.</p> <p>Include interactive methods that match the developmental needs of youth, such as peer discussion groups.</p>
Reduce risks <u>and</u> increase protective processes.	<p>Enhance protective factors such as positive one to one adult-youth relationships and reduce risk factors such as lenient community norms or easy access to tobacco and other drugs.</p>
Build developmental assets.	<p>Among all youth, increase opportunities and recognition for positive activities; build strong family and school relationships.</p>
Respond to diversity and individual differences.	<p>Address culturally specific risk and protective factors; respond to gender issues in risk; recognize diversity within gender and ethnic groups by targeting individual interests and needs.</p>
Create a continuum of support and care.	<p>The higher the risk level of the target population, the more intensive, and earlier, prevention are needed.</p> <p>School-based programs offer opportunities to reach all risk populations from early prevention and early intervention to support for youth needing assessment, treatment, and after-care.</p>
Intervene to create and sustain desired behavior.	<p>Target specific risk factors, identify and reward desired behavior, individualize the intervention, apply simple principles that can be remembered (1, 2, 3..), practice desired skills in teaching and naturalistic environments, offer booster sessions and peer support.</p>

ⁱ Adapted from Chapter 2 of *Building Results: From Wellness Goals to Positive Outcomes for Children, Youth, and Families*. Authors: Clara Pratt, Aphra Katzev, Tammy Henderson, and Rachel Ozretich. Oregon State University Family Policy Program. Available from the Oregon Commission on Children and Families, Salem, Oregon.

ⁱⁱ OCCF Symposium: Hope for the Future. 2000.

ⁱⁱⁱ Oregon Commission on Children and Families. *Building Results: From Wellness goals to positive outcomes for Oregon's children, youth and families*. Chapter 2.

And Western Regional Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT). Excerpt from *Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents: A Research-Based Guide*. 1997. National Institute for Drug Abuse.

<http://www.open.org/~westcapt/bpprinc.htm>.