

Louisiana EBP Selection Assessment Guide

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Patrick Canary

Director, Center for Innovative Practices

Institute for the Study and Prevention of Violence

Kent State University

Stephen Phillippi, PhD

Assistant Professor-Behavioral and Community Health Services

Louisiana Models for Change in Juvenile Justice- Evidence-Based Community
Practices

Louisiana Mental Health and Juvenile Justice Action Network- Chair

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INTRODUCTION

As part of its involvement in the Models for Change in Juvenile Justice Reform initiative, Louisiana has sought to create successful and replicable models of reform. One focus of reform has been Evidence-Based Community Services. Louisiana had a long history of relying heavily on residential and institutional care for youth involved with the juvenile justice system, including one of the highest incarceration rates per capita in the nation at one point (Trupin, 2006). In recent years the state has made major changes in the way it handles youth coming in contact with the justice system, significantly reducing the number of youth placed in residential facilities. While this reduction has been a welcome shift in Louisiana, the diversion of these youth into the community has highlighted the shortage of community-based services. In response, Louisiana selected Evidence-Based Community Services as one of its targeted areas for improvement under funding from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The Foundation funded reform efforts also coincided with the states reform efforts. Act 555 of the 2004 legislative session outlined the purpose and role of Children and Youth Planning Boards throughout Louisiana. According to the law...

the purpose of the children and youth planning boards is to assist in the assessment, alignment, coordination, prioritization, and measurement of all available services and programs that address the needs of children and youth. This includes children and youth at risk for, or identified with, social, emotional, or developmental problems, including but not limited to educational failure, abuse, neglect, exposure to violence, juvenile or parental mental illness, juvenile or parental substance abuse, poverty, developmental disabilities and delinquency. The boards are intended to encourage collaborative efforts among local stakeholders for assessing the physical, social, behavioral, and educational needs of children and youth in their respective communities and for assisting in the development of comprehensive plans to address such needs.

The infrastructure for planning is intended to be data-driven in order to select appropriate evidence-based programs which will maximize available resources.

Children and youth services advisory boards; members; duties include...

(c) Develop and select the appropriate evidence-based strategies or programs to meet those needs identified by soliciting community input and developing a strategic plan to

best address the needs of children and youth in the respective community. This strategic plan should have measurable goals and objectives and should be evaluated annually to ensure its effectiveness.

Successfully implementing a long-term, system wide movement towards evidence-based practices, while perhaps one of the most important reforms that a state or local jurisdiction can take on, is also one of the most challenging. Jurisdictions that take on this charge must address a number of complicated and interwoven challenges, including:

- the need for broad support and knowledge among a range of stakeholders at the state and local levels;
- the ability to provide for ongoing, continuous stakeholder education and awareness, in order to deal with changing leadership and agency personnel;
- lack of knowledge among stakeholders about the various evidence-based practices, and the potential “fit” of these practices with the local community’s needs and resources;
- capacity to implement evidence-based practices within the local provider community;
- provider resistance to shifting from treatment-as-usual to an evidence-based practice, and to participate in fidelity and outcome monitoring processes;
- funding streams that may not be structured to encourage or support evidence-based practices;
- the need for policy development that ensures the preferred utilization of evidence based practices

(NCMHJJ & LSUHSC SPH, 2010)

Recognizing that successfully shifting towards a system built around evidence-based practices and increasing the likelihood of successful implementation requires a comprehensive, thorough, and meticulous review of both what evidence-based practices are available and which evidence based practices might best fit identified needs and gaps in services in local jurisdictions, the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center Partnered with the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice and Ohio’s Kent State University’s Center for Innovative Practices. That partnership led to the creation piloting of this EBP Selection Guide authored by Patrick Canary with development assistance from Stephen Phillippi and the Rapides Parish’s Models for Change subcommittee on evidence-based practices.

(Canary & Phillippi, 2009)

The tool offers a framework for identifying and determining a community's and/or organization's readiness to select and adopt evidence-based practices. The readiness tool, which uses a structured questionnaire to map key readiness and implementation questions, helps to anchor discussions, capture priorities and key concerns of local decision makers, and focus the search for EBPs that might fit local needs. In particular, the guide helps assess and discuss the following areas:

- Target Population
- Funding
- Level of collaboration
- Level of evidence
- Practice Recognition
- Practice Structure
- Family Involvement/Engagement
- Expected Youth Outcomes
- Cultural Diversity
- Workforce Requirements
- Feasibility of Implementation
- Organizational Experience with EBPs
- Organizational Readiness
- Leadership

INSTRUCTIONS

The EBP Selection Guide is intended to assist Child Youth Planning Boards and local jurisdictions make well informed decisions to answer their call to develop and select the appropriate evidence-based strategies or programs to meet local community needs. The guide is intended to help leaders and stakeholders pose difficult questions concerning the fit of recommended EBPs and the likelihood of successful implementation. It offers an objective and consistent method of evaluating proposed changes in community services. This assessment guide is intended to only assist in organizing the discussion and provide some structure for capturing strengths and challenges. The topic areas are not 'weighted' by importance nor is the guide a scientifically validated tool. The guide should only be used along with other local processes (e.g. MfC Juvenile Provider Survey, Mapping Survey, etc.) in the identification and selection of evidence based and promising practices.

EBP Selection Guide

Name of Program for Consideration:

Intent of the Program-What Need Does It Address:

What Outcomes Does the Program Achieve:

Description of Target Population:

Identify the 'Endorsements/acknowledgements' for this EBP or Best Practice:

Directions: For each of the Topic Areas below, discuss the pros and cons, and 'assess' accordingly. This assessment guide is intended to only assist in organizing the discussion and provide some structure for capturing strengths and challenges. The topic areas are not 'weighted' by importance nor is the guide a scientifically validated tool. The guide should only be used along with other local processes in the identification and selection of evidence based and promising practices.

1. Target Population: The program being considered...

3 = Exactly matches local description of highest priority

2 = Closely matches local description of highest priority, with minor differences

1 = Matches few characteristics of the description of highest priority

0 = Does not match

Notes:

2. Funding: The program being considered had demonstrated...

3 = Local/state/federal funding is secured

2 = Local/state/federal funding is highly likely

1 = Local/state/federal funding is possible

0 = No secured source of funding

Notes:

3. Collaboration (includes financing): The program developer/provider has...

3 = All relevant local public/other systems needed for effective implementation participating in implementation

2 = Several local public/other systems participating in implementation

1 = Primary responsibility for implementing with few collaborative partnerships

0 = No identified collaborative partnership

Notes:

4. Level of Evidence: The program being considered...

- 3 = Meets Blueprints or similar level of evidence (including Randomized Clinical Trials)
- 2 = Meets level of a 'promising practice' which includes multiple sound evaluations
- 1 = Meets a minimum level of evidence; only limited outcomes and/or anecdotal information
- 0 = No evidence of effectiveness

Notes:

5. Recognized Practice: The program/practice being considered...

- 3 = Is widely identified on a number of recognized lists, e.g., Blueprints, SAMHSA, other comparable websites as an Evidence Based Practice or Model Program
- 2 = Is somewhat recognized: identify: _____
- 1 = Has limited recognition: identify: _____
- 0 = Is not identified on any nationally recognized list of Evidence Based/Promising Practices

Notes:

6. Structure of the Practice: The program being considered has...

- 3 = Program guidelines, manuals, training, and ongoing consultation *are established* components of the practice
- 2 = Program guidelines, manuals, training and ongoing consultation that *are available*, but not mandated, components of the practice
- 1 = Program guidelines, manuals, training or ongoing consultation that *are limited* components of the practice
- 0 = Has no discernible guidelines, manuals, training and ongoing consultation

Notes:

7. Family Involvement/Engagement: The program being considered has...

- 3 = Family strengthening /engagement in treatment as the primary focus of the program
- 2 = Family strengthening/engagement as a component of the program
- 1 = Family strengthening/engagement as a limited and/or optional component of the program
- 0 = No family strengthening/engagement components as part of the program

Notes:

8. Youth Outcomes (e.g., remaining in the home; attending/succeeding at school or work; reduced interaction with the Juvenile Justice system)

- 3 = Youth outcomes are specifically identified and targeted for attainment
- 2 = Youth outcomes are generally identified and targeted for attainment
- 1 = Youth outcomes are not clear or measureable
- 0 = Youth outcomes are not identified

Notes:

9. Diversity: The program being considered has...

- 3 = Strong evidence of effectiveness within diverse cultural communities
- 2 = Evidence of effectiveness within diverse cultural communities
- 1 = Very limited evidence of effectiveness within diverse cultural communities
- 0 = No evidence of effectiveness within diverse cultural communities

Notes:

10. Staff /Workforce Requirements: Based on the selected model or intervention, the...

- 3 = Current workforce, with additional specific training, could readily meet requirements
- 2 = Current workforce, with additional specific training, could at least minimally meet the requirements
- 1 = Current workforce would require considerable re-training to meet the requirements
- 0 = There is no locally available workforce that meets minimum requirements

Notes:

11. Feasibility of Implementation: The practice, as described by developers...

- 3 = Is highly feasible for implementation in our community
- 2 = Would present some challenges to implementation
- 1 = Would present major challenges to implementation
- 0 = Would not be feasible in our community

Notes:

12. Organizational Experience with EBPs: The provider organization...

- 3 = Has a strong and positive record of implementation of EBPs
- 2 = Is experienced in implementation of EBPs
- 1 = Has limited and/or uneven experience in implementation of EBPs
- 0 = Has no experience with implementation of EBPs

Notes:

13. Organizational Readiness: The provider...

- 3 = Can readily accommodate the necessary organizational requirements needed to effectively implement the practice
- 2 = Has the ability to accommodate the necessary organizational requirements to effectively implement the practice
- 1 = Has limited ability to accommodate the necessary organizational requirements to effectively implement the practice
- 0 = Is unlikely to be able to accommodate the necessary organizational requirements to effectively implement the practice

Notes:

Summary Discussion Points:

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- **NASMHPD-NRI**
- **Child/Family EBP Consortium**
- **MSTServices**
- **Child Trends**

(Kanary 2009)