Preliminary Scan of Birth Parent Engagement
Journal Articles and other Resources

This list is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all possible resources but is the foundation of an ongoing listing of articles and other resources that promote and support the engagement of parents as partners. The National Alliance of Children’s Trust and Prevention Funds would like to acknowledge the Child Welfare Information Gateway for its help in identifying some of the articles in this publication.

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Emerging Practices

Emerging practices that support birth parent engagement in direct services and policy and practice reform at the national, state and local levels

A. The 5 C’s of Engaging Birth Families in the Reunification Process.
Tallidis, Zoe.
Buckner Children and Family Services.
2012
A list of ways to support and assist children and their biological parents as they work through the reunification process.
**B. Understanding Parental Engagement With Child Welfare Services: An Integrated Model.**

*Special Issue: Parental Engagement with Services when Children may be at Risk.*

Platt, Dendy.

University of Bristol, Bristol, UK.

2012

*Child and Family Social Work*

17 (2) p. 138-148

This paper takes an ecological approach to understanding engagement of parents with services when children may be at risk of abuse/maltreatment. Gaining parental cooperation is a fundamental factor affecting social work interventions, treatment and decision-making. Based on a review of current literature, the paper adapts the Multifactor Offender Readiness Model to the child welfare context, using insights from other theoretical and empirical work. Parental engagement with child welfare services is portrayed as having behavioral, attitudinal and relationship components, and is determined by internal (service user) and external (policy, program and worker) factors. (Author abstract)

**C. Engagement Strategies and Change: An Intentional Practice Response for the Child Welfare Worker in Cases of Domestic Violence.**

Melchiorre, Rylee. Vis, Jo-Ann.

Lakehead University (Canada)

2012

*Child and Family Social Work*

In order to engage mothers who are victims of domestic abuse, the child welfare worker needs to be challenged to develop an intentional practice response that includes knowledge and skill concerning the complexities of domestic violence, as well as the process of change. Developing a supportive relationship, understanding the stages of change (SOC) and engaging mothers as leaders in the change process are essential to successful child protection outcomes. Within the context of the SOC model, this practice-based paper focuses on the importance of engaging mothers who are victims of domestic violence in conversations about their own unique dilemmas, challenges and barriers regarding change. Through the inclusion of engagement strategies such as signs of safety, active listening and cost/benefit analysis, in concert with the SOC theory, the child welfare worker would be equipped with an approach to successfully assist mothers through their change journey, ultimately keeping children safe. (Author abstract)

**D. Practice Innovations in Child Welfare.**

Kanaya, Melissa.

American Public Human Services Association.

2012

Designed for child welfare leaders and administrators, this document highlights various innovative child welfare practices that are being implemented in different States. It begins by discussing common practice themes, including themes that focus on values and address client and family engagement, client and family centered, and cooperation...
and collaboration, and themes that focus on strategies and address organizational capacity and service delivery. Examples from the field of how these values and strategies manifest themselves within practice are provided. The next section describes family engagement practice innovations implemented in Larimer County, Colorado; the implementation of Family Time Coaching in Vermont; the New Collaborative Team Approach implemented in Hampton, Virginia; trauma informed practices implemented in Wilson County, North Carolina; the redesign of foster care in North Florida; The implementation of the Family Support Program in Albemarle County, Virginia; the implementation of the Child Welfare Military Project in El Paso County, Colorado; and the implementation of the Youth Support Partners program in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The final section on lessons learned includes reflections from the leaders of the field examples based on their experiences. 9 references.

E. Using Cellular Phones to Engage and Retain Families in Parenting Interventions [Presentation Slides].
This slide presentation explains how child welfare agencies can use cell phones to improve the ability of the agency to keep families from dropping out of parenting interventions, keep families more actively engaged in interventions, help families learn to apply the parenting skills throughout their daily interactions with their children, and help families do the intervention correctly and more often. Reasons to use cell phones are explained, and the Cell Phone Enhanced Planned Activities Training (CPAT) parenting intervention that used cell phones is described. Participants (n=89) were provided with five intervention visits, given a cell phone, received twice daily text message and phone calls once a week. Steps for implementing PAT are outlined, and results from the intervention are shared. Findings indicate CPAT mothers were more engaged but PAT mothers (without cell phones) were more satisfied with interactions with the family coach.

F. Engaging Families in Case Planning
Bulletin for Professionals
Child Welfare Information Gateway 2012
Discusses the importance of involving families in case planning and provides strategies for caseworkers and agencies that can encourage and support family engagement. Strategies include family teaming, solution-based casework, and structured decision-making, among others. Outcomes from States' Child and Family Services Reviews show the need for employing new strategies to engage families. Three examples are provided of innovative ways that agencies are promoting family engagement.
Child Welfare Information Gateway.
2011

H. Bringing Family to the Table: Tips and Techniques for Effective Family Engagement.
Child Trends.
2011
The purpose of the family finding model is to provide child welfare practitioners with intensive relative search and engagement techniques to identify family and other close adults for children in foster care, and to involve them in developing and carrying out a plan for the emotional and legal permanency of a child. Child Trends researchers are currently evaluating family finding programs in multiple localities in five states. During annual site visits to each program site, family finding workers have reported on the implementation of each component of the family finding model, including barriers and facilitators to practice. This brief presents findings from the site visits focusing specifically on the engagement process, the second component of the model. The brief describes current practice in the sites and identifies promising techniques, common challenges, and potential solutions to engaging family members and/or other important people in the child's life. (Author abstract)

I. Thinking Outside the Box: The MA DCF Experience.
Domingo, Beryl.
Massachusetts. Dept. of Children and Families.
2010
Common Ground (New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors)
25 (2) p. 1, 3
This article describes the participation of the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families in the New England Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Safety and Risk Assessment. The selection of six regional teams is discussed, as well as strategies used to improve practice in engaging families more effectively. The introduction of the Integrated Casework Practice Model, the use of the Through Line by which the work of teams is linked to the agency's goals, and the spread of promising practices are highlighted.
Gomby, Deanna S.
First 5 Contra Costa Children and Families Commission.
2009
This report describes the outcomes of a pilot project designed to elicit collaborative efforts to test new strategies for providing home visiting services to African American and Asian American families who live in three California zip codes within the First 5 Contra Costa Commission's target areas. A central feature of the Hand to Hand (H2H) collaborative was a learning community, which was designed to help programs share lessons learned, undertake joint evaluation efforts, and use research and results to improve practice. The collaborative was launched in March 2008 and has enrolled 77 of the 161 individuals contacted through the project. Results based on a review of administrative data and interviews with and a survey of H2H collaborative members are discussed in the areas of: collaborative and learning community, outreach to and engagement of families, home visiting services, and programmatic barriers and challenges. It concludes that high-risk families are being served, though not as many as anticipated, and that African American and Asian American families who have never been to the First 5 Center before are now attending classes and activities there. Recommendations for improving the collaborative, H2H outreach and home visiting services, the learning community, and the evaluation are discussed.

Model Programs and Practices That Engage Birth Parents

Lalayants, Marina.
2012
This report shares findings from an evaluation study conducted in an effort to learn more about the parent organizing model implemented by the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP) in East Harlem, New York City and identify the role and impact of CWOP community representatives on birthparents, families, and child safety conference outcomes. CWOP community representatives attend child safety conferences with birthparents to provide them with emotional support, resources, and information about their rights and responsibilities within the child welfare system. The community representatives, who are familiar with the community and resources available, help parents as they take steps to either ensure that their children remain safely home or become reunified with them after a removal. The study investigated perceptions of multiple stakeholders (i.e. birthparents, community representatives, and child protective
services staff) about this model; examined birthparents satisfaction levels with CWOP representatives' services; depicted barriers to parental engagement and factors promoting engagement; and discussed dynamics in collaboration between community representatives and child protection services.


B. Partnering With Parents: Promising Approaches to Improve Reunification Outcomes for Children in Foster Care. (This study was completed on the California Contra Costa County Parent Partner Program)

Article 14.
Journal of Family Strengths
11 (1) p. 1-13
Family reunification is one of the central tenants of the child welfare system, yet research supporting effective practices to promote safe reunifications is limited. As a departure from previous initiatives, the Parent Partner (PP) program enlists as staff mothers and fathers who have experienced child removal, services, and reunification. This study examines outcomes for children served by the PP program. The experimental group includes 236 children whose parents were served by a Parent Partner and a matched comparison group of 55 children whose parents were served by the public child welfare agency in 2004, before the Parent Partner program was established. Cases were examined 12 months following case opening to determine reunification status. Results from the outcome study indicate that reunification may be more likely for children whose parents were served by Parent Partners. Although there are limitations to the data, findings from this study suggest that the Parent Partner model may hold promise as a child welfare intervention designed to support reunification. (Author abstract)

http://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=jfs

C. An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of a Parent-To-Parent Program in Changing Attitudes and Increasing Parental Engagement in the Juvenile Dependency System.
Children and Youth Services Review
34 (10) p. 2036-2041
Parent mentor programs, which have helped parents with disabled children, are emerging in the field of child welfare as a means of engaging parents in the juvenile dependency process. Two current studies assessed a parent-to-parent program implemented in King County, Washington. Study 1 assessed a change in attitudes that occurred following participation in the program. Study 2 assessed differences in outcomes between participants in the program and parents who were invited, but did not
attend the program. Results from study 1 suggest that there was a significant, positive change in attitudes following program participation -- parents increased trust in child protection services, better understood the role of the stakeholders, increased their awareness of case issues, and increased belief that they had personal control over the case outcomes. A few gender differences were noted in attitude change; no race differences emerged. Findings from study 2 suggest that program participants were more engaged in the juvenile dependency court process, as evidenced by increased presence at court hearings, increased compliance with court ordered case plans, and increased visitation. Overall, the program appears to be effective in shaping parents' attitudes and improving parents' engagement in the juvenile dependency court process. (Author abstract)

D. Parent Partner Programs for Families Involved in the Child Welfare System [Website].
California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.
2011
The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC) website is designed to allow you access to a summary of practice topical areas or programs relevant to one or more major child welfare goals. This link allows you to view the programs that have been reviewed and rated by the CEBC in the Parent Partner Programs for Families Involved in the Child Welfare System topical area. Results are shown only for the programs that have been rated in each category. (Author abstract modified)
http://www.cebc4cw.org/search/topical-area/28

Emerging Policies and Legislation

Emerging and existing state policies and legislation that support birth parent engagement

Pennell, Joan. Shapiro, Carol. Spigner, Carol.
Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.
Center for Family and Community Engagement.
2011
This paper explains the need for youth to have a foundation of safety, fairness, and stability to grow into responsible and productive adults, and strategies for ensuring that youth involved with both child protection and juvenile justice maintain connections to their homes, schools, and communities. It begins by exploring the challenges crossover youth face and the elevated risks for minority youth. The paper then explicates why a strategy of family engagement is particularly timely because it counters historical approaches that have estranged youths from their families, it responds to current political and demographic trends, it fits with legislative changes and conventions on human rights, it aligns with recent research findings, and it supports partnership
approaches. The paper examines strategies for advancing family leadership at the practice, program, and policy levels and summarizes the findings on family engagement in child welfare and juvenile justice practice. In conclusion, a series of recommendations are made for repositioning juvenile justice and child welfare to engage youths and their families, victims of offending, other systems, and the broader community. Recommendations are made for child welfare agencies, juvenile justice agencies, schools, and mental health services. Numerous references.
http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/pdfs/famengagement/FamilyEngagementPaper.pdf

B. Three States Build Father Engagement.
Spotlight on the CFSRs: What Are We Learning From Round Two?
United States. Children's Bureau.
2010
Children's Bureau Express
11 (7) 2 html pages
This brief describes efforts in Kansas, Texas, and Kentucky to implement innovative practices to engage fathers and paternal relatives in the lives of children involved with the child welfare system. Kansas has changed the word "parent" to the phrase "mother and father" throughout the Children and Family Services policy manual, provides training on father engagement, strengthened requirements for contacting relatives of children entering foster care, and sponsors an annual Fatherhood Summit. Texas has created the State-level position of Fatherhood Program Specialist to spearhead a commitment to involve fathers in their children's lives, revised policies to ensure that fathers are included, provides training on father engagement and family finding, uses Family Group Decision Making to include fathers and paternal relatives in case planning, and collaborates with fatherhood groups around the State. Finally, Kentucky has updated written policies to include father-specific languages, developed tools caseworkers can use to help them locate fathers and paternal relatives, provides training about father involvement and family engagement, and conducts meetings with judges and court personnel to discuss paternity establishment and parent engagement.
http://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?event=website.viewArticles&issueid=119§ionid=2&articleid=2956

National Conference of State Legislatures.
2010
A non-resident (or non-custodial) father is a parent who does not live in the same household as his child; he may be divorced or separated or may have never married the child's mother, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, Promoting Responsible Fatherhood. While state efforts in the location, identification, and engagement of non-residential fathers in child welfare programs differ, many states are looking at the requirement of locating non-resident fathers in a set timeframe and defining "due diligence" efforts. While many states may have legislation in place around the notification, identification, and engagement to mothers, fathers, or parents in child welfare, this summary of legislation is tailored to these efforts in child welfare to non-
resident (non-custodial) fathers, unknown fathers, or absent parents. Due to different terminology used in various states or jurisdictions, it is possible that some relevant provisions are not included. Approximately twenty-one states have enacted legislation around the notification, identification, and engagement of non-resident fathers in child welfare. This includes four states that allow or require that notification to parents regarding a child welfare proceeding be issued by publication and three states that determine a time frame for when parents or other adults shall be identified and notified of a child proceeding. Summaries of related state legislation are detailed in this document. (Author abstract)

This document compiles state and provincial laws that identify family group decision making (FGDM) and other family engagement approaches in the United States and Canada. (Author abstract)

**Federal, State or Local Efforts**

*Federal, state or local efforts underway to raise awareness and opportunities for birth parent engagement*

**A. National Parent Leadership Month** - Parents Anonymous® Inc. invites public and private partners to join together to co-sponsor National Parent Leadership Month in February every year. This major initiative includes a series of national, state, and local activities to recognize, honor, and celebrate parents for their leadership roles in their homes and communities. National Parent Leadership Month highlights the many opportunities available for parents, staff, policymakers and other community members to engage in partnerships with the goal of building and supporting strong, safe families. Parents Anonymous® Inc. works in partnership with public and private organizations such as social services, education, juvenile justice, childcare, mental health, health, businesses and policymakers to promote National Parent Leadership Month in communities all around the world to:

- Raise public awareness about the important roles parents play in shaping the lives of children and families
- Publicize and expand opportunities for Parent Leaders to participate in meaningful Parent Leadership activities at the local, state and national levels
- Recognize individual Parent Leaders whose contributions make a positive difference to their families and communities
• Build successful partnerships between Parent Leaders and staff in sharing responsibility, expertise and leadership in decisions being made that affect families and communities.


**B. Family Leadership and Perspectives [Webpage].**
National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections.
2011
Meaningful family engagement is becoming an area of great interest as child welfare agencies across the country continue to work to improve outcomes for children and their families. Engaging a family in the development of case plans is a central tenet of good social work practice in child welfare. Additionally, new roles are emerging for families as partners in improving the child welfare system and transforming practice beyond the case plan. This webpage offers resources, examples of parent leader recognition events, State and local examples/resources, PowerPoint presentations, bibliographies, and links to other websites on this topic. It will be updated regularly with new resources. [http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/family-leadership-and-perspectives.html](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/family-leadership-and-perspectives.html)

**C. The Children's Bureau's Role in Promoting Parent Engagement and Family Support: A Brief History and Current Efforts.**
*Special Issue: Centennial of the Children's Bureau. Article 3.*
United States. Children's Bureau.
2012
*Journal of Family Strengths*
12 (1) p. 1-27
Over the years, federal child welfare policy has supported parent engagement and family support strategies through various Children's Bureau funded state formula grant programs, research and demonstration discretionary grants, and technical assistance. This article highlights programs funded by two federal laws, Promoting Safe and Stable Families and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, and Children's Bureau's efforts to test innovations and disseminate knowledge about promising and evidence-based practices regarding parent engagement and family support. The article begins with a brief legislative history and then describes several grant programs that are supported by the legislation. The article concludes with lessons learned and a discussion of the new opportunities for system changes through the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration projects. Key Take Away Points: (1) The Children's Bureau incorporates family engagement and family support through many of its state formula and discretionary grant programs and within the technical assistance provided for grantees; (2) There is the clear recognition and value placed on those two strategies in order to effectively work with families brought to the attention of the child welfare system; (3) Formula grants provide a relatively stable, albeit limited, source of funds for states that want to infuse parent engagement.
engagement and family support into their programs; (4) The discretionary grant programs are opportunities to test and evaluate new and innovative approaches for engaging and involving parents and other family members in services; (5) Tailored technical assistance for all grantees is definitely an important federal investment; and (6) New opportunities to re-design child welfare through the Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration projects, and other discretionary grant initiatives are underway and more will be learned about family engagement through these efforts.

http://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1150&context=jfs


Pennell, Joan. Burford, Gale. Connolly, Marie. Morris, Kate.


E. Parent Leadership and Involvement.

FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.

2010

This website provides access to a number of publications on parent support, education and leadership including: Parent Leadership Self-Assessment Tool; Family Leadership Self-Assessment Tool for System-Building Collaboratives; Parent Education; Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide; Circle of Parents (English and Spanish versions); Core Principles of Parent Support Groups; Parent Leadership Development Checklist; Successful Strategies of Parent Leadership; The Role of Parent Mutual Support; Successful Models of Parent Leadership.

http://www.friendsnrc.org/cbcap-priority-areas/parent-leadership-and-involvement


*American Humane FGDM Issues in Brief.*

Jenkins, Molly.

American Humane.

2010

Since 1997, a consortium of Colorado counties, calling themselves the Forum for Family Engagement, have been discussing implementation and best practices regarding the multiple family engagement models at their human services departments. As a national organization headquartered in Englewood, Colo., we wanted to profile the family engagement work in our home state. This Issue Brief on family engagement in Colorado outlines the valuable work of these counties that have each committed to involving families in decision making. (Author abstract)

http://www.americanhumane.org/assets/pdfs/children/fgdm/five-counties-many-voices.pdf.
G. Family Engagement
*State Managers Series: Bulletin for Professionals.*
Child Welfare Information Gateway.
2010
Describes the benefits of family engagement in the child welfare system. This bulletin for professional child welfare caseworkers discusses ways to achieve meaningful family engagement, specific strategies that reflect family engagement, and examples of State and local child welfare programs that have achieved success with engaging families.

H. Building and Sustaining Effective Parent Partnerships: Stages of Relationship Development.
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds.
2009
This guide is part of a series of resources developed by the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds and the National Parent Partnership Council to support children's trust funds (CTFs), their partners, and grantees and parents in creating powerful partnerships to support positive outcomes for children and families. It explains the benefits of partnerships with parents in amplifying family strengthening efforts and the four distinct stages of partnership development: self-leadership, participation, community involvement, and mentorship. For each identified stage, strategies that CTFs can use to promote parent partnerships are described and the experiences of those involved in partnerships are shared.

Conferences, Trainings, Events and Tools

Conferences, trainings events and tools related to birth parent engagement at the national, state and local levels.

A. California Parent Leadership Conferences - Parents Anonymous Inc. in partnership with the California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, sponsored three statewide California Parent Leadership Conferences which were held in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The conferences provided an important platform to share knowledge and practical tools from the newest programs, practices, policies, and research on parent and shared leadership® taking place across various California systems. General plenary sessions, skill-building workshops and Think Tanks were offered to help promote and support parents and staff to work in shared leadership® in the design, delivery, and evaluation of services and policies relating to children and families. Information on all three conferences can be found at https://www.strengthening-families.org/plconference/2012home.aspx
B. Iowa Parent Partner Summit - This conference was held on April 24-25, 2013 in Des Moines, Iowa. It provided a multidisciplinary opportunity for Parent Partners, coordinators, community providers, DHS and other child welfare staff to share best practices, expand skills, and build relationships. Contact: Geri Derner - 515-281-0617; gderner@dhs.state.ia.us.

C. Charting Effective Strategies for Building and Sustaining Parent Partnerships.
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, 2012.
The National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds joined with its member children's trust and prevention funds and other state and national organizations at the Network for Action Meetings in 2011 and 2012 to create this tool to help guide organizations as they seek to develop and sustain meaningful relationships with parents. Key definitions related to parent partnerships are included as well as strategies, activities and tools that parents and practitioners have found to be effective.
www.ctfalliance.org

This conference, held on November 3, 2012 in Atlantic City, New Jersey was sponsored by A Partnership of Parents Anonymous of New Jersey, Inc. and the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, NJEA, and the National Institute for Family Success. The statewide conference addressed meaningful parental leadership across New Jersey’s education, health, mental health, family support, human services and child welfare systems. Workshops also focused on creating change by creating strong parents, strong families, excellent schools, and stronger communities.

E. Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: The Power of Community - Statewide Prevention Summit - October 16-17, 2013 – Sacramento, CA; Website Link: www.familyresourcecenters.net
The 2013 Prevention Summit will launch with half day intensive institutes of learning, followed by a full day infused with interactive workshops, dynamic general sessions, and a community building dialog (world café). Prevention Summit institutes and workshops will focus on innovative strategies, research-informed practices, and strategic partnerships that foster safety, permanence, and child and family well-being in the family strengthening field. The conversation (world café) will bring together the diversity of the prevention community across California to share wisdom and insights, and to spark our commitment and ability to make a collective impact to strengthen families and communities through prevention of child abuse and neglect. This two-day conference is designed to provide the field of child abuse and neglect prevention and early intervention a forum for:

- Shared understanding and knowledge of current trends, evidence-based practices, and practice innovations in the field of family strengthening.
• Shared commitment to the power of community to prevent child abuse and neglect.
• Increased capacity for family and community partnerships.
• Inspiration to work with communities to foster optimal outcomes for all children and families.

**F. Enhancing Child Safety and Building Partnerships with Families through Supported Decision Making Casework: Evaluation of In Class Trainings for Signs of Safety.**

*Research Brief: 1.*

Northern California Training Academy.
2011

Sponsoring Organization: Casey Family Programs.

Toward the aim of promoting safety for children, California social workers are being trained in implementing an integrated practice approach, Signs of Safety (SoS, Turnell & Edwards, 1999)/Structured Decision Making (SDM®). The integrated SoS/SDM® is intended to enhance assessment processes and case planning for families involved with Child Welfare Services. It is hypothesized that increasing relationships and engagement in case work will lead to more accurate assessments, leading to increased participation in safety planning which will lead to increased child safety. This research brief presents findings on the recent evaluation from three different trainings held in California. It outlines the data collection methods and assessment tools employed by the evaluation, describes the key evaluation activities undertaken by the evaluation team, presents preliminary results, and discusses the next steps for the evaluation. Findings indicate: 1) A total of 274 people working in California child welfare services have been trained in Signs of Safety; 2) There were significant improvements in knowledge of Signs of Safety practices and tools from pre- to post-test overall; 3) Trainees generally thought that the Signs of Safety tools and practices would improve their work with families; and 4) Trainees indicated that they wanted on the job support in implementing Signs of Safety practices. (Author abstract modified)


**G. Special Issue of Protecting Children.**

American Humane.
2010

*Protecting Children*
25 (3) p. 7-20

This article describes a training effort under way in the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families designed to enhance worker judgment, decision making, and family engagement skills, that integrates a strength-based practice framework with formal decision support tools. It describes the purposes, process, and structure of Action Learning Groups. 1 figures, 1 table, and 38 references.
H. Guide to Clinical Supervision.
L 3 P Associates.
2010
This tool provides a structure for supervisors to assess and support family centered practice in their staff. Three critical areas of family centered practice are addressed; family engagement, critical thinking and intentional visitation practices. (Author abstract)

I. Introduction to Family-Centered Practice: A Curriculum.
National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections.
2010
A curriculum is presented that was developed and reviewed by Indonesian social work faculty to promote family-centered practices in child welfare services. The curriculum includes four modules that address principles of permanency, family-centered assessment, family-centered care planning and participatory goal setting, and developing social work skills in family engagement. The first part of the guide lists curriculum competencies for each of the modules. The following sections contain information for presenting each of the four modules, including a facilitator's guide for conducting the training, handouts for participants, action plans for participants to fill out, and PowerPoint presentations. Numerous references.
http://www.nrcpfc.org/ifcpc/introduction.html

National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections.
2011
This toolkit is intended as an online tool for programs, states and tribes where promising practices, programs and resources are made available on family engagement, described in current research literature as a series of intentional interventions that work together in an integrated way to promote safety, permanency and well-being for children, youth and families. The toolkit can provide an opportunity to connect with colleagues and share program successes and challenges. For this toolkit, we have chosen a few examples and recognize that they are by no means the only programs using some of these principles and practices. Our goal is to continuously update this toolkit to reflect current practices and resources in the field and recognize programs and practices. (Author abstract modified)

North Carolina Division of Social Services.
2012
This practice guide draws on information gained from a research and assessment project by Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina that sought to identify key strategies for building the capacity and strength of North Carolina's fatherhood movement. The project involved
the completion of a literature review on best practices and evidenced-based programs, an environmental scan of key national and local resources, and interviews with key stakeholders. Simultaneously, PCANC convened the Fatherhood Policy Committee, consisting of key stakeholders within State and community agencies that have been active in fatherhood activities, to assess, discuss and translate the information and data collected, and make recommendations for advancing North Carolina's fatherhood efforts. The guide begins by explaining healthy father involvement as a protective factor for child well-being and healthy development, and that the following protective factors are linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect: social and emotional competence of children, knowledge of parenting and child development, parental resilience, social connections, concrete supports for parents, and nurturing and attachment.

Recommendations are then made for best practices for engaging fathers and non-residential parents at intake, during assessment, in in-home services, and in out-of-home services. Additional strategies are discussed for engaging incarcerated parents, multiple fathers, parents in the armed forces, families with a history of domestic violence, and same sex parents. Finally, a list of additional fathering resources is provided. An appendix includes an organizational check-list to assess father friendliness.


Pennell, Joan.
North Carolina State University. Center for Family and Community Engagement. 2010
This report explains the importance of child and family team (CFT) meetings for achieving family-centered practice in a system of care in North Carolina, the mission of child and family teams, and the development and implementation of CFT training. It explains the components of the curricula and the use of the curricula during 57 formal CFT trainings in 81 out of 100 counties in North Carolina. A total of 798 workers attended CFT trainings from July 2009 through May 2010. Additionally, 20 forums were provided to 183 participants and 34 technical assistance and learning support. For all five formal CFT curricula, a total of 761 participants completed the participant satisfaction form and nearly all favorably rated the content of the curricula, the trainer competence, and the utility of what they learned for their jobs. During the year, family partners co-trained 28 events, including 21 face-to-face introductory CFT trainings and 7 online facilitator forums. In addition, youth partners trained one formal event and one online forum. On a survey one week after the training event, 95% respondents reported that the information shared by the family partner trainer was valuable and likewise most planned to use what they learned on the job. Strategies used to adapt the curricula to respect family, community, and organizational cultures are discussed. 38 references.
**M. Interactional Helping Skills Model.**

*The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program CORE and Specialized and Related Curricula; 204.*

Krikston, Dan.
Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program.
2010

Part of the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, this curriculum is designed to be used to conduct a 6-hour workshop on the Interactional Helping Skills Model. The Interactional Helping Skills Model is presented as a way to engage and work with families to accomplish the mission of child welfare. The curriculum covers the four phase of the Interactional Helping Skills Model: the preliminary/preparatory phase and the associated skills of tuning in to self and others; the beginning/contracting phase and associated skills of clarifying purpose and role, dealing with issues of authority, and reaching for feedback; the middle/working phase and the associated skills of questioning, reaching inside of silences, and communicating information; and the ending/transition phase and the associated skills of summarization and formulating next steps.

The curriculum includes trainer directions for conducting the workshop, a summary of key concepts, handouts, a PowerPoint presentation, and overheads.

http://www.pacwcbt.pitt.edu/Curriculum/204%20Interactional%20Helping%20Skills%20Model.htm

**N. Engaging Parents in Child Welfare Services [PowerPoint Presentation].**

*Endowed Professor Lecture Series 2009-2010*

Marcenko, Maureen.
2010

These presentation slides provide information on parent needs and resilience in child welfare systems, the benefits of involving parents in developing services, and innovations in parent engagement. The slides emphasize the synergistic partnership between families, social workers, and researchers, identify criteria for determining whether there is parent engagement in programming, discuss the benefits of parent engagement for children in care, and describe the characteristics of parents in the child welfare system. Innovative programs for parent engagement are then highlighted and include: solution-based casework, parent mentoring, and parent-to-parent programs. Strategies for engaging parents in child mental health services are also explored.

**O. Engaging Latino Families/Entendiendo La Cultura Latina y Su Familia.**

*The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program CORE and Specialized and Related Curricula ; 307.*

Sherrid, Gale L.
Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program.
2009

This online curriculum is designed to be used for a one-day workshop for Pennsylvania child welfare professionals on engaging Latino families. Information is provided on: traditional Latino norms versus American mainstream norms, the effects of culture on
Research and Evaluation in Birth Parent Engagement

A. Early Findings From a Community-Based Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Program to Increase Family Engagement.

Special Issue: One Hundred Years of the U.S. Children's Bureau Professionalizing and Improving Child Welfare.
Marcynyszyn, Lyscha A. Maher, Erin J. Corwin, Tyler W. Uldricks, Jennifer C. Casey Family Programs.
2012
Journal of Public Child Welfare
6 (4) p. 531-549
This article describes the elements of Paths to Success (P2S) -- a Title IV-E waiver demonstration project designed to increase family engagement and reduce out-of-home placement through a professional staffing and collaboration model. We present the characteristics of families participating (N = 155), including their service needs, and findings from program and administrative data about adherence to the engagement strategies. Implications for refining P2S in the context of child welfare finance reform, and Title IV-E waivers in particular, are discussed. As the number of states able to obtain IV-E Waiver funds expands, this article serves as a timely contribution to those designing new waiver demonstrations and associated evaluations. (Author abstract)

B. Increasing Family Engagement in Early Childhood Programs.
Jor'dan, Jamilah R. Wolf, Kathy Goetz. Douglass, Anne.
2012
Young Children
37 (5) p. 18-23
This brief profiles the Strengthening Families Initiative (SFI) in Illinois and shares findings from an evaluation of early childhood programs that had been participating in the Illinois initiative for more than two years. The evaluation included review of parent and staff surveys, programs' completion of a survey instrument, interviews, and site visits, and asked what difference participation in SFI made. Respondents stated overwhelmingly that participation in Strengthening Families resulted in more and better-quality family involvement. Ninety-two percent found that being part of SFI helped them define and articulate their family engagement and family support efforts. Program staff described the following ways SFI helped them to be more effective in their family engagement efforts: increased parent involvement and attendance at family events and meetings;
increased parent-to-parent interactions and relationships; increased parent leadership; and improved parent/staff formal and informal communication. Elements of the initiative's success are identified and explained in the following five main areas: protective factors and Parent Cafes, a welcoming community and culture in the program, professional development makes the implicit explicit, commitment to the Strengthening Families program strategies, and tools to assist with implementation. 5 references.

http://www.strengtheningfamiliesillinois.org/mirror/downloads/NAEYC_Article_1112.pdf


Special Issue: Centennial of the Children's Bureau. Article 6.
University of Denver.
2012
Journal of Family Strengths
12 (1) p. 1-24
Parent partner mentoring programs are an innovative strategy for child welfare agencies to engage families in case planning and service delivery. These programs recruit and train parents who have been involved in the system and have successfully resolved identified child abuse or neglect issues to work with families with current open cases in the child welfare system. Parent partner mentors can provide social and emotional support, advocacy, and practical advice for navigating this challenging system. Insofar as parent partners share similar experiences, and cultural and socioeconomic characteristics of families, they may be more successful in engaging families and building trusting supportive relationships. The current study presents qualitative data from interviews and case studies of families who were matched with a parent partner in a large county in a Midwestern state. Interviews with families, parent partner mentors, child welfare agency staff, and community partners and providers suggest that parent partner programs may be just as beneficial for parent partner mentors as they are for families being mentored. These programs can build professional skills, help improve self-esteem, provide an avenue for social support, and may potentially prevent recidivism. Parent Partner programs also provide a mechanism for amplifying family voice at all levels of the agency. (Author abstract)

http://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1147&context=jfs

D. "They Treated Me Like a Real Person": Family Perspectives on Effective Engagement Strategies [Presentation Slides].

Fuller, Tamara. Paceley, Megan.
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Children and Family Research Center. 2011
Despite being a central concept of most family-centered service interventions, including Differential Response, very little is known about the best ways to engage families in child welfare services. The small amount of literature that exists typically focuses on engaging
families in mental health or substance abuse treatment, rather than the mandated or involuntary services often provided by child welfare. What little evidence has been collected within child welfare points to very low or uneven levels of parent engagement, even within interventions designed to encourage parent participation. This presentation highlighted the results of a qualitative study of family engagement strategies used by both DR caseworkers and investigators in Illinois. Individual interviews were conducted with approximately 40 caregivers who provided in-depth accounts of their experiences and responses. Responses were transcribed and analyzed to reveal those strategies that were most effective (and least effective) in making families feel engaged. (Author abstract)


2011
Child Welfare
90 (4) p. 117-134

This paper reports findings from practitioner-led research on engagement with families in the child protection system in Scotland. Engagement is here defined in a participative sense, to mean the involvement of family members in shaping social work processes. Key findings include the importance of workers building trusting relationships; the value of honest and clear communication, information, and explanation; and the potential for formal structures such as reports and meetings to hinder family engagement. These findings contribute to a growing critique of managerialism in social work. (Author abstract)


ICF International.

2011
Children and Youth Services Review
33 (7) p. 1212-1216


This paper examines the strategies and approaches child welfare agencies used to integrate meaningful family involvement into their service delivery systems, under the Children's Bureau Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care demonstration initiative. Through a series of retrospective interviews with child welfare agency staff, systems of care project staff, family members actively involved in implementing the systems of care initiative, and local program evaluators, researchers
investigated the family involvement planning and capacity building activities of child welfare agencies during the initiative's implementation. Findings indicate that child welfare agencies' capacity building efforts primarily centered on human resource development, focusing on three areas: program staffing, family engagement, and agency buy-in. These findings illustrate the importance of developing the capacity of child welfare agency staff and family members before fully implementing family involvement programs and activities. Although more research is needed to document the impact of family involvement, the lessons learned from these grant communities' experiences provide critical information and can inform development of policies and practices to help child welfare and other child- and family-serving systems promote and implement meaningful and sustainable family involvement. (Author abstract)

Morris, Kate. Connolly, Marie.
2010
Child Abuse Review
Over the past two decades, engaging families in decision-making has grown in popularity across child welfare systems internationally. The family group conference in particular has generated interest as a practice model that facilitates broader family engagement in care and protection. As the practice has flourished, research has been undertaken to strengthen the knowledge base and to support the introduction of family engagement strategies across jurisdictions. This paper examines the recent research relating to family involvement strategies in child welfare and explores the ways in which family involvement in decision-making can be incorporated into emerging protective practices.

Crea, Thomas M. Berzin, Stephanie C.
2009
Journal of Public Child Welfare
3 (3) p. 305-327
Child welfare practice has undergone significant shifts in the relationship between state agencies and families, with families increasingly being considered as partners in decision-making. An emerging body of research shows high family satisfaction with these approaches, but little outcome research currently exists. This article synthesizes practice and research literature on three predominant approaches to family involvement, Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM), Team Decision-Making (TDM), and Community Partnerships for Protecting Children (CPCC). We conclude with recommendations for future research, and for addressing the underlying values and ethics of family involvement. (Author abstract)
I. What Works For Parent Involvement Programs For Children: Lessons from Experimental Evaluations of Social Interventions.

Child Trends Fact Sheet; #2009-47.

Mbwana, Kassim. Terzian, Mary. Moore, Kristin A.
Child Trends.
2009

Child health and well-being are intrinsically important and also contribute to a healthy, productive adolescence and adulthood. Parents can play an important role in helping their children acquire or strengthen the behaviors, skills, attitudes, and motivation that promote physical and mental health and overall well-being in childhood, adolescence and well into their adulthood. Acknowledging this, a variety of programs and interventions engage parents in efforts to achieve one or more outcomes for their children: academic achievement and attendance; a reduction in internalizing behaviors such as depression and anxiety, a reduction in externalizing behaviors or acting out such as aggression or delinquent behaviors; an awareness, reduction, or avoidance of substance abuse; awareness or avoidance of risky sexual behavior; and achieving/maintaining health and fitness. In this Fact Sheet, Child Trends synthesizes the findings from 67 rigorous evaluations of parent involvement interventions for children ages 6-11 years old to identify the components and strategies associated with successful programs and interventions. Overall, programs that actively engage parents generally have positive impacts. These include parenting skills training programs (21 of 25 evaluated programs had positive impacts on at least one child outcome), parent-child involvement programs (15 of 18 had a positive impact), and programs that actively involved both parents and children (40 of 46 had a positive impact). However, parent education-only programs did not generally have impacts; only six of 19 had impacts on any child outcomes. On the other hand, most (10 of 12) programs that integrate technology into their interventions have positive impacts on at least one child outcome. (Author abstract)


Nilsen, Wendy J. Affronti, Melissa L. Coombes, Margaret L.
University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.
2009

Family Relations

58 (5) "Veteran parents" (VPs), or parents who have experienced challenges concerning their children's health and then mentor other families through similar situations, are widely used for parent support. This model has been adopted by Child Protective Services (CPS) to increase parent engagement. Here, we expand the theoretical discussion of VPs in CPS to address the unique challenges and implementation issues associated with maltreating families. We contend that this model, as originally evaluated in pediatrics, is compromised within CPS. VP programs in CPS will require the same rigorous investigation as other new programs. (Author abstract)