Bringing Evidence-Based Practice to Professional Development

Presentation at 2009 OSEP National Early Childhood Conference
Arlington, VA
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Presenters: Pam Winton, Virginia Buysse, & Beth Rous
(on behalf of CONNECT team)
CONNECT
The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge

A partnership between:

Funded by:
Who are we?

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CONNECT
Who Are You?

What Brings You to This Session?
Goals of Presentation

- EBP approach to professional development
- Share information about the CONNECT modules
- Answer questions about the modules and project
- Apply EBP approach to PD to your work
Focus on teacher quality and professional development
Focus on the quality of higher education programs and PD efforts
Faculty & PD providers as “knowledge mediators”
Early childhood teachers are not adequately prepared in preservice for serving children with disabilities.

- Chang, Early, & Winton, 2005
Graduate students in early childhood teacher preparation programs do not get adequate preparation on how to plan and implement professional development

- Maxwell, Lim, & Early, 2006
Challenges faced by faculty and PD providers
Challenges faced by faculty and PD providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Programs</th>
<th>All other departments within Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61.2 Students / FT Faculty</td>
<td>38.7 students / FT Faculty*</td>
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*source: Early and Winton, 2001

- Increasing faculty workload
- Shrinking resources
Practitioners, faculty and PD providers are expected to use evidence-based practice
What does evidence-based practice (EBP) mean?
identifying specific research-based practices that have been validated through a rigorous review process

Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, & Harris, 2005
A decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family & professional wisdom & values

Buysse & Wesley, 2006; Buysse, Wesley, Snyder, & Winton, 2006
Process for Making Evidence-Based Practice Decisions

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence (Research-based practices)
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation
Evidence-based Approach To Professional Development

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation

5-step Learning Cycle
Our Primary Target Audience

- Family faculty: n=12,375 (estimated)
- 4-year faculty
- 2-year faculty

Source: Maxwell, Lim, & Early, 2006
Secondary Audience

- Other professional development providers who reach a variety of learners (e.g., consultants, supervisors, etc.)
What PD Providers want

- FREE
- Flexibility & ease of use
- 24/7 availability
- Activities
- Short video clips that illustrate practice
Overview of CONNECT Modules
CONNECT Modules: An EBP Approach to PD

Learn about practices to solve dilemmas in early childhood settings

Videos, activities and narratives will guide you through a process to learn about serving children with disabilities effectively.

Read More About Connect Modules

RESOURCES
Library of videos, activities, handouts and supplemental materials

INSTRUCTORS
Instructor community and guides for module facilitation

LEARNERS
Web-based modules presented in a 5-step learning cycle
CONNECT Modules

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation

5-step Learning Cycle

- Adapted from evidence-based medicine
Step 1: Dilemma
Luke’s Story

Teacher’s Perspective (Jackie)

Family’s Perspective (Christine)
Step 2: Question

What interventions are effective in promoting learning in the area of communication development?
Putting the details into a chart may be helpful for you to identify the question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PICO</th>
<th>P Person (child or family of focus) or Program issue</th>
<th>I Interventions or practice(s) being considered</th>
<th>C Comparison to alternate Interventions (if applicable)</th>
<th>O Outcomes desired</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>Young children (2-3 yrs of age) Developmental delays in language &amp; social skills</td>
<td>Embedded interventions</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Luke will communicate his wants and needs to adults and peers; and he will participate in learning activities with peers</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Step 3: Evidence

- Best available research
- Related laws, policies & consensus statements
- Families’ experience-based knowledge
Video Example of Practice

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation
Policy Advisory
The Law on Inclusive Education

INCLUSION is the principle that supports the education of children with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers rather than separately. Both the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Sec. 504) require schools and agencies to provide equal educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Even more, Brown v. Board of Education held that separate was not equal, inclusion has been part of this requirement to provide equal educational opportunities. But the primary source for the inclusion requirement is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA. IDEA not only supports equal educational opportunities, it specifically requires schools to support inclusion of children with disabilities through the least restrictive and natural environment mandates. For preschool and school age children (ages 3-21), IDEA requires that children with disabilities be educated in the “least restrictive environment” (§1412[a][5] and §1413[a][1]). For infants and toddlers (ages 0-3) with disabilities, IDEA promotes the use of “natural environments” for early intervention services (§433[4][D]).

Why does federal law support inclusion in schools and services?

While inclusion is justified as part of equal educational opportunities in enacting IDEA (and in each subsequent revision of the law) Congress has also recognized the benefits of inclusion. Section §1400(5) of IDEA states:

“Almost 30 years of research and experience have demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be more effective by... ensuring their access to the general education curriculum in the regular classroom, to the maximum extent possible.”

In addition to the academic benefits of inclusion, courts have long recognized that there are non-academic benefits to inclusion that are important to the quality of life of children with disabilities—such as the opportunity to make friends and increase acceptance among their peers (Daniel R.R. v. State Bd. of Educ., 1989; Sacramento City Sch. Dist. v. Richard J. 1996). Federal law recognizes and protects the educational, and social benefits that inclusion provides to children with disabilities.

How does federal law define inclusion and what does it involve?

Inclusion is not specifically defined in the law, but is supported through the equal opportunity, least restrictive and natural environment mandates. Together these requirements support inclusion in three areas: placement of the child with children who do not have disabilities, access to the standard educational or developmental curriculum, and participation in typical non-academic activities.

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) have developed a joint position statement on early childhood inclusion. For more information on that definition and specifics on access, participation and supports for inclusion, visit http://community.tfg.unc.edu

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation
Research Summary on Embedded Interventions

Researchers at the University of Florida analyzed 36 research studies on embedded interventions. They wanted to find out the following:

- How the practice was defined across different studies.
- Who implemented the practice and in what type of settings.
- What the characteristics of the children were and whether the practice was beneficial for young children.

Here is what the researchers learned.

How was the practice of embedding interventions defined?

Embedded interventions are teaching strategies that address a specific learning goal within the context of everyday activities, routines, and transitions at home, at school, or in the community. Terms such as routines-based interventions, embedded instruction, or embedded learning are used to mean the same thing.

Who implemented embedded interventions and in what type of settings?

Almost half of the people implementing embedded interventions were preschool teachers. Others were assistant teachers and graduate students. The interventions were implemented in a variety of early childhood settings including preschool classrooms, early childhood special education classrooms, community-based childcare programs, and Head Start.

What were the characteristics of the children who participated in the research?

About two-thirds of the children were boys. The children ranged in age from 2-7 years of age. About one-half of the children had some type of developmental delay. The remaining children had speech-language delays, Autism, or Down syndrome.
Parents Speak Out
Partnering with Families on Embedded Interventions

In a conversation with Christine, a mother of a child with developmental delays, family leaders from across the nation provide their views on embedded interventions and building partnerships.

Perceptions of Teachers That Some Parents Are Extremely Demanding

"Most of the [community college] students that I work with share the feeling of the teacher [Jackie] in this module. They have limited experience and education with working with children with special needs. They come to [my community college] class with many questions. They describe some of the parents to be extremely demanding with concerns for their children."

--Lisa Stein, parent & community college faculty

Families’ Perceptions About How to Get Their Idea Across

"After reading Lisa Stein’s comments on her [community college] students talking about the ‘extremely demanding’ parents, it brought back concerns I had initially after my son was enrolled in his program. I immediately felt push-back from his teachers when I encouraged certain embedded interventions to be used in the classroom, or trying to explain that my son was ready to be challenged in new ways. I didn’t want to be perceived as the demanding parent, and I wanted to develop a good relationship with his teachers.

“...But it seemed like the expectations that I had for Luke and what the teachers had just didn’t line up. They talked about things like what is ‘developmentally appropriate,’ while I talked about what Luke was actually doing and showing an interest in at home.

“I must confess that I haven’t done anything to change the situation. If I get push back on ideas now, I generally nod my head, and then work on that skill with my son at home. For example, most recently, I shared that my son was expressing interest in the alphabet. I thought that encouraging letter recognition could help engage my son in a variety of activities, like reading, making verbal sounds, etc. I was told that it was too early to introduce letters, and that they’ll do that next semester. So I worked on it at home. One month later my son knew all his letters. Daily we engage in verbal play (sounding out words) by pointing out the letters and sounding out words.”

--Christine Lindauer, student

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (leading professional organization of early childhood educators) NAEYC is rethinking developmentally appropriate. The idea of a developmentally appropriate is no longer what is possible. In just one month, students are already doing what was once thought impossible."

--Cherie Takekoma, student

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation
Evidence-Based Practice Decision-Making Tool

Evidence
- Research
- Consensus statements & policies
- Experience-based knowledge

Unique Perspectives & Contexts of the Dilemma

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Reflection
Step 3: Content
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation

Integrate

Decision
Step 5: Evaluation

- What information would you gather to evaluate whether the practice was implemented as designed?
- What information would you gather to evaluate the results of the intervention?
- How will that information be used to make adjustments and identify next steps?
Module 1: Embedded Interventions

Learning Objectives

1. Explain what is meant by embedded interventions to promote participation in inclusive settings.
2. Use a decision-making process to help a child participate more fully in an inclusive setting through embedded interventions.

Module 1 Dashboard

Five-Step Learning Cycle

Step 1 Dilemma >
- Description

Step 2 Question >
- Description

Step 3 Evidence >
- Description

Step 4 Decision >
- Description

Step 5 Evaluation >
- Description

Module 1 Resources

- Glossary
- Activities
- Audio
- Handouts
- Videos
Best Available Research on Adult Learning

- Focus on realistic problems
- Relevance & quality of content
- Emphasis on a decision-making process
- Learner feedback & evaluation

(Dunst & Trivette, 2009; Trivette 2005; Wei, Darling-Hammond et al, 2009)
Instructors’ Guide

- Alignment with national personnel standards (CEC/DEC and NAEYC)
- Alignment with US Dept of ED OSEP Annual Performance Report
- Facilitation tips
- Strategies for assessing learners
Design Features: “Faculty Lounge”

Comment on additional guideline

Posted by Johnna Darragh at Feb 05, 2009

Thanks for the opportunity to review--I found the guidelines very comprehensive and well-developed. The only add on suggestion that I had pertained to demonstrating diversity in professional roles...there is a broad range of target audiences listed, and an overt inclusion of this as a guideline could ensure that the modules "speak to" the broad array of professionals who could benefit from the materials.

Comment on additional guideline

Posted by Pam Winton at Feb 06, 2009

So true Johnna...we are striving to incorporate ways to engage a variety of learners at different levels (and we hope you all can help with this) and guidelines need to make that explicit. Thanks

Feedback

Posted by Christine Myers at Feb 06, 2009

I think this is very comprehensive, I just had a couple comments. First, under E-learning/Accessibility, you might add "at a variety of font sizes" to "Materials and module components are readable on the screen". I have had this be an issue when I teach online. Also, I see learner reflection mentioned in Family-Centereded practices and collaboration, but not under Instructional Design. Perhaps you could be a little more specific and add something about "Opportunities for learners to reflect on application of the practice" instead of just addressing feedback. This may help to close the loop for practitioners. Christine
Variety of PD Contexts

- Coursework
- Practice
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Consultation
- Supervision
Ways Faculty, PD Providers and Learners Might Access the Modules

- Online
- Face to face
- Hybrid
Evidence-Based Practice Decision-Making

- Step 1: Dilemma
- Step 2: Question
- Step 3: Evidence
- Step 4: Decision
- Step 5: Evaluation

- Diversity
- Transition
- Family-Professional Partnership
- Assistive Technology
- Step 1: Dilemma
- Step 2: Question
- Step 3: Evidence
- Step 4: Decision
- Step 5: Evaluation

- Challenging behaviors
- Teacher-child interaction
- Socioemotional development
- Collaboration
- Family support
- Family support
Next Modules

- Family-Professional Partnerships
- Transition
Module Development Timeline 2009-2010

2009

- Aug: Module 1 Usability Test
- Sep: Phased roll-out of Module 1
- Oct: Module 1 Pilot Study
- Nov: Revision of Module 1
- Dec: Spanish translation of key Module 1 resources

- Jan: Module 2: Family-Professional Partnerships
- Feb: Release Module 1 ver.1.1
- Mar: Mod 2-3 Usability Test
- Apr: Release Modules 2 & 3
- May: Mod 4-5 Usability Test
- Jun: Release Modules 4-5
- Jul: Module 5
- Aug: Module 6
- Sep: Module 7
- Oct: Identify topics for Modules 5-7 & Approval by OSEP
- Nov: Ongoing web monitoring and random survey of users
- Dec: Phased roll-out of Module 1
Practical, Creative, Strategic, Informative & Reflective - CONNECT

Posted by Erin Speer Smith at Oct 27, 2009 | Permalink

What do you think about CONNECT's Module 1?

If you haven't had a chance to view the recently released preview of CONNECT's Module 1, you've got to check it out! I was very excited to have the opportunity to preview it and was really excited about the design of the module. CONNECT's five steps lead adults through the process of making informed, evidence-based decisions. The situations (dilemmas) were realistic to what practitioners face each day when working with children with differing abilities and their families. The modules take the learner beyond just the situation at hand and into figuring out how to form a question and providing specific resources that relate to this question and situation that can help lead to a decision. Everything from research, to policies, to the personal stories of children and their families, the learner is able to review and synthesize this information to help formulate an informed decision. Most importantly, in my mind at least, is the opportunity to reflect and assess the process and decision. Video clips, summaries, and activities make CONNECT modules easy and practical to use in a variety of professional development situations and appropriate for all sorts of different learning types.

I am fortunate to have the opportunity to work with the 58 Community Colleges in North Carolina, all of which have Early Childhood Education Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees. I certainly will be getting the word out to my fellow Early Educator faculty colleagues across the state about this resource so that they might consider embedding some of the CONNECT resources and modules within their coursework. They will likely all appreciate the CONNECT instructor guide to assist them when using these materials too!
Pilot Study- Spring Semester 2010

- 2-year and 4-year faculty teaching undergraduate course in Spring 2010
- Can embed Module 1 in coursework

Preview module & sign up to participate in the pilot:
http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules/preview
Discussion

- How could you use the modules?
- How might you use an EBP approach to PD?
- How would you use an EBP approach to developing PD curricula?
Module Development, Dissemination, and Evaluation Steps

- Identify needs
- Find, assess & select resources
- Develop useful, relevant, & high quality modules
- Make available
- Evaluate
Resources used in Module 1*

**OSEP-funded projects: 69% (34% excluding those produced by CONNECT)**

n=26

*The above resources include video clips, documents, and research syntheses but not photos.
Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance

- CONNECT Rubrics
  - Content
  - Process / Design
  - Evidence-based Practice
  - Mirror OSEP Program Evaluation Guidelines
Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance

- CONNECT Rubrics
- Panels of key stakeholders
Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance

- CONNECT Rubrics
- Panels of key stakeholders
- Usability Studies
Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance

- CONNECT Rubrics
- Panels of key stakeholders
- Usability Studies

WE NEED YOU:
- Faculty lounge & other activities
Module Enhancement Panel

Graduate Faculty:
- Faculty teaching a graduate level course in Spring 2010

PD Providers:
- Non-faculty who are providing PD in Spring 2010

Preview module & sign up to be part of the Module Enhancement Panel:
http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules/preview
Module Development, Dissemination, and Evaluation Steps

- Identify needs
- Find, assess & select resources
- Develop useful, relevant, & high quality modules
- Make available
- Evaluate

Refine, share, and build knowledge base

Adapt for learning context

Implementation Sequence for PD providers

Monitor and evaluate learner outcomes

Implement with fidelity to CONNECT learning cycle
HELP NEEDED

Can you help share information about the modules?
Thank You from all of us at CONNECT