

Leadership Strategies

for Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Development
and Addressing Challenging Behavior



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**The Center on the Social and Emotional
Foundations for Early Learning**



**Administration for
Children & Families**



**Child Care
Bureau**



**Head Start
Bureau**

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Learner Objectives

- Participants will identify common challenges to implementing evidence-based practices in local programs.
- Participants will identify at least one strategy to remedy each challenge.
- Participants will practice developing program policies and staff development plans to promote the sustained use of evidence-based practices.
- Participants will identify steps to collaborative planning for programs and systems that support all young children's social and emotional development and provide evidence-based interventions for children's challenging behavior.

Suggested Agenda

- | | | |
|-------------|--|-----------|
| I. | Introduction and Activities | (40 min.) |
| | A. Reflective Questionnaire | |
| | B. Purpose of the Workshop | |
| II. | Overview of the Session | (45 min.) |
| | A. Agenda Review and Learner Objectives | |
| | B. Link between Administration and Child and Family Outcomes | |
| | C. Philosophy and Terminology | |
| | D. Evidence-Based Practice | |
| III. | Leadership and Collaboration | (90 min.) |
| | A. Review | |
| | B. Roles for Leadership | |
| | C. Challenges to Evidence-Based Practices | |
| | D. Collaborative Planning Model | |
| | E. Action Planning | |
| | F. Resources | |
| IV. | Take-Home Activity | (10 min.) |

Materials Needed

- Agenda
- Powerpoint Slides or Overheads
- Handout 4.1 Powerpoint Overhead Handout for Each Participant
- Handout 4.2 Participant's Workbook
 - Reflection Questionnaire
 - Challenges
 - Strategies
 - Action Planning Steps and Forms
 - Take-Home Activities
- Handout 4.3 Guiding Principles and Definitions
- Handout 4.4 DEC Concept Paper on the Identification of and Intervention with Challenging Behavior
- Handout 4.5 List of Resources
- Handout 4.6 Collaborative Planning Model
- Handout 4.7 Administrator's Essentials
- Session Evaluation Form (H4.SE)

Please go to <http://www.csefel.uiuc.edu> for several other resources pertinent to Module 4.

I. Introduction and Activities

(40 minutes)



(Handouts 4.2)



A. Reflective Questionnaire

Put up Slide 1. Introduce yourself and, if there are not too many people, ask them to introduce themselves, etc. Otherwise, ask for a show of hands of roles: for example, program director, supervisor, coordinator, trainer/mentor, family member, teacher, other.

Ask the participants to take 5 minutes and complete the **reflective questionnaire** on their beliefs related to social/emotional development and behavior in young children that is in their “Participant’s Workbook” (**Handout 4.2**).

Ask them to maintain quiet even after they have finished.

Thank everyone for completing the questionnaire and tell them they can keep the questionnaire. Explain that this exercise was designed to help them quiet their busy minds and to take advantage of the luxury they have today to focus on one topic—children’s social and emotional development and challenging behaviors—rather than on the myriad of crises program leaders must deal with daily.

B. Purpose of the Workshop

Put up Slide 2. Go over the purpose of the workshop, which includes the Learning Objectives, but also includes:

- Having the time to focus and reflect on one issue or topic;
- Learning some efficient ways to think about issues and some strategies, tools, and resources to take back to help them “work smart” on the topic of supporting social/emotional development and challenging behavior;
- Clarifying the concept of “evidence-based practices” and learning where to access information about them.

II. Overview of the Session (45 minutes)

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A. Agenda Review and Learner Objectives

Put up **Slide 3** of the agenda for the time together and go over it.

Put up **Slide 4** of the learner objectives and go over them.

B. Link between Administration and Child and Family Outcomes

Put up **Slides 5 and 6**, entitled the “Link between Program Administration and Child and Family Outcomes.”

Read the quotes about the link between administrative infrastructure, high-quality (evidence-based) practices, and child and family outcomes.

Ask the group why and how child and family outcomes are affected by the program’s administrative policies and procedures.

Slide 7 talks about the notion of “indirect supports,” like administrative policies and training, being essential to “direct-services.”

For teachers to provide evidence-based direct services to children, administrators must provide the infrastructure or “indirect supports” like training and good working conditions.

Ask for an example of an “indirect support” for a “direct service.”

Continue the discussion about these important links.

If the audience doesn’t mention these, make sure you cover the following point. The ability of direct service personnel to provide high-quality, evidence-based practices is driven by:

- the tone/vision of the leadership,
- the training, TA, coaching, and supervision provided to them,
- how the programs resources are used,
- their job descriptions, e.g., the job descriptions include

8



(Handout 4.3)

9



(Handout 4.4)



time for planning and collaboration, etc.

C. Philosophy and Terminology

Put up **Slide 8** and have the participants look at **Handout 4.3**, entitled “Guiding Principles and Definitions.”

Talk about the terms and philosophical foundations for this module and for the Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL), as reflected in the handout.

Conduct the activity that is on **Slide 9** and in **Handout 4.4 (20 minutes)**.

Ask one-third of the room/tables to read the first section of the DEC concept paper (in their packets) “Many young children engage in....”

Ask one-third to read the second section “DEC believes strongly that many types of services....”

Ask one-third to read the last section “DEC believes strongly that families....”

Then ask them to discuss their sections with their small group.

Have them appoint one person to report to the group: “One important concept or idea.” **After 10 minutes, take 10 minutes for reports—stop after 10 minutes** even if everyone has not had a chance to report.

Be prepared to show the link between the CSEFEL principles and the concepts in the DEC paper.

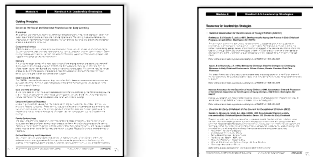
Talk about how these concepts relate to the guiding principles and the terms/concepts discussed so far, especially the CSEFEL guiding principles.

Review definitions of “challenging behaviors.” Point out that a key component in a working definition should be that the child is not blamed and the focus should be on the effect of the behavior on learning and social development. Definitions offered in CSEFEL and the

10-12

13

14



(Handouts 4.3 & 4.5)

DEC concept paper speak to the range of behaviors that may be perceived as “challenging.”

Put up **Slides 10-12**. Refer to the importance for early childhood programs to have a continuum of approaches from promoting social/emotional well-being and building positive relationships in all the children to intensive interventions for a few.

Show the next slide (**Slide 13**) and go over the notion of thinking about the practices in the program from universal (for all children and families) to intensive interventions (for only a few). Note that classroom strategies targeted at prevention or minor challenging behavior fall between these two ends.

Ask the group for examples of all four levels

- universal/promotional,
- prevention,
- social/emotional teaching strategies,
- intensive intervention.

D. Evidenced-Based Practice

(**Slide 14**) relates to the term “evidence-based practices.”

Talk about the fact that there are numerous approaches to children’s mental health or social/emotional and behavioral development.

However, to be a good consumer and to help ensure that children receive the best services and that resources (**Handouts 4.3; 4.5**) are being used wisely, program leaders need to be able to select those that have evidence that they work.

CSEFEL and the Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behaviors (funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs) are based on this commitment. Their Web site addresses are on the list of resources.

The Center for Evidence-Based Practice has developed research syntheses on effective services, systems, and service utilization. CSEFEL has developed What Works

15

16-19

17-19

Briefs based on evidence-based practices. These materials are on their Web sites.

Note that you will discuss the Centers more at the end of the workshop, and that there is a growing trend in the fields of education, mental health, and early childhood to be evidence-based.

Slide 15 introduces the fact that the Center for Evidence-Based Practices: Young Children with Challenging Behaviors has synthesized the literature on what the evidence is for effective services and systems/programs for young children with challenging behavior.

Slides 16-19 contain the definitions used in the literature synthesis about systems (important: systems were not defined as individual federal programs or funding streams, e.g., Medicaid, Head Start, etc.). Slide 16 defines a service system as an "...interdependent group of items (e.g., funding streams, programs) forming a whole." A system of services is defined as "...system (unified whole) of programs/resources/policies/services (federal, state, local, program level) that impact positively on children's social-emotional development and behavior."

Slides 17, 18, and 19 all contain the recommendations from the literature synthesis for systems that would support young children's social/emotional development and address challenging behavior through evidence-based practices. Several recommendations include:

- Systems must provide a range or continuum of service from promotion to prevention to intervention.
- Systems must provide a comprehensive array of services. Services must be individualized related to child and family needs, culture, and language.
- The "systems of care" concept used in mental health offers promising guidelines and refers to the weaving together of multiple existing services or programs into a cohesive, collaborative system.
- They should be family-centered and include both child-

18

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III. Leadership and Collaboration (90 minutes)

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focused services and family supports.

- Personnel need the resources and working conditions to provide evidence-based services.

Note that a very important point that you will return to at the end of the workshop is the “system of care” recommendation (**Slide 18**, point c in #4 in outline). See the Synthesis at <http://www.challengingbehavior.org>.

Conduct the activity on **Slide 20**.

Let participants spend 5 minutes discussing the question.

Ask for a few key issues raised in their discussion (**5 minutes**).

Share with large group.

A. Review

Put up **Slide 21** and summarize the material covered thus far.

B. Roles for Leadership

Go over the roles of effective program leadership (**Slide 22**).

- Set tone and vision
- Ensure child well-being and progress
- Ensure compliance with requirements

23-24



(Handout 4.7)

25-27

28

- Establish fiscal, administrative, and personnel procedures
- Other?

Utilizing **Slides 23-29**, discuss each role (points 2a – 2e in outline) and the evidence-based practices associated with it. The link between the program leader's role in high-quality, evidence-based practices and children's social/emotional development and challenging behavior is the theme throughout the session.

Setting the tone: Slides 23 & 24.

Distribute the “**Administrator's Essentials**” paper (**Handout 4.7**) and go over it. Ask whether there are examples of these responsibilities that people want to share or whether there are other roles that are not incorporated in these slides.

Ensuring Child Well-Being and Progress:

Slide 25, 26, & 27. Review the resources related to evidence-based, high-quality standards and recommendations that are listed on the resource sheet (What Works Briefs and other resources from the Web sites of CSEFEL and the Center on Evidence-Based Practice, DEC Recommended Practices, NAEYC Accreditation Criteria, etc.). Ask whether there are examples of these responsibilities that people want to share or whether there are other roles that are not incorporated in these slides.

Compliance: Slide 28.

Head Start Performance Standards (regarding the definition of emotional/behavioral disorders). Ask if people are aware of the IDEA requirements related to children with disabilities/IEPs who exhibit challenging behavior. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has a downloadable or for-purchase booklet on these

29

requirements (IDEA Requirements for Preschoolers with Disabilities, Policy and Practice Guides); the information is on the list of resources (Walsh, Smith, & Taylor, 2000). Ask whether there are examples of these responsibilities that people want to share or whether there are other roles that are not incorporated in these slides.

Establishing Fiscal, Administrative, and Personnel Procedures: Slide 29. Review these procedures and then review the Administrator's Essentials checklist. This checklist is drawn from the DEC Recommended Practices (Sandall et al., 2000), which is a set of recommended practices drawn from a synthesis of the research literature as well as focus groups of parents, teachers, administrators, and researchers. Although the checklist focuses on early intervention and early childhood special education, it encompasses the role of the administrator in any early childhood program that is striving to be evidence-based and provide high-quality services. This checklist is free from the DEC Web site, which is on the list of resources. Similar categories of practices are found in the NAEYC Program Accreditation Criteria and Procedures, which is also on the list of resources. Ask whether there are examples of these responsibilities that people want to share or whether there are other roles that are not incorporated in these slides.

30

C. Challenges to Evidence-Based Practices

(40 minutes)

1. Focus groups of administrators, teachers, family members, and training and technical assistance (T/TA) providers have been held over the past year to find out what the challenges are to providing evidence-based services to young children and what some strategies might be to overcome these challenges. Discuss the summaries of the focus group findings and the general categories of challenges on **Slide 30**.
 - a. Lack of knowledge of evidence-based practices; where to get this information; and how to ensure that trainers, consultants, and supervisors are providing information and guidance that is based on evidence

(continued)

that the practice works

- b. Beliefs/attitudes about children, behavior, their families, and attitudes about philosophies and certain practices
- c. Lack of adequate fiscal resources and procedures, such as not enough money for on-site technical assistance (TA) or providing substitute teachers while staff go to training; fiscal procedures such as insurance or Medicaid reimbursement procedures that do not allow for adequate service or family support approaches
- d. Lack of collaboration within programs, with families, and within the community, including the need for all stakeholders to be involved in decision making about practices, procedures, and individual child planning (e.g., families, teachers, administrators); as well as the need to collaborate at the community-wide level to address evidence-based practices, fill in gaps in services, reduce duplication, and share limited resources such as shared training events, etc.



(Handout 4.2)



Put up **Slide 31**. Review the challenges and strategies sheets in the Participant's Workbook (**Handout 4.2**) with the group. Ask participants to complete the activity on **Slide 31 (10 minutes)**.

Assign each table one of the four categories of challenges.

Ask them to write the challenge and at least one strategy to address it on the flip chart.

After 10 minutes, ask for a couple of samples of strategies the groups came up with (**take only about 5**



(Handout 4.6)



minutes for this step).

Tell the participants that they can walk around at the end of the workshop and read the flip charts; they may get some good ideas about strategies to take back home.

D. Collaborative Planning Model (35 minutes)

Review **Slide 32** and the reasons for collaborative planning.

- “Many heads are better than one”
- “Stakeholder ownership and commitment
- Shared beliefs, values, and understanding

The “Collaborative Planning Model” (**Handout 4.6**) is based on over 15 years of work with programs and communities and on the literature on effective program and system planning.

Review with the group the steps of the “Collaborative Planning Model” (**Handout 4.6; Slides 33-35**) and the sheet explaining each step that is in the handout on the model. It is important to go over each step so that there is clear understanding of each of the components of the model.

Slide 33: Make the commitment and provide leadership.

Slide 33: Build commitment among stakeholders through information and experiences.

Slide 34: Build leadership and commitment through team decision-making.

Slide 34: Build a vision with the stakeholders team of supporting children’s social-emotional development

Slide 34: Identify challenges to vision with the team.

Slide 35: Engage in action planning with the team.

Slide 35: Continue to build and expand the commitment.

Slide 35: Continuously evaluate the process and the outcomes of the collaboration and action planning.

(continued)

36

37-39



(Handout 4.2)

Recalling Slide 18, the “system of care” recommendation from the synthesis of literature, the Collaborative Planning Model would be a strategy for advancing that notion in the community. The Hayden et al. book that is listed on the list of Resources describes step-by-step activities that several communities have used in collaborative planning to achieve community, coordinated early childhood systems and services.

Go over **Slide 36**, the flowchart for a collaboration model.

E. Action Planning

Put up **Slide 37**. Talk about the action planning steps in particular (**Slides 37-40**) and the materials in the Participant’s Workbook (**Handout 4.2**) related to action planning. Again, go over each step.

Slide 38: List the challenges that emerge from brainstorming.

Slide 38: Transfer to Action Planning Form

Slide 38: If a challenge is believed to be a written policy or procedure...Get a copy! It has been our experience that in nearly all cases where a policy was thought to be a challenge, once the planning group obtained a written copy of the policy itself, it was more flexible than they had thought it was and, therefore, was not the challenge. Rather the perception of the policy was the challenge (or beliefs or attitudes). Therefore, do not rely on someone else’s interpretation of a policy; they may have never read it either!

Slide 39: Identifying strategies will include:



(Handout 4.2)



Individual or team exercise



(Handout 4.5)

- Establishing criteria for trying possible strategies
 - Brainstorming this statement: “we could remedy this challenge by...”
 - Selecting strategies from the brainstorming.
 - Transferring to the Action Planning Form.
- Slide 40:** This is the **Action Planning Form** from **Handout 4.2**.

Ask the group to do the **Activity on Slide 41** as individuals or, if they have a partner from their program, ask them to work with a partner (also described in the Participant’s Workbook (**Handout 4.2**) (**20 minutes**)). They should take this work home to facilitate their continued work on action planning to overcome challenges to evidence-based practice.

Identify two challenges to using evidence-based practices that are related to an administrative/fiscal issue and a skill development/supervision issue.

Identify a strategy for each of the two challenges.

Name team members for action planning.

Draft an Action Plan for both challenges (in **Handout 4.2** “Participant’s Workbook”).

F. Resources for Evidence Based Practices (5 minutes)

- 1. Review the list of resources (Slide 42 and Handout 4.5)** and the activities of the two Centers to promote the use of evidence-based practices:

CSEFEL: What Works Briefs and partnerships with national associations such as NAEYC, NACCRRA, etc., including collaborative training events all over the country with these associations and with the Center for Evidence-Based Practices (check the Web site for more information).

Center for Evidence-Based Practices: Young Children with Challenging Behavior: syntheses of the evidence

IV. Take-Home Activity (10 minutes)



(Handout 4.2)

supporting services/practices and systems; research on effective/evidence-based practices; partnering with national associations such as NAEYC, DEC, NACCRRA, NHSA, etc.; and collaborative training events with CSEFEL and these associations (check out the Web sites for more information on these activities).

A. Put up Slide 43.

Ask the participants to begin the take-home activity, which is described in the Participant's Workbook **(Handout 4.2)**.

Reflect on implementing the Collaborative Planning Model in your community with the goal of planning a system of care for young children.

Write who should be on the team.

Write how you might get started.