2009 Annual Meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Child Care Bureau
Office of Family Assistance
Administration for Children and Families

OPRE
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Administration for Children and Families
Assessing and Measuring Readiness for Change: Potential Applications to Quality Initiatives for Home-Based Child Care

October 30, 2009

Presentation at the 2009 CCPRC Annual Meeting
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Overview of the Presentation

- Characteristics of home-based caregivers
- Initiatives to support quality in home-based care
- Potential applications of readiness-to-change concepts that could strengthen quality initiatives for home-based child care
Characteristics of Home-Based Caregivers

- Includes regulated and exempt caregivers; most are relatives.
- Ages vary—most caregivers in mid-40s.
- Most caregivers have low incomes.
- Family, friend, and neighbor caregivers tend to share same race/ethnicity and home language as parents and children.
- Family child care providers are more likely to have a high school degree.
Motivations and Challenges Faced by Home-Based Caregivers

- Motivation for family, friend, and neighbor caregivers: help the family or keep child care within the family

- Motivation for family child care providers: earn income; stay home with own children

- Challenges of home-based caregivers:
  - Social isolation
  - Work-related stress and physical exhaustion
  - Conflicts with parents—childrearing styles, scheduling, payment, lack of respect for professional status
Recent national scan identified 90 recent or ongoing initiatives in all 50 states

Primary goals of initiatives:
- Quality improvement (72)
- Support for licensing or registration (9)
- Support for obtaining accreditation (5)
- Certificate program or college credit or CDA (4)
Initiatives to Support Quality in Home-Based Care: Strategies

- **Primary service delivery strategies:**
  - **High intensity:** home visiting (17), coaching and consultation (10), professional development through formal education (2)
  - **Moderate intensity:** workshops (46) play and learn groups (6), peer support (4)
  - **Low intensity:** materials and mailings (5), grants to caregivers (2), mobile reading vans (2)

- **Most initiatives combine strategies**
  - Core and supplemental services
  - Menu or continuum
No one size fits all.
  - Need for targeting and tailoring

Caregivers are more likely to enroll in programs that address their interests/needs.
  - Many examples of mismatches

Initiatives should be based on logic models with expected outcomes linked to program content and intensity.
  - Many initiatives not well specified.
  - Outcomes not realistic given dosage and resources.
Potential Applications of Readiness-to-Change Concept

- A screening tool
- A tool for targeting and tailoring
- A tool for motivation and sustaining participation
- A framework for staff supervision and development
Potential Applications: A Screening Tool

- For an intensive program that requires behavior change, use as a screening tool to identify motivated caregivers.
  - Coaching and consultation
  - Home visits
  - Formal education

- Screen caregivers not ready to change into lower intensity services that may prepare them for change before investing more resources.
  - Peer support groups and social interactions
  - Materials and equipment to improve environment
  - Reading vans
Potential Applications: Targeting and Tailoring

- For programs offering a continuum of services, use to place applicants in the appropriate track.
  - Not ready to change: low intensity such as grants, materials, mobile vans
  - Ready to change: high intensity: home visiting, coaching/consultation, formal education
  - Maintenance: access to peer support, professional development, support for accreditation

- Use as a factor for identifying target outcomes and services from a menu.
  - Relationship to children in care, motivation, interest in professionalization, education, regulation status, needs, readiness-to-change
Use incentives to move caregivers along the readiness continuum.
  – Informational incentives
  – Financial incentives
  – Social incentives
  – Public and professional recognition
Potential Applications: Staff Supervision and Development

- Train staff to assess and reassess caregivers’ readiness to change.
- Help staff in targeting services to caregivers’ readiness to change.
- Help staff identify appropriate strategies for motivating participation of caregivers at each stage in the continuum.
- Train staff to support caregivers in maintaining change.
- Identify skills needed to effectively work with caregivers at different levels of readiness.
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