

QIC-EC Newsletter, February 2010

Request for Research and Demonstration Proposals

On October 1, 2009, the QIC-EC released its Request for Proposals for Research and Demonstration Projects that will implement and evaluate rigorous approaches to preventing child maltreatment, increasing family strengths, and promoting optimal development among infants and young children. Organizations were invited to submit a Letter of Interest by November 9.

We received 120 Letters of Interest, and of these 52 were invited to submit a full proposal. These were due on January 19, 2010, and reviewers will meet in February to select three to five proposals for funding. These projects will have 40 months to implement their research projects, with the QIC-EC providing ongoing support and technical assistance.

Coming Soon!

The QIC-EC will disseminate a Request for Proposals (RFP) for dissertation support. The QIC-EC will support up to four two-year dissertation research awards to advanced level doctoral students conducting research that focuses on preventing the abuse or neglect of infants and young children - including those impacted by HIV/AIDS, substance abuse or abandonment - and promoting child and family well-being. The awards will be for \$25,000 for each of the two years. The RFP will be released in early 2010.

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About the QIC-EC Partners

The Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood (QIC-EC) is a five-year project to generate and disseminate new knowledge and robust evidence about programs and strategies that contribute to child maltreatment prevention and optimal development for infants and young children (0-5) and their families, including those impacted by HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, or abandonment. A service of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, USDHHS, the QIC-EC was awarded to the Center for the Study of Social Policy, partnering with ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families and the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds.

The **Center for the Study of Social Policy** (CSSP) is a non-profit, nonpartisan, research and technical assistance organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. CSSP's mission is to promote public policies and practices that improve the lives of children by strengthening their families, their communities and the public systems intended to serve them. Founded in the late 1970s, CSSP has a strong record of assisting state, local and federal leaders interested in improving opportunities and outcomes for children. CSSP's initiatives are informed by data, research and CSSP's extensive on-the-ground work with communities and states. Find information and resources from CSSP at www.cssp.org.

Center
for the
Study
of
Social
Policy

ZERO TO THREE's organizational mission is to pro-

mote the health and development of infants and toddlers. This is accomplished by translating research and knowledge – specifically information about the kinds of early experiences that help children thrive – into a range of practical tools and resources for use by the adults who influence the lives of young children. ZERO TO THREE's work is designed to meet three major goals: train professionals and build networks of leaders, raise public awareness of early childhood issues, and influence policies and practice. Visit ZERO TO THREE's website at www.zerotothree.org and watch a short video about their work.



The **National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds** initiates and engages in national efforts that help State Children's Trust and Prevention Funds in strengthening families to prevent child abuse and neglect. The Alliance promotes and supports a system of services, laws, practices and attitudes that supports families by enabling them to provide their children with safe, healthy and nurturing childhoods. For more information about the Alliance visit www.ctfalliance.org.



The QIC-EC strives to gain information and input from a broad range of sources; to disseminate new knowledge to professionals in early childhood, child welfare, family support, and other fields, as well as community and family members; and to incorporate feedback from these audiences into the ongoing work of the QIC-EC.

The QIC-EC Learning Network

One of the ways the QIC-EC disseminates new knowledge is through the **Learning Network**. The role of the Learning Network is to ensure that organizations actively involved in prevention and promotion efforts have an avenue to share, receive, and incorporate new knowledge into their work. Learning Network members have the opportunity to learn first-hand about new knowledge the QIC-EC is generating so it can be readily communicated to their organization's constituencies. Learning Network members have the opportunity to provide input and insights as well as participate in the building of and disseminating of knowledge to the field.

PLANNED TOPICS* FOR 2010 LEARNING NETWORK WEBINARS

March 2010: Current research on the adult outcomes of maltreatment. Presenters: David Zielinski, NIMH, and others TBD

June 2010: QIC-EC Research and Development sites present their program and research questions. Presenters: TBD

September 2010: Mobilizing communities to prevent maltreatment—How do we do it? Presenters: TBD

* *Topics subject to change*

For example, members were asked what would be important research questions for inclusion in the QIC-EC Request for Proposals for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Research and Demonstration projects. Questions and suggestions were also solicited to help determine future webinar topics.

Learning Network Webinars

The QIC-EC offers free, quarterly, 1.5 hour webinars on topics pertinent to the prevention of abuse and neglect of young children. Each webinar is recorded and posted on the QIC-EC's website. To date we have held the following webinars:

February 27, 2009: The "Introduction to the Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood (QIC-EC)," presented by Charlyn Harper Brown, Project Director, QIC-EC, and Nancy Seibel, Director, Center for Training Services at ZERO TO THREE provided background into the QIC-EC purposes of 1) generating and disseminating robust evidence and new knowledge, 2) funding innovative evidence-based and evidence-informed research and demonstration projects, and dissertation projects, and 3) supporting program and systems strategies that contribute to child maltreatment prevention and optimal developmental outcomes for infants, young children, and their families. In addition, risk factors, protective factors, social-ecological model (societal, community, relationship, individual) and expected short and long term outcomes were discussed. The webinar also addressed the dissemination of new knowledge through the Learning Network and expected products through the QIC-EC. Webinar attendance: 65

June 26, 2009: The goals of the "Prevention: A

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Dialogue about Research and Practice,” presented by Sandra Alexander, M.Ed, Child Maltreatment Consultant, Division of Violence Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Richard Puddy, Ph.D, Lead Behavioral Scientist, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Brenda Jones Harden, Ph.D, Associate Professor, Institute for Child Study, Department of Human Development, University of Maryland College Park, and Deborah Daro, Associate Professor and Research Fellow, Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, were to recognize the challenges practitioners face in implementing prevention research, generate increased understanding of issues surrounding evidence-based practice, and discuss how researchers and practitioners can inform each other’s work. Dialogue centered on what evidence based practice means and the burden for evidence of effectiveness. Presenters addressed the dilemma that effective program practices may not be captured in research when practitioners and researchers may have different ideas about which out-

comes should be measured. Research designs and questions may not always include the practices that programs believe are key to their success. Webinar attendance: 102.

September 25, 2009 – Jeanne Pietrzak, National AIA Resource Center, Rizwan Shah, Blank Children’s Hospital, and Wendy Courts, Family and Children’s AIDS Network presented “Promoting Optimal Development in Young Children and Families Affected by Substance Abuse and/or HIV/AIDS.” How we think about optimal development, developmental outcomes, cultural differences in and responses to families and evidence based and evidenced informed program approaches were among the main topics. The gaps in research and services were also addressed, outlining the need for more research focusing on early intervention/child development for young children 0-5 in families affected by HIV/AIDS. The lack of rigorous studies that utilize control groups was a recurring theme. Webinar attendance: 87

Learning Network’s 2009 In-Person Meetings

At the **Strengthening Families Leadership Summit** held in Atlanta, GA in October 2009, the Learning Network met in person! We extended a special invitation to Learning Network members attending the Summit to attend a round table luncheon to engage in a lively, interactive discussion on how we help programs use research findings to improve practice. The luncheon was attended by 14 current Learning Network members and

12 conference attendees who were interested in the topic and in learning more about the QIC-EC’s work.

The themes that emerged included: how to facilitate transfer of new knowledge, barriers that block transfer of knowledge, and a new way of thinking that identifies customer satisfaction as part of helping, planning, and delivering services.

Attendees were challenged to select one idea that they will think about more, something that they would take back and share with colleagues, and something they

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want to learn more about. Responses ranged from thinking more about how to support innovation and change when there are gaps in the available research, sharing with colleagues the need to build in time for reflective practice in making changes, and learning more about promoting synergy across related networks.

At ZERO TO THREE's December 2009 **National Training Institute** in Dallas, TX, we held a similar meeting for Learning Network members and other interested conference participants. Nancy Seibel facilitated this discussion, asking participants to introduce themselves and to share what they hoped to gain from this networking session. The 35 participants' responses ranged from state policy questions (how to effectively disseminate opportunities for funding prevention initiatives to attract responses from nonprofits) to research interests, i.e. analysis of NASCAW data, to content issues, i.e. how to sort out extreme lack of resources from neglect. The hour flew by as participants provided peer support and shared ideas, questions and experiences.

Attendees were asked to select ideas that they will think more about, something to take back and share, and something they want to learn more about. Responses included prevention programs, what defines neglect, multiple response systems at CPS for child abuse/neglect and differential response. Attendees wanted to learn more about best practice models of prevention, evidence-based program models for preventing CAN, and information on Happiest Baby (Harvey Karp's work).

As a result of these two in-person events the QIC connected directly with 63 professionals and gained 14 new members for the Learning Network. In the coming year we will use similar opportunities to convene in-person Learning Network meetings.

VISIT WWW.QIC-EC.ORG FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF LEARNING NETWORK MEMBERS

Knowledge Development, Knowledge Integration

By Nancy L. Seibel

One of the QIC-EC's goals is to disseminate and integrate new knowledge. We probably all know what we mean by "disseminate," but what does it mean to "integrate" knowledge? When the QIC-EC team has discussed this, we identified it as the process of incorporating new knowledge into the work we do everyday.

It is interesting to think about what happens when our interest in disseminating and promoting integration of new knowledge hits the reality of everyday practice. Here's a story that helps illustrate how dissemination and integration of knowledge is not necessarily a straightforward process of getting from point A to point B.

I am a bicycle rider, one who is somewhere between beginner and intermediate in knowledge, experience, and ability. I have recently been talking with more ex-

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perienced cyclists about something that was new to me, the use of clipless pedals. Using them means equipping yourself with special shoes that have a cleat that clips into a special pedal. Being connected to your bike increases the efficiency of your pedaling so that you can go faster without having to make an effort to keep your foot on the pedal. My friends assured me that they love their clipless pedals and that I would love them too.

In order to experience these gains, I would have to spend quite a bit of money on equipment, spend time learning to use this new equipment, and be willing to fall several times in the learning process – though, if I practiced in a grassy area, I *probably* wouldn't get hurt. Ever adventurous, I was willing to try out this new approach.

The bike shop sales person was happy to sell me the needed equipment and orient me to it. Then it was up to me to practice. Yes, I did fall, right away. I got some bruises and cuts that first day, but I kept on trying. The next day I spent a couple of hours practicing and did better, with no falls. I was confidently clipping in and out of the pedals. But it was a grim process. I realized that bicycling, which had been fun up until then, was not so much fun now. I could successfully use the new pedals but I did not feel secure. Could I execute the needed maneuver in an emergency, or would I just top-

ple over? Would I really want to use the clipless pedals in the stop and go of city cycling? I concluded that I hated these things and wanted to get rid of them. Luckily my bike shop took everything back with a smile and full refund.

I went on to research other options, since I could not believe that these clipless pedals were the only choice out there. With some persistent internet searching I discovered a product called Power Grips, an ingeniously simple and inexpensive strap that secures your foot to the pedal without locking it in place. That was more my speed. I love them and would not go back to cycling without them. I have to say that I have never seen another cyclist using them!

This story brings out some of the complexity involved in the integration and implementation of new knowledge. People and situations vary. In encouraging people to adopt new knowledge we have to be aware of their context. We may need to be creative in developing ways to implement the new knowledge. Implementing new knowledge may be expensive for practitioners and programs and require research, study and practice. We may need to find ways to bring what worked in the past ways of doing things into the new ways we are developing. If efforts to implement new knowledge interfere with us obtaining our goals, we may have to step back and find a new approach.

Thinking about this example, what do you find helps you to adopt and implement new knowledge? How do you encourage others to do so? What interferes with the implementation of new knowledge? How can these barriers be recognized and addressed? We're interested in your experiences, thoughts and ideas! Write us at bjohnson@zerotothree.org.