Implementation gaps in child welfare: Examples and responses

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Missouri’s new philosophies and practices

**Signs of Safety** as core child protection practice

**Team Decision Making (TDM)**
Applied to custody & placement decisions.

**Five Domains of Well Being and Trauma-Informed Care:**
Philosophies for understanding families

Breaking inter-generational cycles of poverty, violence and trauma requires we simultaneously support progress in these Five Domains – at the individual, family and community levels.
Trauma-informed care core principles

**Safety**
Physical and emotional safety

**Trustworthiness**
Maximize trustworthiness; tasks clear; appropriate boundaries

**Choice**
Developmentally appropriate choice and control

**Collaboration**
Maximize collaboration and sharing of power

**Empowerment**
Prioritize youth and family empowerment and skill-building
**Signs of Safety**
Solution-based engagement, assessment & planning
Value-based principles broadly describe theory of change
Multi-page fidelity tool, but refinement/testing necessary
SoS Briefing Paper a manual for implementation
A promising practice, no RCT

**Team Decision-Making**
Applied when placement change is considered
Value based engagement principles
Fidelity measures in development
A promising practice, no RCT

**Common Elements**
Family voice & choice; use of natural supports
Identifying what’s working
Identifying & rating concerns
Individualized safety plan
Implementation Stages
2-4 Years

**Exploration**
- Assess needs
- Examine intervention components
- Consider implementation drivers
- Assess fit

**Installation**
- Acquire resources
- Prepare organization
- Prepare implementation drivers
- Prepare staff

**Initial Implementation**
- Adjust implementation drivers
- Manage change
- Deploy data systems
- Initiate improvement cycles

**Full Implementation**
- Monitor, manage implementation drivers
- Achieve fidelity and outcome benchmarks
- Further improve fidelity and outcomes
Implementation supports

Facilitative administration
Required case documents cut by 50%

Systems level interventions
Community Conversations
Significant efforts to inform and engage courts, GALs, etc.

Staff selection
Well-organized process (Staying Power)
Implementation concurrent with installation

Introduced in June → Trained in August → Implemented in September

Separate trainings for each philosophy and practice
  Supervisor & staff development nearly simultaneous
  No pre & post test

Supervision
  Frequency, focus, not monitored,
  tendency remains ad hoc, risk containment

Fidelity assessment
  SoS purveyor recommends monthly direct observation
  Agency will only do one case each quarter
  Monthly case data review may or may not support fidelity
Implementation gaps due to quick startup

Installation activities addressed as implementation begins

SoS briefing paper is a manual for practitioners, coaches, and administrators/managers but it is not required reading

Procedural interface between service areas not yet well-monitored
Implementation gap patterns in child welfare?

1. Lack of clarity/understanding key elements & activities of the practice model

2. Case data forms not adjusted to reflect presence of key elements and activities compromises supervisor & manager abilities to monitor fidelity

3. Limited practice observations to enhance staff ability to deliver elements & activities with fidelity to achieve improved outcomes

4. Lack of monitoring frequency, focus and formats of coaching

5. These missing data compromise administrators' ability to know how to adjust competency and organization drivers of implementation.
What Will Help?

**Intervention components**

Operationalize and integrate philosophies with activities, elements of new practices

Write, train & coach through an integrated theory of change

Practitioner understanding & creativity may be supported with multiple fidelity tools developed by NCWWI trainee
What Will Help?

Organization drivers

Monitor expected procedures at interface of services

Coach through case-based fidelity measures

Data-informed coaching: specify & monitor frequency, focus & format