

Issue 15 July 2007

Research Publications – What's New!

Research to practice

The Research to Practice Program provides an essential link between the latest research and DoCS staff.

As part of this important initiative, the Research to Practice Update encompasses a broad range of research publications and resources to reflect the diversity of DoCS staff.

If you have any comments or suggestions about how we could improve this Update to make it more useful or relevant to your work, please email the Research to Practice Team at:

- researchtopractice@community.nsw.gov.au, or
- 'Research to Practice' on the internal email.

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DoCS

Permanency Planning and Placement Stability.

This Research to Practice Note is based on a comprehensive literature review of Australian and international research on permanency planning and out-of-home care. This Note presents the key research evidence that informs interventions to decrease the likelihood of placement breakdown and facilitates permanency planning.

Use of appropriate language when working with Aboriginal communities in NSW.

This Research to Practice Note has two purposes. The first is to address concerns raised by a number of Aboriginal staff in DoCS who identified the need for such a resource. The second is to highlight for DoCS staff the important role that language has when working with Aboriginal people and communities on behalf of the Department. Areas covered in this article include history, identity and use of the terms Indigenous, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The information outlined in this article is a guide only. Further reading of the references listed should be considered a starting point for anyone wanting further information relating to this topic.

These and other Centre resources can be accessed at:

http://docsonline.dcs.gov.au/research_to_practice/research_to_practice.htm

Early Intervention

The role of parents in early intervention: Implications for social work.

Mahoney, G. & Wiggers, B. (2007). *Children and Schools* 29 (1), pages 7 - 15.

This study highlights the importance of parents playing a role in early intervention programs in order to achieve a significant effect on children's developmental and social-emotional well being. It draws on empirical evidence, as well as a review of an early intervention training program which is being integrated into a social work degree. <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf>

Parenting education for young fathers in prison.

Meek, R. (2007). *Child and Family Social Work* 12 (3), pages 239 - 247.

This paper explores the effectiveness of delivering an intensive parenting class to groups of young fathers in prison. Results demonstrated the diversity in parental education requirements, and a need to keep courses flexible. In considering parenting support needs, participants highlighted the importance of better visiting procedures to enable them to keep in contact with their children whilst in custody.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/>

What do service users think of evaluation? Evidence from family support.

Cortis, N. (2007). *Child & Family Social Work*, (online early articles).

This paper considers how service users' perspectives can help improve the performance indicators that

Seminar Series

Upcoming Seminars

9 August

Principles of Father Engagement

Richard Fletcher, University of Newcastle

Examples of work with fathers from *Good Beginnings*

Paul Prichard

Venue: Wesley Conference Centre

220 Pitt Street, Sydney

28 August

A Global Perspective of Children in Care

June Thoburn

Accessing journal articles

Journal articles can also be requested from the Library by completing an Article Copy Request Form located on the Library Services Intranet page. Completed forms can be sent to:

- DOCS.Library@community.nsw.gov.au
- or,
- Fax (02) 9716 2085.

inform child and family service funding, management and planning. The services examined aim to strengthen family relationships, build life and parenting skills, and develop communities so that in times of crisis family breakdown can be avoided and children are prevented from entering the statutory care system. The findings show how parents judge service quality and outcomes, how they experience data collection, and how they prefer to participate in routine performance measurement and monitoring that informs child and family welfare provision.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/>

Child Protection

Understanding and addressing the “neglect of neglect”: Why are we making a mole-hill out of a mountain?

McSherry, D. (2007). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 31 pages 607-614.

Child neglect has consistently been shown to have a markedly higher incidence rate than abuse and can result in more profound development deficits. Yet neglect has received so little attention compared with abuse. This commentary focuses on the neglect of neglect in child protection in the United States and United Kingdom. It aims to examine why child neglect is poorly understood and attended to and offers suggestions on addressing the problem.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?>

Out of Home Care

Research review: Sibling placement in foster care, a review of the evidence.

Washington, K. (2007). *Child & Family Social Work*, (online early articles).

This research review was undertaken to explore the current evidence pertaining to sibling placement in the foster care system. The review specifically addresses the following questions: (1) Which theories inform research on siblings in foster care? (2) Which designs and methodology are used to study brothers and sisters in out of home placement? (3) How do researchers define ‘siblings’ when investigating child placement? and (4) What are the findings of studies pertaining to siblings in the foster care system? Overall, the evidence presented in this review strongly supports keeping sibling groups intact unless there is a compelling reason for separate placements.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2006.00467.x>

Foster parent perceptions of placement success.

Brown, J. & Campbell, M. (2007). *Child and Youth Services Review* 29 (8), pages 1010 - 1020.

While there are various indicators of success in foster care, the authors argue that there has been relatively little attention to the perspectives of foster parents about what constitutes success. In this study a random sample of foster parents were asked the question ‘what in your opinion is a successful foster placement?’ Six dominant themes - security for child, family connections, good relationships, positive family change, seamless agency involvement, and child grows - were highlighted and discussed.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?>

Seminar Series DVD Kits

The Research to Practice team has developed a number of DVD seminar kits, which have been sent out to all CSCs and regional offices. These are a valuable resource for staff members who are unable to attend the Research to Practice Seminars.

These include:

- High Needs Children in Out-of-Home Care: Profiles, Needs and Services
- Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care: Foster Care Training and Support Programs
- Promoting Security and Resilience in Long-Term Foster Care

Coming soon:

- Parental Mental Health: Issues in Child Welfare
- Domestic Violence and Child Protection

Material from seminars can be accessed at:

http://docsonline.dcs.gov.au/research_to_practice/research_to_practice.htm

Tomorrow is another problem: The experiences of youth in foster care during their transition into adulthood.

Geenan, S. & Powers, L. (2007). *Children and Youth Services Review* 29 (8), pages 1085 - 1101.

This study gathered information about the experiences of youth transitioning out of foster care into adulthood, from the perspectives of youth themselves, as well as foster parents and professionals. A number of key themes emerged with respect to participants' experiences with the transition of foster youth into adulthood, including (a) self-determination; (b) coordination/collaboration (c) importance of relationships; (d) importance of family; (e) normalising the foster care experience; (f) the Independent Living Program and (g) issues related to disability.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?>

Predictors of successful permanency planning and length of stay in foster care: The role of race, diagnosis and place of residence.

Becker, M., Jordan, N. & Larsen, R. (2007). *Children and Youth Services Review* 29 (8), pages 1102 - 1113.

This study examined the significant predictors of successful permanency planning and length of stay in foster care for children served by the child welfare system in Florida. Results showed that across the state, the child's geographic district of residence was the single most important predictor of outcome. Other factors that helped determine the outcome of permanency planning were race, presence of a mental disorder, developmental disabilities and placement in therapeutic foster care.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?>

New Books

Horwath, J. (2007). *Child Neglect: Identification and assessment*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke.

This book is designed to assist practitioners and managers with the task of identifying and assessing the complex nature of neglect. It provides a comprehensive reference source, offering conceptual and practical assessment tools and frameworks. Recognising the ever-changing modern working environment, the author clarifies the issues and processes involved in identifying and assessing neglect, and explores particularly challenging assessment areas.

Brown, T. & Alexander, R. (2007). *Child abuse and family law: Understanding the issues facing human service and legal professionals*. Allen & Unwin: Crows Nest.

This book draws on research to identify the causes, features and impacts of child abuse in parental separation and divorce. The authors argue that professionals working with these families need to better understand the specific and often severe nature of this abuse to improve outcomes for both children and their families.

Corby, B. (2006). *Applying research in social work practice*. Open University Press: England.

This book presents social work students and practitioners with a background to the key issues relating to social work practice and social research. It provides guidance on the skills needed to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a range of research studies. It also offers assistance and guidance about how research can actually be applied in practice.

Summers, N. (2006). *Fundamentals of case management practice: Skills for the human services*. Thomson Brooks/Cole: Southbank, Vic.

This book aims to equip practitioners in a social service setting with the vocabulary and methods to work effectively in the human services field. It provides a step by step guide from intake through monitoring, to terminating a case.

Meredith, J. & Mantel, S. (2006). *Project management: A managerial approach*. John Wiley & Sons: Hoboken, N.J.

In this text the authors draw upon their personal experiences working with project managers and on the experiences of friends and colleagues who have spent much of their working lives serving as project managers. It addresses the basic nature of managing all types of projects - public, business, engineering, information systems, and so on - as well as specific techniques and insights required to carry out this unique way of getting things done. It deals with the problems of selecting projects, initiating them, and operating and controlling them. It also covers the difficult problems associated with conducting a project using people and organisations that represent different cultures and may be separated by considerable distances.

Saleeby, D. (ed) (2006). *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. Allyn & Bacon: Boston.

This book presents a collection of essays that explains the strengths-based philosophy, demonstrates how it works, and provides clear and practical tools for its application. It presents a balanced approach to social work practice, in contrast to a problems-based approach, that takes into account the strengths and assets of clients and their environments.

These books can be accessed through the DoCS library.

Disclaimer

This Update has been compiled by DoCS' Centre for Parenting and Research as part of the Research to Practice Program. It has been developed to facilitate access to research publications and resources.

The content contained within these publications is provided for your information only and should not be seen as a directive or endorsement by DoCS.

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