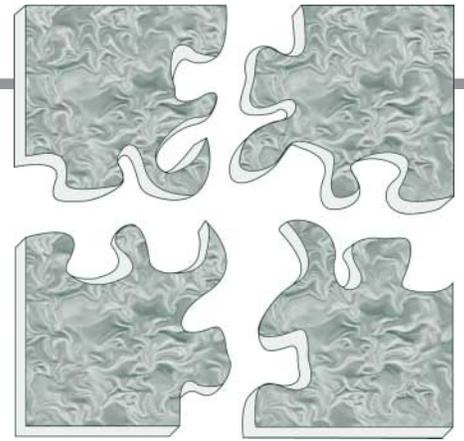


BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS



PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS

- issued monthly
- concise
- state-of-the-art knowledge
- designed for policy and planning executives, staff
- covers concepts, processes, tools, models

PARADIGM SHIFTS are

- changes in thinking
- similar across service systems
- targeted at improving outcomes
- to be referenced in future Briefs



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INTRODUCING BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS

Not another newsletter, but a way to enable decision makers and policy developers to have access to the human services knowledge developed and organized by MSU faculty.

If you decide policy or plan, fund, develop or evaluate programs to improve outcomes for children, families, neighborhoods, and organizations... If you are a foundation manager, United Way executive, government official, agency director, development officer... or a board member or member of a collaborative body concerned with cutting edge planning and implementation... BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS will be an *affordable time-saver* for you in translating state-of-the-art knowledge and expertise in human services for community use.

BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS will be short, concise, user-friendly statements of state-of-the-art knowledge, covering three types of information:

Basic Concepts

Paradigm shifts in human services that are promoting change for better outcomes for children, families, neighborhoods, and communities.

Processes and Tools

Ways of operating that can facilitate the new way of doing business.

Best Practice Models

Tried and tested human service delivery options that illustrate the paradigm shifts in human services.

“Best Practice” refers to the state-of-the-art lessons learned as culled and extrapolated from basic research and evaluation reports and field experience—the best information currently available that decision makers can use in human service program development. When evidence in the human service field is tentative, or even contradictory, this will be noted.

BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS will be issued monthly, starting in the fall of 1998. This first issue outlines the changes in thinking that are shaping the planning and delivery of human services. These paradigm shifts will be referenced in subsequent issues.



CHANGES IN THINKING THAT ARE SHAPING THE PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF HUMAN SERVICES

CONCEPTS Major paradigm shifts, designed to improve outcomes, are occurring in the planning and delivery of human services in response to concerns about effectiveness and cost of current practices. This **BEST PRACTICE BRIEF** outlines conceptual changes derived from research and experience. These changes in thinking may be discerned in current formulations from think tanks such as the *National Center for Service Integration* and federal and state government initiatives concerning child welfare, mental health, health care, juvenile justice, education, youth services. Although vocabularies and formulations may differ from one service system to another, there are strong commonalities in concepts and direction.

FROM

TO

Performance Judged on Process

Units of service provided

Deficit Approach

Emphasis on needs, problems
Response to crises, problems

Focus on treatment and end-stage intervention

Human services seen as costs

Separate Systems

Isolation, going it alone, competition

“Your child” “My child”

Agencies refuse services
Fragmented services

Time-limited “Projects”

Discontinuity

Multiple agencies, multiple workers
No one person for continuity, support

Individual Focus

“Fix the child”

Hierarchical Relationship

Professional convenience and expertise
Professional decision-making
Professional-centered services

Agency-based

Services provided at agency offices

Agency-provided organized services

Categorical funding

Rigidly defined eligibility, staff, services
Micro-management from federal, state level

Performance Judged on Outcome

What has happened
Decisions based on data

Strength/Assets Approach

Emphasis on strengths, assets
Promote normal development and social connections
Promote functioning, connected community
More emphasis on prevention, early intervention

Human services seen as investment

Connected Systems

Interagency partnerships and collaborative bodies for planning, decision-making and implementation

“Our child”

Agencies accept joint responsibility
Coordinated and integrated
A community system of care

Change in Ongoing Services

Continuity

Single case manager & service plan across agencies
Long term trusting relationship with one person

Ecological Focus

Child in context of family, school, community

Peer relationship

Customer-driven services and decision making
Customer empowerment
Person/family centered services
User-friendly, culturally responsive
Involvement of customers in policy making

Community-based

Services provided in homes, schools, neighborhoods
Non-traditional services
Involvement of business and community

Flexible funding

Flexible options or local choice
Devolution of control, decisions to local level

CURRENTLY in the planning stage are issues directed at such questions as:

- How can the strength-based, assets approach be used to improve outcomes for youth and communities?
- What is “community mapping” and how can it assist in promoting community and individual development?
- What are the dimensions of the school-community partnership in full-service schools?

IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR TOPICS

that would be of particular relevance to you, call or e-mail Betty Tableman, Editor.

TO SUBSCRIBE TO BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS, return the form below with a check for \$25 made out to Michigan State University.

REFERENCES FOR CHANGES IN THINKING

Publications of the National Center for Service Integration, 5111 Leesburg Pike, Suite 702, Falls Church, VA 22041 (703) 824-7447

Videotapes: Joel Arthur Baker, *The Business of Paradigms*, *The Power of Vision and Paradigm Principles*. Available from ChartHouse, (612) 890-1800. Rental: \$200 for 7 days.

- How can environmental scanning of community data help to shape effective services?
- Is moving from welfare to work all that is involved in “self-sufficiency”?
- What characteristics of home visiting make a difference for at risk infants?
- What do we know about pregnant adolescents and adolescent parents?
- What are effective long term and short term measures to prevent violence?



MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

TO: **OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS** Room 6, Kellogg Center—Michigan State University—East Lansing, MI 48824

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Enclosed is a \$25 check made out to Michigan State University.

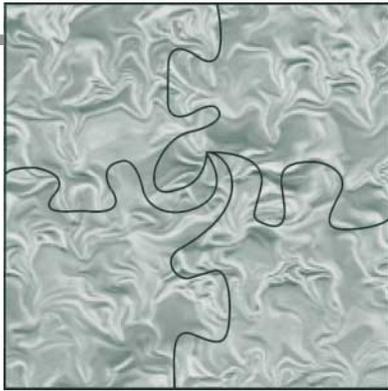
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BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS are a product of the **Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF)** and **OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS @ MSU** that connects university resources to the community. Materials are reviewed by participating faculty, **CMF** staff, **OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS** staff, and an Advisory Group of potential users. Responsibility for content is assumed by the Editor. If you have questions, call Betty Tableman, Editor, at 517-432-2500, or e-mail: tableman@pilot.msu.edu. **BRIEFS** may be copied within the subscribing office and may be quoted with citation of the source.

COMING next month: No. 2—The Assets/Strength-Based Approach

BEST PRACTICE BRIEFS, a new MSU venture, joins **Outreach Partnerships Initiatives** already in place, which explore these paradigm shifts.

- **Community Partnerships** link people from the community and the University in order to collaborate on community-defined concerns. They are designed to build capacity in the community, examine the

impact of existing programs, and generate new knowledge about community issues.

- **Check Points**, a 6–or 12-session skill-building training in using evaluation to assess program outcomes.
- **Human Services/Human Strengths**, a 5-session skill-building training in applying the assets/strength based approach to community issues.



about developing a **Community Partnership**, or enrolling in **Check Points**, or **Human Services/Human Strengths**, call (517) 432-2500.

Next cohorts for training at Kellogg Center, East Lansing start in January 1999, meeting monthly.

Training can be adapted for training of trainers, conference workshops, or delivery at community sites.

Outreach Partnerships @ MSU
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