

DISSEMINATION OF THE *COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT NEEDS*

Study Mandate

- The Commission on Youth is directed to:
 - Make the *Collection of Evidence-Based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs 4th Edition (Collection)* available through web technologies;
 - Seek the assistance of the Advisory Group, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, Secretary of Public Safety and Secretary of Education;
 - Develop a cost-effective and efficient dissemination method to allow for easy access to the information; and
 - Update the *Collection* biennially (SJR 358, 2003).

Issues

- As noted by Voices for Virginia's Children, national estimates of children's mental health disorders indicate that one in five children ages 9 to 17 experiences a diagnosable mental health disorder in the course of a year, and roughly one in ten experiences a serious disturbance. In Virginia, this means that between 85,129 and 104,046 children and adolescents struggle with a serious emotional disturbance.
- Finding meaningful state-level data about children's mental health services is challenging in part because the service delivery system is fragmented.
- Data supports particular treatments for specific problems known as "evidence-based practices" (EBPs). There is mounting interest in Virginia and across the nation in EBPs for children with mental health and substance abuse treatment needs.
- There is still a gap between what is known through research and what is actually implemented in public mental health systems.
- State mental health commissioners have identified the benefit of having a central location where the latest research related to EBPs can be accessed. There is a large body of work devoted to increasing practitioners' knowledge of EBPs.
- A 2010 study conducted by the Virginia Department of Health and the Capital, South Central, Southside, and Southwest Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) found that:
 - 80% of primary care providers in these regions participated in one pediatric behavioral health/mental health related training in the past year;
 - 95% expressed interest in training on pediatric mental health topics;
 - 84% indicated that they needed education on behavioral health/mental health related topics and how to practice more collaboratively with child psychiatrists; and
 - 62% preferred a training format that was an article review.
- The need for information regarding EBPs has been a recurring issue, as identified by:
 - Virginia Child and Family Services Council of the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards;
 - The Campaign for Children's Mental Health;
 - The League of Social Services Executives;
 - The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services;
 - *Report on the Integrated Policy and Plan to Provide and Improve Access to Mental Health and Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services for Children, Adolescents and their Families* (330 F);
 - HJR 96 (2006) Education and Training Opportunities to Address the Needs of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders; and

- SB 479 (2008) requiring the Office of Comprehensive Services to conduct an annual workshop to train on best practices and evidence-based practices.
- According to the National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI), implementation policies for EBPs are most effective when both general and specific education is provided on what evidence-based practices are and are not;
- The Commission on Youth has received recurring requests for training on EBPs and elements influencing their adoption.

Study Activities

- Review state and local training initiatives regarding the utilization and dissemination of evidence-based practices in the field of children's mental health.
- Identify additional partners and participants in biennial update and training initiatives.
- Identify potential partnerships with public and private organizations for *Collection* dissemination.
 - Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services' System of Care Expansion Planning Committee;
 - Virginia Association of Community Services Boards' Child and Family Services Council;
 - State and Local Advisory Team's (SLAT) Committee on CSA Training and Best Practices;
 - Local Family Assessment and Planning Teams;
 - Local Comprehensive Services Act Coordinators;
 - Department of Juvenile Justice/local court services units; and
 - Virginia Coalition of Private Provider Associations (VCOPPA)
- Present findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth.