This research is supported by grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency

Special thanks to:
Brittany Rhoades, Julia Moore, and Sandee Kyler,
The staff of PCCD
and
PA’s prevention practitioners and community prevention coalitions
Over a decade ago, we conducted a comprehensive review, at the request of CMHS, to identify programs with empirical evidence of effectiveness in preventing mental disorders in children.

Since then, many “lists” have emerged to guide policymakers and practitioners in the adoption of evidence-based practices.

Today there is little evidence that the knowledge of “what works” has resulted in large-scale public health impact.
Translational Research Perspective

- Rigorous Testing of Hypothesized Programs, Practices, and Policies
- Real world settings: Training, Financing, Support, Sustainability

*National Institutes of Health, 2009*
From Lists to Improved Public Health: Barriers

- Synthesis and translation of research to practice, (and practice to research)
- EBP dissemination, selection, and uptake
- Ensuring sufficient implementation quality and fidelity
- Understanding adaptation and preventing program drift
- Measuring and monitoring implementation and outcomes
- Policy, systems, and infrastructure barriers
- Coordination across multiple programs and developmentally
- Sustainability in the absence of a prevention infrastructure


The challenges

- Having prevention practice be more focused and strategic
- Increase (carefully planned) adoption of EBPs by more communities
- Ensure high quality implementation
- Sustain programs long-term
A unique partnership between policymakers, researchers, and communities to bring science to bear on issues of public health and public safety.
Interactive Systems Framework for Dissemination and Implementation

*Wandersman, et al., 2008*
Creating Fertile Ground for EBPs
Risk-focused Prevention Planning
(the Communities That Care model)

Form local coalition of key stakeholders

Collect local data on risk and protective factors

Re-assess risk and protective factors

Select and implement evidence-based program that targets those factors

Leads to community synergy and focused resource allocation

Use data to identify priorities
Evidence-based Programs Funded Throughout Pennsylvania*

*programs funded under the EBP initiative 1998-2008
Supporting EBPs

- Onsite TA during startup phase
- Manualize implementations within PA context
- Promote high quality implementation
- Create economies of scale & learning communities
- Develop tools for outcome and implementation data collection and utilization (INSPIRE)
- Foster coordination across state agencies
- Develop and test new models for training, coaching, adaptation, and dissemination
Measuring Population-level Impact

• Cross-sectional quasi-experimental study of 98,000 students in 147 communities
  • Found youth in CTC communities reported lower rates of risk factors, substance use, and delinquency than youth in similar non-CTC communities
  • Communities using EBPs showed better outcomes on twice as many R/P factors and behaviors
Research following 419 age-grade cohorts of youth over a 5-year period found youth in CTC communities using EBPs had significantly lower rates of delinquency and better academic achievement!

Some Lessons Learned

• Focus on risk and protective factors rather than narrowly-defined behavioral outcomes

• Community-specific (i.e. local) data to drive decision making and resource allocation
  • Single state epidemiological survey
  • Becomes community needs assessment tied to multiple agency RFPs

• Community needs assessment and mobilization, as well as EBP implementation, requires proactive Technical Assistance
Some Lessons Learned (cont.)

- Fix community readiness and infrastructure issues before throwing money at problems
- Find a small number of things that work, and do them well
- Multi-year funding is necessary to get to stable effective services
- Tie funding to quality implementation and outcomes (objective criteria de-politicizes the process)
Thank You!

Brian K. Bumbarger
Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Support Center
Prevention Research Center, Penn State University
206 Towers Bldg.
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 865-2618
www.prevention.psu.edu