

EVIDENCE BASED PROGRAMS 101

What is an Evidence Based Program?

Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs) or manualised programs are a clearly structured package of practice elements or modules, that have been combined into a clearly defined program including specifications for implementation. They are empirically supported by control trial evidence and have demonstrated effectiveness with specific client groups.

How do we know they work?

EBPs can be supported by a range of evidence, the highest quality of which is a [systematic review with meta-analysis](#), followed by [rigorous randomised controlled trials \(RCTs\)](#) studies and quasi-experimental designs.

An EBP is highly regarded when a systematic review shows that it can produce a greater and sustained impact in multiple contexts compared to alternatives.

EBPs can clearly identify the linkages between their core components and expected outcomes: an evidence informed logic or theory of change.

How do we find them?

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is currently developing a Menu of Evidence-informed Practices and Programs to provide the sector access to available EBPs. [Click here](#) for more information.

What makes EBPs different?

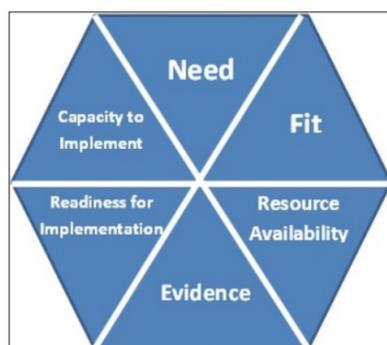
Evidence based programs are characterised by strict controls. For example:

- A specific population group
- A specific set of processes to abide by
- Skills and resources
- Training and credentials

Selecting and Implementing for your organisation

How do you know if an evidence-based program is appropriate for your organisation?

The NIRN Hexagon Tool offers six factors to consider before selecting and implementing an EBP:



[Hexagon Tool Image reference : Blase, K., Kiser, L. and Van Dyke, M. (2013). The Hexagon Tool: Exploring Context. Chapel Hill, NC: National Implementation Research Network, FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.]

Examples of EBPs Delivered in Victoria

Family Foundations

Assisting first time parents to maintain strong family bonds.

Multi-Systemic Therapy

Aims to improve the functioning of youth by changing their natural settings.

SafeCare

Aims to reduce incidents of child maltreatment and increase positive parentchild interaction.

Tuning into Kids

Aims to promote emotional competence in both parents and children.

Considerations

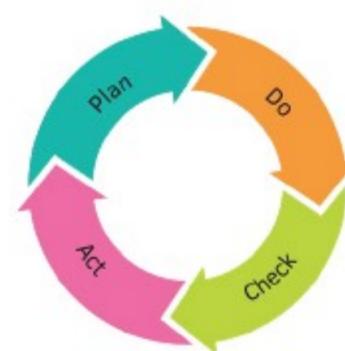
EBPs have been designed and tested for a specific context, as such they often need to be delivered with 'fidelity' - faithful to the design.

Before implementing an EBP it is important to consider:

- The alignment between program outcomes and your client group.
- If it has been evaluated with a client group similar to yours.
- Any adaptations that may be required to fit your client group, service or community context.

Delivering EBPs as intended, known as 'implementation fidelity' is important, but should not always be the end result. We can adapt and innovate with careful consideration and collaboration to make sure the core elements that are vital for change are not discarded.

Evidence Based Programs will constantly evolve with a cycle of continuous improvement. As practitioners and researchers build on knowledge, practice and evidence, programs should adapt and change.



Want to know more about the Outcomes Practice Evidence Network (OPEN)? Head to our website to find out more and become a member, or get in touch with Project Manager Emily Mellon.
www.cfecfw.asn.au/OPEN ♦
emily.mellon@cfecfw.asn.au