Placing Evidence-based Interventions at the Fingertips of School Social Workers

Tommi L. Rivers, BA
Catherine Randall, MSW
Humberto López Castillo, MD, MEd, MSc
Acknowledgements

- Project and presentation made possible through a collaboration between the University of South Florida Institute for Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health* and the Hillsborough County Public Schools.

*Funded through the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Grant 1R25DA031103-01A1
Panel Overview

1. Needs Assessment & Evaluation
   – Background & Initial eBIT Conceptualization

2. Literature Review & Methods
   – Constructing the Framework for eBIT

3. eBIT Development & Launch Plan
   – Looking Ahead: Testing and Implementation
   – Sustainability Planning
1. Needs Assessment & Evaluation
USF Institute for Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health

MISSION:
To develop, cultivate, and disseminate an innovative model of research education that addresses best practices for translational research in the field of adolescent behavioral health, as it relates to substance abuse and co-occurring disorders.
Institute Coursework

- Foundations in Adolescent Behavioral Health
- Translational Research Methods I & II
- Service Learning in Adolescent Behavioral Health I, II, & III
- Elective courses related to Adolescent Behavioral Health
Institute Coursework Timeline

Spring 2013
- Orientation Conference
- Foundations Course

Summer 2013
- Research Methods I
- Service Learning I

Fall 2013
- Research Methods II
- Service Learning II

Spring 2014
- Elective
- Service Learning III
- Capstone Presentation

Graduate Certificate in Adolescent Behavioral Health
Service Learning Institute Objectives

Orient students to the organizational context of community partner agencies and the implementation of evidence-based practices in real-world community settings.

Form a collaboration with the community partner agency to design and implement a translational research project of benefit to the agency.

Apply principles of translational research methods to conduct community projects, analyze and organize the information yielded, and report findings.
The Stakeholders

SSW Steering Committee
- Evelyn Fearon
- Lynette Judge

Academic Mentor
- Tiina Ojanen, PhD

SSW Supervisor
- Ken Gaughan, PhD

ITRABH Scholars
- Tommi Rivers
- Cat Randall
- Humberto López Castillo

IS Dept.
- Chris Franklin

IS Dept.
Hillsborough County Public Schools

- Fully accredited district
- Eight largest school district in the US
- Third largest school district in FL
- Educational opportunities include Head Start and adult education programs
- Pre-K through 12th grade are offered through traditional and nontraditional alternatives
HCPS Numbers

The district operates with more than 202,000 students, 25,000 employees, and a $2.8 billion budget.
HCPS SSW Services

Social Workers Make the Connection

Assess and Address Needs
Provide Professional Services
Overcome Barriers that interfere with Academic Success
Mobilize School and Community Resources

Promote and Support the Educational Process

Evidence-based Intervention Toolkit
Theoretical Framework

• Response to Intervention (RtI) Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)
  – Systematic use of multi-source assessment data to most efficiently allocate resources

• Ultimate goal
  – Improve learning for all students, through integrated academic and behavioral supports.
Tier 1
Core Universal Instruction and Supports

Tier 2
Targeted Supplemental Interventions and Supports

Tier 3
Intensive Individualized Interventions and Supports
Service Learning Project: Overall Objectives

- Translate science to service in a tangible and meaningful manner
- Meaningful, practical application for school social workers
- Mechanism to sustain post-Institute participation
- Capacity for future adaptations and expansions
**Desirable Skills that Social Workers Must Have to Effectively Implement Evidence-Based Interventions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand and value the evidence-based perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select empirically tested interventions or practice methods supported by the best available scientific evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciate the degree to which leading social work theories and policies are research based</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively deliver micro-, mezzo-, and macro-practice interventions with the strongest empirical support in their fields of practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapt the recommendations of practice guidelines, treatment manuals, and systematic reviews for use with specific client populations and in diverse agency settings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the effectiveness of their own practice efforts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify their information needs as they arise in varied practice settings, define searchable questions with which to query relevant scientific databases, and locate, critically appraise, and apply interventions based on the evidence they judge valid and pertinent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Translational Model for SW

Phase 1
Laboratory Knowledge to Clinical Intervention Trials

Efficacy

Effectiveness

Best Practices

Phase 2
Adoption of Best Practices in the Professional Community

Dissemination

Implementation

Transporting Interventions

Single Usual Care Site

Generalization Across Sites

Diffusion of Intervention Knowledge

Needs Assessment Rationale

• EBIs are those “based on the best available science” (McNeece & Thyer, 2004, p. 9).

• For SSW) EBI integrate expertise with the best available evidence within the context of clients’ values and expectations (Johnson, 2006, p. 93).

• There is a growing body of EBI that is not effectively reaching the SSW professional community (Howard, McMillen, & Pollio, 2003, p. 240).
Average weekly time spent looking for online interventions (n = 107)*

*P < .001 for the \( \chi^2 \) test for independence with Yates correction and 2 degrees of freedom (\( \chi^2 = 98.9 \)).
I know where to find evidence-based interventions (n = 107)*

*P < .001 for the $\chi^2$ test for independence with Yates correction and 2 degrees of freedom ($\chi^2 = 40.2$).
I use evidence-based interventions in my everyday practice (n = 107)*

*P < .001 for the χ² test for independence with Yates correction and 2 degrees of freedom (χ² = 72.4).
Results

• HCPS had 128 site-based SSWs, 107 of which returned the surveys (response rate = 83.6%)
• Just under half (49%) of respondents use online intervention databases, Intervention Central, or District Mental Health Toolbox less than twice per month.
• Of all respondents, 18% are not familiar with the EBIs identified and sanctioned by HCPS in the past 10 years
  – Why Try
  – Motivational Interviewing
  – Project ACHIEVE
  – Skillstreaming
Primary Goal

• The ultimate goal is to provide a “one-stop shop” for obtaining information about tier 2, evidence-informed interventions for School Social Workers.

• Create a web-based toolkit for SSW behavioral interventions to support academic performance
  – Tier 2
  – Evidence-based
  – School-age appropriate
2. Literature Review & Methods

Translating research into categorizations for evidence-informed SSW interventions
What is eBIT?

• eBIT is an online searchable database for evidence-informed, tier 2 interventions for School Social Workers.
• Users will be able to search using keywords or criteria to find an intervention appropriate for use with their caseload.
• Will include both public domain and proprietary interventions.
• Users can rate their experience with an intervention using a 5-star rating system with a field for narrative descriptions.
• Users can request new interventions be added.
  – Must meet minimum “evidence” criteria for inclusion.
Development of eBIT

• Comprehensive literature review using a set of criteria for inclusion
• Standardization of information in an Excel-based database
• Summarization of interventions for website “output”
• Collaboration with HCPS’s IS Department to establish structure and function of eBIT website fed by the eBIT database developed by the Institute Scholars
Logic Model

Inputs & Resources

Impact

Activities

Outputs

Outcomes

- Newsletter
- HCPS IT Staff
- SSW Online Bulletin Board
- SWIFT
- Intervention Categories
  - Review Newsletter Contents
  - Classify Interventions
  - Implementation Possibilities
  - Process Manual Development
  - Evaluation/Pilot Testing Phase
  - eBIT Toolkit
  - Pre-/Post-Evaluation
  - SSW eBIT Training Series
  - Articles

- Ease of EBP Access for SSW
- Increased Utilization of EBP
- Protocol for Periodic Updates
- SSW Feedback Mechanism
- Experience
- Developing/Updating eBIT
- Sustainability
  - Decreased Search Time
  - Increased Awareness
  - Increased Access
  - Experience
  - Developing/Updating eBIT
  - Better Outcomes for Students
Rationale for Classification

• Common reference source for SSW
• “Standardized” classification tool
• Not a comprehensive list of interventions
User-defined Intervention Ratings

• Intuitive

• Ratings from 1 to 5 stars, with 5 stars being the best.

• An intervention's average rating will appear in eBIT.
Central Research Question

Will the development and implementation of an electronic toolkit of EBIs have a positive impact for SSWs’ use of EBIs?
A Word or Two on Our Logo

Evidence-based Intervention Toolkit
Project Timeline

Conceptualization to development of eBIT
**eBIT Project Timeline**

**Spring 2013**
- Scholars paired with Hillsborough County Schools.
- Early meetings held to discuss ideas for a service learning project.

**Summer 2013**
- Initial literature reviews and building upon project ideas.

**Fall 2013**
- September: Intensive work on building eBIT database through literature review.
- October: Initial meeting with I.S. to pitch the eBIT website.
3. Testing & Implementation

Timeline of next steps with an eye on sustainability
eBIT Development

- Meeting with IS Department
- Development of “Interface”
- Reports generation
- Testing
Testing Phase

After development and initial testing by I.S., two rounds of additional testing will be employed to ensure appropriate functioning of the eBIT website.

Phase 1: Alpha Testing
Scholars will conduct the first round of testing and report any “bugs” or “quirks” to I.S. for resolution.

Phase 2: Beta Testing
The website will be opened for access and a group of school social workers will be invited to “play” with eBIT.

Functionality
Ease of Navigation
Correct Content

Ease of Navigation
Search Functions Properly
Desired Content
Downloads Work
Project Outputs

Dissemination of Findings
Post-implementation Survey Plans

• Allow SSW access to eBIT for a minimum of one month.
• Distribute online survey link.
• Utilize SSW Steering Committee to encourage participation for sufficient response rate for statistical testing.
• Analyze differences pre- and post-eBIT implementation.
Breaking News

• Prototype is generating reports of good enough quality
  – Still has consistency issues
• Next step: User-friendly interface
• Initial functionality testing ($\alpha$) should be ready early April
• Launch for $\beta$ testing in May (✌️️)
A great deal of excellent research is collecting dust in a journal.

There is a need to utilize more creative means of dissemination in order to increase and enhance awareness of and access to the research literature by practitioners.
Implications for Hillsborough County Public Schools

- District-wide, SSW will have the ability to one-stop-shop for interventions.
- With eBIT the district will possess the first database of its kind and is on the cutting edge of using research to inform practice.
- Future integrations with existing district electronic systems can further enhance awareness of clinical need and match it with the appropriate interventions.
Dissemination Efforts

• SSW Project Presentation on December 2013
• Poster presentation at USF Health Research Day
• This conference!
USF Health Research Day
February 21, 2014

- USF Health Research Day event featured over 350 scientists displaying their work.
- eBIT poster was awarded one of the seven Best College of Public Health Poster Presentation recognitions.
Future Dissemination Efforts

- Peer-reviewed journal article(s)
- Newsletters and district-wide eBIT training series for SSW
- Conference presentations (APHA, NASW).
• For more information on the Institute for Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health, see http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/itrabh/index.htm
• For additional information about this presentation, please contact:
  – Catherine Randall: Catherine.Randall@sdhc.k12.fl.us
  – Humberto López Castillo: hlopezca@health.usf.edu
  – Tommi L. Rivers: trivers@health.usf.edu
References


