
How can social workers reduce child abuse? Lessons from the nationwide dissemination of evidence-based parenting programmes

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Abstract

What needs to happen to move from patchy examples of good case-work to nationwide implementation of effective practice? While small trials of evidence-based parenting programmes show good effects in reducing abusive parenting, moving up to widespread roll-out across the country is much harder to achieve. Issues include (1) paying for the upfront cost of running programmes versus the long-term economic cost of not treating cases (2) deciding whether to target most at-risk families, or only those with the worst problems (3) persuading local commissioners and politicians to choose evidence-based programmes rather than local favourites not shown to work (4) practical issues in the training of practitioners (5) the impact role of practitioner skill and the need for supervision (6) how to engage reluctant parents (7) what to do with treatment resistant cases. Some lessons from the National Academy for Parenting Practitioners will be presented.

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