



The Leading Edge

The DIRECTORS INSTITUTE aims to develop a cohort of strong, effective leaders to support and sustain local use of the California Child Welfare Core Practice Model (CPM). By January 2018, all County Child Welfare Directors (CWDs) will have the individual skills & organizational resources to systematically implement the CPM.



Director's Corner

As we have learned from the experts in Implementation Science who have helped guide our process in the development of the Child Welfare Core Practice Model, implementation is a process, not an event. Four important stages of that process are Exploration, Installation, Early Implementation and Full Implementation. When we began this work, we projected that it would be a ten year journey. As we trace the trajectory of that journey, which began in 2012, we are at the mid-point and know that we all still have a way to go before we can say, "yes, we are there." But rather than being discouraging, this realization should make us all feel good that we are on the right road and are going in the right direction.

The work that we have been doing this year in the Directors Institute—the Directors Learning Sessions and the Development Circle work—has offered us an opportunity to move together through the Exploration phase. By taking a methodological approach to developing the leadership skills and operational tools that will undergird the Installation and Implementation phases we are collectively demonstrating a commitment to improving Child Welfare Services in California in a new way. We have agreed together to take a consensus-driven, systematic approach, and we have given ourselves the time to do it right. We have learned from past efforts that we cannot just expect instant results from good ideas and good intentions—that lasting results take time to achieve.

Starting in January 2018, we hope to work with every county to move into the Installation phase.

We do not expect that everyone will be in the same place to begin the installation of the Core Practice Model, so during November and December we will be working with all of the counties to prepare for the Installation phase. On November 6 and 8 we will host a webinar (identical webinars on each date—you only need to attend one) for Child Welfare Directors and the teams who will be working with them on CPM implementation, in which we will unveil a process that Directors and their teams can use to answer the question, "Where are we in the implementation of the CPM?" We are asking each county team to complete this review process before the Directors Learning Session #3, on December 7 and 8, so that it can guide a structured Installation/Implementation planning process that we will undertake at the Learning Session.

In none of the work so far have we asked counties to go it alone and we are committed to ensuring that at least the same levels of support are available to guide counties into and through the Installation and Implementation phases. We will continue to support the CPM Faculty that have been working with you this year and we have begun conversations with the Regional Training Academies to plan for their support role in this process as it continues into 2018 and beyond. We don't know when we will be able to answer the question, "are we there yet," but we do know that we plan to continue to be by your side to make sure that you have the supports that you need to make the elements of the CPM a central feature of your Child Welfare program.

Circling Over the DC's: Updates from the Development Circles



Quality Outcomes and System Improvement

The QOSI Development Circle continues to build a **CPM Logic Model Framework** that depicts how the people, systems and partnerships grounded in CPM will contribute to short-term outcomes for children and families. Another focus of the QOSI work is to offer guidance on how counties can develop their own customized CPM Logic Model based on their unique priorities, environments and resources. County staff and Champions have participated in monthly webinars, two in-person meetings and countless communications to identify the most critical indicators and lowest burden data sources from a menu of possible choices. The CPM Logic Model Framework will be further developed through input from the other DCs at the October 30 Development Circle meeting in Sacramento.



Organizational Readiness

Counties involved with the ORB Development Circle have paired up to try out **communication** and **organizational assessment tools** that promote key elements of readiness building for CPM in their locations. Seven counties are testing out these tools with their local teams and partners with support from a "buddy county" along the way. This not only helps to refine the tools for adaptability across a diverse sample of counties, but also informs what it takes to utilize these tools. Highlights about the results of testing these ORB tools were shared at the October 30 Development Circle meeting in Sacramento. The ORB DC will celebrate final testing during its November 28th webinar. County "Testing" summaries coming soon!

Workforce Development

Efforts within the Workforce Development DC have been aimed at refining and testing an array of workforce capacity building tools to support CPM implementation. WD members have focused on advancing recruitment and selection through a **realistic job pre-review letter**, **Selection Interview Protocol**, and production guide for **job screening video**. To support staff in practicing CPM behaviors daily, a **Supervision / Coaching Guide** is under development. **Practice Profiles** at both front-line worker and leadership levels are being shaped and tested to describe what it looks like when CPM values, principles and behaviors are visible in working with colleagues, partners, children, youth and families. These tools will be further shaped by input gathered at the October 30 DC meeting in Sacramento.



Engagement, Relationships & Partnerships

The ERP Development Circle is preparing guidelines with tips, tools and examples for cultivating strong partnerships grounded in the values, behaviors and principles of CPM. This guidance is organized into 5 stages of partnership involvement in CPM implementation:

- **The Pre-Work:** Preparing to share CPM with the child welfare partner community
- **Early Engagement:** Laying the foundation for orienting partners to CPM
- **Barrier Busting:** Working together to reduce system barriers to CPM implementation
- **Stronger Together:** Aligning partnerships with quality implementation of CPM practice
- **Sustaining Change:** Monitoring CPM implementation in partnership with the community

Two tools: **Foundational Engagement Tip Sheet** and **Assessment Tool for Aligning Partnerships with CPM** were shared at the October 30 DC meeting in Sacramento with more to come!

Implementing CPM: The Critical Importance of Agency Leadership & Implementation Teams

Implementing the CPM is about specific practice and leadership behaviors. It is also about *how* agencies implementing the CPM *actively support its use* by supervisors and workers with children and families. Effective implementation requires deliberate and ongoing attention to individual and organizational factors that both help and get in the way of effective implementation. Who does this work – not *doing* the CPM, per se, but *supporting its effective use*? The answer is Leadership and Implementation Teams – a team or teams with dedicated, purposeful attention to leading, managing, and ensuring effective implementation.

As local county agencies begin to implement the Core Practice Model (CPM), **one of the most critically important decisions** in the process includes each agency's commitment to building leadership capacity to effectively support implementation. Research clearly shows that when agencies formally dedicate staff and resources to purposeful implementation, two measurable benefits occur: (1) effective implementation occurs *much faster*, than when teams are loosely or ill-defined, or not specified at all for active implementation support, and (2) the *quality of implementation dramatically improves* (e.g., fidelity, outcomes) (Fixsen, Blase, Timbers, & Wolf, 2001). This doesn't mean that agencies must identify new staff; rather, implementation science details the positive impacts of *formally dedicated staff resources* (actually, FTE's or full time equivalent staff) on implementation outcomes. Most agencies rely on existing staff. However, everyone understands that staff members already have busy jobs. One adaptive leadership challenge requires agency directors, along with their leadership teams, to decide how to allocate staffing resources by shifting work and/or reallocating positions to intentionally attend to implementation. Another way to look at this is to consider integrating the leadership and management *functions* (executive, cross-agency, and day-to-day) of CPM implementation into existing leadership teams (Aldridge et al., 2016). In fact, being clear and specific as to staff roles in the implementation process may be as important or more so than simply naming staff to the team itself (Higgins, Weiner, & Young, 2012).

When agency leaders specifically assign staff and resources to a formally dedicated leadership and implementation teams, there can be very positive changes in the organization's climate (culture), team structures, and commitment to the functions required for implementing an evidence based practice (Aarons & Sommerfeld, 2012). Remember too that effective CPM implementation is a staged process – that is, it won't happen all at once or even in a short period of time. Additional research suggests that successful implementation of a new intervention or program can take 2-4 years depending on a myriad of factors, and can save substantial costs when proper organizational readiness and leadership commitment is in place (Romney, Israel, & Zlatevski, 2014).

So California's local county agencies with dedicated implementation teams have time to do it well, and to pay attention to their local contexts in the process. Working collaboratively with engaged partners (internal and external) can really help. For example, the Regional Training Academies have expertise in many of the day-to-day functions that accompany CPM. Other county agencies (e.g., peers, members of a collaborative or consortium) can also be great assets. A county agency leadership team that expertly partners with others doesn't have to invent or reinvent a resource. By formally dedicating leaders and staff to the process of CPM implementation, these partnerships can be identified, leveraged and used to everyone's benefit while saving scarce resources.

- Aarons, G. A., & Sommerfeld, D. H. (2012). Leadership, innovation climate, and attitudes toward evidence-based practice during a statewide implementation. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 51(4), 423-431. doi:10.1016/j.jaac.2012.01.018
- Aldridge, W. A., II, Boothroyd, R. I., Fleming, W. O., Lofts Jarboe, K., Morrow, J., Ritchie, G. F., & Sebian, J. (2016). Transforming community prevention systems for sustained impact: Embedding active implementation and scaling functions. *Translational Behavioral Medicine*, 6(1), 135-144. doi:10.1007/s13142-015-0351-y
- Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K. A., Timbers, G. D., & Wolf, M. M. (2001). In search of program implementation: 792 replications of the Teaching-Family Model. In G. A. Bernfeld, D. P. Farrington, & A. W. Leschied (Eds.), *Offender rehabilitation in practice: Implementing and evaluating effective programs* (pp. 149-166). London: Wiley.
- Higgins, M., Weiner, J., & Young, L. (2012). Implementation teams: A new lever for organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33(3), 366-388. Retrieved from doi:10.1002/job.1773.
- Romney, S., Israel, N., & Zlatevski, D. (2014). Exploration-stage implementation variation: Its effect on the cost-effectiveness of an evidence-based parenting program. *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*, 222(1), 37.

Notes from the Field: Mapping CPM Elements & Agency Practices in Monterey County

At the May 2017 Directors Learning Session we introduced Mapping as a way to assist staff in understanding how the initiatives and practices that are currently being implemented in counties are consistent with the California Child Welfare Practice Model. We followed this up with a Webinar in September to provide a T for T for Directors and Managers to think about how they might use this process in their own county as they prepare for implementation of CPM. We were pleased to learn that Monterey County had already launched a Mapping exercise with staff in one of their Divisions, and they generously shared the process they used and some preliminary results, which we will highlight in this article.



Christine Lerable, Program Manager, along with Alice White, Supervisor/Child Welfare Trainer, used Mapping with a cross section of staff that included Social Workers from the Court Intake, Family Reunification, Permanency Planning, Adoptions Units, along with Social Services Aides that do transportation and visitation, and Clerical staff. Staff were asked to count off by five and were assigned to a table where a Supervisor assigned to the table facilitated the process. Table cards were placed on each table that identified

the Practice Behavior that table was assigned; Engagement, Assessment, Service Planning & Behavior, Teaming, and Transition, as well as, a description of the behavior.

Christine introduced the exercise with the following statement:

“Every profession has an ideal practice model with core values and practice principles, whether it is a teacher, doctor, building inspector, law enforcement, therapist, fireman. These models are developed using research, theories, evidenced-based practices....The main question I hear, “What do you expect me to do differently?” I hope we can answer that today after a short exercise. As a County, we are ahead of the game and you may not realize that we already have many of the practice behaviors and are moving forward towards them all.”

For the exercise, staff was provided a list of some of the practices in Monterey such as; Safety Organized Practice, Family Finding, Collaborative Plan Reviews, Behavioral Health collaborations, etc. They were asked to select five from the list that would fit under the description of the Practice Behavior assigned to their table. They were then asked to reflect and to think about how they would rate how well they were doing on them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 not at all and 10 highly consistent with the Practice Behavior. They were then asked to make suggestions for what practice changes might be made to move the practice higher on the scale. For example, under the Teaming practice behavior one of the Monterey practices selected was “Wrap Around”

which was rated as a 6. One suggestion for improvement was to make sure that services were better defined. Under the Engagement practice behavior Clinical Staffing was selected and was rated as a 6 and one suggestion was to engage in team building exercises between Behavioral Health staff and Foster Care staff.

Management took the Engagement suggestion and developed a plan to implement their idea that involved Clinical Staff. In partnership with Behavioral Health, they planned a Convening for both therapists that provide therapy for the children as well as for parent and Social Work staff. They were asked to write their suggestions on yellow post-its in ways to improve collaboration, teaming and outcomes. The post-its were then placed on posters for participants to do a “Walk About” reviewing the suggestions. There is commitment by both departments to continue to work on suggestions to improve clinical practice and collaboration to better serve children and families. Thanks to Monterey for this great example of how they are improving the services to families through both engagement and teaming with partner agencies, by looking at work through the lens of the California Practice Model.

Christine reported that staff really appreciated the Mapping exercise and felt they better understood the goal of the CPM and how their current practices fit into this and how they might improve their practices by alignment with the CPM practice behaviors.

California Child
Welfare Core Practice
Model

Directors Institute



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Calendar of Events

Learning Session # 3 December 7-8

Berkeley Marina Doubletree

Directors Institute planning meeting



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