

THE STATEWIDE HUMAN SERVICES RESEARCH AND TRAINING NETWORK (RTN) CHARTER

Vision of the Network

A community of researchers and practitioners who work together to improve outcomes for families, where researchers understand the practice environment and respond to the knowledge needs of the practice community, and practitioners understand and use relevant research and evaluation evidence.

Mission of the Network

To promote coordination of research, education, training, consultation and technical assistance in California's human services system.

Goals to Support the Mission

1. Build relationships between researchers and practitioners to promote practice-oriented research* and evaluation within universities, counties, and the state; *(Increase collaboration)*
2. Increase the visibility of practice-oriented research; *(Increase visibility)*
3. Coordinate and communicate research priorities at the county, regional, and statewide levels; *(Increase coordination)*
4. Increase the use of research to improve practice. *(Increase relevance)*

Strategies to Achieve the Goals

1. Develop common understanding and language about evidence-based practice, and implementation science,
2. Enhance the development of working relationships between researchers and practice leaders, including faculty in schools of social work and other related disciplines,
3. Disseminate practice-oriented research in avenues and formats accessible to practitioners,
4. Promote partnerships that integrate practice-oriented research into social work education and training,
5. Create an environment that promotes practice-oriented research and implementation and encourages funding for these activities,
6. Encourage university administrators and faculty to direct their efforts towards practice-oriented research that is identified in an agreed-upon research agenda.

Activities to Carry out Strategies

On an annual basis, the RTN will establish a work plan that may include the following activities:

1. Convening Statewide Leadership Symposia
2. Maintaining a Statewide Research Agenda
3. Conducting Webinars
4. Maintaining the RTN Website
5. Disseminating relevant research findings statewide through a collaboration among our partner organizations (CalSWEC, CFPIC, California Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare, RTAs and Regional Consortia),
6. Disseminating information about funding opportunities for practice-oriented research and evaluation.

Target Audiences

- ▶ State and county human services administrators and practitioners
- ▶ University Faculty, Deans, Directors and Chairs (including schools of social work and other related disciplines)
- ▶ Title IV-E project coordinators
- ▶ Administrators of community-based organizations that partner with the public sector
- ▶ County- and state-based researchers and data analysts

Network Participants

Organizations representing the Human Services Practice and University communities are encouraged to join the the RTN and individuals from those organizations are welcome to join the RTN Steering Committee (see below). Organizations interested in joining the Network should contact Stuart Oppenheim: stuart.oppenheim@cfpic.org or Barrett Johnson: barrettj@berkeley.edu

Current membership includes the following:

Statewide

- ▶ California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC), UC Berkeley
 - Curriculum Committee
 - Research and Development Committee
- ▶ Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC)
- ▶ California Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC)
- ▶ California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- ▶ Center for Social Service Research (CSSR), UC Berkeley
- ▶ Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality

Regional

Northern California

Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension

- ▶ Northern California Directors
- ▶ Northern California Training Academy

Bay Area

Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC)

- ▶ Bay Area Academy (CSU, Fresno)

Central Region

Social Welfare Evaluation, Research and Training Center (SWERT), CSU Fresno

- ▶ Central California Area Social Services Consortium (CCASSC)
- ▶ Central California Training Academy

Southern Region

Academy for Professional Excellence, San Diego State University

- ▶ Southern Area Consortium of Human Services (SACHS)
- ▶ Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA)

Los Angeles

University Consortium for Children and Families (UCCF)

- ▶ Child and Family Research Consortium (?)

RTN Steering Committee Members

Participation on the RTN Steering Committee is open to state and county practitioners (with an emphasis on Leadership and Research staff), University faculty with an interest in Human Services research and representatives of statewide organizations that support partnership between faculty and practitioners. Anyone interested in joining the Steering Committee should contact Stuart Oppenheim: stuart.oppenheim@cfpic.org or Barrett Johnson: barrettj@berkeley.edu

Member responsibilities include:

- Regular meeting attendance
- Coordination of, and communication about the activities of the RTN with colleagues who are not members of the RTN
- Assistance in establishing the annual RTN Work Plan
- Assistance in carrying out the activities in the Annual Work Plan
- Participation in regular planning meetings to revisit and revise foundational documents (Charter, Research Agenda, Action Plan)

Member benefits include:

- Close partnerships between practice and University communities
- Opportunities to guide Human Services research priorities in California
- Opportunities to network with colleagues with similar interests in practice-oriented research
- Opportunities to influence the direction of statewide Human Services policy through the coordination of research efforts
- Gaining a statewide perspective about the direction of their own practice and research efforts

Definitions

*Practice-oriented research – Research and evaluation activities that support and enhance practice at all levels, from policy to direct service.