

Coos Coalition for Young Children and Families

Outcome:

Early Care professionals in Coos County are trained in evidence-based curricula and evidence based strategies to support healthy social and emotional development in children 0-5

Indicator

% of families who adjust parenting practices and demonstrate progress in appropriately supporting their child's healthy social and emotional development, as measured by the Universal Parenting Assessment Form

Why is use of an evidence based parenting curriculum important for supporting healthy social and emotional outcomes for children in Coos County ?

- Readiness for school requires children to have certain social and emotional competencies. Kindergarten teachers report that social and emotional skills are actually more important than cognitive skills for children to be ready to learn. The critical foundations for these skills are laid down in the earliest years through the context of nurturing and supportive relationships with caring adults.
- Research demonstrates a pathway between early social and emotional problems and later academic problems. Deficits in a child's capacity for attention regulation in the first year of life (how long can a child sit and play with a toy by herself?) predicts later reading skills.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) describes how children whose homes lack the safety and nurturance of high-quality parenting are at high risk for a range of cognitive and behavioral difficulties extending into adulthood. Exposure to toxic stress... has the effect of short-circuiting brain development, leading to the subsequent development of unhealthy lifestyles (e.g., substance abuse, poor eating and exercise habits), persistent socioeconomic inequalities (e.g., school failure and financial hardship), and poor health (e.g., diabetes and cardiovascular disease) in adulthood.
- Research shows that when evidence based strategies are introduced into the home by home visitors parents can gain new knowledge, insight and strategies for supporting positive social and emotional development in their children. These programs may introduce parents to the concept of developmental stages and show them how to engage in playful positive interactions. Home visitors support parents to praise a child's positive behavior, encourage problem solving, express emotions and emphasize play as a critical context for early learning. They focus on the quality of parent child interaction with particular attention on back and forth exchanges (serve and return), parental responsiveness, self regulation and displaying warmth and affection.

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What is happening now in Coos on the use of evidence based curriculum and/or strategies -(organizations involved, strategies/activities currently in place)?

- Coos organizations using evidence based parenting programs:
 - Child and Family Services (Colebrook)
 - Family Resource Center
 - Northern Human Services
 - Family Centered Early Supports and Services
- Evidence based programs in use in Coos County:
 - Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)
 - Growing Great Kids (GGK)
 - Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- Number of staff trained-approximately 20
- Number of families receiving in-home parenting support in Coos- 80-100

How do these programs work?

- Home visiting programs are voluntary-the families choose to participate
- Home visitors meet with families in their homes anywhere from once a week to once a month
- Home visitors use strategies and materials from the curriculum to assess a family's strengths, identify areas to work on and use specific tested strategies to support and enhance a family's ability to support their child's healthy social and emotional development

Why is training important?

- Training staff from diverse organizations at the same time has reduced cost, improved communication between organizations and improved service (avoiding overlap and mixed messages) for families

How is success measured?

- A universal parenting assessment form has been developed to gather data across organizations on the effectiveness of these curricula in improving outcomes for families-data available in FY

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How will the Coos Coalition strategic plan have an impact on encouraging positive parenting practices and helping parents to support a child's healthy social and emotional behavior?

- Encourage and expand the consistent use of evidence based strategies in working with parents
- Provide on-going training, support and updates for staff using these programs
- Develop a countywide data tracking system to measure program effectiveness and outcomes
- Encourage cross organization training and communication to reduce overlap and improve service delivery
- Build community awareness for the importance of healthy social and emotional development in young children

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