Evaluation of Kinship Navigator Programs: Everything You Always Wanted to Know, But Were Afraid to Ask.

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Questions

A. How do we define Kinship Navigation as a model?

B. Where are we in the field of kinship studies with this model development?

C. What challenges does such a model present for designing and conducting an evaluation?

D. What challenges does such a model present in terms of outcomes and rigor?

E. Application: How can we bridge research to practice?
Kinship Navigator Definition

How do we define KINSHIP NAVIGATION as a model?
Evaluator Discussion
Tucson, AZ (Spring, 2014)

• Seven different kinship navigator programs in cluster funded 2012
• All serving different target populations in unique locations with distinct outcomes
• Began important discussion on the kinship navigator model.
Where are we with testing this model?

• Joanna DeWolfe (JBA Associates, Cross-site evaluator), Kerry Littlewood, and Michelle Rosenthall developed a tool to assess the model.

• Each program director and evaluator from the grantee cohort assessed each component derived at grantee meeting in May, 2014. These include:
  • Is it essential service?
  • Is it enhanced service?
  • Is it a component the program is currently implementing?
  • Is it a component the program has planned on implementing, but has not?

• Fall, 2014 assessments will be assessed based on agreement and validation on model components. Results will be shared, discussed with evaluation committee and results will be drafted for manuscript Spring, 2014.
Bi-level model

• Client Level: Serves individual participants, children, caregivers, etc.

• Organizational Level: Includes collaboration and partnership building
Client Level

- Identification and updating of community resources and gaps in services and systems
- Participant recruitment, such as:
  - Captive audience – Department of Human Services, Child Welfare office
  - Community partnerships to refer clients to program
  - Direct marketing and outreach through advertisement and individual contact at events
- Kinship family engagement and relationship building
- Intake and Needs Assessment
- Education – educating caregivers of resources available, including self-referral; knowledge-building
- Referral – action or activity taken by Navigator and/or caregiver, such as:
  - Medical
  - Basic needs/housing
  - Respite/child care
  - Legal
Organizational Model

• Community partnership/Child Welfare and TANF agency staff
• Systems coordination
• Crisis planning, protocol for addressing client crisis
• Understand information, education, and resource needs of the intended population
• Data sharing agreements with key partners
What components are “enhanced”

• Follow-up with clients
• Peer to peer support – support groups, peer Navigators, Grandparent Ambassadors
• Case planning and management
• Advocacy for caregivers
• Advocacy for policy and legislation (systems)
• Specialized populations, such as children of incarcerated parents, immigrants, children with special needs
• Parenting education
• Youth Ambassadors
• IT innovations – e-applications, ifoster/211 – public, private data sharing and integration, e.g. population of online resource portal based on community needs
• Data integration across systems
Challenges Evaluating the Model: California

• How to design an evaluation that best captures a self-service, online portal for service delivery to kinship families
• An iterative approach and the County Collaboratives---county readiness to partner, localization, and entry points
• Data sharing with program and county partners
• Enrolling kinship caregivers in an online study
Challenges Evaluating the Model: Florida

• How to adapt a random controlled trial based on community context and revenue streams.
• How to integrate simultaneous enhancements to current model (one-e-app, peer-to-peer, interdisciplinary team)
• Data sharing with county and state in a privatized child welfare model.
What challenges does such a model present in terms of outcomes and rigor?

• Dose of Treatment
• Important Outcomes
  • family needs
  • health
• Cost
Research to Practice

- How can these kinship navigator models offer us lessons in improved service delivery for kinship families through innovative systems coordination?
- What is the best approach for sharing our findings with a broader audience to best help families?
Other Questions