

GEORGE WARREN BROWN SCHOOL

—|| of Social Work ||—

NEXUS

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What's Going on with the Brown School and EBP? (Part 2 of 2)

Brett Drake, Ph.D.

In the last issue of *NEXUS* we featured the first of a two-part article on evidence-based practice (EBP) and the Brown School. In the first article, we informed you of "FLAIR," a mnemonic to help remember the five steps and core elements of the EBP process:

Formulate an empirically relevant question, a question answerable by data (e.g., "Why do members of X racial group often drop out of treatment?" or "What organizational factors have been shown to most directly influence client outcomes?").

Locate the Best Available Evidence.

Assess the quality of the evidence you found.

Integrate the best available evidence with professional judgment, client factors, and social context.

Review how things went. Did you find the information you needed? Did you implement a new process or plan? How did it go?

The illustration below of step (4) in the EBP process might help people remember that EBP is a dynamic process involving 1) the best available evidence with (2) your judgment and experience, while considering (3) all involved persons (client, parents, other providers, caregivers) and (4) the social context, including formal factors (laws, agency policies, lack of health care availability) and informal factors (e.g. sexism, culture).



The second part of the article outlines the principles guiding the Brown School's primary goals 1) to ensure that Brown School graduates are trained as evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioners, transparent and accountable as they work with individuals, groups and communities in their future practice; and 2) to support the professional and others interested in EBP-based social work in their EBP practice efforts.

1. EBP is defined as a process which can include reference to evidence-supported theories (EST).

The process of EBP always begins with a question. When that question is of the form "*what treatment is best for ...*", then consideration of ESTs and understanding of practice guidelines, systematic reviews and primary Randomized Clinical Trials (RCTs) is necessary. Therefore, the "practices" version of EBP, is subsumed under the broader "process" model.

2. EBP is a framework for Social Work Practice, not a competitor with or replacement for traditional professional touchstones.

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What's Going on with the Brown School and EBP? (con't)

Core social work touchstones, such as Social and Economic Justice, Diversity, the Person-in-Environment perspective, are not replaced or relegated to lesser roles under EBP. These traditional elements are, in fact, strengthened under the EBP framework we propose, which requires attention to these elements as part of all practice decisions.

3. EBP applies to all levels and all areas of practice.

Embracing the process version of EBP allows us to apply this framework to all micro and macro levels and areas (e.g. child welfare, social and economic development, mental health) of practice.

4. EBP provides a means for resolving longstanding conflicts within our profession, and for showcasing and supporting Social Work's unique strengths.

a. EBP dissolves boundaries between micro and macro practice.

Under our new curriculum, micro and macro practitioners will apply the same framework for practice. This will provide a binding element to the profession. While social work practice varies (e.g. lobbying vs. direct mental health practice), social workers will share a common practice syntax which includes consideration of evidence, judgment, involved persons and social context making our profession more cohesive and increase the degree to which social workers can recognize what each other do and make career transitions to new areas.

b. EBP dissolves boundaries between research and practice.

EBP provides a unifying framework linking how research informs practice and how practice informs research. EBP practitioner possess a strong grasp of research methods, an understanding of how to understand and integrate existing research, and the ability to generate needed evidence from your own practice when necessary. EBP provides guidance to social work researchers. Under an EBP framework, researchers can best claim utility for their work by showing how their work can answer questions that practitioners generate in the field. Under EBP, knowledge is a tool for practice.

c. EBP assures the explicit use of the ecological model.

With regard to the immediate environment, our revised step 4 of the process (see Figure 1) demands that practitioners consider all involved persons in any practice decision, not just the identified client. With regard to the broader ecological context, this same step requires that both formal and informal structural factors be considered with regard to every practice decision.

d. EBP assures the centrality of diversity in social work practice.

Social work is to be applauded for its early and strong leadership in the field of diversity. It may have been the case, however, that some social workers do not keep issues of diversity in the front of their minds at all times. Our step 4 (Figure 1) element demands consideration of involved persons, formal structural factors (e.g. laws banning gay marriage) and informal structural factors (e.g. covert sexism).

e. EBP assures the centrality of Social and Economic Justice in social work practice.

As diversity and the environmental perspective are highlighted in Step 4, so is social and economic justice. All social work students are trained to be sensitive to, recognize, and combat unjust formal and informal structures. Our students will be taught exactly how these necessary and defining social work acts fit into every practice decision. Under our approach, the centrality of formal and informal structures reminds us and demands of us a focus on these issues, issues which can be too often ignored in daily practice.

5. EBP is a moral necessity.

At its core, EBP is the conscious use of the best data you can find in making decisions, combined with respect for your own judgment, an understanding of involved persons and consideration of the social context. We feel that this is a pretty good starting point for a description of ethical practice. Too many social workers (myself included) will form opinions or make decisions without reference to what is known. Imagine that your child has an ear infection. When your doctor gives you medications or performs a procedure, you know (or at least expect) that his or her action is based on evidence (tests, studies, experiments, etc...). Imagine how you would feel if your child got the wrong medication, or your child were misdiagnosed simply because the doctor hadn't bothered to keep current. You would be justifiably outraged. Having met with dozens (hundreds?) of our field instructors over the years, there is no doubt that the well being of clients is at the core of their professional lives and identities. Supporting you in using the best evidence to help your clients is one small way that the School can help with our shared task of helping those most in need.

FIELD INSTRUCTOR BENEFITS

If you are interested in taking a course as a field instructor benefit and have supervised a Brown School student within the past academic year, please contact Kelly Sabharwal at 935-4271 or ksabharwal@wustl.edu.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In our commitment to lifelong learning, the Brown School offers an annual Professional Development Program. For more information about these continuing education opportunities, visit our website: www.gwbweb.wustl.edu/professionaldevelopment

Field Education in the Global Arena

As in past issues of NEXUS, the Office of Field Education wants to highlight some of the learning experiences of our students who chose to complete practicum out-of-state or abroad. Fifty-one students participated in an out-of-state or international practicum in 15 States, the District of Columbia, and 14 countries in the past academic year. The following summaries will give you a sense of the Brown School's broader impact on our world.

Making a Difference in the Ibadan Community

Student: Haley M. A-bel

Agency: Centre for Enterprise Development and Action Research (CEDAR)

Location: Nigeria

Type: Community development, volunteerism, and education

Haley M. A-bel came to the Brown School in August 2007 with determination to complete a dynamic social



Haley A-bel, MSW May '09, Individualized SED & CYF

work program in two years in which she would build a sound domestic foundation in the areas of Social and Economic Development and Children, Youth, and Family, that would prepare her to study abroad in an African country during her final semester. Having never traveled abroad, her resulting trip to Nigeria to work at the Centre for Enterprise Development and Action Research (CEDAR) was dually exciting. It fulfilled her dream

to travel abroad and to learn more about community development in a non-American context.

Haley had many learning goals in her work at CEDAR, many of which dealt with the agency's underlying goal of providing skills and knowledge to people on how to increase their entrepreneurial skills. She also went with the desire to learn about education reform, at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels, via volunteerism, but especially for primary and secondary education. Specifically, she wanted to learn if community service was done in Nigeria (Ibadan in particular) and, if so, how volunteerism worked with children, youth, and young adults.

After putting together the information gathered from field research about Nigerian education and volunteerism, Haley identified a two-fold problem: the need to both develop more formalized volunteer programs for youth and increase access to higher academic achievement of Nigerian youth, particularly in public schools. Thus, the Teen Reading Outreach and Mentoring Program, Ibadan (TROMP-I), was developed. TROMP-I was created as a means for improving literacy skills of young people, while providing a more formalized process of documenting community service hours given by youth. There are two goals of TROMP-I: to teach teenage, senior secondary aged youth the importance of serving and giving back to their

immediate community by participating in their community's development (i.e., educating and mentoring younger students); and to help younger, primary-aged students improve their literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and hearing) by the additional work they do with literacy materials.

Some key lessons Haley learned during her time at CEDAR and in Nigeria:

- The importance of full engagement of the environment in which the program is being developed
- The importance of being aware of your audience in program development
- The importance of creating quality data collection instruments for a developing program.
- What it means to be an outsider: regardless of her skin color, she was still seen as "White" because she is not "full" African

Haley states, "Having my first international experience in Nigeria with CEDAR was nothing short of amazing!" Although there were moments of frustration because of cultural differences, she said it was a great learning experience on both professional and personal levels. Although her stay was short, she's confident that the project she started has made an impact on the lives of the Nigerian youth with whom she worked and will continue to make a positive difference in the Ibadan community. She is encouraged for the future of TROMP-I and look forward to learning more about how volunteerism amongst youth continues to be used as a means for the development of Nigeria.

Finding purpose in rural North India

Student: Ian Forber-Pratt

Agency: Seva Mandir

Location: Udaipur, Rajasthan, India

Type: Rural outreach, education and health

As a second year MSW student, Ian has combined his love for India with his desire to help children. During his first year at the Brown School, Ian completed his fieldwork hours at the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition in a variety of different functions including work on a new intervention to find older foster children homes and a holiday wishes program to give foster children gifts during the holiday season.

Ian was adopted from Kolkata, India, in 1980 and has always wished to give back to India. The Brown School



Ian Forber-Pratt, MSW December '09, SED

offered the perfect vehicle for this desire, practicum. Ian identified a well renowned and reputable NGO, Seva Mandir, in Udaipur, Rajasthan, India and began the affiliation process four months prior to the summer of 2009. Seva specializes in rural development and women's empowerment in Udaipur District.

Ian was drawn to the multitude of projects the organization offered. While there he helped to monitor Non Formal Education projects in remote tribal areas, create structure in slum area programs for children (Children's Corners) and worked at a season residential learning camp for children, a school for the deaf and a school for the blind.

Ian's concentration at The Brown School, Children Youth and Families, positioned him to offer Seva Mandir his current academic skills in report writing and research. While in Udaipur, Ian wrote a 30-page update book on the social and economic status of rural Rajasthan. Seva Mandir provided Ian the rough data from an eight year MIT data survey and he was asked to create a summary report in comparison to a baseline report that had been written eight years earlier.

During his time in India, Ian was also able to travel to Kolkata, India, his birthplace, to work in an orphanage he helped to build in 2006 while on a trip to find his own family. Ian was able to witness state of the art therapies for the disabled girls at the orphanage and understand many of the cultural challenges the young girls face.

While finishing up his MSW, Ian has been hired full time on a federal grant program at The Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition to case manager and help create evidence-based practice surrounding the agency -designed intervention for older foster children. Upon graduation Ian hopes to continue work with Seva Mandir and eventually start his own NGO in North India.

Contributing to the American Indian Population

Student: Electa Hare

Agency: Indian Health Care Resource Center

Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma

Type: Community-based health/mental health services; child welfare, and juvenile justice

Electa wanted to pursue a practicum which complemented her specialized coursework at the Brown School. A requirement of the Buder Scholarship is that upon graduation, Electa return to Indian Country for a minimum of two years. Electa entered the Brown School with previous

experience as a mental health technician at an inpatient adolescent psychiatric hospital, working directly with children with emotional or behavioral disorders.

During her time at the Brown School, Electa completed specialized coursework concerning issues Native American peoples face. She wondered how she could merge her mental health experience with community building practice. In this period of time she learned how the previous generations of child welfare

professionals treated American Indian children youth and families: traditionally assessing families from a deficit perspective which did not respect the relational world view of native people. Courses she is grateful to have integrated into her practicum experience include: American Indian Social Welfare Policy; Social Work with American Indians; Native Health and Wellness, Indian Child Welfare, and Indian Federal Law.

Electa found the perfect practicum at Indian Health Care Resource Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She served as a student in the Care Coordinator role of a Systems of Care Program site. Timing was perfect for her to develop skills in

strength based social work practice, practice with youth diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders, and community advocacy. Her workload consisted of crisis management, safety planning, family support team building, as well as presence in child welfare and juvenile justice affairs. Her research experience while at Washington University under Dr. Monica Matthieu and Dr. Paul Shattuck has prepared her to contribute to the evidence and knowledge base concerning American Indian people in Urban populations. She will begin pursuing her LCSW in September 2009. Her career goals include strengthening American Indian children, youth, and families through family voice and choice, child centered practice, and the utilization of community resources as assets.

Licensure Updates for State of Missouri

The Missouri Division of Professional Registration Committee for Social Workers has introduced new requirements for the social work licensure process, so keeping abreast of the changes by visiting the Committee for Social Workers website is recommended: <http://www.pr.mo.gov/socialworkers.asp>. In particular, the following information may be worth noting:

Supervision:

Effective immediately – All supervisors of social workers applying for licenses must meet the experience requirement which defines a qualified clinical supervisor as “any licensed social worker who has ‘practiced in the field for which he or she is supervising the applicant uninterrupted since August 28, 2004, or a minimum of five years.’”

Anticipated Change—It has been proposed that qualified supervisors will have to complete a 16 hour supervision training course. This should take effect sometime in 2010.

Licensure Tiers:

Anticipated Changes—A license will be required for an MSW graduate to call him/herself a “social worker;” and, in addition to the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), the following licenses will take effect in early 2010:

- Licensed Advanced Macro Social Worker (LAMS) – requires a master's or doctorate degree in social work from an accredited school, 3,000 hours of supervised experience and passing the ASWB advanced generalist examination;
- Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) – requires a master's or doctorate degree in social work from an accredited school and passing the ASWB master's examination;
- Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker (LBSW) – requires a baccalaureate degree in social work from an accredited school and passing the ASWB bachelor's examination;
- Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker – Independent Practice (LBSW-IP) -requires a baccalaureate degree in social work from an accredited school, 3,000 hours of supervised experience and passing the ASWB bachelor's examination.

Source: <http://www.pr.mo.gov/socialworkers.asp>



Electa Hare, MSW
August '09,
Individualized CYF &
Community Wellness

Introducing the Competency-based ELA

The Educational Learning Agreement (ELA) has changed! The competency-based ELA (c-b ELA) serves as a learning agreement and guide to monitor student's progress towards gaining competency during the field experience. The c-b ELA highlights the specific practice behaviors in which the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) expects all MSW students by graduation to be competent. "Competency" is determined by the student's ability to demonstrate the specific practice behaviors listed in the new c-b ELA.

The c-b ELA is basically divided into three parts:

Part I:

Includes a summary of the student's primary responsibilities and activities while in practicum at the organization. The activities should provide opportunities for students to assume the role of a social worker under the field instructor's guidance and supervision.

Foundation practicum activities must be grounded in the generalist practice approach. This approach must provide students an opportunity to develop basic social work skills, knowledge, self-awareness, and an understanding of the core social work values, respect for diversity, and a commitment to social and economic justice.

The concentration practicum is grounded in skills and knowledge gained from the generalist perspective approach in the foundation-level practicum and will build on those skills and knowledge at an advanced level

through increasingly more specific and responsible ways that prepare Brown School students to become competent social work professionals.

Part II:

Details the supervision process and the methods by which the student will be evaluated by the field instructor during the practicum. This section is to be completed by the field instructor.

Part III:

Provides the student and field instructor opportunities to record specific activities during the course of the practicum experience that demonstrate the student's abilities to practice as a competent social worker. It will, thus, become a dynamic tool to be used by the Field Instructor to monitor the student's practice over the course of the practicum. It will be used by the student as a guide to record the multiple levels of social work practice in which the student is involved and to highlight the learning process.

The c-b ELA is posted on the Brown School's external website (<http://gwbweb.wustl.edu/Pages/Home.aspx>) for your review. Please contact the Office of Field Education at (314) 935-6602 or ofe@gwbmail.wustl.edu if you have any questions about the c-b ELA.

CEU UPDATE

Field instructors are no longer required to provide their full social security numbers to receive CEUs. The field instructor's social work license number or the last four digits of a social security number will be sufficient.

FIELD EDUCATION CALENDAR

Fall 2009

September

29 Educational Learning Agreements due

October

9 Successful Beginnings, Field Collaborative Session #2*

November

9 Mid-Semester Evaluation of Practicum Due
(This date applies to students who are at least mid-way in completing their practicum hours.)

December

4 Ethical Decision making, Field Collaborative Session #3*

14 Final Evaluation of Practicum
(This date applies to students who have completed all contracted practicum hours.)

Spring 2010

January

4 Introduction to Field Instruction, Field Collaborative Session #1*

19 Spring Semester begins

February

3 School Social Work Fair (hosted by the UM-St. Louis)

12 Cultural Competence, Field Collaborative Session #4*

15 Educational Learning Agreement due

March

8-12 Spring Break

15 Annual Field Collaborative Professional Development Session for National Social Work Month

15 Dr. Clara Louise Myers Outstanding Practicum Student Awards—Nominations due
Shirlee Fink Kahn Award for Volunteerism—Nominations due

22 Mid-Semester Evaluation of Practicum Due
(This date applies to students who are at least mid-way in completing their practicum hours.)

April

9 Field Instructor as Teacher, Mentor, and Supervisor, Field Collaborative Session #5*

May

7 Final Evaluation of Practicum
(This date applies to students who have completed all contracted practicum hours.)

24 Summer Semester begins

* part of Field Instruction Certification series; register at www.umsi.edu/~fieldedu or contact the Office of Field Education at ofe@wustl.edu or 516-6602 for more information.

New Field Site Coordinator Joins the Office of Field Education

Chandra Bailey-Todd, MSW, MHA, MA, is the newest member of the Office of Field Education team. Chandra, who joined the staff in August, is the new MPH Field Site Coordinator, responsible for supporting MPH students in practicum through preparation for field placements; providing personal consultation and advising to students; and monitoring the quality of practica experiences. She will also assist in establishing educational and professional partnerships with health organizations to develop new affiliate sites for practica and collaborations on projects related to improving community health. Chandra holds Masters degrees in Health Administration and Human Resource Management from Washington University, as well as a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Michigan. Chandra's professional career has included serving as the Administrative Fellow for the Los Angeles VA Medical Center, where among many projects she managed for the Executive Management Team, she served as Interim Director for the start-up phase of a new community-based health clinic for veterans. She has also counseled women in

reproductive health issues; provided HIV education and testing to chemically dependent clients; managed quality assurance policies and procedures for a women and infants health clinic; and worked in health care research at University of Michigan's Institute of Social Research and in Ghana, Africa, as a Charles R. Drew Social Work Research Fellow. Chandra is excited to be a part of the Brown School community and is eager to build meaningful relationships, internally and externally, to help students succeed in the fields of public health and social work.

OFFICE OF FIELD EDUCATION STAFF

Cynthia D. Williams, MSW,
LCSW, ACSW
Director
(314) 935-8348
cynthiadwilliams@wustl.edu

Chandra Bailey-Todd, MSW,
MHA, MA
MPH Field Site Coordinator
(314) 935-5005
chandra_bailey-todd@wustl.edu

Diane Beckerle O'Brien, MSW,
LCSW
Associate Director
(314) 935-7849
drb1@wustl.edu

Stacey Spruiel, BS
Administrative Coordinator
(314) 935-6602
sds1@wustl.edu

Jeffrey Yin, MSW
Field Site Coordinator
(314) 935-3456
jyin@wustl.edu



George Warren Brown School of Social Work
Campus Box 1196
One Brookings Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130-4899

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