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ABSTRACT
        A study of 250 persons who work with youth with emotional or
behavior disorders and participated in school-based wraparound training in
several sites across Illinois, evaluated the technical assistance that was
provided to them. The initial training provided an introduction to the
wraparound process and offered strategies for use in schools. A year later,
follow-up technical assistance meetings were offered for those who had been
implementing the initial training and providing leadership or technical
assistance to others in their schools and/or communities. Participants
numbered 80. Results found that participants could identify specific
strategies for implementation as a result of the technical assistance
activities, and that they tended to support others in the same areas that
they focused on for implementation in their own work. These areas included
using strength-based approaches; participating in child and family teams;
interacting with school staff; using creative alternatives; and insuring
parent access/voice/ownership. Individuals reported financial resources,
time, and attitudes of staff as challenges to implementation. Participants
also reported more change in their own work roles than perceived change in
supporting others. Findings also indicated that participants changed their
focus for future efforts as a result of the one-day follow-up technical
assistance activity. (CR)

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Applying Wraparound Approaches in Schools: Evaluating Training and Technical Assistance Activities

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Introduction

A major aim of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities (EBD) has been to provide technical assistance (TA) and training throughout Illinois to effect the system of care for youth with EBD and their families. Training activities have provided an opportunity to develop an evaluation process and pilot instrumentation to be used to determine the impact of EBD Network activities and guide future training and technical assistance. This summary provides evaluation highlights of a specific TA component "Applying the Wraparound Process in Schools," which was targeted for piloting evaluation of TA.

Method

During the 1995-96 school year, 250 persons participated in school-based wraparound training in several sites across the state. This training addressed the application of the wraparound planning process to schools and the integration of school, family, and community strategies through multiple life domain wraparound planning. This initial training provided an introduction to the wraparound process and offered specific strategies for use in schools. Personnel who participate in teams, which develop and provide services for students with or at-risk of EBD, were invited to participate in these initial training activities.

A year later, follow-up TA meetings were offered for those who had been implementing the initial training and providing leadership or technical assistance to others in their schools and/or communities. These follow-up meetings provided participants (N=80) an opportunity to discuss their experiences and challenges in implementing wraparound approaches through their schools and communities. Participants also developed specific strategies for supporting others in implementation of wraparound approaches.

A TA Needs Assessment and a survey addressing application of previous TA activities was completed by all participants prior to the follow-up activity. In addition, all participants completed a survey at the completion of the follow-up activity. Descriptive statistics were used to provide basic information about the data. Changes over time in were analyzed using paired t-tests, and examining changes between groups were

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examined by using ANOVAs. Table 1 includes the general evaluation questions addressed by the evaluation activities.

<div align="center">[insert Table 1]</div>

<div align="center">

Results

</div>

Initial Training

Out of the 250 participants, 195 completed an "Initial Training Evaluation Survey." Table 2 provides descriptive information about the background of participants of the initial training.

<div align="center">[insert Table 2]</div>

The majority reported specific strategies for incorporating the TA into their current practice and role. These included: use of strengths in planning meetings and pre-referral interventions: needs-drive focus in designing interventions; team development; and informing those in control of the wraparound process. Only two percent reported that they were unsure of how they would begin implementation. Anticipated challenges to implementation were reported as follows: cooperation and resistance of staff (42%), time (34%), program or philosophical differences (6%), lack of staff (5%).

Respondents reported a variety of future support and learning needs. These included: additional training and seminars (23%), practice (9%), resource development (8%), more school training (8%), continued contact for technical assistance (6%), and getting others involved (6%).

Follow-up TA Activity

The following provides key findings for specific questions included in the evaluation of the follow-up TA activity:

What aspects of the previous training have participants implemented during the past year both in their own work and when supporting others?
Participants reported implementing many of the approaches they said that they would implement after the initial training the previous year, and participants reported using the same aspects of training both in their own role and when supporting others. There was a high degree of agreement between the activities that participants incorporated in their own role and the activities where they supported others. This included: using strength-based approaches; participating in child and family teams; interacting with school staff;

<div align="center">4</div>

using creative alternatives; and insuring parent access/voice/ownership. Figure 1 shows the extent of agreement between the professional's use of previous training in both their own role and when supporting others.

[insert Figure 1]

What challenges have people faced when implementing the previous TA and training both in their own role and when supporting others? Overall, challenges identified by participants for their own work were very similar to challenges they experience when supporting others (see Table 3). This is not unexpected, since the people they are likely to support are professionals who are working in the same environment.

[insert Table 3]

What changes have participants perceived both in their own role and when supporting others? Although participants tended to rate the same areas in use of previous training and level of challenge for themselves and others, they did not report the same amount of change for themselves and others. For example, 61% reported a high amount of change in evaluating the effectiveness of the team in their own role, and only 27% rated a high change in when supporting others. Fifty-three percent of respondents reported a high amount of change in their own use of creative resources, while 38% reported a high change in supporting others. Likewise, 61% of the participants reported significant change in their participation in child and family teams, and only 36% reported a high change in the amount of support that they gave to others.

What were the perceived challenges to implementation in participant's own work and when supporting others? There was no appreciable difference in the challenges participants identified in incorporating strategies in their own work, or when supporting others. In general, participants rated the same challenges to using the follow-up activity that they identified to using the initial TA activity. This suggests that these areas should be targeted to assist people with these implementation challenges. Participants rated: time (55%), financial resources (53%), previous training and attitude of staff (40%), and number of staff (38%) as challenges to implementation.

Changes as a Result of the Follow-up TA Activity

Additional analyses were conducted in order to determine the impact of the follow-up TA activity on participant's implementation priorities for the future. In order to conduct this analysis, information from the survey completed before the follow-up activity ("Use of Previous Technical Assistance Assessment") was compared to survey information collected after the TA activity ("Planned Use of Today's Activity"). Changes between respondents reported use of previous TA over the past year, and their planned priorities for the future were examined. These analyses examined both changes in participant's own roles and the ways that they reported they would support others. The findings reported here are those that were significant at the .05 level or greater. Significant differences were found in the activities individuals planned in their own role and when supporting others.

Significant Changes in Own Role

After the day's TA activity, participants reported a higher priority in implementing the activities to insure parent access/voice/ownership than they had previously reported (t=-2.28, p=.04). Priority for implementing collaboration with both mental health (t=-2.63, p=.02) and child welfare professionals (t=-2.45, p=.03) was greater than previously reported, along with priority for evaluating the effectiveness of one's work with the team (t=-4.57, p=.00). Priority for accessing resources was significantly greater than use of previous TA toward this activity (t=-4.83, p=.00). Priority for developing parent groups was significantly higher than previous report of use TA in this area (t=-4.51, p=.00.

Significant Changes in Supporting Others

Priority for supporting others in their collaboration with DMH (t=-4.04, p=.00) and DCFS (t=-3.88, p=.00) was significantly higher than reported use of previous TA in these areas. Priority for supporting others in evaluation activities: effectiveness of work with teams (t=-3.24, p=.01), and effectiveness of work with youth and families (t=-2.75, p=.02) was significantly greater than use of TA in these areas prior to the day's TA activities. Priority for supporting others regarding accessing the LAN (t=-3.12, p=.01), accessing resources (t=-4.22, p=.00), and the development of parent groups (t=-3.70, p=.00) were significantly higher than reports of previous use of TA in these areas.

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Implications for Future TA Activities

It is clear from these analyses that all individuals attending the "Applying Wraparound in Schools" TA activities could identify specific strategies for implementation as a result of the activity. It was also found that individuals tend to support others in their work in the same areas that they focus on for implementation in their own work. With respect to challenges, individuals report financial resources, time and attitudes of staff as challenges to implementation. It may be useful to target future TA activities to address these challenges. Interestingly, people report more change in their own work than perceived change in supporting others. More information regarding this finding could be explored in future survey work.

One of the most interesting findings, from the pre-and post-testing conducted at the follow-up activity, is that participants in the follow-up training changed their focus for future efforts as a result of a one-day follow-up TA activity. As reported earlier, participants reported significant differences in the areas they would apply TA after the follow-up activity than what they had reported using during the past year. This finding suggests that providing on-going TA can significantly influence where participants focus future activities.

Implications for Future Evaluation Activities

It is clear from these analyses that all individuals participating in the "Applying Wraparound in Schools" activities could identify specific strategies for implementation as a result of the activity. Although individuals have been working with and supporting others to apply the wraparound process, they identify many areas of need for TA. Almost all of the areas listed were rated as high needs for the participants.

It was also found that individuals tend to support others in their work in the same areas that they focus on for implementation in their own work. With respect to challenges, individuals report financial resources, time and attitudes of staff as challenges to implementation. It may be useful to target future TA activities to address these challenges. Participants reported more change in their own work than perceived change in others they are supporting through TA. More information regarding this finding could be explored in future survey work.

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One of the most interesting findings is that after the follow-up TA activity, participants report that they will increase their use of TA in both their own work and when supporting others. This finding suggests that individuals have continued needs for TA and will change their focus for applying TA after a follow-up training opportunity.

<u>Implications for Future Evaluation Activities</u>

The piloting of these instruments has been useful in providing information about both the content and the length of instrumentation. Additional information about needs could also be gathered from follow-up interviews or a focus group. The evaluation approach could also be modified by selecting a sample of participants to interview over the telephone before and after the initial training to determine implementation, challenges, and needs for future TA.

Table 1
Training Details

Activity	Date	Location	Number of Participants	Number of Surveys
Initial	10/24/95	Mt. Vernon, IL	31	26
Initial	12/19/95	Anna, IL	60	33
Initial	1/11-12/96	Bloomington, IL	44	50
Initial	1/19/96	Northern, IL	57	47
Initial	1/23/96	PAEC Elementary	28	20
Initial	1/30/96	PAEC High School	24	19
Follow-up	10/09/96	Springfield, IL	30	27
Follow-up	10/24/96	Willowbrook, IL	50	36

Table 2
### Participant Background

Job Titles	
social worker	33%
administrator, department chairperson, project director, school nurse, teacher aide, therapist	32%
school psychologist	14%
school coordinator	11%
special education teacher	10%
Employment Setting	
school	87%
mental health	6%
unknown or "other"	5%
juvenile justice	1%
child welfare	1%
How informed about wraparound prior to training?	
slightly informed	36%
somewhat informed	33%
not at all informed	16%
very informed	14%

Table 3

Challenges When Implementing Previous Technical Assistance and Training

Areas of Challenge	Supporting Others	Own Role
Evaluating effectiveness of work with youth and families	66%	41%
Working with families over time	61%	71%
Evaluating effectiveness of work with teams	61%	54%
Using creative alternatives to service provision	61%	54%
Evaluating the effectiveness of work with youth & families	56%	51%
Accessing resources	56%	50%
Evaluating effectiveness of work with team	54%	52%
Networking with other comity providers	54%	49%
Collaborating with professional from DCFS or child welfare agencies	53%	47%
Developing parent networks	52%	61%
Interacting with school staff	51%	40%
Collaborating with professionals from DMH or mental health agencies	50%	51%

Figure 1
Previous Training Used in Own Role
and in Supporting Others
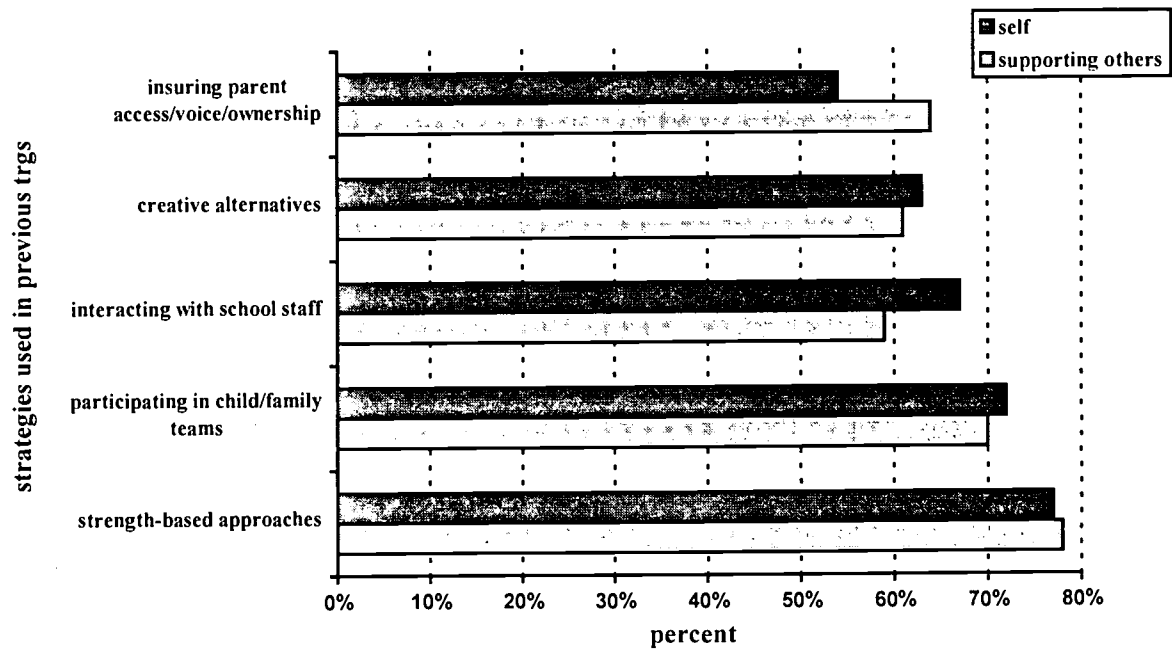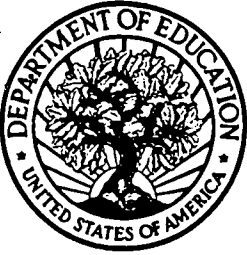
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