Does it Change Practice in Community-Based Part C Settings?

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**Background**

In order to help early intervention (EI) providers use family-guided practices (FG6), state and local Part C programs make critical decisions about how to offer professional development (PD) to implement coaching practices (INS 13) to enhance a family’s ability to embed intervention in everyday routines and activities (INS 5).

Although researcher-delivered PD is known to create changes in early childhood provider practice in some settings (Pianta, Mashburn, Downer, Hamre, & Justice, 2008; Markussen-Brown et al., 2017), evidence of successful PD in community-based programs is not widely available (Googet al., 2019; Pianta et al., 2017), despite a focus on implementation science in professional development research.

While there is little research specific to PD approaches for Part C providers (Krick Oborn & Johnson, 2015; Marturana & Woods, 2012), research synthesizes highlight important features of PD in early childhood settings. Key features include: sustained, job-embedded opportunities that include direct content, practice in context, opportunities to receive feedback and to reflect on one’s own use of the new skills with follow up support (Dunst, 2015).

This study evaluates the impact of using trained peer internal coaches to support Part C providers’ implementation of Family Guided Routines Based Intervention (FGRBI), the model adopted by Iowa’s Part C system, Early ACCESS.

**Internal Peer Coaches in FGRBI**

In order to become a peer internal coach, providers must:

- Reach at least 80% fidelity of implementation of FGRBI Key Indicators,
- Participate in formal, ongoing training and feedback, reach 80% fidelity of implementation of coaching session protocols,
- Maintain an active Part C caseload within the local agency, and
- Learn to use distance technology and processes to support peer providers

**Coaches, Providers, and Families**

- 2 peer internal coaches with 2-4 years experience in internal coaching in FGRBI.
  One provider per site (1 ECSE, 1 SLP) and a third site is in data collection.
- 6 providers with backgrounds in ECSE (n=3), SLP (n=2) and one dual ECSE/SLP who work in two separate regions in Iowa.
- 12 families of children with delays and disabilities who participate in Iowa’s Early ACCESS system.

**Experimental Design and Research Questions**

Single case, multiple probe designs across providers in three agencies, two reported here (the third is collecting data). Used What Works Clearinghouse guidelines for multiple probe designs (Krathowitch et al., 2013).

1. Is there a functional relationship between the multicomponent professional development intervention delivered by a community-based peer internal coach and the providers’ use of the FGRBI Key Indicators?
2. Does provider implementation of the FGRBI Key Indicators vary by family?

**Key Results**

- Providers increased their use of FGRBI Key Indicators after the onset of peer coaching across providers at both sites.
- Providers’ use of the FGRBI Key Indicators was consistent between families in both sites.
- Providers varied in their gains during the module phase.
- Peer internal coaches conducted PD during the module and peer coaching phase at fidelity.

**References**