



The ParentingWell Practice Approach: What's Been Learned from Recent Research

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Introduction

ParentingWell is a way to support or give resources to parents with mental illness. ParentingWell makes talking about parenting and family a regular part of mental health care. ParentingWell was created in Finland. This research looked at how to use ParentingWell in Massachusetts. The research also looked at the ParentingWell Learning Collaborative. The ParentingWell Learning Collaborative showed specialists how to use ParentingWell.

Background

Parents with mental illness need mental health care that focuses on families. There isn't a lot of research about parents with serious mental illness though. Serious mental illness is a type of mental illness that can have a big impact your life. For example, someone with serious mental illness might have trouble following a daily routine. Mental health specialists say they don't know how to work with parents. More research is needed to make sure parents can get good mental health care.

What They Learned

ParentingWell is for parents with mental illness. ParentingWell uses conversations about parenting and family as a part of your mental health care. It fits into the everyday work of mental health specialists. It builds on the skills mental health specialists already have.

ParentingWell has:

Four Important Parts	Four Basic Ideas
1. Engage The first step is asking about a person's family situation and whether they want to be or are a parent.	1. Trauma-Informed The specialist understands that some parents have experienced stressful life events and situations that cause bad effects. The specialist helps

	parents to understand the relationship between what happened in the past and what's happening now.
<p>2. Explore</p> <p>Next, you should ask questions to learn about how things are going in the family. You can ask about the past if it is important to the person right now or in the future.</p>	<p>2. Strengths-Based</p> <p>The specialist focuses on what people are good at. They build on strengths to help parents reach their goals.</p>
<p>3. Plan</p> <p>Help them plan to address issues happening in the family. Set goals related to parenting and family life. Include those goals in their personal plan.</p>	<p>3. Family-Focused</p> <p>The specialist understands families have different values and that people parent in different ways.</p>
<p>4. Access & Advocate</p> <p>Learn who is a part of the parent's support system and what resources they have to support them. Learning what supports they have and don't have can help parents get the supports they need and reach their goals.</p>	<p>4. Culturally Sensitive</p> <p>The specialist knows that every culture is different and that they need to respect everyone's culture and values.</p>

The ParentingWell Program

Four Core Elements

① Engage



② Explore



③ Plan



④ Access & Advocate



Four Core Principles

① Trauma-informed

② Strengths-based

③ Family-focused

④ Culturally sensitive

The ParentingWell Program: Four Core Elements and Four Core Principles

Mental health specialists learned how to use ParentingWell as part of the ParentingWell Learning Collaborative. The specialists were happy about their experience in the ParentingWell. They used what they learned in their work with parents.

Why It Matters

This research can help mental health specialists be more focused on families and parents. This can help improve the lives of parents with mental illness and their children.

We still need to learn more about the way mental health specialists change how they do their work because of ParentingWell. We also need to learn more about the impact on the parents with mental illness and their children.

What They Did

ParentingWell started in Finland. They called it “Let’s Talk about Children.” It helped parents with mental illness by giving them information about how children grow up. It allowed parents to talk about their children.

Researchers, policy makers, mental health specialists, and parents changed the Let’s Talk About Children to make ParentingWell. They made it so it can be used by mental health specialists in Massachusetts.

Twenty nine mental health specialists took part in the ParentingWell Learning Collaborative. The program included an orientation, training, and follow-up session. It also included coaching and an online hub. Participants shared 1) how they took part, 2) if they were happy with the program, and 3) how they used what they learned.

References





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