SEMINARIO INTERNACIONAL

DESINTERNACIÓN:

Vivir en familia es un derecho
Supporting Families: LESSONS LEARNED
Working in 30 countries During 40 years

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I. What is prevention and how should it be organized?

Three models of social welfare and child protection*

• Anglo-American model
  • Tertiary prevention:
    • After a family is overwhelmed with problems

• Nordic model
  • Primary Prevention
    • Before problems develop

• Continental European model
  • Secondary Prevention
    • When problems first appear, to prevent problems getting worse

Low and middle income countries unfortunately rely on Anglo-American model

II. What service models support families and prevent family separation?

Two useful resources

- Better Care Network:
  - www.Bettercarenetwork.org
- California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare
  http://www.cebc4cw.org/
III. Principles for Effective Programs to Prevent Family Separation

• 1. Community Ownership

Different levels of community ownership

• Direct implementation by the external agency
• Community involvement in the agency’s initiative
• Community owned and managed activities mobilized by external agency
• Community owned and managed activities initiated from within the community
Principles for Effective Prevention Programs

2. Build on local resources, programs and approaches that are already part of the informal system of care

• These are:
  • Religious institutions and leaders,
  • Schools and teachers
  • Neighbors in Family Group Conferences
  • Parents who have had similar experiences
3. People using a service need to trust the program and the people who work in it.

- People from the community and who are served by the program need to be involved at every level of the program:
  - Design
  - Implement
  - Deliver services
  - Evaluate

- The services should meet their identified needs
Principles for Effective Prevention Programs

4. Create an early warning system to identify problems before a family is overwhelmed.

Ways to create an early warning system

• Multi-service centers (Lithuania)
• School programs (everywhere)
• Community workers (Rwanda and Cuba)
Principles for Effective Prevention Programs

5. Family and Child Rights Need to be Protected

- Good legal representation
  - lawyers trained in child protection
  - Lawyers have social workers to investigate from the parents’ perspective
  - Lawyers continue to work with the family after the child is removed from family
IV. What are the most effective reform strategies?*

- **Bottom Up**
- **Top Down**
  - Executive leadership, for laws, policies and capacities
  - Grassroots community action to stimulate community-government collaboration
- **Middle Out**
  - At municipal or district level, city councils, to link national and community levels

Not mutually exclusive

Best to use Top Down and Bottom Up together

*Mike Wessells: (2015). Bottom-up approaches to strengthening child protection systems
V. Outcome evaluation is essential

Most program evaluation looks at **OUTPUTS**
- Numbers deinstitutionalized
- Numbers reached
- Numbers of schools build

• Essential to look at **OUTCOMES**
  - Are children and families better off?
  - Do children feel safe?
  - Did they get the help they needed?

**BOTTOM LINE: ARE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FEEL BETTER OFF AS A RESULT OF OUR WORK? DO THEY FEEL BETTER?**
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