

Michigan Child Care Expulsion Prevention Program

Reflective Supervision

Survey Summary No. 4 • August 2008

Introduction

In February and March 2008, 29 Michigan Child Care Expulsion Prevention Program (CCEP) consultants from 16 CCEP programs across Michigan participated in a survey administered by the Michigan State University evaluation team.

Reflective supervision is a critical piece of the CCEP model and is important for improving CCEP service quality. It is also an effective way for CCEP consultants to learn from the issues that they or their fellow consultants encounter. The CCEP program suggests that all consultants participate in reflective supervision at least twice per month. In the survey, consultants were asked to report on their participation in reflective supervision.

Reflective supervision, from a clinically trained supervisor or consultant, supports relationship-based practice by promoting the CCEP consultant's self-awareness of her own emotions and a careful re-evaluation of how her ideas, actions, and interactions contribute to or impede working with providers and families.¹

This fact sheet provides information on:

- How often consultants participate in one-on-one and group reflective supervision.
- The length of time that consultants spend in one-on-one reflective supervision.

Participation

All consultants reported participating in reflective supervision. However, the form (one-on-one or group), frequency, and consistency varied as described below. In addition, in some cases, there appeared to be problems with the supervision process. One consultant reported that supervision was irregular—not scheduled for several months, then occurring as frequently as every other week for a period, then once per month. This consultant noted, “It gets cancelled or our supervisor ‘forgets.’” Another consultant wrote, “It is supposed to be scheduled for bi-weekly, but it rarely happens. If it does get scheduled, my supervisor usually cancels. Currently, we have no supervision scheduled.” Both consultants were from the same program.

¹ Derived from L. Gilkerson, (2004), Reflective Supervision in Infant-Family Programs: Adding Clinical Process to Nonclinical Settings, *Infant Mental Health Journal*, Vol. 25(6), 424-439.

Form

Reflective supervision may be provided in individual or group sessions. One-on-one reflective supervision provides the consultants with the chance to communicate with their supervisor individually and target issues that occurred during their consultation services, ideally giving them the chance for confidential reflection and feedback. During group reflective supervision, several consultants meet their supervisor together and have the opportunity to support each other, increase skills and gain knowledge through interaction. Table 1 shows the percent of consultants receiving each form of reflective supervision or a combination of both.

- The most common form of reflective supervision was a combination of one-on-one and group supervision, with just over half of consultants receiving this form.
- An additional quarter of consultants received one-on-one reflective supervision only, while 14% received only group reflective supervision.
- These results indicate that overall, 74% of consultants received individual reflective supervision and 69% received group reflective supervision.
- Of those who did not regularly participate in one-on-one reflective supervision, a couple of consultants noted that they called their supervisor when they had specially difficult cases or were located far from their supervisor, had difficulty getting to reflective supervision (for example, due to bad weather). One consultant simply wrote, "As needed."

Table 1. Percent of Consultants by Form of Reflective Supervision	
<i>Form</i>	<i>Percent</i>
One-on-one only	24%
Group only	14%
Both	55%
Other (scheduled, but does not occur or "on hold")	7%

Note. N = 29 consultants responding.

Frequency

Table 2 presents the frequency of reflective supervision for those consultants who participated in each type of reflective supervision.

- Consultants who received one-on-one reflective supervision were most likely to participate every other week or once per week; only 17% received individual reflective supervision less frequently than every other week.
- Consultants who received group reflective supervision were most likely to participate once per month or every other week. One consultant had group reflective supervision weekly, and 10% had once every two or three months.
- The majority of consultants had the opportunity to meet the CCEP recommended guidelines of some form of reflective supervision at least every other week, and many exceeded this goal. However, about a quarter of consultants were not receiving reflective supervision more frequently than once per month in any form, and some much less. This appeared primarily due to geographic constraints.

Table 2. Frequency of Participation in Reflective Supervision		
<i>Frequency</i>	<i>One-on-one</i>	<i>Group</i>
One time per week	21%	3%
Every other week	41%	24%
One time per month	14%	31%
Every two months	3%	3%
Every three months	0%	7%

Note. N = 29 consultants responding. Percents reported of those participating in each type of reflective supervision.

Time Spent in One-on-One Reflective Supervision

To get a sense of how consultants spend their time on one-on-one reflective supervision, they were asked to report the typical length of sessions.

- On average, consultants who had one-on-one reflective supervision reported that it lasted about 77 minutes.
- Typical one-on-one reflective supervision times ranged from 60 minutes to 120 minutes, suggesting that substantial differences exist among consultants in their individual reflective supervision. Time spent tended to be shorter when reflective supervision occurred more frequently.

Copies of this report are available from:

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