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One Minute Guide:

Evidence Informed Practice (EIP)

What is it?

Evidence is fundamental to social work practice and other professions. Evidence informed practice means that decisions about how to meet the needs of children, young people, their families and carers are informed by an understanding and use of:

- The practice knowledge, wisdom and experience of the workforce, including values, law, policy, local community awareness and instinct;
- The views and wishes of service users and carers i.e. children, young people and their families - sometimes referred to as 'experts by experience'; and
- Research evidence, both nationally and locally, of what is effective and performance data.

This approach is usefully illustrated by the 'evidence' triangle (below).



Critical reflection is where we ask the question "Are we making a difference and achieving the best outcomes possible?"

Evidence suggests that a thoughtful, carefully planned implementation is key to better outcomes.

How are we doing it?

Working in an evidence informed way is integral to the development of a 'learning culture' and is illustrated by the following organisational features:

- asking questions regularly about current practice and making necessary changes;
- accessing and making use of relevant research;
- understanding key messages about what works from research and performance data;
- reflecting on our own experiences in order to learn, change and develop;
- enabling the 'voice of the child' and other service user input by regular participative engagement;
- regularly seeking feedback from the workforce and acting upon it;
- measuring the impact of work on service users experiences; and
- sharing knowledge and best practice with others within Redbridge Children's Services and beyond.

Why are we doing it?

The *Munro Review of Child Protection* (Munro 2011) focuses on the need for practitioners to draw upon evidence of the effectiveness of methods and supporting practice in their work with children and families.

Our practice with children, young people and their families can affect their lives and outcomes in a fundamental way. The decisions made and advice given, particularly during the early years of a child can remain with them for the rest of their lives. Using evidence effectively means that we can make the best use of our professional skills, knowledge and limited resources to plan and deliver more effective services and make well-informed decisions to ensure better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Additionally the recent overview of the key messages from 15 research programmes focussing on identifying and responding to child maltreatment (Davies and Ward 2012) recommends implementing multi-faceted evidence based programmes to respond to abuse and neglect.

Who are the key players?

The whole workforce, including partner agencies, and service users, all have an important part to play in the delivery of evidence informed practice. Ruth Jenkins, Head of Development and Principal Child and Family Social Worker is the strategic lead on evidence informed practice.

What support and resources are available to practitioners?

Partnerships with Research in Practice ([RiP](#)), Making Research Count ([MRC](#)) and also Community Care Inform ([CCI](#)) provide both practitioners and managers with support in terms of learning and development activities, research and guidance materials.

In addition, NSPCC [Inform](#) provides resources for the workforce on safeguarding and child protection, and SCIE [Athens](#) provides easy access for health and social care professionals to high quality academic and research resources to help inform best practice.

Within the Workforce Development Team the following resources are available for loan:

- TeamWise – using research evidence – a practice guide for teams (2005)
- Audit for Evidence Informed Practice – where you can work with your Team to benchmark how far evidence informed practice is embedded in your service delivery;
- *“Improving the use of research in social care practice”* Knowledge Review No. 7 SCIE

How do I find out more?

A good starting point is by reading the Children’s Services Evidence Informed Practice (EIP) Strategy which is available on TriX:

http://redbridgechildcare.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/values/evid_inf_prac_strat.pdf

or via [here](#).

Following this, RiP elearning modules, available via www.rip.org.uk, “Finding Research” and “Evaluating Research” – both of which take less than one hour to complete - are very helpful and available to all staff.

If you would like support in researching a particular area of practice, please e-mail:

evidenceinformedpractice@redbridge.gov.uk

or contact Lesley Perry, Workforce Development Manager, who is the RiP Link Officer or Samantha Wells, Bola Ademuyiwa or Michelle Johnson, who are the Assistant Link Officers.