Shifting the Child Safety Paradigm

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“Saving Lives today while laying the foundation for a 21st Century Child Welfare System”

“Core Components of the 21st Child Welfare System Require a public health approach”

One of the core components is “a shared family and community responsibility to protect children”
Paradigm: A theory or a group of ideas about how something should be done, made, or thought about...

• **Paradigm Shift**

An important change that happens when the usual way of thinking about or doing something is replaced by a new and different way....
Paradigm paralysis

The inability or refusal to see beyond the current models of thinking
19th and 20th Century Child Protection: Theoretical orientation and historical tensions
Societal values and beliefs: child rescue orientation

19th and 20th Century ideology and view of poor families:

• Poor laws - "worthy and unworthy poor"

• Attitudes about race, ethnicity, new immigrants...

Rescue: free from confinement, danger, or evil; to take forcibly from custody; to recover by force... freeing from imminent danger by prompt and vigorous action.
Child rescue and historical tensions

Rescuing children

Supporting families

Individual responsibility

Environmental conditions
Child rescue and historical tensions

Rescuing children

Individual responsibility

Supporting families

Environmental conditions

Ecological theory

Person in the environment
Child rescue and historical tensions

Less government

Philanthropy
Community

Local/State
Federal

More government
When and how we intervene?

FEDERAL | STATE POLICIES | FUNDING STRUCTURE

**Individual responsibility**
- After maltreatment occurs
- Categorical
- Individual
- Problem/deficit oriented
- Investigation (findings) or assessment, out of home care.

**Environmental conditions**
- Before maltreatment occurs
- Universal
- Population level
- Build protective capacity/strength-based
- Intervene with at risk population using data and evidence
Evolution of child rescue: almshouses to orphanages

• In 1824 report by New York Secretary of State Robert Yates heralded placement in almshouses as the most effective approach for meeting the needs of the poor.

• By 1840s many states began to recognize that conditions within almshouses were not acceptable for housing children.

• Orphanages came into existence as an alternative to house poor children who could not be maintained adequately by their parents.
Evolution of child rescue: Orphan trains

Who were the “orphans”? Native American/American Indian, Immigrant, Poor...
Evolution of child rescue: Societies for the prevention of cruelty to children

• The story of Mary Ellen- NYC
• 1874 New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was formed
• By 1929, there were 300 non-governmental child protection societies in the country

Emergence of the Social work profession:
- Charity Organization movement
  (scientific charity)
- Settlement House movement
Birth of the modern child protection system: Increasing role of government in child welfare
The New Deal

- White House Conference on Children -1909
- Mother’s/Widow’s Pension – controversial but palatable when the mother was “morally upright” and white
- **Social Security Act of 1935**
- States given flexibility to decide benefits
1960’s: Civil rights movement, the Great Society, and War on Poverty

- Civil Rights Movement and War on Poverty
- Louisiana expelled 23,000 children from its welfare rolls

Flemming Rule: a state plan...may not impose an eligibility condition that would deny assistance with respect to a needy child on the basis that the home conditions in which the child lives are unsuitable, while the child continues to reside in the home. Assistance will therefore be continued during the time efforts are being made either to improve home conditions or to make arrangements for the child elsewhere.”

HEW Secretary Flemming, 1961

“unsuitable home” becomes “unfit parent”
Child Abuse /Battered Child Syndrome

1962: Dr. C. Henry Kempe “Child Abuse Syndrome” or “Battered Child Syndrome”

- Developments in medical technology allowed radiologists to see evidence of subdural hematomas and abnormal fractures caused by beatings.

- Awareness of child abuse represented a major shift for the child welfare system. By 1966, every state had passed legislation requiring better reporting and intervention in cases of child abuse.

Data compiled by Data Advocacy 1.23.2015.
Child Maltreatment Report 2015

- 7.2 million children involved in referrals alleging maltreatment
- 3.4 million children involved in referrals screened in for an investigation or assessment
  - 29% of CPS investigations are substantiated
  - 1,670 fatalities (national estimate)
- 1.3 million children received services
- 265,000 children entered foster care
  - 3.7% of all children involved in referrals alleging maltreatment

annual all-staff meeting | january 2017 | washington state convention center

THE EVOLUTION OF HOPE
Charting a path into the next 50 years
safe children | strong families | supportive communities
An increasing number of children are involved in a report screened in for an assessment or investigation

The number of children screened in increased by 8.7% during this timeframe, a total of 269,000 children

Data source: Child Maltreatment 2015
Variation across 3BI states on the rate of children involved in a report screened in for investigation or assessment

Data source: NCANDS; FY2015
Measures of child safety: Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR)
The number of children substantiated increased by 3.8% during this timeframe, about 25,000 children.

A relatively stable rate of children are involved in a report of maltreatment that is substantiated.
Neglect as a primary maltreatment type

Neglect and “other” may include threatened abuse, domestic violence, parent's drug/alcohol abuse, mental health issues, lack of supervision.

- child victims
- child fatalities

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Victims</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
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<td>unknown</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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</table>
Variation across 3BI states on the *rate of children* involved a substantiated report of maltreatment

Data source: NCANDS; FY2015
Cumulative substantiated victims?

Synthetic cohort approach (Wildeman et. al., forthcoming) as cited in a presentation by Drs Emily Putnam Hornstein and Barbara Needell, Children’s Data Network, University of Southern California, University of California Berkeley

Cumulative Percentage of Children Substantiated as Victims of Abuse or Neglect Between Birth and Age 17
California - 2011
Cumulative risk of confirmed maltreatment by age 18, by primary race/ethnicity

According to standard federal measures, there has been **consistent improvement in repeat maltreatment**

- About **10%** of all children who are victims of maltreatment experience another incident of maltreatment in **12 months**
- About **6.1%** experience repeat maltreatment in **6 months**

**Data source:** NCANDS
Variation across 3BI states on the percent of children who experience repeat maltreatment

Data source: NCANDS; FY2015
The national trend in child maltreatment fatalities

Data source: Child Maltreatment 2015
Variation across 3BI states on the rate of child maltreatment fatalities

Rate per 100,000 children

Alabama | Kentucky | Maryland | Oregon | Tennessee | Wisconsin | West Virginia | Virginia

Data source: Child Maltreatment 2015
Response to critical incidents

- Child deaths/critical incidents
- Media & public outrage
- Blame agency/staff for failing to remove the child
- Heightened concern for child safety - risk intolerance

- Fire the director & staff involved
- Reactive policies
- Reforms
- Increase training
- Some funding
Pendulum swing

- Increase in referrals
- Defensive practice - staff err on the side of caution
- Increase in child removals
- Increase in caseloads overwhelms the system
- Further compromises child safety
Saving Lives today while laying the foundation for a **21st Century Child Welfare System**
Safety science/Safety culture

Safety Science
• Interdisciplinary science that concerns itself with understanding how humans interact with and within complex systems so those systems can be made safe.

Safety Culture
• Organizational values, attitudes and behaviors support an engaged workforce and reliable and safe care delivery.
Safety science/Safety culture

Aviation, health care, nuclear energy and others have learned that in order to improve public safety, it is important to:

• Avoid blame: view human error in the context of systems
• Focus on creating high reliability organizations
• Create a safe environment for staff to report and learn from error
• Proactively address system issues
• Use data analytics to predict potential concerns (conduct directed studies, assessment of safety enhancements, known risk monitoring, and vulnerability discovery)
Most maltreatment-related fatalities involve very young children.

Many (42%) are babies under the age of 1. Most (82%) are under the age of 4.
Children at increased risk

- Economic recession
- Foreclosure
- Prior report of maltreatment
- Sentinel injury: Minor injury can precede severe physical abuse in infants
Child Maltreatment Report 2015

7.2 MILLION CHILDREN
Involved in referrals alleging maltreatment

3.4 MILLION CHILDREN
Involved in referrals screened in for an investigation or assessment
- 29% of CPS investigations are substantiated
- 1,670 fatalities (national estimate)

1.3 MILLION CHILDREN
Received services

265,000 CHILDREN
Entered foster care
- 3.7% of all children involved in referrals alleging maltreatment
Can the child welfare system as currently designed succeed in keeping children safe?

- Responsibility is too broad - safety, permanency and well being

- Capacity is limited to deal with the issues that bring families to the attention of child welfare – not properly resourced, staffed and equipped to handle the millions of referrals.

- Intervenes after the fact
When and how we intervene?

FEDERAL | STATE POLICIES | FUNDING STRUCTURE

• After maltreatment occurs
  • Categorical
  • Individual problems
  • Deficit oriented
  • Investigation (findings)

• Before maltreatment occurs
  • Universal
  • Population level
  • Strength-based
  • Assessment (offer to help)
“Core Components of the 21st Child Welfare System Require a *public health approach*”
Social-Ecological Framework

The Impact Health Pyramid

- Socioeconomic Factors
  - Changing the Context to Make individuals’ Default Decisions Healthy
  - Long Lasting Protective Interventions
  - Clinical Interventions
  - Counseling & Education

Increasing Population Impact

Increasing Individual Effort Needed

Public health approach to child welfare

• Aims to change attitudes, beliefs and behaviors.
• Creates population impact: a universal approach can reach and more readily impact larger segments of the population.
• Places primary prevention and early intervention at the center of public policy.
• Promotes health and builds protective capacities.
• Works on multiple levels and multiple systems - individual, family, system and the community.
• Provides additional supports and resources to at-risk population.
Public health campaigns

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
Sponsored

Does your Baby sleep on his back, in his own crib, even for naps? Does he sleep without toys, blankets, bumpers or pillows?

Make sure your Baby is a Safe Sleeper
http://www.ctoec.org/safe-sleep

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
Sponsored

Breastfeeding is great for Baby. Mom should be sure to stay awake!

Make sure your Baby is a Safe Sleeper
http://www.ctoec.org/safe-sleep
One of the core components is “a shared family and community responsibility to protect children”
Multisystem integrated response

(Source: Rubin, D. Presentation to the Casey Safety Forum, October 30, 2013. rubin@email.chop.edu)
Building protective factors for families in communities: Fostering Hope Initiative in Salem Oregon
Communities of hope: Hagerstown, Maryland

• How can a community challenged with high removal rates of children due to abuse or neglect become a Community of Hope? For the Bester community in Hagerstown, Maryland, the answer lies in overhauling its approach to strengthening families and keeping children safe.
Communities of hope: Johnson county, KY

- This communitywide partnership grew in an area struggling with unemployment and substance abuse. It brings together social services, the judicial system, community volunteers, mental health services, substance abuse services, public schools, the local library and the business community, all in support of building stronger families.
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Questions/Discussion?

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