



research **in** practice

Performance Pointers

Bringing performance management
and evidence-informed practice
together

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research in practice



Dartington

working
together with



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

C4EO for the sector
from the sector

Core partner

Who we are

Our mission is to promote positive outcomes for children and families through the use of research evidence.

Our purpose is to identify effective methods of understanding and using research by providing services to a collaborative network of committed agencies

What makes research in practice distinct is that we offer a collaborative support network of over 100 agencies who are committed to evidence-informed practice and improving outcomes for children

What do we mean by evidence-informed practice?

A way of working where decisions about how to meet the needs of service users are informed by an understanding of :

- the best available **research evidence** about what's effective
- **practice expertise** (built up through learning from operational experiences)
- **views of service users** themselves (eg. about their expectations, preferences and the impact of their problems and of our interventions)

ie. making sure these are considered and combined with other factors in the complex process of making judgements, proposals and decisions.

About this series...

- Bring performance management and evidence-informed practice closer together
- Each briefing focuses on one national indicator
- Targeted at senior officers in children's services
- Tools and key research messages designed to guide local performance improvement planning

Knowledge generation

Agency needs and
good practice

Literature review

E-advisory group



Service user views

Research advisor

NI 62



- Published April 2008
- Stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves
- Close links to outcomes
- Definition of indicator

Risk factors for placement breakdown

- Lack of information for foster carers
- Over-optimistic planning
- Children with challenging behaviour
- Heavy workloads
- Failure to involve the child in planning

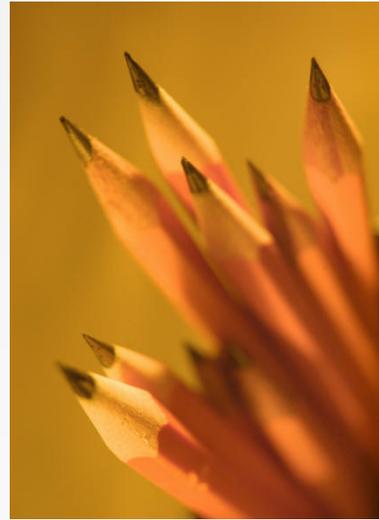
Factors with little influence on placement breakdown

- Sibling placement
- Disability
- Matching BME children with BME carers
- Age of carers or presence of birth children

How can performance for this indicator be improved?

- Increasing placement choice
- Developing and supporting foster carers
- Multidisciplinary emotional support
- Stability for older children
- Stability in residential care

Tools



- Performance Pointers
- Examples of promising practice
- Haringey's work with the Tavistock Clinic
- Dorset's 'Connections'

Evaluation methods



- What we wanted to find out
- Link Officers - who had they sent it to
- Email questionnaire
- Follow-up telephone conversation
- 32 responses

Findings

- All respondents rated this publication as '*useful*' or '*highly useful*'
- 20 respondents disseminated it to others
- 22 respondents said that the 'performance pointer' questions had prompted a reflection in their agency on policy and practice in placement stability
- Fewer had looked at the examples of promising practice

Findings

'it focuses on the issue - does not oversimplify it, does not look for a quick fix, but takes a broad strategic look at a range of information and action requirements that are necessary to have a balanced approach to promoting placement stability'

Planning and Project Manager, Derbyshire

The next in our series

- NI 112 - Under 18 conception rate
- Topic chosen using evaluation responses and data regarding local authority priorities
- Recruited professionals for the e-advisory group
- Scoping review of the literature
- Discussions of key themes

The next in our series

- Available for Partner agencies in the April 2009 mailing
- Extra copies can be purchased from our website www.rip.org.uk
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References

- Meltzer, H. et al (2003) *The Mental Health of Young People Looked After by Local Authorities in England* (London: HMSO).
- Ward, H. and Skuse, T. (2001) 'Performance Targets and Stability of Placements for Children Long Looked After Away From Home' *Children and Society* 15 (5).
- Wilson, K. et al (2004) *Knowledge Review 5. Fostering Success: An Exploration of the Research Literature in Foster Care* (London: Social Care Institute for Excellence).