Aubyn Stahmer, Ph.D.

What can historically marginalized groups teach us about the research to practice gap in ASD?

Presentation

Evidence-based practices (EBPs) for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have the potential to improve children’s developmental trajectories and quality of life. There is mounting consensus around the common elements of what works, the ages at which various approaches are appropriate, and the specific learning goals best targeted through psychosocial intervention. Despite this wealth of knowledge, the gap between research and practice remains: best-practice interventions are not reaching communities where the majority of children and families can benefit. The successful use of EBPs in community settings requires careful attention to the context in which services are delivered. However, in spite of well-documented socioeconomic disparities in ASD diagnoses and service use, the field has essentially overlooked the diverse sociocultural contexts in which children live. Most ASD intervention studies have been conducted primarily with white, upper/middle-class families. We have a poor understanding of necessary adaptations needed for interventions to work for racially and ethnically diverse families. Similarly, there is a scarcity of research aimed at understanding how to best implement EBP in low-resource communities.

Implementation Science and Intervention research at the MIND Institute aims to understand research to practice gaps in the translation of EBP to community programs. Multiple projects employ community-partnered approaches to engage historically underrepresented groups in ASD treatment research. Collaborating with providers and families from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and adapting interventions for use in schools and communities in which many families live in poverty has provided clues to potential mechanisms for improving translation of EBP into the community more broadly. Studies engaging low resource schools, ethnically and racially diverse families, and families living in poverty will be reviewed to examine innovative ways researchers can develop and test implementation strategies to ensure access to high quality ASD treatment for all children and families.

About the Speaker

Dr. Stahmer is an expert in the translation of evidence-based autism research to community-based practice and delivery. The main goals of her research include developing ways to help community providers, such as teachers and therapists, help children with autism and their families by providing high quality care. She is an internationally respected expert in the use of naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions which are validated treatments for autism. Dr. Stahmer has conducted extensive research in the areas of parent coaching, early intervention, inclusive education, and service research in autism spectrum disorders. Dr. Stahmer has conducted extensive research in the areas of parent coaching, early intervention, inclusive education, and service research in autism spectrum disorders. She led several grants funded through the U.S. Department of Education that involve adapting evidence-based practices for children with autism in collaboration with teachers and community providers. She is also interested in examining key ingredients of efficacious interventions to help with use in the community. Dr. Stahmer also works closely with Dr. Sally Rogers, developer of the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) approach to early autism intervention. Together they examine methods of increasing access to evidence-based care to families of children with autism in rural and underserved areas. She is widely published and a frequent presenter at annual professional meetings in the field of services to children with autism. She is an editor of Autism: International Journal of Research and Practice. In addition, she is very involved in the autism community, participating in the California Best Practice Guidelines Committee and the National Standards projects, developing guidelines for autism treatment.

Event information

To view this presentation, please register for the ZOOM webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hBy3L0R9TgKhRQqPmi-4dA

All questions to the speaker will be answered through the Q&A function after the presentation is completed.

This webinar will also be recorded and added to the MIND Institute’s YouTube channel at a later date.