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I have been teaching, supervising and consulting around collaborative strengths-based family-centered practice since the early 90's, and specifically wraparound since the mid 90's. All of my research focuses on how to maintain model fidelity in wraparound and in other collaborative team approaches to strengths-based family-centered practice.

Most recently, I'm working with Jackson County Missouri's child welfare system to transform the nature and focus of supervision to better support strengths-based collaborative team efforts with families when a report of abuse or neglect has been made. We are evaluating an instrument for use by teams and by supervisors and staff to evaluate team structure and cohesion. This will be augmented later this year with an instrument evaluating staff knowledge and skills necessary to implement collaborative strengths-based family centered team efforts with fidelity. Then, next year we'll be comparing results from these theory-based measures of model fidelity with outcomes in the cases.

With support from Kids Safe funds and a UMKC Center for the City CORPS grant, the same theory-based model for building well-structured, cohesive teams is being applied and evaluated at an administrative level across multiple systems that share overlapping or complementary legally mandated roles around reports of child sexual abuse. Results have thus far affirmed the utility of this model for supporting multi-system collaboration in creating more integrated, comprehensive and supportive responses to families in which a report of child sexual abuse has been made. Both studies have been presented as papers at the systems of care research conference in Tampa.

All of my work is theory-based and tested in several settings...mental health and school collaborations in rural and urban Florida, mental health, community youth services, special education and child welfare in suburban Illinois and Kansas federal grants, and now the child welfare work in urban, suburban and rural greater Kansas City area.

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