

Introduction to I/DD (Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities) Practice Guidelines

To date, there are no national practice guidelines for the I/DD population. In response to this situation, PBH initiated the development of an I/DD workgroup to draft guidelines. The I/DD work group includes stakeholders such as clinicians, providers, and family members who worked on a variety of projects related to the development of Practice Guidelines for I/DD Population. While the Practice Guidelines developed by the I/DD Workgroup are not exhaustive, the intention is that the guidelines will give providers and families useful information that can facilitate the process of learning more about I/DD.

Working Definition of Best Practices for I/DD Population

There exists a lag between research and implementation. Thus, the concept of Best Practices for I/DD population continues to evolve. Research with the I/DD population can be challenging because it can be difficult getting enough participants for group studies, so single-subject studies are often conducted. Therefore, these guidelines are not meant to be a final product but a work in progress that reflect the evolving status of research with the I/DD population.

A definition of Best Practices is included to help providers and families develop a working knowledge of this concept. The amount of research and information available can be overwhelming to navigate. It is important to remember that there is a difference between research, anecdotal testimonials, and advertisements. Research follows rigorous scientific methodology; whereas, anecdotal testimonials and advertisements often do not.

The PBH I/DD Workgroup developed a working definition of Best Practices for the I/DD population. This working definition of Best Practices includes the following: evidenced-based practices, promising practices, and emerging practices. It is important to note that prohibitive practices are not included as a treatment option under Best Practices, but it is defined for informational purposes. As with the guidelines, the working definition of Best Practices for the I/DD population is fluid. The workgroup will review and revise the definition when needed.

Definitions Developed by the I/DD Workgroup

Best Practices includes the following: evidenced-based practices, promising practices, and emerging practices.

Social Validity includes interventions and outcomes that have social meaning within a particular context. For example, the skill of hand raising may have social validity with teachers in a school setting. However, hand raising may not have social validity with teenagers in a community setting.

Evidenced-Based Practices include specific interventions with social validity that have at least three replicated studies across populations with similar

characteristics documented in peer-reviewed journals with no documented evidence of harm identified with use of the intervention.

Promising Practices include specific interventions with social validity that have at least two replicated studies across populations with similar characteristics documented in peer-reviewed journals with no documented evidence of harm with use of use of the intervention.

Emerging Practices include specific interventions with social validity that are supported by a minimum of five references from experts in the field with no documented evidence of harm identified with use.

Prohibitive Practices include interventions that are not substantiated through peer-reviewed journals or experts in the field, are experimental, or have reportedly caused harm as evidenced through peer-reviewed journals or experts in the field. The use of prohibitive practices is forbidden under the Best Practices definition.

Resources

Print Resources

Horner, R. H., Carr, E. G., Halle, J., McGee, G., Odom, S. L., & Wolery, M. (2005). The use of single-subject research to identify evidenced-based practices in special education. *Exceptional Children, 71*, 165-179.

National Autism Center [NAC]. National Standard's Report (2009). Randolph, MA: National Autism Center.

Web Resources: Retrieved July 2011

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMSA]
(<http://www.samhsa.gov/>)