A self-reflection tool to support improvement work at family centres

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Overview

Why do we need a tool of reflection at family centres?
The self-reflection tool
How to use it and experiences so far
The importance of reflexive professionalism and the second generation of Evidence Based Practice
The being under the same roof

The positive is taken for granted
... however, how does it work in practice?

"It was not as easy as we thought it would be"

An invisible wall
An invisible wall

- Maternal care
- Child health care
- Social work
- Open preschool
The invisible = preconceptions

Maternal & child health care
- Planning of work
- Organisation
- Scientific background
- Knowledge
- Rationality
- Hierarchy
- Medicine
- One & only

Open pre-school & social work
- Ad hoc solutions
- Flat
- Social science
- It depends on perspective

It depends on perspective.
Why a tool of reflection?

The potential of family centres
The potential of family centres

Compliance to parents’ & children’s needs
Compliance to parents’ & children’s needs

**Individual level** - In encounters between individual parents /children & a personnel = professional compliance

**Group level** – In the opportunity of parents in using the most gainful service at this time = internal organisational compliance

**Organisation level** – The family centre’s adaption to what happens in the society as a whole = external organisational compliance
Objectives of developing a tool of reflection

Facilitate an easy flow in every-day inter-professional co-operation

Reflective practitioners with different professional backgrounds as the extra resources

A compliant organisation with personnel who act compliant to parents & children’s needs
THE REFLECTION TOOL
This study

The aim has been to develop a self-reflection tool which can be used in improvement work at family centres.

Initial research questions:
• What do we know of parents’ needs?
• And therefore what is most relevant of making explicit among the personnel?

An interactive research design was performed. 20 family centres in Sweden have been involved in the development of the self-reflection tool.
Stepwise development

1 – Identify relevant research
2 – Define topics of interest together with practitioners
3 - Operationalise the topics into statements
4 - Feed-back from practitioners
6 – Test the tool and get feed-back from practitioners
7 – Revise the tool
8 – Retest the tool
9 – Get feedback from practitioners, co-ordinators and members in steering groups (not ready)
THE REFLECTION TOOL
The 7 topics

1. General work at the family centre
2. Early support to parents
3. Accessibility
4. Learning among parents
5. Early support by the personnel
6. Equality - parents
7. Co-operation
To what extent do you agree to each statement?

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  

We do not agree  
We agree
Topics & Statements

1. General work at the family centre
   2. Early support to parents
   3. Accessibility
   4. Learning among parents
   5. Early support by the personnel
   6. Equality - parents
   7. Co-operation

1 - Health promotion arena
2 - Childrens convention
3 - Family centre as a resource in the community
Topics & Statements

1. General work at the family centre
2. Early support to parents
3. Accessibility
4. Learning among parents
5. Early support by the personnel
6. Equality - parents
7. Co-operation

1- Group dynamics at the open pre-school
2 - Acknowledgement from personnel
3 - Parents as resources for each other
4 - Bounding work to all parents (universal)
5 - Bounding work addressing the more needy parents and children (directed)
Topics & Statements

- General work at the family centre
- Early support to parents

**Accessibility**
- Learning among parents
- Early support by the personnel
- Equality - parents
- Co-operation

1. Gettings parents over the treshold of the open pre-school
2. Quality by using each others competence in the house
Topics & Statements

• General work at the family centre
• Early support to parents
• Accessibility

• **Learning among parents**
  • Early support by the personnel
  • Equality - parents
  • Co-operation

1 - Children and parentship
2 - Interplay with the child
3 - Learning of language
4 - Cultural exchange between social groupings (social & ethnical)
Topics & Statements

1. General work at the family centre
2. Early support to parents
3. Accessibility
4. Learning among parents
5. Early support by the personnel
6. Equality - parents
7. Co-operation

1. Universal and early support
2. Midwifes identify
3. Midwifes refer
4. Nurses identify
5. Nurses refer
6. Social workers are visible at open pre-school
7. Pre-school teachers pay attention to parents and children with more needs
Topics & Statements

1. General work at the family centre
2. Early support to parents
3. Accessibility
4. Learning among parents
5. Early support by the personnel

6. Equality - parents
   1 - Both parents get information
   2 - Both parents are encouraged to participate with their child in activities

7. Co-operation
Topics & Statements

1. General work at the family centre
2. Early support to parents
3. Accessibility
4. Learning among parents
5. Early support by the personnel
6. Equality - parents
7. Co-operation

1 - The professionals pre-conditions for co-operation are well-known and respected by each other
2 - Common objectives are formulated
3 - The common objectives are regularly followed up
4 - The managers in the steering group are actively involved in the follow-ups of the objectives in common
Extra topics?

• If there are other professions in the house
• If there are targets groups you want to focus
• If there are special needs the house you want to lift and develop ways to meet
How to use the tool?

Step I – All personnel individually judge every statement
Step II – Dialogue and judgement in common in the group of personnel. Formulate a comment to each statement
Step III – Improvement work (prioritise, objectives, planning and performing)
Step V – Follow-up regularly each year
What needs to be documented?

- A number to each item makes internal longitudinal comparison possible.
- Formulating a comment to each statement (”what more exactly are we doing?) This clarifies interpretations and discrepancies in the group of personnel and therefore enhance a critical appraisal to work.
- A comment of priority to each statement (objective)
The tool as a spiral of improvement work

Research, experiences & professional knowledge

reflection

Action

reflection

Action
Experiences so far

• The tool contribute with insights and common learning in the house
• It provides a meeting place of different perspectives
• It facilitate to revise objectives in the house
• The tool can systemitise regular follow-ups of the activities and provide with documentation to politicians and managers
• There is tendency to rate high which is cut back by a comment to each statement
• External comparision between family centers
• The tool is a starting point – not the final solution
A process of strengthening the core

- Maternal care
- Child health care
- Open pre-school
- Social care

The common goods
Questions to the future

Is this tool a way to integrate research-based and practise-based knowledge through reflection?

What kind of learning is stimulated by using this tool?
- Adaptive learning?
- Reflective learning?

Could this tool be a contribution to a second generation of EBP (evidence based practise) which recognizes the importance of reflexive professionalism?

References

- Abrahamsson A, Bing V (red). Familjecentral som föräldrastöd. Socialmedicinsk tidskrift 2011; 88 (2)
- Abrahamsson A. Bing V. Löfström M. En utvärdering av 16 familjecentraler i Västra Götaland.
Thank you!

The tool will be published at:
http://www.familjecentraler.se/

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