Characteristics and Consequences of Capacity-Building Parenting Supports

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Abstract

Selected references to the conceptual and operational foundations of capacity-building parenting education and parenting support practices are included in this bibliography. The particular sources of information are ones that provide a foundation for understanding the characteristics and consequences of both informal and formal participatory experiences and practices that strengthen parenting competence and confidence.

This *CASEmaker* bibliography includes selected references to different conceptual and operational features of capacity-building parenting education and support practices. The particular approach to parenting support practices constituting the focus of this bibliography is one component of an integrated framework for practicing early childhood intervention and family support (Dunst, 2000; Dunst, 2004). Capacity-building parenting education and support practices are ones that strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills, and build upon existing capabilities to strengthen and enhance parenting confidence, competences, and enjoyment.

The building blocks for developing and implementing a capacity-building approach to parenting education and supports include: (a) the foundations of capacity-building parenting supports (definition and key characteristics), (b) the kinds and types of parenting supports that strengthen parenting competence and confidence, (d) parenting opportunities that strengthen existing and promote new parenting competencies, and (e) the outcomes and benefits of capacity-building parenting support and practices. The Prescription for Practice includes a number of source materials that readers should find helpful to more fully understand and appreciate the characteristics and consequences of this approach to parenting education and support practices.

Capacity-Building Parenting Supports

Foundations

The foundations of a capacity-building approach to providing and mediating parenting supports include a number of different family-centered beliefs, attitudes,

and practices. A basic foundation of capacity-building parenting support and practices is recognizing the strengths and assets of parents, and using these capabilities as the basis for promoting and building parenting abilities. Several useful sources of information about the meaning and the key characteristics of capacity-building parenting education and support practices can be found in:

Bornstein, M. H. (Ed.). (1995a). *Handbook of parenting: Vol. 1. Children and parenting*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bornstein, M. H. (Ed.). (1995b). *Handbook of parenting: Vol. 2. Biology and ecology of parenting*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bornstein, M. H. (Ed.). (1995c). *Handbook of parenting: Vol. 3. Status and social conditions of parenting*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bornstein, M. H. (Ed.). (1995d). *Handbook of parenting: Vol. 4. Applied and practical parenting*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

> ### Rx   Prescription for Practice   Rx
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> Improve your knowledge and understanding of parenting supports and education practices by reading the following:
>
> Dunst, C. J. (2000). Revisiting "Rethinking early intervention". *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 20,* 95-104.
>
> Dunst, C. J. (2001). *Parent and community assets as sources of young children's learning opportunities*. Asheville, NC: Winterberry Press.
>
> Dunst, C. J. (2004). An integrated framework for practicing early childhood intervention and family support. *Perspectives in Education, 22(2),* 1-16.
>
> Powell, D. (Ed.). (1988). Parent education as early childhood intervention: *Emerging directions in theory, research and practice*. (Vol. 3). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Cochran, M. (1990). Personal networks in the ecology of human development. In M. Cochran, M. Larner, D. Riley, L. Gunnarson, & C. Henderson (Eds.), Extending families: *The social networks of parents and their children* (pp. 3-33). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cochran, M. (1993). Parenting and personal social networks. In T. Luster & L. Okagaki (Eds.), *Parenting: An ecological perspective* (pp. 149-178). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Dempsey, I., & Dunst, C. J. (2004). Helpgiving styles and parent empowerment in families with a young child with a disability. *Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability, 29,* 40-51.

Dunst, C. J. (1995). *Key characteristics and features of community-based family support programs*. Chicago: Family Resource Coalition.

Dunst, C. J., & Trivette, C. M. (1994). Aims and principles of family support programs. In C. J. Dunst, C. M. Trivette, & A. G. Deal (Eds.), *Supporting and strengthening families: Methods, strategies and practices* (pp. 30-48). Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Dunst, C. J., & Trivette, C. M. (1996). Empowerment, effective helpgiving practices and family-centered care. *Pediatric Nursing, 22,* 334-337, 343.

Luster, T., & Okagaki, L. (Eds.). (1993). *Parenting: An ecological perspective*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Ortega, D. M. (2002). How much support is too much? Parenting efficacy and social support. Children and *Youth Services Review, 24*, 853-876.

Powell, D. (Ed.). (1988). *Parent education as early childhood intervention: Emerging directions in theory, research and practice*. (Vol. 3). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Powell, D. (2003). Parenting beliefs and behaviors: What matters most. *Schools and Families, 6*(1), 1 - 4.

Types of Parenting Supports

Parenting supports include the information, advice, guidance, etc. that both strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote acquisition of new competencies necessary for parents to both carry out child rearing responsibilities and provide their children development-enhancing learning opportunities. Several different types and kinds of capacity-building parenting supports are described in the references included in this section of the bibliography.

Chase-Lansdale, P. L., & Pittman, L. D. (2001). Welfare reform and parenting: Reasonable expectations. *Future of Children, 12*(1), 167-185.

Cochran, M., & Brassard, J. (1979). Child development and personal social networks. *Child Development, 50*, 601-616.

Cowan, P. A., Powell, D., & Cowan, C. P. (1998). Parenting interventions: A family systems perspective. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4. Child psychology in practice* (5th ed., pp. 3-72). New York: Wiley.

Kishchuk, N., Laurendeau, M.-C., Desjardins, N., & Perreault, R. (1995). Parental support: Effects of a mass-media intervention. *Canadian Journal of Public Health, 86*, 128-132.

Miller, S., & Sambell, K. (2003). What do parents feel they need? Implications of parents' perspectives for the facilitation of parenting programmes. *Children and Society, 17*, 32-44.

Powell, D. R. (1986). Parent education and support programs. *Young Children, 41*(3), 47-53.

Participatory Parenting Opportunities

Participatory parenting opportunities provide parents experiences that strengthen existing parenting abilities and provide contexts for learning new parenting skills. These experiences constitute windows of opportunities for parents to identify and accomplish parent-identified outcomes for their children and family. The following references include descriptions of participatory parenting opportunities that function as parenting supports.

Connecticut Family Learning Initiative. (2004, November). *Listening to families: The family learning outreach study* [Research brief]. Middleton: Connecticut State Department of Education.

Dunst, C. J. (1989, January). *Accessing social support and intervention services by teenage mothers* (Project ASSIST): Final report. Asheville, NC: Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute.

Dunst, C. J. (2001). *Parent and community assets as sources of young children's learning opportunities*. Asheville, NC: Winterberry Press.

Powell, D. R., & Eisenstadt, J. W. (1988). Informal and formal conversations in parent education groups: An observational study. *Family Relations: Journal of Applied Family and Child Studies, 37*, 166-170.

Turbiville, V. P., & Marquis, J. G. (2001). Father participation in early education programs. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 21*, 223-231.

Turbiville, V. P., Umbarger, G. T., & Guthrie, A. C. (2000). Fathers' involvement in programs for young children. *Young Children, 55*(4), 74-70.

Outcomes and Benefits

Evidence now indicates that different types of parenting supports, and the ways in which they are provided, are associated with different parent and family benefits, including, but not limited to, enhanced parenting competence, confidence, and enjoyment; parents' positive self-efficacy beliefs and judgments about their parenting capabilities; increased time and energy to carry out childrearing and parenting tasks and roles; and positive affective relationships with their children. The following references include descriptions of the types of parenting supports and approaches that are associated with different parenting benefits.

Ardelt, M., & Eccles, J. S. (2001). Effects of mothers' parental efficacy beliefs and promotive parenting strategies on inner-city youth. *Journal of Family Issues, 22*, 944-972.

Bloomfield, L., Kendall, S., Applin, L., Attarzadeh, V., Dearnley, K., Edwards, L., Hineshelwood, L., Lloyd, P., & Newcombe, T. (2005). A qualitative study exploring the experiences and views of mothers, health visitors and family support centre workers on the challenges and difficulties of parenting. *Health and Social Care in the Community, 13*, 46-55.

Cochran, M., & Woolever, F. (1983). Beyond the deficit model: The empowerment of parents with information and informal support. In I. Siegel & L. Laosa (Eds.), *The empowerment of parents with information and informal support* (pp. 225-246). New York: Plenum.

Dunst, C. J. (1989, January). *Accessing social support and intervention services by teenage mothers* (Project ASSIST): Final report. Asheville, NC: Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute.

Gowen, J. W., Nebrig, J., & Jodry, W. L. (1995). Promoting parenting self-efficacy. *Network, 4*(3), 12-22.

Humphries, T. L., & Dunst, C. J. (2003, October). *Parenting CEC: It's not what you think*. Presentation made at the 19th Annual Division for Early Childhood International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, Washington, DC.

Trivette, C. M., & Dunst, C. J. (2004). Evaluating family-based practices: *Parenting experiences scale. Young Exceptional Children, 7*(3), 12-19.

Dunst, C. J., & Masiello, T. L. (2005). *Influences of professional helpgiving practices on parenting competence, confidence and enjoyment*. Manuscript in preparation.

Conclusion

This bibliography included sources of information about different aspects of capacity-building parenting education and support practices. Capacity-building parenting practices constitute a set of principles (guiding beliefs), practices (participatory opportunities), and practitioner behaviors (actions) that form a foundation for acknowledging the strengths and assets of parents and using these capabilities as the basis for promoting and strengthening parenting abilities. The consequences of doing so include enhanced parenting competence, confidence and enjoyment as well as other benefits.

References

Dunst, C. J. (2000). Revisiting "Rethinking early intervention." *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 20*, 95-104.

Dunst, C. J. (2004). An integrated framework for practicing early childhood intervention and family support. *Perspectives in Education, 22*(2), 1-16.

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