

International Fathers Rights Foundation, (785) 230-5620

“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.”

“Words have the power to both destroy and heal. When words are both true and kind, they can change our world.”



Research for the Future

Research is the basis for effective and efficient policy. In order to target services it is necessary to know which children are at risk of negative outcomes, what services are needed and when these services should be offered. Problems in research design as well as limited funding have contributed to a lack of rigorous

Issues that affect children have been the subject of researchers for years. The studies published about specific topics such as education or foster care is extensive. However, a closer examination of this research reveals that there are limitations to both the quality and quantity of data. The role of research in developing policies and services for children and their families is explored..

You can compile a mailing list from business reply cards, customer information sheets, business cards collected at trade shows, or membership lists.

Knowledge Gaps

Research could provide answers to fundamental questions such as which

children will experience difficulties and when these difficulties will appear.

Knowing which children should be targeted for prevention and intervention efforts could make the delivery of these services more efficient and effective. Services can be directed at the most propitious time to children known to be at risk. Unfortunately, research has not been able to answer these questions adequately. These are factors that place children at risk of negative outcomes. It is difficult to take to findings of a research project and apply them to an individual child. Research findings usually describe characteristic of a group. In retrospect group studies can yield ridiculous results.

The inferences that are drawn from retrospective studies can be harmful if applied to individuals. Maltreatment has been linked with other negative events such as drug use, delinquency and affects disorders.

There are non-abusive parents who as children were exposed to abuse. By labeling and assuming that correlation is causality, young adults who were reared in difficult circumstances many

needlessly doubt there parenting abilities. By labeling and assuming that correlation is causality, young adults who were reared in difficult circumstances may needlessly doubt there parenting abilities. Some may actually be fearful of assuming the role of parent because they might repeat the dysfunctional behaviors of their parents. Research to support the notion of intergeneration transmission of maltreatment is weak.

There is no definitive explanation for dysfunctional behavior. Some children reared in violent homes become abusive parents while others do not. It is difficult to explain why some youngsters reared in non-abusive families become abusive parents. Research has been able to identify a cluster of variables that are frequently associated with negative outcomes. These variables can be considered risk factors. The presence of a risk factor or set of factors does not necessarily mean that the negative event will occur. It should however alert concerned adults to the possibilities.



"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing you can do is keep your mind young."

Research and Risk Factors

Factors associated with particular negative are unknown. There are no single factors or even sets of factors clearly associated with particular negative outcomes. Children have received little attention from the mental health industry. A review of the most widely used publication for diagnosing mental disorders reveals that children have been invisible.

Although this increased recognition is positive, it has not been without controversy. Applying psychiatric labels to children should be performed with caution. Development is not linear and children acquire cognitive skills within a broad time frame.

A delay in learning to read is now defined as a mental disorder. Mental disorder implies a more serious negative condition than word "delay." It is questionable whether a learning disability such

as dyslexia should be included in a book devoted to psychiatric problems.

In order to research the emotional problems of children, a system for classifying childhood disturbance is helpful. With that being said the system must be both valid and reliable. The validity and reliability of D.S.M (Diagnosis and Statistical Manual) has been questioned.

For example, one study reported the children who met the criteria for conduct disorder and attention deficit disorder. There are serious questions about the reliability of the DSM. There are serious questions about the reliability of the DSM. There are various methods for determining reliability of the DSM.

One method involves looking at how often people observing the same behavior agree in their assessment of the behavior. The primary method for classifying

the mental health problems of the children suffers from validity and reliability of their problems. Nevertheless, it at least recognized that children can suffer from emotional problems

Funding Research

The federal government is by far the primary funder of research on the emotional problems of children. There is no single federal agency or program dedicated to research on children. This makes it difficult to learn how much money is allocated to children's research. A number of federal agencies service for children and within each of these programs a portion of the budget is spent on child mental health research. The two largest federal agencies to fund child mental health research are the "alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration and the National Institute on Child health and Development. Funding for research on mental health and particularly child mental health has low priority when compared to funds allocated for research on biomedical issues.

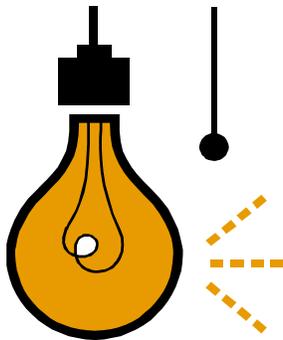
This is disturbing because many more American's are affected by mental health issues than any other disease. There is meager support for child mental health research. This creates a cycle that can slow the

development of knowledge. Research is expensive. Researchers interested in children's issues are unable to get funding and therefore pursue research interests in other areas instead.

When funds are allocated to an area, researchers redirect their interests to where the funds are. More could be learned about child mental health if children become a priority.



Caution in Research



There is consensus that more research on children is needed. However the research can pose threats to children. Caution needs to be exercised to avoid labeling children.

Identifying which characteristics heighten the risk of a negative outcome can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. As a parent and especially teachers become aware that factors are associated with problems, they may look for and inadvertently created those problems. Children are open to the messages communicated by significant adults. The major source of information used in building self-esteem comes from the very adults who may be anticipation negative outcomes.

As these adults communicate both verbally and non-verbally

that the child has or will develop problems, the child may then meet expectations of these adults and develops the problem. The transitory nature of childhood makes prediction even more difficult. Childhood is characterized by nonlinear development and rapid changes. Many behaviors of children that can upset adult's (i.e. fighting with peers and fears) are transitory and normal. Sibling rivalry which can disturb parents is common and not predictive of a lifelong pattern of conflict. There are however other behaviors that are predictive of later adjustment problems. These behaviors are not transitory and require early intervention in order to help the child achieve his or her potential. Mental Retardation disorders and antisocial behaviors tent to be long lasting. Early interventions can help children with these disorders. Research on children presents special ethical considerations. For example, young children cannot give informed consent,

this place additional burdens on researchers. Older children with cognitive and verbal skills should be involved in the consent process. Although most states establish the arbitrary age of 18 as the demarcation between child status and adult status, studies indicated that from age 10 to 11 children understand abstractions and are beginning to understand abstractions and re beginning to form measured judgements. Therefore children should be subjected to strict scrutiny. Any possible negative consequences of the research should be anticipated and plans for addressing the consequences need to be included in the project. Experimental designs that have much to offer the researcher interested in identifying causal relationships are fraught with ethical problems. For example, should children be exposed to noxious event in order to see how they respond? What about the children in a control group?

Summary

Research is often overlooked as a child welfare activity. Yet policies and practices in order to be appropriate and effective should be based on empirical research. Through research factors that can threaten the well-being of children as well as factors that can enhance well-being can be identified.

There is much that is unknown about children. The needs and abilities of children have been of low priority among researchers and funders. Research involving adults and medical issues receive higher priority. This is short sighted because failure to ensure the healthy development of children results in increased costs when they grow up to become troubled adults.

Children's mental health is particularly overlooked. This is unfortunate since a significant minority of children experience

mental health problems. Many of the interventions used with adults suffering from emotional problems cannot be applied to children. Research is needed in order to establish effective treatments.

Children present special challenges for researchers. The transitory nature of childhood makes prediction risky. Problems experienced by a young person one day may be gone the next day. Without rigorous designs, children could be placed at increased risk of being labeled. The vulnerability of children places added demands for ethical research practices. There are difficulties associated with research on children but none are insurmountable.



"The ideals which have lighted my way and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty, and Truth. The trite subjects of human efforts, possessions, outward success, and luxury have always seemed to me contemptible."

International Fathers Rights Foundation
PO Box 162
Quenemo, Kansas 66528

Phone
(785) 230-5620

E-mail
fathersrightsfoundation@gmail.com

About Our Organization

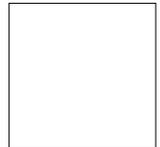
Sierra Stephenson founded International Fathers Rights Organization in response to his own experiences with Social Service organizations and foster care services in the state of Kansas.

Many programs through the State of Kansas and throughout the United States are aimed at single mothers as head of household and are often not prepared to support families that are headed by fathers. The bias in the system for single headed families for mother's, prompted the development of IFRO for supportive development for all families to find the supports they need and to find the information and resources all families need to be productive parts of their communities.

The main goal for IFRO is to provide development of programs for father's and those who need an access point to programs, weather social services or information, has the equal opportunity and supports to the programs they as a family need.

INTERNATION FATHERS RIGHTS FOUNDATION

PO BOX 162
QUENEMO, KANSAS 66528



We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.internationalfathersrightsfoundation.com