

Case Study #5

HOMEBUILDERS PROGRAMME

Homebuilders is an intensive home and community-based programme which aims to prevent out-of-home placements of children.



APPROACH

Running since 1974, it is the oldest Intensive Family Preservation Services (IFPS) programme in the United States, and provides intensive, in-home crisis intervention, counseling, and life-skills education for families whose children are on the edge of care. The programme engages families by delivering services in their natural environment, at times when they are most receptive to learning, and by addressing them as partners in assessment, goal setting, and treatment planning.

The programme focuses on children who are either at imminent risk of placement into institutional care, or who are at the point of reunification. Available 24 hours, seven days per week, therapists meet the families within 24 hours of their referral and spend on average 8 to 10 hours per week with the family. This is possible due to the low caseload of therapists, which is never more than two cases at any given time.

While therapists see the same total number of families per year as therapists in many traditional programmes, the services are concentrated to take advantage of the time when families have the most challenges, and have the most motivation to change.

Sources

<http://www.institutefamily.org>

www.uiowa.edu/~nrcfcp/about/.../http://www.institutefamily.org/progr_ams_IFPS.aspLeavittHomebuildersModel.ppt



IMPACT

Homebuilders has a 30 year track record. It has been implemented in 40 US states and recently in Northern Europe. The most recent meta-review carried out by Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) found that IFPS programmes that adhered closely to the Homebuilders model significantly reduced out-of-home placements and subsequent abuse and neglect. It was estimated that such programmes produce \$2.54 of benefits for each dollar of cost.

The most recent data shows that six months after termination of services, 86 per cent of children have avoided placement in state-funded foster care, group care or psychiatric institutions, and have remained safely in their homes.



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