



Characteristics and Consequences of Capacity-Building Intervention Practices

Linda L. Wilson

Abstract

Selected references to the characteristics and consequences of capacity-building intervention practices are included in this *CASEmaker* bibliography. Capacity-building practices both strengthen existing capabilities and promote acquisition of new competencies. The particular sources of information are ones that provide a foundation for understanding the kinds of child, parenting, family, and community intervention practices and participatory experiences (both informal and formal) that support and strengthen child, parent, family, and community member competence and confidence.

This *CASEmaker* bibliography includes selected references to different characteristics and consequences of capacity-building interventions practices. Capacity-building is defined as a continuous process of providing, creating, or mobilizing experiences through which children, parents, families, and community members strengthen their ability to engage in (identify and meet) development-enhancing opportunities or address challenges in sustainable ways (Wilson, et al., 2002). Capacity-building intervention practices are ones that support and strengthen existing child, parent, family, and community member knowledge and skills, and build upon existing capabilities to strengthen and enhance individual and group competence and confidence. The particular approach to practices constituting the focus of this bibliography is one of the conceptual foundations of an integrated framework for practicing evidence-based early childhood intervention and family support (Dunst, 2000, 2004).

The *building blocks* of capacity-building approaches to child, parent, family, and community interventions include: (a) an interest- and asset-based foundation and approach, (b) the use of participatory opportunities and active participation in achieving self-identified outcomes, (c) practitioner use of family-centered participatory helping practices to strengthen existing and promote new child, parent, family, and community member competence and confidence, and (d) the desired and expected outcomes and competency-enhancing benefits of capacity-building intervention practices. The *Prescription*

for Practice includes a number of source materials that readers should find helpful for more fully understanding and appreciating the characteristics and consequences of capacity-building intervention practices with children, parents, families, and community members. The reader is referred to Dunst and Trivette (2005), Mott (2005), and Wilson (2005), for additional sources of information on capacity-building intervention practices.

Child Capacity-Building Intervention Practices

The characteristics of child capacity-building intervention practices include a strengths- and asset-based approach to promoting child competence and confidence, interest-based child learning activities, participatory child learning opportunities and experiences, and active child participation in everyday family and community

CASEmakers is an electronic publication of the Center for the Advanced Study of Excellence in Early Childhood and Family Support Practices, Family, Infant and Preschool Program, J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center, Morganton, NC. CASE is an applied research center focusing on the characteristics of evidence-based practices and methods for promoting utilization of practices informed by research.

Copyright © 2006
Center for the Advanced Study of Excellence
in Early Childhood and Family Support Practices

Rx Prescription for Practice Rx

Aspen Institute. (1996). *Measuring community capacity building: A workbook-in-progress for rural communities*. Queenstown, MD: Author.

Beaulieu, L. J. (2002). *Mapping the assets of your community: A key component for building local capacity* (No. SRDC-227). Mississippi State: Mississippi State University, Southern Rural Development Center.

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

Dunst, C. J., Herter, S., & Shields, H. (2000). Interest-based natural learning opportunities. *Young Exceptional Children Monograph Series No. 2: Natural Environments and Inclusion*, 37-48.

Kretzmann, J. P., & McKnight, J. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA.

Raab, M., & Dunst, C. J. (2006). Influence of child interests on variations in child behavior and functioning. *Bridges*, 4(4), 1-22. Available from: <http://puckett.org/products.php>

life events. *Strengths and assets* include the child specific talents and abilities that are most likely to be used as a means to participate in different settings, activities, and events. Being strengths- and asset-based is having a basic belief/attitude that everyone (e.g., children, parents, families, and communities) has existing strengths and abilities (assets) and the capacity to become more competent (Dunst, 1995). *Interests* include individual children's likes, preferences, favorites, and so on that encourages participation in different activities, and which result in both the expression of existing abilities and enhancement of new competencies (Dunst, Herter, & Shields, 2000; Krapp, Hidi, & Renninger, 1992; Raab, 2005; Raab & Dunst, 2006). *Participatory learning opportunities* include the experiences afforded children that provide them meaningful contexts to practice existing abilities and acquire new knowledge and skills in ways strengthening their confidence and competence.

Participation refers to children being actively engaged in everyday learning opportunities and experiences promoting and strengthening their interactive capabilities. Several useful sources of information about the meaning and the key characteristics of child capacity-building intervention practices can be found in:

Campbell, P. H., Milbourne, S. A., & Silverman, C. (2001). Strengths-based child portfolios: A professional development activity to alter perspectives of children with special needs. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 21, 152-161.

Dunst, C. J., & Bruder, M. B. (1999). Increasing children's learning opportunities in the context of family and community life. *Children's Learning Opportunities Report*, 1(1). Available at <http://www.everydaylearning.info/reports/lov1-1.pdf>

Dunst, C. J., Bruder, M. B., Trivette, C. M., Hamby, D., Raab, M., & McLean, M. (2001). Characteristics and consequences of everyday natural learning opportunities. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 21, 68-92.

Dunst, C. J., Bruder, M. B., Trivette, C. M., Raab, M., & McLean, M. (2001). Natural learning opportunities for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. *Young Exceptional Children*, 4(3), 18-25 (Erratum in Vol. 14(14), 25).

Dunst, C. J., Herter, S., & Shields, H. (2000). Interest-based natural learning opportunities. *Young Exceptional Children Monograph Series No. 2: Natural Environments and Inclusion*, 37-48.

Dunst, C. J., & Snyder, D. (2004). *Possibilities interest assessment interview protocol*. Asheville, NC: Winterberry Press.

Freeman, J. G. (1998). Interest and special education: The role of interest in teaching children with learning disabilities. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 59(02), 455A.

Hare, V. C., & Devine, D. A. (1983). Topical knowledge and topical interest predictors of listening comprehension. *Journal of Educational Research*, 76, 157-160.

Kellegrew, D. H. (1998). Creating opportunities for occupation: An intervention to promote the self-care independence of young children with special needs. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 52, 457-465.

Raab, M. (2005). Interest-based child participation in everyday learning activities. *CASEinPoint*, 1(2), 1-5. Available from: <http://www.fippcase.org/products>

Raab, M., & Dunst, C. J. (2006). Influence of child interests on variations in child behavior and functioning. *Bridges*, 4(4), 1-22. Available from: <http://www.puckett.org/products>

- Renninger, K. A., Hidi, S., & Krapp, A. (Eds.). (1992). *The role of interest in learning and development*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Wilson, L. L., Mott, D. W., & Batman, D. (2004). The asset-based context matrix: A tool for assessing children's learning opportunities and participation in natural environments. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 24*, 110-120.

Parenting Capacity-Building Intervention Practices

A basic foundation of capacity-building parenting supports and practices is recognizing the strengths and assets of parents, and using these capabilities as the basis for supporting and strengthening parenting competence and confidence. *Strengths- and asset-based* parenting practices include the belief and attitude that parents have existing strengths and abilities and the capacity to become more competent (Dunst, 1995). *Interest-based* parenting support and parent education programs and activities focus on self-identified priorities and desires as a way to strengthen existing parenting skills and develop new competencies. *Participatory opportunities* include a variety of experiences that strengthen existing parenting capabilities, and which provide contexts for learning new parenting skills. Enabling experiences and opportunities that strengthen parenting competence and confidence in turn are likely to bolster parents' self-efficacy beliefs about their parenting abilities (Bandura, 1997). Several useful sources of information about the meaning and the key characteristics of capacity-building parenting education and support practices can be found in:

- Brody, G. H., Flor, D. L., & Gibson, N. M. (1999). Linking maternal efficacy beliefs, developmental goals, parenting practices, and child competence in rural single-parent African American families. *Child Development, 70*, 1197-1208.
- 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*. New York: Plenum.
- Coleman, P. K., Trent, A., Bryan, S., King, B., Rogers, N., & Nazir, M. (2002). Parenting behavior, mothers' self-efficacy beliefs, and toddler performance on the Bayley Scales of Infant Development. *Early Child Development and Care, 172*, 123-140.
- Connecticut Family Learning Initiative. (2004). *Listening to families: The family learning outreach study*

- [Research brief]. Middleton: Connecticut State Department of Education. Available at http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Family/Literacy/Research_Brief.pdf
- Dunst, C. J. (1989). *Accessing social support and intervention services by teenage mothers (Project AS-SIST): 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. (Ed.). (1988). *Parent education as early childhood intervention: Emerging directions in theory, research and practice*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- 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.
- Trivette, C. M., & Dunst, C. J. (2004). Evaluating family-based practices: Parenting experiences scale. *Young Exceptional Children, 7*(3), 12-19.
- 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.
- Wilson, L. L. (2005). Characteristics and consequences of capacity-building parenting supports. *CASEmakers, 1*(4), 1-3. Available from: <http://www.fippcase.org/products>

Family Capacity-Building Intervention Practices

Family capacity-building intervention practices build on family interests and priorities and family strengths and assets, and use family participatory opportunities and active family participation in activities as a means of supporting and strengthening family competence and confidence. Families who are actively involved in identifying, implementing, and evaluating desired outcomes and accomplishments are more likely to experience increased knowledge and skills, and make positive attributes about individual family members' capabilities as well as those of the family as a whole. Several helpful sources in providing capacity-building supports and interventions to families can be found in:

- Bailey, D., Dunst, C., Kramer, S., Turnbull, A., Hurth, J., & Brown, C. (1989). Identifying child and family strengths and needs. In B. E. Hanft (Ed.), *Fam-*

- ily-centered care: An early intervention resource manual* (pp. 3/39-33/46). Rockville, MD: American Occupational Therapy Association.
- Chavez, M. D., & Menning, E. P. (1992). Building on the strengths of diverse families: The process of empowerment in an Albuquerque community. *Family Science Review*, 5(1-2), 23-40.
- Dunst, C. J., & Trivette, C. M. (1996). Empowerment, effective helping practices and family-centered care. *Pediatric Nursing*, 22, 334-337, 343.
- Dunst, C. J., & Trivette, C. M. (2005). Family resource programs, promotion models, and enhancement outcomes. *Practical Evaluation Reports*, 1(1), 1-5.
- Dunst, C. J., Trivette, C. M., & Deal, A. (1988). *Enabling and empowering families: Principles and guidelines for practice*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.
- Dunst, C. J., Trivette, C. M., & Deal, A. G. (1994). Enabling and empowering families. In C. J. Dunst, C. M. Trivette & A. G. Deal (Eds.), *Supporting and strengthening families: Methods, strategies and practices* (pp. 2-11). Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.
- Hobbs, N., Docecki, P. R., Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Moroney, R. M., Shayne, M. W., & Weeks, K. H. (1984). *Strengthening families*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Stinnett, N., & DeFrain, J. (1985). *Secrets of strong families*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Trivette, C. M., & Dunst, C. J. (2000). Recommended practices in family-based practices. In S. Sandall, M. E. McLean, & B. J. Smith (Eds.), *DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Beaulieu, L. J. (2002). *Mapping the assets of your community: A key component for building local capacity* (No. SRDC-227). Mississippi State: Mississippi State University, Southern Rural Development Center.
- Bowen, G. L., Martin, J. A., Mancini, J. A., & Nelson, J. P. (2000). Community capacity: Antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Community Practice*, 8(2), 1-21.
- Chaskin, R. (2001). Building community capacity: Underlying strengths and strategies. *Community*, 4(2), 19-25.
- Community Building Resources. (2001). *Community capacity building and asset mapping: Revised model summary*. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Author. Retrieved December 3, 2001 from http://www.cbr-aim-high.com/main/cbam_model_summary.htm
- Dunst, C. J. (1995). *Key characteristics and features of community-based family support programs*. Chicago: Family Resource Coalition.
- Flora, C. B. (1997/1998, September/Winter). Innovations in community development. *Rural Development News*, 21(3), 1-3, 12 & 21(4), 1-3. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED433974).
- Foster-Fishman, P. G., Berkowitz, S. L., Lounsbury, D. W., Jacobson, S., & Allen, N. A. (2001). Building collaborative capacity in community coalitions: A review and integrative framework. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 29, 241-261.
- Kerka, S. (2003). *Community asset mapping: Trends and issues alert* (No. No. 47). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED481324).
- Kretzmann, J. P., & McKnight, J. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA.
- Kretzmann, J. P., McKnight, J. L., & Rans, S. A. (2005). Hidden treasures: Building community connections by engaging the gifts of people on welfare, people with disabilities, people with mental illness, older adults, young people: A community building workbook. Chicago, IL: Asset Based Community Development Institute. Retrieved April 12, 2005, from <http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd/hiddentreasures.html>
- McKnight, J. L., & Kretzmann, J. (1990). *Mapping community capacity*. Evanston, IL: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University.
- Pinkett, R., & O'Bryant, R. (2003). Building community, empowerment and self-sufficiency: Early results

Community Capacity-Building Intervention Practices

Community member capacity-building is achieved by groups of individuals identifying and recognizing individual and group assets, taking ownership and responsibility for identifying desired outcomes and priorities, and actively engaging in collective action necessary for accomplishing desired outcomes. Effective community capacity-building interventions include interest- and asset-based practices and a focus on providing participatory opportunities facilitating active community participation as effective ways to build community capacity. The following includes sources of information useful for understanding community capacity building.

Aspen Institute. (1996). *Measuring community capacity building: A workbook-in-progress for rural communities*. Queenstown, MD: Author.

from the Camfield Estates-MIT Creating Community Connections project. *Information, Communication and Society*, 6, 187-210.

Rissel, C., & Bracht, N. (1999). Assessing community needs, resources, and readiness: Building on strengths. In N. Bracht (Ed.), *Health promotion at the community level: New advances* (2nd ed., pp. 59-71). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Conclusion

This *CASEmaker* bibliography included sources of information about different approaches to capacity-building intervention practices. These kinds of practices place emphasis on both strengthening existing capabilities and promoting acquisition of new competencies. More specifically, capacity-building practices focus on interests and strengths and use participatory learning opportunities and participation to accomplish desired outcomes. The consequences of using such practices strengthens and promotes children, parent, family, and community member existing abilities to engage in development-enhancing opportunities or address challenges in sustainable ways.

References

- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman.
- Dunst, C. J. (1995). *Key characteristics and features of community-based family support programs*. Chicago: Family Resource Coalition.
- 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.
- Dunst, C. J., Herter, S., & Shields, H. (2000). Interest-based natural learning opportunities. *Young Excep-*

tional Children Monograph Series No. 2: Natural Environments and Inclusion, 37-48.

- Dunst, C. J., & Trivette, C. M. (2005). Characteristics and consequences of family-centered helpgiving practices. *CASEmakers*, 1(6), 1-4. Available at <http://www.fippcase.org>
- Krapp, A., Hidi, S., & Renninger, K. (1992). Interest, learning and development. In K. Renninger, S. Hidi & A. Krapp (Eds.), *The role of interest in learning and development* (pp. 3-25). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Mott, D. W. (2005). Characteristics and consequences of resource-based intervention practices. *CASEmakers*, 1(5), 1-3. Available from: <http://www.fippcase.org/products>
- Raab, M. (2005). Interest-based child participation in everyday learning activities. *CASEinPoint*, 1(2), 1-5. Available from: <http://www.fippcase.org/products>
- Raab, M., & Dunst, C. J. (2006). Influence of child interests on variations in child behavior and functioning. *Bridges*, 4(4), 1-22. Available from: <http://www.puckett.org>
- Wilson, L. L. (2005). Characteristics and consequences of capacity-building parenting supports. *CASEmakers*, 1(4), 1-3. Available from: <http://www.fippcase.org/products>
- Wilson, L. L., Shelden, M. L., Barlowe, S., Branch, C., Gouge, C., Holbert, K., et al. (2002). *Capacity building practices work group: Final report*. Morganton: J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center, Family, Infant, and Preschool Program, Morganton, NC.

Author

Linda L. Wilson, M.A., is a Senior Research Associate, Family, Infant and Preschool Program and Center for the Advanced Study of Excellence (CASE) in Early Childhood and Family Support Practices, J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center, Morganton, North Carolina.