

Safe Start Evaluations

Where do we go from
here?

Introduction

- Purpose of the demonstration is to contribute to **knowledge** on how to prevent and reduce the impact of family and community violence on young children (primarily from birth to age 6) and their families.

What is the demonstration supposed to do?

- Create a comprehensive service delivery system that will meet the needs of children and their families at any point of entry into the system. This comprehensive system should improve the accessibility, delivery, and quality of services for young children who have been exposed to violence or are at high risk of exposure.

Ultimate Question

- “If the children in this community are better off because of Safe Start”

What kind of knowledge and for whom?

Four types of questions that Safe Start can address

- **Descriptive** – who, what, when, where
- **Normative** – compared to some standard
- **Correlational** - relationship
- **Impact/causal** – what did the program or parts of program effect
–Usually requires an equivalent comparison group

For Whom?

- **Research community** – What is the incidence of violence and its effects?
- **Practitioners** – how do we set up a program, collaborate?
- **Policy makers** – are there changes in policies and laws suggested, is it effective?
- **Government Program Developers** – What did we learn about how to conduct demonstration projects

What questions have we been able to answer to date?

- Not clear, but there is the potential to address several types of questions

Potential research questions about violence

- What is the incidence of children witnessing violence?
- What are the effects of witnessing violence?
- Are families in which violence occurs different?
- What interventions reduce the effects of witnessing violence?

Potential Policy Questions

- Is there a successful program model that should be replicated?
- What are the barriers to implementation that can be affected by policy?
- Are there policies, in contrast to programs, that can affect the problem?

Potential practitioner questions about implementation

- Whose cooperation is necessary for an intervention to be properly implemented?
- What contextual factors influence the cooperation of different agencies?
- Is there an ideal organizational location for referral and treatment?
- How do we maintain fidelity of the program?

Potential questions about the demonstration

- Has the problem been correctly identified?
- Are there sufficient funds to affect community attitudes?
- Which type of organization should receive the funding?
- Are there effective treatments for the problem?

The questions we can answer depend on

- scientific bases of program,
- quality of implementation of the program,
- type and quality of data
- evaluation design

- **These factors determine which of the two tiers of expected knowledge generation a site can be in**