..........training and holding on to staff in a tidal wave of uncertainty
Background

- Tusla is the dedicated State agency in Ireland responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children
- Established January 2014
- Six regions, 5000 staff
Empowering Practitioners and Practice Initiative
Rationale

• Internationally accepted that the job of social workers is more complex and diverse than at any time in its history and therefore more demanding of individual professionals and of the organisations that support their work.
• Social Worker’s Confidence eroded and their Expertise diluted
• New agency – an opportunity to develop the social work and other front line professions
• Reform of Child Protection and Welfare Systems internationally advocating more child centred approach, direct work with families
• Need for relationship based work, consistency in practice and better use of evidence
EPPI aims to develop evidence-using and evidence-informed practitioners in Tusla by increasing the knowledge levels and confidence of staff and improving the consistency and quality of practice across the Agency.
Evidence Informed Practitioner Programme

Programme Aim
- To develop the confidence and expertise of social workers so they achieve better outcomes by applying evidence and knowledge into their day to day practice.
- Facilitated peer learning and development programme
- Pre and post assessment
- Conduct a short literature review using live case
- Allocated a mentor
The Evidence Informed Practitioner Programme

Who has participated?
- 305 Social Workers have successfully completed the Programme
  - 112 in Dublin
  - 169 in South
  - 24 in West

Who delivers it?
- Centre for Effective Services
- Workforce Learning and Development
- Social Work Practitioners

What teams were involved?
- Educational Welfare
- Children In Care
- Social Care
- Duty & Intake
- Child Protection & Welfare
- Fostering & Adoption
- Crisis Intervention Service
- Retrospective Child Abuse & Adult Assessment
- Workforce Learning & Development
- Quality Assurance & Risk
- Residential
- Aftercare

What themes have come up in the literature reviews?
- Parenting Capacity was the most common theme
  - 262 literature reviews
- Other common themes included:
  - Reunification and Permanency
  - Child Abuse and Neglect
  - Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence
- New themes emerging:
  - Female Genital Mutilation
  - Supporting Foster Carers and their Families
  - Transgender issues
  - Pre-Natal Exposure to Alcohol
  - Online Child Sexual Exploitation

What difference is it making?
- To individuals:
  - ‘entire process has been empowering & confidence building’
  - ‘informing my initial assessments, case conference reports and court reports’
  - ‘Being more outcomes focused in my work’
- To Tusla:
  - Confident decision making
  - Sharing evidence and knowledge within and between teams
  - Positive feedback from judges on quality of court reports
EPPI on the Tusla Hub

EPPI Toolkit

EIPP - Evidence Informed Practitioner Programme
EPPI on the Tusla Hub

EPPI Toolkit

EIPP - Evidence Informed Practitioner Programme
Practice Development and Improvement Project

- train, recruit and retain a skilled, competent, and quality social work and social care staff equipped to practice effectively
Practice Development and Improvement Framework

- National student placement co-ordination system
- 26 Student placement co-ordinators
- Student database
- All students provided with laptop and phone
- Graduate Recruitment Programme

Student Practice Placements

- Practice Educator database
- 260 new Practice Teachers since January 2020
- Student and Practice Teacher feedback questionnaires
- Practice Teacher Learning Community

Practice Educator Development
Practice Development and Improvement Framework

- Supported first year in practice - Virtual Support Pack on Hub
- Mentoring for new staff/TLs
- Early career social worker survey
  - Pilot findings - reduced caseload, mentor and peer support, trauma informed practice, protected time for training
- Endorsed and funded post qualifying courses
- Employee supported social work training
- Post qualifying awards system
Thank You!

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