

# **Literature Reviews: How to locate them, and how do they inform program and evaluation?**

## ***What can a literature review tell me?***

- What has worked with populations similar to yours
- What elements or features have been included in programs/practices
- Which features have been linked with successful outcomes
- What barriers to success have been encountered and how they can be avoided/dealt with
- What areas of program content are controversial or have not yet been shown to be successful

## ***When do I need a literature review?***

- When preparing a grant proposal
- Developing training related to program implementation or practice changes
- Developing programs or policy

## ***How do I locate articles?***

- Search:
  - Clearinghouse/professional organization websites
  - Google Scholar <http://scholar.google.com> Links to library resources and some full text articles
  - University library databases (e.g. Psych Info)
- Identify recent summary articles
- Use a summary article to identify other relevant references, authors, search terms, model programs, generally agreed upon knowledge and areas of controversy

## ***How do I know if I have enough information?***

- When your questions about a practice or policy have been answered
- Generally go back about 10 years. Include older articles if they are “classics” (e.g. an article that lays the early groundwork that is cited by almost everybody else).
- Include published and unpublished literature (e.g. grant final reports)

## ***Some child welfare/human services websites that can help you get started.***

- Child Welfare Information Gateway <http://www.childwelfare.gov>
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) <http://www.samhsa.gov> from here you can get to their National Registry of Evidence Based Programs and Practices, also a searchable publications list
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network <http://www.nctsn.org>
- The California Evidence Based Practice Clearinghouse for Child Welfare <http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org/importance-of-evidence-based-practice> site has links to several other sites that can provide sources
- The Campbell Collaboration <http://www.campbellcollaboration.org> An international group that sponsors and disseminates high quality reviews of social policies and programs. There is a Social Welfare section that includes areas of interest for Child Welfare.
- National Center on Family Group Decision Making. Has bibliography, FAQs, information about conferences.  
[http://www.americanhumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pc\\_fgdm](http://www.americanhumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pc_fgdm)