Readiness to change: Implications for improving quality in early care and education

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Defining the Problem

- Need for high-quality care

- Challenges for ECE workforce
  - Financial resources
  - Psychological well-being
  - Academic skills
  - Professional identity
  - Childrearing beliefs

- Existing PD approaches are one-size-fits-all
Mentor Observations of ECE Readiness

“Absolutely did not want to change”

“Change was just too much effort or energy”

“Very open to [thinking] about what’s needed in her room”

“People who say, ‘Oh, I’m so glad you’re here... I need to do this or that or the other.’”
The Change Process

- Most systems resist change
- Change takes time (3-5 yrs)
- To be sustained, change must be self-determined
- Only about 20% of the population are “ready to change”
- Programs that are mismatched to stage can actually make outcomes worse

(Deci & Ryan, 1985; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003; Prochaska & Velicer, 1997)
The Transtheoretical Model (TTM)
(Prochaska & Diclemente, 1983)

- An NIH recommended practice for behavior change programs (Ory, Jordan, & Bazzarre, 2002)

- Large evidence base (e.g., Noar, Benac, & Harris, 2007; Velicer et al., 1999; 2006)

- Wide range of applications
  - Smoking cessation
  - Exercise adoption
  - Stress management
  - Organizational change
  - Physician practice
  - Foster care/adoption
## Stages of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Precontemplation</td>
<td>Not ready to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Contemplation</td>
<td>Not ready to change on their own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Preparation</td>
<td>Ready to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Action</td>
<td>Actively engaged in change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Maintenance</td>
<td>Maintaining change with vigilance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Markers of Change

- **Decisional balance**: Relative weight given to pros and cons to change

- **Self-efficacy**: Confidence that one can cope with obstacles to change
## Goals for Each Stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Precontemplation</td>
<td>Awareness, concern, confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Contemplation</td>
<td>Risk-reward analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Preparation</td>
<td>Commitment, creating a plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Action</td>
<td>Implementation, revision of plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Maintenance</td>
<td>Integration into lifestyle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Processes of Change

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Experiential Processes</th>
<th>Behavioral Processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Precontemplation | - Consciousness raising  
| Contemplation |   - Dramatic relief  
|              |   - Self-reevaluation  
|              |   - Environmental reevaluation  
|              |   - Social liberation  |                          |
| Preparation |                                                                                      | - Self liberation  
| Action      |                                                                                      | - Stimulus control  
| Maintenance |                                                                                      | - Counter-conditioning  
|             |                                                                                      | - Reinforcement management  
|             |                                                                                      | - Helping relationships  |
Context of Change

- Current life situation
- Beliefs and attitudes
- Interpersonal relationships
- Social systems
- Enduring personal characteristics
Applying the TTM to ECEPD

- Training for mentors, coaches, home visitors
  - Characteristics of each stage
  - Optimally supportive strategies
- Progress monitoring
- Screening tool
The Stage of Change Scale

- Used with ECEs enrolled in professional development programs
  - Early Educator Mentoring System
  - Partners in Family Child Care
- Two parallel versions
  - Caregiver/provider survey
  - Mentor/home visitor survey
## Stage of Change Scale

- **Stage of change**
- **Awareness**
- **Seeking information**
- **Effect on children**
- **Overcoming obstacles**
- **Social support**
- **Professional identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of change</th>
<th>Does not plan to make any changes</th>
<th>Thinks about making a change but just can’t do it right now</th>
<th>Is planning to make a change</th>
<th>Is working to change something right now</th>
<th>Is making sure s/he doesn’t go back to her/his old ways</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Stage of Change Scale

- High internal reliability (.95)
- FCC provider rating > Home visitor rating
- Growth from pre to post
Center-based ECEs in mentoring

![Bar Chart]

- Frequency on the y-axis
- STAGE on the x-axis
- T1 and T2 data points

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FCC providers in home visiting

![Bar chart showing frequency of FCC providers in home visiting stages.](chart.png)
Predictive validity

- Moderate correlation with increase in caregiving skills (0.39) in center-based sample (N=21)

- Further research is planned to develop the measure and assess its validity
### Potential Uses and Benefits of the TTM

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
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<tr>
<td>Match PD to stage</td>
<td>- Increase effect for those in lower stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Decrease cost for those in higher stages</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Increase retention</td>
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<td>- Maintain diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Screen for eligibility for PD</td>
<td>- Maximize observed changes in practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Maximize observed child outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Screen for job/license</td>
<td>- Exclude from the profession those who lack or show no increase in readiness</td>
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</tbody>
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