

Reflective Supervision and Quality Improvement

ALMA Regional Meeting

June 14th, 2017

Jackson, Mississippi

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What is Reflective Practice?

“Reflective Supervision is a collaborative relationship for professional growth that improves program quality and practice by cherishing strengths and partnering around vulnerabilities to generate growth” (Shahmoon-Shanok, 1991)

A model of supervision used with those supporting mothers and children.

What is Reflective Supervision

- Support Staff
- Feel better about your work with families
- Improve working relationships
- Help the quality of work
- A blended model of programmatic and reflective supervision
- Regular, collaborative and reflective

Three Pillars of Reflective Supervision

- Regular
- Reflective
- Collaboration

A Few Good Reasons

- Reduces secondary trauma of staff associated with working with high risk situations
- Promotes a trauma and diversity informed approach
- Seen as a best practice to support quality service
- Reduces staff burnout and absenteeism
- Promotes self-awareness
- Increases reflective function of staff

Parallel Process

- Supervisors hold the staff 
- So staff can hold the parent(s) 
- So the parent can hold/contain themselves 
- And then hold the baby/child 
- And the baby/child takes in the holding 

Information Learned About Reflective Practice

- Self-reflection can help you develop self-awareness of your strengths, limitations, and vulnerabilities
- In addition to reflection, collaboration and regularity are essential of reflective practice
- A tool for reflection is using a reflective cycle- **Gibbs Cycle** is an example
- The process of reflection allows us to look at an event, understand it, and learn from it

Why do we do this?

Our work in reflective supervision is helping others uncover their own wisdom creativity, patience, intelligence, and strength so that they can help others make those same discoveries.

Key Principle #1

Reflective Supervision consistently supports co-regulation through a process of being with and witnessing. Calm is invited.

Key Principle #2

Reflective Supervision supports the ability to imagine the perspective and imagine the internal experience of another person.

Key Principle #3

Reflective Supervision slows things down and
lets meaning unfold

Key Principle #4

Human Need

Reflective practice and supervision provide opportunities to meet basic social needs to feel recognized, affirmed, and to make meaning in one's work.

Key Principle #5

Awareness

Ability to recognize reactions to others and to go beyond to imagine, inquire and wonder about thoughts and feelings

Key Principle #6

Awareness of Others

The capacity to reflect on what is occurring in the moment with supervisees, children, and families, teams, and community partners so we are always thinking, individualizing, not just reacting or doing our own thing.

Key Principle #7

The reflective supervisor dare to not know, but seeks to understand so services and interventions can be more effective

Key Principle #8

Never Hydroplane

As a supervisor, there is often a strong pull to fix, soothe, problem solve, or tell that can be parallel to what the provider experiences with a child or family.

Reflection Builds Awareness

Key Principle #9

Recognition and ethical use of power, sorting out power carefully from domination, or control.

Key Principle #10

Recognize BOTH the forest and the trees

Key Principle #11

Help program and staff understand intent and structure of reflective supervision

Key Principle #12

Focus is *About the Work*

Reflective Supervision is not therapy. There is a clear focus on the work, but the nature of this work is that it stirs and engages feelings and responses that must be sorted and understood so they can be used effectively.

Reflective Supervision Example

<http://vimeo.com/user17959987/videos>

SUPER Vision!

Think of Reflective supervision as **SUPER** Vision!

This SUPER Vision allows you as the supervisor to see more deeply into a situation than you might imagine. It helps shine the light on those “hidden” areas and qualities that might otherwise elude us if we were providing general supervision

(Shahmoon-Shanok, 2006)

Do you have SUPER Vision?



How to Create a Safe Environment for RS

- It takes time to create a safe and trusting environment
- It takes collaboration and hard work from both the supervisor and the frontline staff
- The frontline staff must be willing to share his or her own thoughts and feelings
- Both contribute to an atmosphere of openness, curiosity and emotional availability
- The supervisor holds the space for the frontline staff to be vulnerable
- Must build the circle of **TRUST**

Building the Circle of **TRUST**

- **Safety**-full presence of the supervisor, focused attention and care to the conversation, thoughtful responses, clear parameters
- **Consistency**- respectful approach and communication, asking for clarity when needed to ensure holistic understanding
- **Dependability**- honoring the meeting time clear communication around times supervisor is not available, how to contact, or who will cover
- **Respect/Confidentiality**- acceptance and respect, non-judgmental attitude, maintaining confidentiality
- **Honesty**-open communication both about things that are going well and areas of concern

Circle of TRUST!



In the Midst of silence....



- Mindful listening takes focus and practice
- In Reflective Supervision the supervisor spends most of the time listening
- The supervisor allows the frontline staff to explore the situation or event and excavates their own thoughts and feelings
- The supervisor holds this space, responds as appropriate, and keeps the pulse on his or her own feelings and emotional responses

...there is a lot happening

Good vs. Bad Supervisor





The Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988)

Reference Gibbs, G (1988) Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford

A Learning Activity

Reflective Practice and Quality Improvement

- Reflective practice is about ensuring **quality** care is delivered and **quality** decision are being made
- Reflective Supervision is to evaluate current practices, with the aim of having an informed picture of the quality of care in the services being provided

Reflective Practice and Quality Improvement cont.

- Reflective Supervision helps to identify both strengths and areas that need improvement
- Reflective Supervision shows how our programs support the frontline staff based on quality outcomes



Reflective Supervision Contributes to Quality Improvement When:

- you include different perspectives
- everyone involved speaks honestly about current practices and is open to new ideas
- you ask 'hard' questions
- there is a continuous, embedded cycle of assessment, review and reflection on or about a practice

Questions

- What are some challenges in getting Reflective Supervision done?
- What are your obstacles, and what can you do about them?
- Do you have time?
- Is Reflective Supervision apart of your day/week?
- Is Reflective Supervision important to you?



You Can DO It.....

.....because it is important to your staff

.....because it is important to clients

.....because it is important to your outcomes

