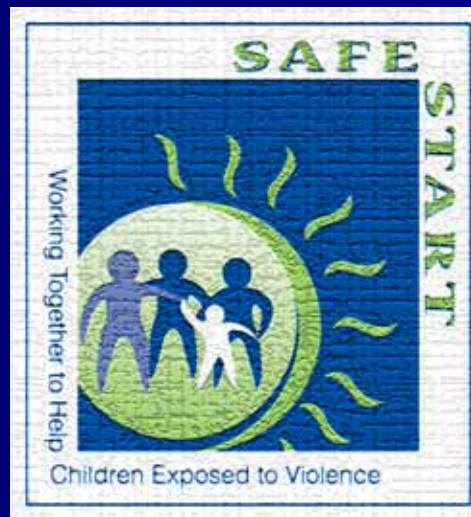


Safe Start: Working Together to Help Children Exposed to Violence



San Mateo Safe Start Promising Approaches Summit
August 1, 2008



Elena P. Cohen
Safe Start Center

www.safestartcenter.org



Public Service Announcement





Exposure to Violence

- ❖ The adverse outcomes associated with exposure to violence make a strong case for preventing and reducing its negative effects in a wide range of systems and agencies that interact with vulnerable children and families.



Exposure to Violence & Child Abuse Prevention

- ❖ Overlap among risk factors for child maltreatment, community violence, domestic violence, youth violence, juvenile delinquency.
- ❖ Risk of child maltreatment increases in families with domestic violence; in communities with high levels of violence.



Exposure to Violence and Prevention

Prevention efforts may be more effective if they target children and families with known risk factors and implement evidence-based strategies to address these factors.



Exposure to Violence & Child Abuse Prevention

- ❖ Factors contributing to risk of child abuse include: having a history of child maltreatment, witnessing domestic violence, and living in violent communities.



Stress-to-Trauma Continuum

- ❖ All children experience stress, what matters is the type of stress and the supports from family and community.
- ❖ Positive stress fosters normal development.
- ❖ Tolerable stress occurs during brief periods, and with appropriate support helps children learn to cope.



Stress-to-Trauma Continuum

- ❖ Toxic stress is chronic, uncontrollable and experienced without adequate supports.
- ❖ May actually interrupt child's development.
- ❖ Later in life may impact capacity to *parent* and to *partner*.



Exposure to Violence & Child Abuse Prevention

In communities or populations where violence is pervasive, addressing full spectrum of violence—direct and indirect—becomes essential because a large proportion of the population will have been exposed.



Exposure to Violence and Child Abuse Prevention

- ❖ To stop the cycle need primary, secondary and tertiary prevention (intensive and highly skilled interventions)



Safe Start Definition of Exposure to Violence

Being a direct victim of abuse, neglect, or maltreatment or a witness to domestic violence or other violent crime in the community.



Safe Start Vision

Create a comprehensive service delivery system that improves the access to, delivery, and quality of services for young children at high risk of exposure to violence or who have already been exposed to violence.



Safe Start Initiative : Purpose

To prevent and reduce the impact of family and community violence on children and their families.



Guiding Principles

- ❖ Balance *innovation* of practice with *efficacy* of interventions
- ❖ Increase *awareness* and *identification* of children exposed to violence
- ❖ *Plan for safety* of adult victim **AND** child in all systems/entry points



Guiding Principles

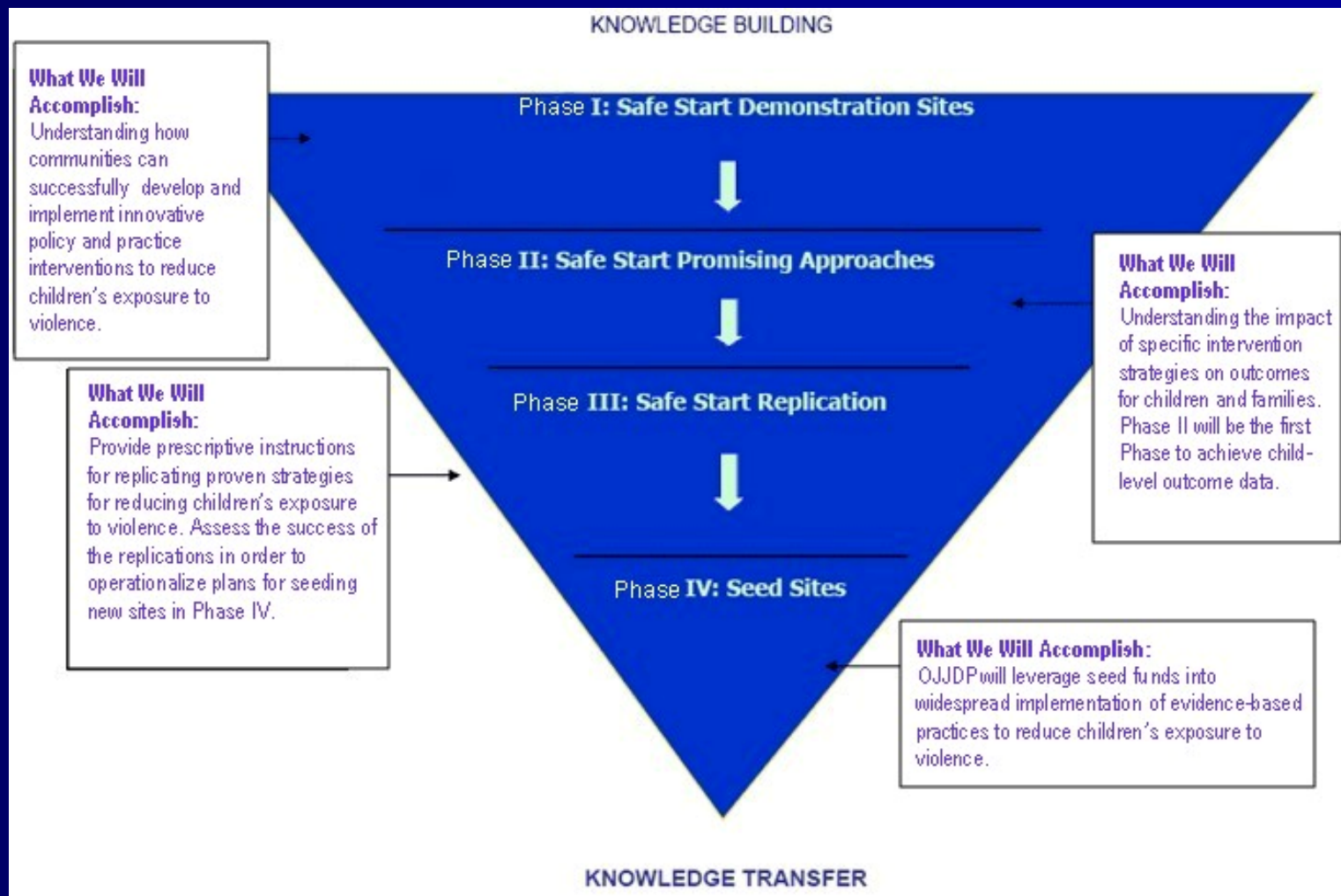
Develop and support systems that provide *developmentally appropriate, specialized, and evidence based* interventions

Use an *ecological approach to respond to* children's strengths and risks in the context of family and community



National Safe Start Initiative Framework

Sphere of Influence and Support





Safe Start Components

- ❖ Practice innovation
- ❖ Evaluation
- ❖ Research
- ❖ Training and technical assistance
- ❖ Information and resource development



Practice Innovation



Demonstration Sites: Phase I

- ❖ Baltimore, MD
- ❖ Bridgeport, CT*
- ❖ Chatham County, NC
- ❖ Chicago, IL*
- ❖ Pinellas County, FL*
- ❖ Pueblo of Zuni, NM
- ❖ Rochester, NY*
- ❖ San Francisco, CA*
- ❖ Sitka Tribe of Alaska
- ❖ Spokane, WA*
- ❖ Washington Co., ME



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

- ❖ Increased identification of children exposed to violence
- ❖ Capacity to document these children to get real estimates on the prevalence—dispatch and police reports, 211, and hotlines
- ❖ Acute Response—Commitment to “respond at least as fast as a tow truck”



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

- ❖ Ambassador kits/briefcases (volunteers trained to deliver key messages)
- ❖ “Flip” Books for getting the word out
- ❖ Increased community capacity to respond to CEV



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

- ❖ Increased awareness of both professionals and public—two nationally award-winning PSA's
- ❖ Increased service pathways and collaboration
- ❖ Changes in Policy and Procedures—MOUs, New Protocols for CPS/DV



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

- ❖ Modified infrastructure of local service delivery systems by creating centralized access and by developing partnerships that expedited linkages



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

- ❖ Improved existing mental health services by funding specialized training
- ❖ Increased sustainability by creating local funding streams through tax base and through strong coordinating bodies of governance



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

- ❖ Developed screening procedures and protocols
- ❖ DV Protocol for the Department of Children and Families
- ❖ Coordinated Case Review
- ❖ Home-based therapy and cell phone distribution



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

- ❖ Modification of police dispatch software to record presence of a child
- ❖ Course Credits/Certifications/Funding of Training (for partner providers)
- ❖ Coding 911 calls for child presence



Phase I—Demonstration Grantees

Buy-in from police for referrals through “tow truck” commitment

Dependency Court Judges to drive reform in the dependency system with increased awareness of CEV



Accomplishments

- ❖ Developed new and improved, working relationships between sectors
- ❖ Developed comprehensive and coordinated systems of care



Accomplishments

- ❖ Demonstrated capacity to change policies for children exposed to violence
- ❖ Demonstrated that with treatment, it is possible to reduce the impact of exposure to violence on children



System Change Findings

- ❖ Multiple opportunities to identify, screen and refer.
- ❖ Integrated services to address diverse needs.
- ❖ Increased awareness and service provider capacity.
- ❖ Changes of policy at state level.



Local Programs: Child & Family Findings

- ❖ Children's exposure to violence decreased
- ❖ Children had fewer trauma-related symptoms
- ❖ Parents/caregivers experienced less parenting stress; and
- ❖ Parents/caregivers had increased understanding of exposure to violence



Promising Approaches Sites: Phase II

- ❖ Chelsea, MA
- ❖ Bronx, NY
- ❖ Dallas, TX
- ❖ Dayton, OH
- ❖ Erie, PA
- ❖ Kalamazoo, MI
- ❖ Miami, FL
- ❖ New York City, NY
- ❖ Oakland, CA
- ❖ Pompano, FL
- ❖ Portland, OR
- ❖ Providence, RI
- ❖ San Diego, CA
- ❖ San Mateo, CA
- ❖ Toledo, OH



Phase II: Intervention Approaches

- ❖ Assessment-Based Treatment for Traumatized Children (San Diego)
- ❖ Attachment, Self-Regulation, and Competence (ARC) (Chelsea)
- ❖ Child Advocacy Center (Bronx, Erie)
- ❖ Child Development-Community Policing Program (CD-CP) (Providence)



Phase II—Intervention Approaches

- ❖ Child Parent Psychotherapy (Bronx, Dayton, New York, Providence, San Mateo, Toledo)
- ❖ Child Welfare-Domestic Violence Collaboration (Portland)
- ❖ Head Start School Intervention Project (Kalamazoo)



Phase II—Intervention Approaches

- ❖ Heroes Program (Miami)
- ❖ Home Visitation (Dayton)
- ❖ Infant Mental Health (Miami)
- ❖ Integrated Case Management/Mental Health (Oakland)
- ❖ Intensive Family-Centered Treatment (Pompano)



Phase II—Intervention Approaches

- ❖ Kids Club (New York)
- ❖ Kinship Caregiver Services (San Mateo)
- ❖ Medical Home (Bronx)
- ❖ Motivational Interviewing (Dallas)



Phase II—Intervention Approaches

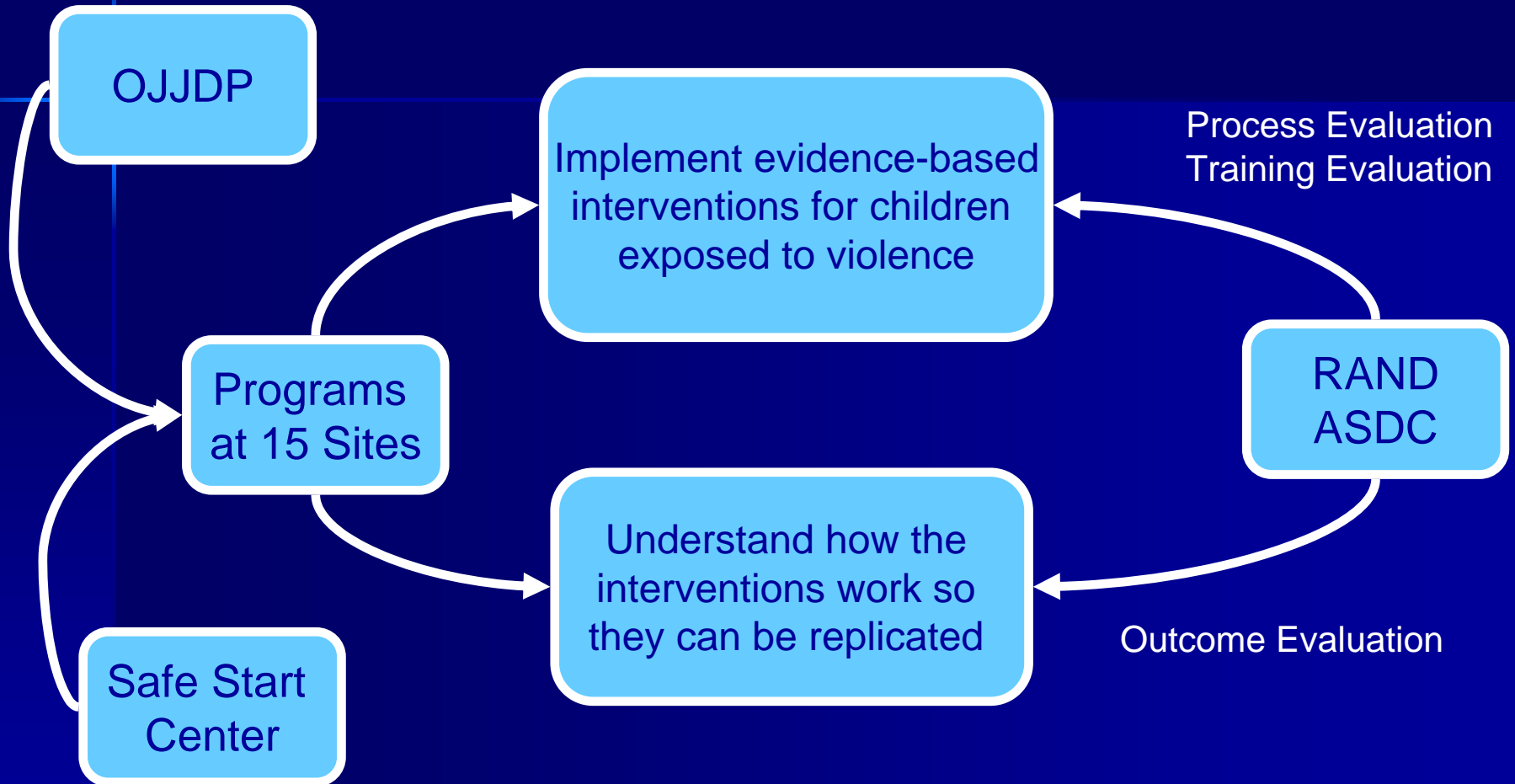
- ❖ Parent-child Interactive Therapy (PCIT) (Kalamazoo)
- ❖ Project Support (Dallas)
- ❖ Trauma-Focused Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) (San Diego)
- ❖ Working with the Dependency Court (Miami)



Evaluation



Schematic of the Overall Initiative





Association for the Study and Development of Community

Demonstration Sites Evaluation Design

Cross-site Outcome Evaluation

Process Evaluation

Case Studies

6 Local Child-Level Outcomes

Studies—"Tier II" Studies



RAND Corporation

❖ Pilot Site Evaluation Design

Quasi-Experimental Comparison Study



Pilot Sites Evaluation Design

- ❖ First to use experimental design to examine effects of exposure—good methods in real world setting.
- ❖ Majority of sites using randomized experimental designed (gold standard).



Evaluation Objectives

1. To assess the effectiveness of the interventions at the child level
2. To examine the variability in the intervention effects, and identify plausible reasons for that variability



Research



University of New Hampshire

- ❖ National Study on Children Exposed to Violence
- ❖ Randomized Telephone Survey on Incidence and Prevalence



Training and Technical Assistance



Training and Technical Assistance

- ❖ Training and technical assistance expert consultants (multidisciplinary)
- ❖ Peer-to-Peer Support
- ❖ Clinical supervision/Consultation
- ❖ Cross-site national and regional meetings



Information and Resource Development



Information and Resource Development

Webpage

Webinars

Domestic Violence Month (2006)

Child Abuse Prevention Month (2008)

Listserve



Publications

- ❖ Fact Sheet
- ❖ E-newsletter (bi-monthly)
- ❖ Keeping Our Children Safe: Reference and Resource Guide.
- ❖ Safe Start: Promising Approaches Communities. Working Together to Help Children Exposed to Violence



Safe Start Moving from Evidence to Action Series

1. Understanding Children's Exposure to Violence.
2. Working Together to Help Children Exposed to Violence: Homeless Shelters and Transitional Housing.
2. Working Together to Help Children Exposed to Violence: Schools.



Safe Start Moving from Evidence to Action Series

4. Working Together to Help Children Exposed to Violence: Child Welfare System.
5. Working Together to Help Children Exposed to Violence: Domestic Violence Agencies.
6. Working Together to Help Children Exposed to Violence: Pediatric Care Settings.



Publications

Childhood Exposure to Violence: A Significant Issue for Children and Families *Protecting Children* (Double Issue). April, 2008.

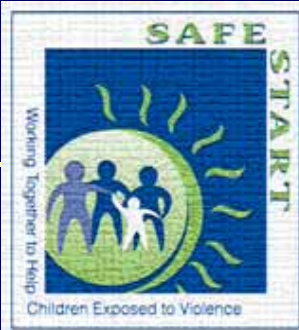
Best Practices in Mental Health. An International Journal. Vol. 4, (1) Winter 2008.

Journal of Emotional Abuse Volume 8, (Double Issue) Summer 2008.



Publications

Healing the Invisible Wounds of Exposure to Violence. A Guide for Parents and Other Caregivers. (May 2008).



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Escape the Shadow of Violence

