

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION IN CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

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Hi everybody, and welcome to Program Development and Implementation. I'd like to begin by introducing myself. My name is Sharon Hodges, and I am a research professor in the Department of Child and Family Studies. I have spent pretty much my whole career working on implementation at both the program and the systems levels and have really enjoyed that process because I think it's a way to totally make a difference in the lives of children and families.

In children's services, they're either interventions at the child level or sometimes interventions and programs that are for children and families. And putting those into place is a real challenge for the folks out in the field doing it. So when we talk about real-world implementation, we mean not a textbook learning of what implementation is like but really being able to actively think and apply what we're learning from the research in the field and putting that into practice in agencies and organizations that are serving children and families.

We are going to focus on the real-world process of program implementation and you all building the skills that you need to successfully plan and execute an implementation initiative yourself. What I hope you're going to walk away with in the course is a very practical and actionable understanding of how to identify and select an evidence-based practice, how to implement using some very specific strategies, and then how to ground your work in the cultural context of the families and the communities that you're going to serve.

I have very high expectations for your commitment to the course and commitment to learning. And that means I'm hoping that you're not be skimming through readings and that you're not going to be counting the words in your discussion posts just so you can make sure you hit the minimum requirements. Ultimately, this course isn't about minimum requirements. It's really about your engagement with the materials, and the students in the class, and your commitment to learning.

I've had a real focus on program implementation throughout my career, and I've found it so very important because it's an opportunity to have real impact on children and families. And I very much hope that the skills that you bring away from this course allow you to engage with your community, to engage in your organizations, and to really serve the needs of children and families.