



NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER *for*
HEALTHY MARRIAGE and FAMILIES

Relationship Education as a Strategy to Help Families Achieve Economic Self-Sufficiency

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Key Assumptions

- Healthy marriage is a central component of supporting families in their efforts to achieve economic, emotional and social stability and financial self-sufficiency.
- Core skills: communication, conflict management, parenting and financial literacy.
- Integration strategies can range from simple information dissemination to full engagement where curriculum is integrated into existing service delivery systems.



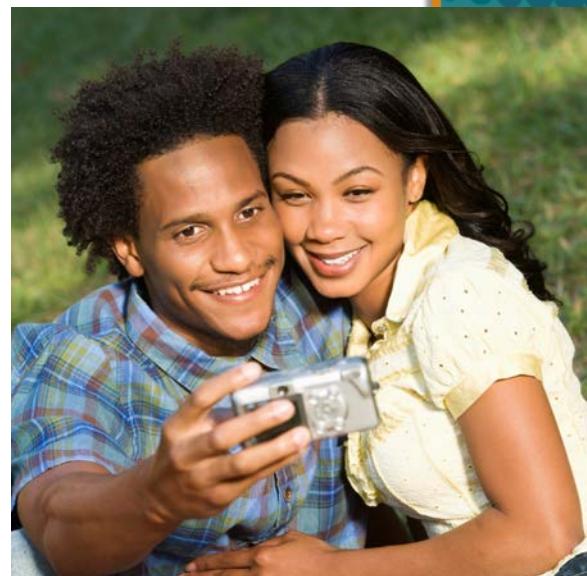
Why the Investment?

- It is estimated that family fragmentation costs U.S. taxpayers at least \$112 billion each and every year, or more than \$1 trillion each decade.
- If the federal marriage initiative, for example, succeeds in reducing family fragmentation by just 1 percent, U.S. taxpayers will save an estimated \$1.1 billion each and every year. (Scafidi 2008)
- The official U.S. poverty rate in 2012 was 15% with 46.5 million people in poverty including 2 out of 10 children. (US Census)



We Value Marriage

- 74.9% of high school seniors surveyed in 2010 said that “having a good marriage and family life” is “extremely important” and 78.7% expected to get married. (Monitoring the Future)
- The probability of adults getting married at some point in their lifetime is still at 90%. (Andrew Cherlin)



Infrastructure

- Engage stakeholders
- Build the website
- Gather research
- Develop research-based products
- Determine evaluation protocols
- Integration Institutes

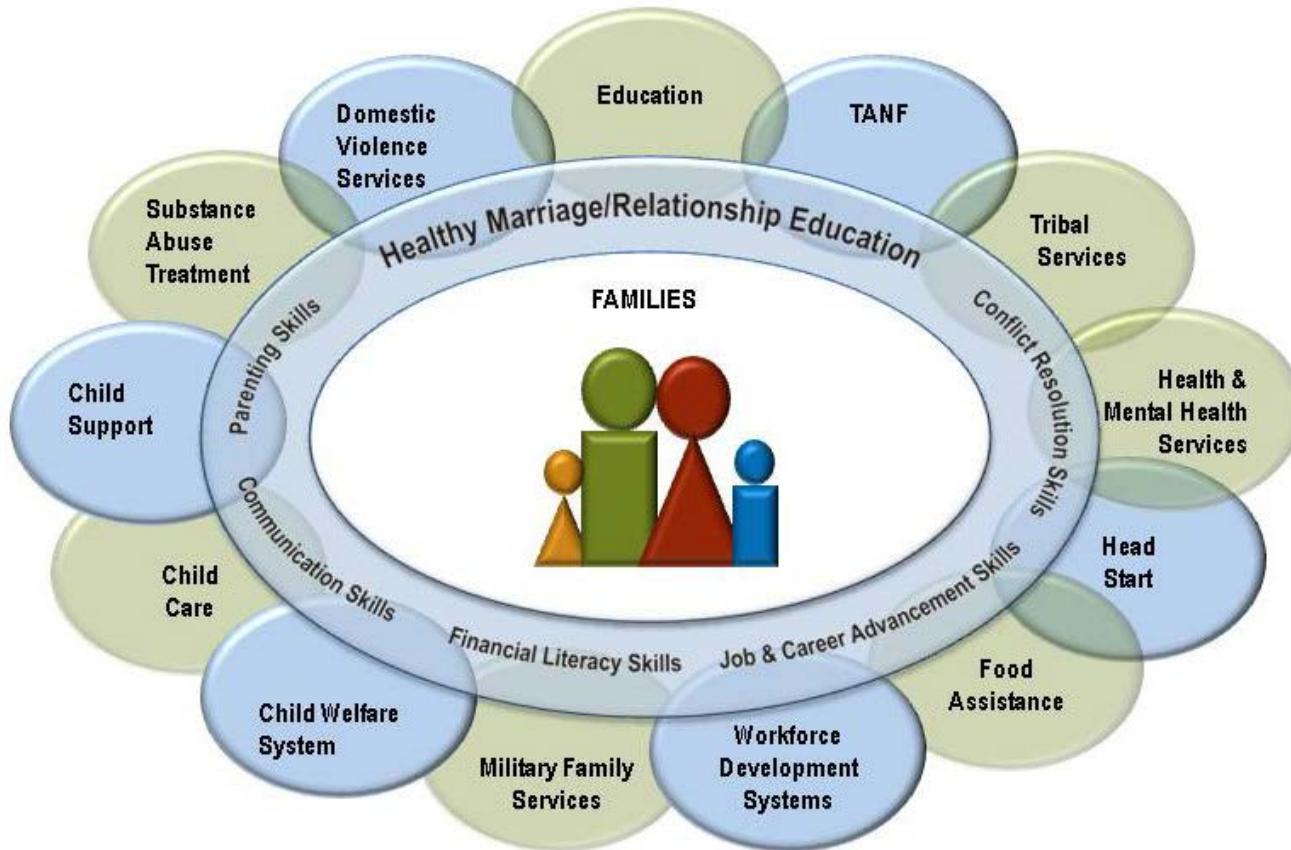


Operationalize the Research

- The National Resource Center developed a formalized training strategy to:
 - Educate stakeholders on the research and relevance of healthy relationship skills.
 - Facilitate development of customized action plan.
 - Provide ongoing technical assistance in support of implementation.



Safety-Net Stakeholders



A Framework for Integration

Level 1

- Basic Engagement

Level 2

- Partnerships

Level 3

- Full Integration



Agency Assessment

- What is the agency's service delivery method?
- Does the agency have a culture of collaboration?
- What level of integration is already being supported in the agency?



Case Studies

- Over a period of three years, 205 safety-net service providers across the United States have attended a formalized one day training (“Integration Institutes”).
- Using a case study approach, we examine the influence of this training on five agencies, whose service delivery provision involves economic self-sufficiency.
- Data are drawn from structured interviews at 45- and 90-days post-training.



Child Welfare Services

- County of San Diego Health and Human Services
- Post-Institute Outcomes:
 - Supervisors view healthy relationship education as a prevention strategy for domestic violence and a treatment tool for substance abuse providers.
 - Promotion of healthy marriage and relationship education as a tool for domestic violence prevention.
 - Via requirement of healthy relationship training in Requests for Proposals (RFP) for domestic violence and alcohol abuse prevention contract providers.
 - Goal: Get information into drug treatment facilities and home visitation programs.
 - Collaboration and support are being using the resources from the Institute, specifically targeted towards a Domestic Violence Prevention Summit the agency was coordinating.



Child Support Services

- Meskwaki Nation
- Post-Institute Outcomes:
 - Agency leadership wants to integrate the healthy marriage and relationship skill information gleaned from the Institute into their new case management model as a matter of community.
 - Ideas were generated regarding training credits given to parents who are arrears in child support.
 - Partnerships were developed to collaboratively cross-train staff and integrate healthy relationship education into programming offered.
 - This effort is being incorporated as part of a new federally-funded case management model.



Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Department of Public Health and Human Services, TANF Program
- Chippewa Cree Tribal TANF Program
- West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, TANF Program



TANF (cont.)

- Post-Institute Outcomes:
 - Colleagues are catching the vision for integration of healthy relationship education into their services and are using the information and materials gathered at Institutes to inform their actions.
 - For example, one agency is distributing information and resources to clients who come into the office to get their TANF checks (Topsky)
 - Another agency focused on integrating healthy relationship education into TANF programs statewide via collaboration with colleagues to distribute flyers/materials at state childcare centers and to include National Resource Center links on state childcare resource/referral websites as well as the state child abuse prevention listserv.



TANF (cont.)

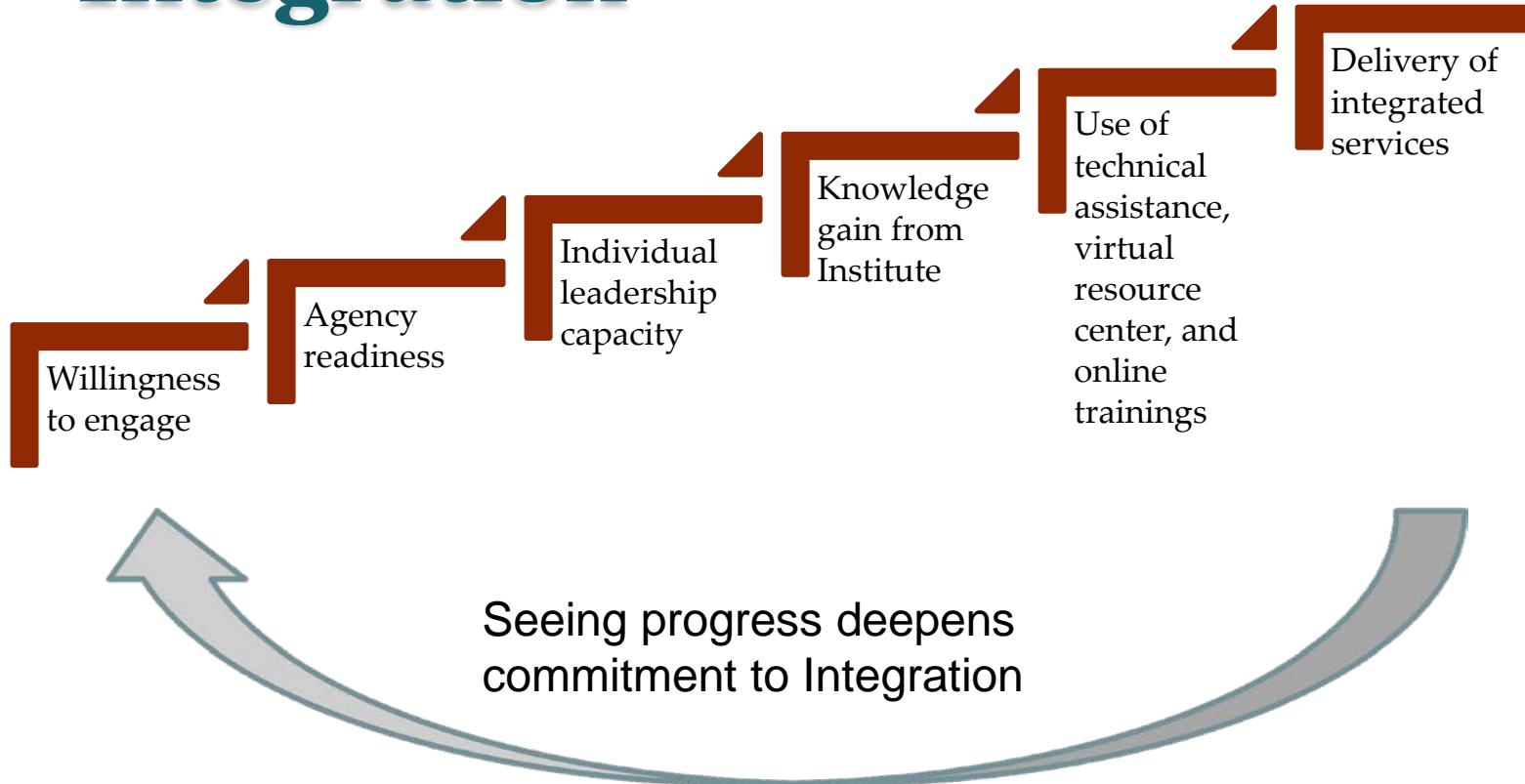
- Providers of home visits are sharing resources and materials from the National Resource Center with TANF participants.
- Partners are willing and able to expand healthy relationship curriculum into their services, for example:
 - One agency focused on integrating relationship education into all counties in their region by sharing information and resources with TANF workers.
 - Another collaborated with job readiness partners to include healthy relationship curriculum in job readiness classes across the state.



Energy Industry Competency Model



Building Capacity for Integration



Summary of Results

- Integration efforts occurred most often within agencies using more than one service delivery method.
- Participants of Integration Institutes who are directly involved in economic self-sufficiency services most frequently reported “basic engagement” (Level 1) or “partnerships” (Level 2) as their primary method of integration.
- Working collaboratively with agency leadership as well as partners and other agencies (Level 2) was key to integration of relationship education into existing services, such as home visits and classes.



What's Next?

- Another series of six Institutes with lessons learned incorporated
- Focus groups with previous participants
- Expanded Follow-up calls to include 45 day, 90 day, 6 months and one year

