

## Effects of Provider Competency on Family Outcomes

### **Abstract**

Evidence-based programs (EBPs), which are programs supported by empirical evidence, have quickly become the gold standard of prevention and intervention treatments to address child and family issues, including child maltreatment. SafeCare® is a widely recognized parent-training EBP that significantly reduces risk factors and occurrences of child maltreatment. As demand for EBPs increases and ensuring effective implementations, so do expectations for providers demonstrate strong skills in the EBP that impact family outcomes. To ensure that EBPs are being implemented correctly and effectively, it is important to evaluate for provider fidelity and competency. Fidelity is the degree to which a provider adheres to a program's protocols, while competency is a provider's level of skill to effectively implement the program. Provider fidelity has been more frequently measured than provider competency. However, researchers advise that equating the importance of measuring fidelity to the importance of measuring competency is an unwarranted conceptual leap. Without competency data, researchers are challenged to ensure that an EBP was delivered with high proficiency. The purpose of the current study is to analyze audio recordings from previous sessions and coded using the SafeCare Competency measure to determine how SafeCare providers' competency data relate to provider and family outcomes. We will present data on the association among provider competency, training outcomes and family outcomes.

keywords: competency, provider competency, fidelity, SafeCare, evidence-based programs, evidence-based practice, child maltreatment, parenting, parenting training, implementation