



September 2018

Coalition for the Advancement and Application of Psychological Science [CAAPS](#)

In September of this year, CAAPS convened a multidisciplinary summit with 40 representatives in attendance from more than two dozen organizations:

- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy
- American Counseling Association
- American Psychiatric Association
- American Psychiatric Nurses Association
- American Psychological Association (who graciously offered their building for the summit)
- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Anxiety & Depression Association of America
- Association for Behavioral & Cognitive Therapies
- Academy for Eating Disorders
- Coalition for the Advancement and Application of Psychological Science
- Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology
- Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology
- Mental Health America
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- National Association of School Psychologists
- National Association of Social Workers
- National Institute of Mental Health
- National Latino/a Psychological Association
- Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System
- RAND Corporation
- Society of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology (Division 53 of the American Psychological Association)
- Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- US Department of Veterans Affairs

Over 1.5 days, summit representatives drafted a consensus statement on evidence-based practice decision-making (see below) with remarkable agreement among all those in attendance. The statement is now being discussed within boards of each association, with several already adding their association's endorsement of this consensus document. Action plans were developed regarding the need to strengthen the evidence-base underlying mental health treatment approaches, develop messaging strategies for the public and for mental health practitioners, and increase expertise in culturally sensitive and inclusive perspectives on mental health and evidence-based practice. The summit was very well reviewed and over 95% of attendees requested a follow-up summit in one year, which we are planning now.

Consensus Statement:

Evidence-based Practice Decision-Making for Mental and Behavioral Health Care

Evidence-based practice of mental and behavioral health care is an ongoing, collaborative approach to making decisions about services, which includes the following components:

1) Evidence-based practice begins with consideration of the best available basic and applied empirical research evidence when making decisions about mental and behavioral health services.

The limitations of the available empirical evidence are also considered, especially given contextual factors such as developmental level, community/cultural needs, the settings in which the services occur, barriers to services, and the strengths and assets of individuals and communities. The limitations of the evidence base, however, do not impede the retention or adaptation of principles and techniques from the empirical evidence that remain relevant and applicable after consideration of the limitations.

2) Evidence-based practice includes ongoing measurement and evaluation of the impact of services and, if necessary, outcome-informed adjustments to services that are intended to maximize their effectiveness.

3) Providers serve as a guide for collaborative decision-making in evidence-based practice, integrating different sources of information, including recipients' values and preferences, as well as the provider's competence and the organization's capacity to provide effective services.