

Anne Douglass

Associate Professor, Executive Director

Institute for Early Educator Leadership and Innovation

University of Massachusetts Boston

Anne.douglass@umb.edu

ADVANCING THEORY, PRACTICE, AND RESEARCH IN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Problem

- Gaps between research and practice
- The quality we want vs. the quality we have
- Persistent barriers to quality improvement
- Decades of scientific discovery on improvement, innovation, and organizational science not yet widely applied in ECE

Solutions

- Improvement science and continuous quality improvement
 - (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow & LeMahieu, 2015; Institute for Healthcare Improvement, 2003)
- Relational organizational scholarship
 - (Dutton & Ragins, 2007; Edmondson & Lei, 2014; Fletcher, J. 2004; Gittell, J.H., 2016; Gittell & Douglass, 2012; Douglass & Klerman, 2012; Schein, E., 2010)
- Innovation and human centered design
 - (IDEO; Stanford d. school)

Contributions & Insights

- Systems thinking and organizational change
- Workplace relationships
- Organizational culture and climate
- Practitioner voice, leadership, co-design/co-creation
- Rapid cycle testing and experimentation

Paradigm Shift

Quality Improvement	Traditional Approach	Relational Systems Oriented, User-focused, Improvement Science
Source of expertise, ideas, solutions	Experts External Narrowly defined	Users Internal & external Broadly defined
Drivers of improvement	Formal leadership or experts Regulatory authorities	Those closest to the work And formal leadership
Accountability	Top down, hierarchical	Reciprocal, mutual
Focus for change	Individuals	Whole systems
Organizational culture	Compliance	Learning
Role of formal leaders	Managerial	Facilitative
Role of educators in change	Adopters Passive	Co-creators Leaders Agents of change
Workplace relationships	Hierarchical Siloed, fragmented	Mutual respect Relationships across roles

Teacher Voice and Leadership in Change

“[Through my participation] I've become a stronger teacher; It's let me spread my wings into the project and made me feel strong and that I deserve the same respect as all involved in this.”

“My whole approach with parents has changed”

- Learned to try more than one way to engage with parents
- Test one strategy, see if it works
- If not, test a different strategy.

“ I learned that I just have to keep trying and find another way if something doesn't work.”

- Teacher

Questions to Consider

1. What kinds of problems can be addressed with these methods?
2. What would it take to spread the use of these methods in our field?
3. How would quality improvement services/systems/policies look different if we adopted more of these methods?
4. What might be different as a result when it comes to improvement outcomes?
5. Is there a way to bring these kinds of methods into an accountability framework such as QRIS?