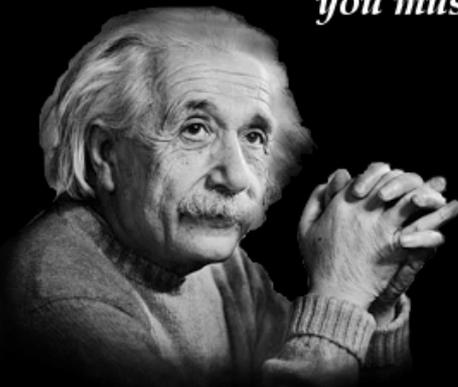


# Building an Evidence-Based Program from the Provider Perspective

*"Life is like riding a bicycle.  
To keep your balance,  
you must keep moving."*

*~Albert Einstein*

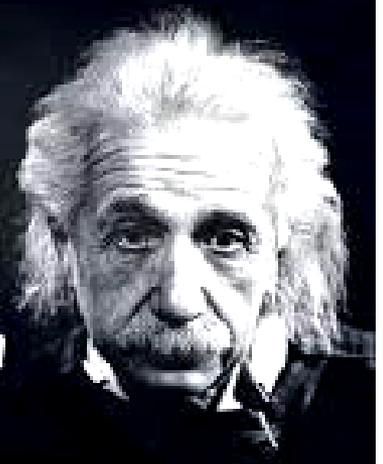


# A Little Bit of Background

- ▶ Internal evaluator (what I do for a living)
- ▶ External consultant (a side gig)
- ▶ EBP Panel member (what OASAS strong-armed me into doing out of the goodness of my heart)
- ▶ Building Skills evaluator – 5-7 years of my life that I will never get back

*The difference between  
stupidity and genius  
is that genius has its  
limits.*

*- Albert Einstein*

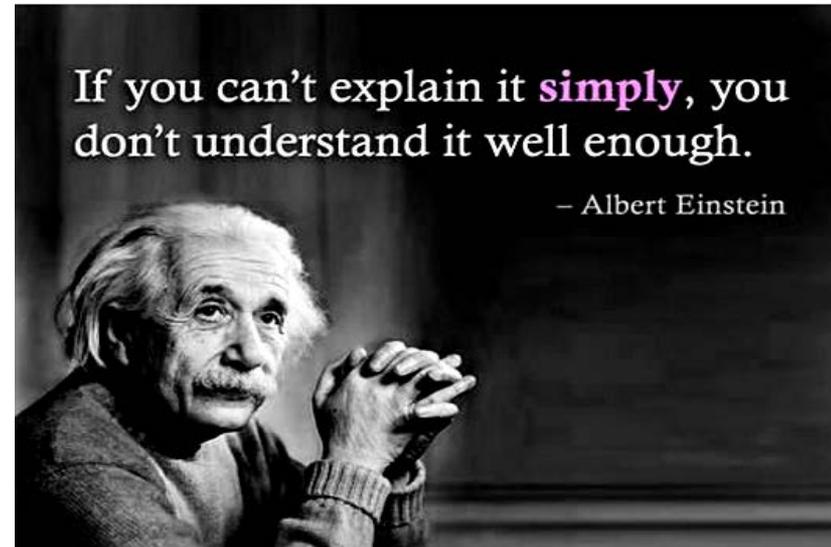


# Building an Evidence-Based Program. Scratch That! Let's Build an Evidence-Based Agency!

- ▶ New EBP development requires a huge amount of resources and a high level of expertise.
- ▶ Developing one EBP is too narrow of a focus Let's go big or go home!
- ▶ Build an evidence-based agency instead and reap the rewards forever!!!
- ▶ Allows the application of data practices to *ALL* of your programs, not just one – how's that for efficiency?

# What is an Evidence-Based Agency?

- ▶ Standardized practices – paperwork, staff deployment, programs, etc.
- ▶ Proper evaluation – programs, staff, practices
- ▶ Data-based decision making – This is the big one! *An evidence-based program uses data to validate usefulness. So does an evidence-based agency.*



# Why Develop an Evidence-Based Agency?

- ▶ Know what all our programs are doing and how they are functioning (*everyone likes to be able to say what their programs are accomplishing*)
- ▶ Boost in staff morale (*happy staff = happy agency*)
- ▶ Targeted training to improve staff development (*good training = effective programs!*)
- ▶ Contract compliance (*meeting your contract obligations is a good thing, right?*)
- ▶ Programs can become EBP registry ready (*we have a winner!*)

# Improved Training: A Quick Example

Staff Member #1

Scale Area	Pre Score	Post Score	Positive Improvement?	P - Value
Decision Making	11.55	11.66	Yes	P = .340
Goal Setting	18.49	18.87	Yes	P = .028*
Assertiveness	34.83	35.37	Yes	P = .076

Staff Member #2

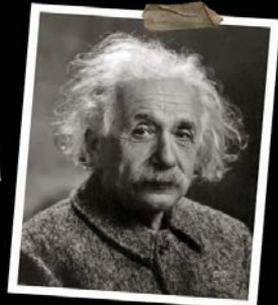
Scale Area	Pre Score	Post Score	Positive Improvement?	P - Value
Decision Making	10.91	10.67	No	P = .242
Goal Setting	18.74	18.86	Yes	P = .640
Assertiveness	36.87	36.08	No	P = .081

Pop Quiz! Guess who we are going to use as a trainer for this program for the upcoming delivery cycle??? Here's a hint: it's the staff member that actually demonstrated consistent positive results!

# Where to Begin????

- ▶ Connect with an evaluator, either by hiring one on staff (like me!) or by securing an external evaluator. There are advantages to both, but either way, an evaluator is necessary.
- ▶ Administrative buy in – This is the most important!! There will be no change without this.
- ▶ Host buy in (also super important!). Embed your staff in your host agencies: *spending time on some non-prevention activities will help you provide much more service down the road. Trust me on this one.....*
- ▶ Get an accurate and honest read on the services you are providing – *what are we doing and where?*

"Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think."  
-Albert Einstein

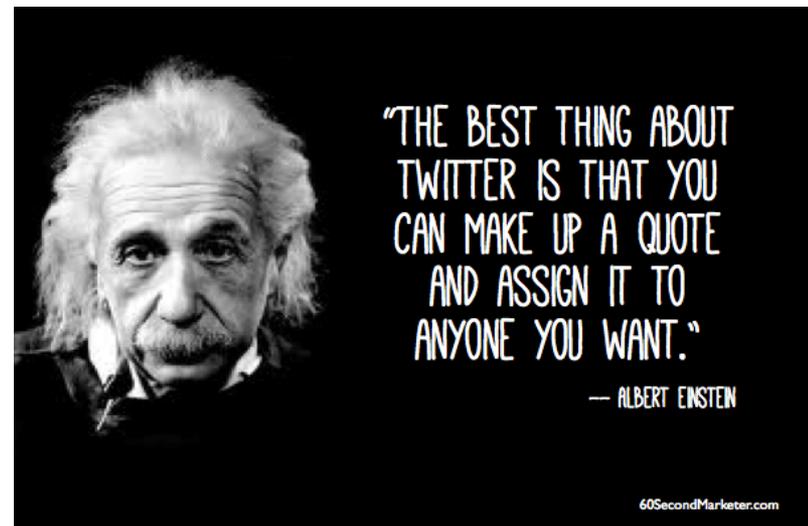


# Define What We Do (Really Do)

- ▶ All programs need to have clear definitions and standardization
- ▶ With ready-made model programs, this has already been done (they did the work for you!). You aren't completely off the hook, though!
- ▶ With new programs, there is work to do. A lot of it. Like a ton of it. Seriously.
  - *Building Skills development took about 6 years off of my life, maybe 7 – it depends on how you calculate life expectancy.....)*
- ▶ Proper program definition is crucial to inclusion on any sort of model/evidence-based registry – no exceptions!

# So Now What?

- ▶ We have all the foundational pieces, but we still need the staff to join the team! Trust me, they will derail the process if we don't.
- ▶ Data fears (they're gonna fire me!). Make sure the staff know that the data will be used for positive purposes – not as a “gotcha game.”
- ▶ Active participation in the process – Get their opinions and use them to make the process better. You hired these individuals – have faith in them!



# Staff Opinions: A Quick Example

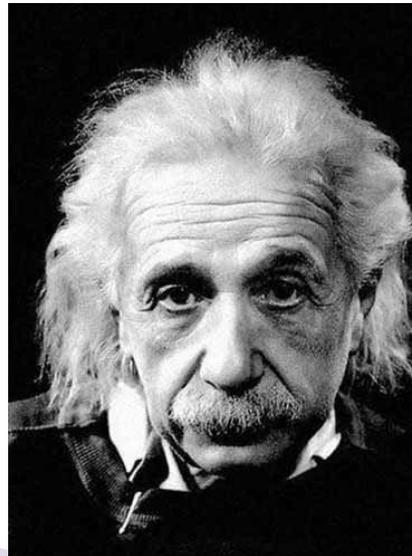
Staff Recommendation	Response
Decision Making activity is boring: the students hate it!	Develop a new activity for that lesson that students will enjoy more.
Assertiveness lesson is too long. Can't finish in one class period.	Remove some content from the lesson to make it shorter. Create a shorter version of the lesson activity that isn't as time consuming.
Students in this age group don't understand the directions for the workbook activity for the goal setting lesson.	Simplify the activity and the directions so it is easier for the students to understand.
Students aren't able to consistently complete the survey in one class period.	Decrease the size of the survey by only measuring the areas <i>most salient</i> to the program.
The lesson regarding conflict stinks!	Inform the conflict lesson to shower on a more regular basis. If that doesn't work, spray it with a healthy dose of perfume.

# Getting Your Evaluation System Ready

- ▶ Now that we have the pieces in place, it's time to start taking an honest look at our programs!
  - Process paperwork – basic information – session dates, number of students, program delivered, etc.
  - Outcome measures – social skills surveys, risk factor scales, behavioral measures, etc.
    - Reliable, valid, and are in tune with what your program is accomplishing!
    - Make sure to include break variables such as gender, age, etc.
    - *For those of you that are super interested in survey development, the EPIS Center is giving a presentation on survey development at this very conference: check them out (Workshop Session 4: Weds. 3:00pm)!*
  - Evaluation design – pre/post, quasi-experimental, experimental, etc.

# Data Collection Time!

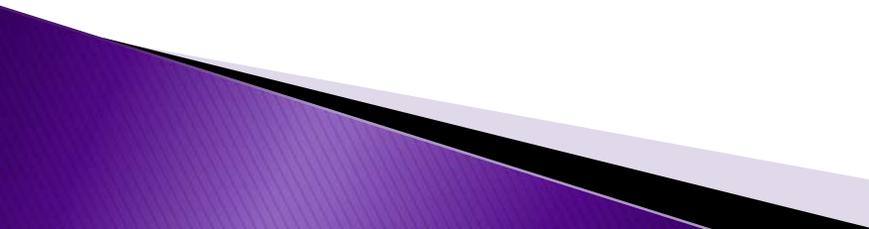
- ▶ Use the process paperwork, outcome measurement tools, and evaluation designs developed in the previous step (this is why we did all that work!)
- ▶ A few tips for data collection
  - *1. Stick with your design*
  - *2. Maintain program fidelity (especially model programs!)*
  - *3. Stay organized!!*



*“You should take your own advice, Tim. You’re about as organized as the \$5 DVD bin at Walmart.”*

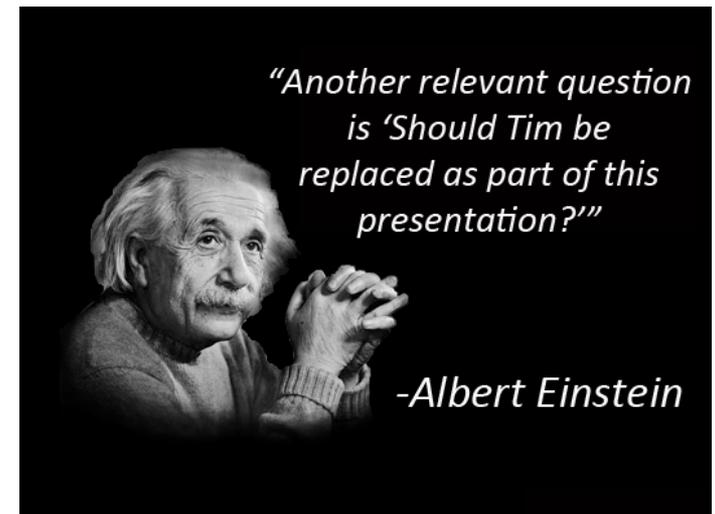
*-Albert Einstein*

# What Do I Do With All This Data???

- ▶ Analysis time!!!!
  - ▶ First year will likely demonstrate some hard truths – *be ok with this*.
  - ▶ Pay attention to what is working and use the data to inform your training protocols and any program changes that need to be made (for newly developed programs).
  - ▶ Look *critically* at your programs from different angles and be prepared to find some poor results: it happens.
- 

# Yes! We Got Through the First Year!

- ▶ We did it! We're all set now, right??? Wrong!
- ▶ **Process perspective**
  - *How much are we doing?*
  - *Are workloads balanced?*
- ▶ **Evaluative perspective**
  - *Are our programs functioning properly?*
  - *Can we do better?*
  - *Should some programs be replaced?*



# Agency Process Data: First Attempt Vs Most Recent Analysis

First Process Analysis

Staff Member	Students Served
Staff Member #1	792
Staff Member #2	692
Staff Member #3	429
Staff Member #4	479
Staff Member #5	697
Average	618

Most Recent Process Analysis

Staff Member	Students Served
Staff Member #1	795
Staff Member #2	941
Staff Member #3	848
Staff Member #4	905
Staff Member #5	949
Average	888

First year was very inconsistent in terms of students served – It also looks like Staff Member #3 and #4 were slacking. Using the principles of an evidence-based agency, not only did consistency improve over time, but so did productivity! Two birds, meet one stone!

# Building Skills Evaluation Data: First Attempt Vs Most Recent Analysis

## First Ever Analysis

Scale	Experimental	Control	Positive Improvement?	P - Value
Decision Making	11.37	11.23	Yes	P = .202
Goal Setting	18.46	18.88	No	P = .003*
Assertiveness	36.06	35.81	Yes	P = .280
Conflict Resolution	38.43	37.91	Yes	P = .052

## Most Recent Analysis

Scale	Experimental	Control	Positive Improvement?	P - Value
Decision Making	13.20	11.81	Yes	p < .001*
Goal Setting	19.88	18.13	Yes	p < .001*
Assertiveness	20.69	19.72	Yes	p < .001*
Conflict Resolution	41.51	40.38	Yes	p < .001*

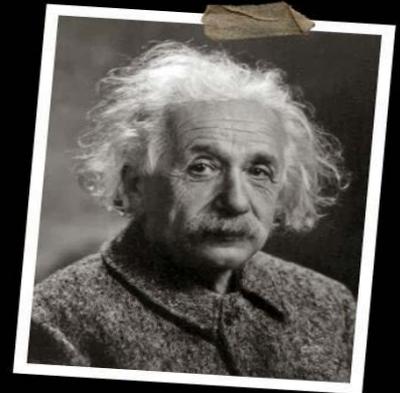
That first year of analysis was ugly! OASAS looked at it and it made them ill - they even considered defunding our agency! Now, after developing the process, results are consistent and positive and OASAS loves me again!

# Keep it Going and Reap the Benefits Year After Year!

- ▶ Being an evidence-based agency is a process and the process is continued year after year.
- ▶ Over time, questions become increasingly more specific. This is good! It means you are doing it right!
- ▶ Huge increase in knowledge and confidence in your agency and its practices as a result!

*“About the only thing I’m  
confident in is that you  
will never stop talking.”*

*-Albert Einstein*



# Conclusions and Final Thoughts

- ▶ Wow, we just covered a lot!
- ▶ Developing an evidence-based agency is a huge endeavor, but it is beneficial from multiple perspectives:
  - *Sound decisions*
  - *Stronger training*
  - *More reasonable program selection*
  - *Better outcomes for all!*

**“Well, there’s  
30 minutes I  
will never get  
back.”**

**-Albert Einstein**

