

**Consider the list of factors affecting the success of family service provision. Based on findings by Dunst et al. (2007), against each, note whether you think they will lead to greater family empowerment or additional stress for families.**

The information in this section is drawn from:

Dunst, C.J., Hamby, D.W. and Brookfield, J. (2007) 'Modeling the effects of early childhood intervention variables on parent and family well-being', *Journal of Applied Quantitative Methods*, 2 (3), 268-288.

(Information in quote marks indicates a direct quote.)

**High family socio-economic status:**

Socioeconomic status (SES) is dependent on levels of 'income, educational attainment, and occupational prestige' (p. 270). People who have a higher SES are generally found to have better physical and mental health and a greater sense of personal control. Although higher SES is associated with greater control over life events, it does not increase control over desired services. Families from higher SES were found to be more likely to feel that services were less family centred than those of lower SES. However, higher SES was associated in this study with a greater sense of family well-being.

**A high perception of own ability to influence events:**

Those who have a greater sense of control, feel more able to organize and carry through their own plans. This has been found to lead to better physical and mental health, and to lessen the impact of negative life events. A high perception of families' own ability to influence outcomes led to a greater sense of family well-being.

**High level of severity of son/daughter's disability:**

Previous research has suggested that greater severity of a son or daughter's disability leads to increased parental stress. However, this study showed within a specific context that, 'contrary to expectation, child disability had no direct effect on personal and family well-being' (p. 279).

**Family-centred, help-giving practices:**

'Family-centered practices involve family decision-making and action that honors and respects family choices, preferences, and desires' (p. 272). Families involved with family-centred services experience a greater sense of control and ability to act to gain desired resources. Families from higher SES were found to be more likely to feel that services were less family centred than those of lower SES. Family centred services were associated with a greater sense of family well-being.

**Increased hours of contact from professionals:**

The more contact that parents had with practitioners, the more likely they were to say that the practitioners and programs used family-centered practices.

**Increased intensity of services provided to the child:**

Increased service intensity (increased length of programme and formal delivery setting) led to a decrease in the families' sense of well-being.

'Evidence from a number of sources indicate that well meaning (but often conflicting) advice from different help-givers can sometimes be confusing and increase caregiver burden and stress.' (p. 273)