**Questions for Critical Appraisal of Systematic Review or Meta-Analysis Study**

**What is the paper about?**

1. What clinical question did the paper address?
2. What type of study was done?
   1. Primary research (experiment, RCT, other controlled clinical trial, cohort study, other)? (If yes, use the other set of questions!)
   2. Secondary research (systematic review, meta-analysis)? (If yes, this set of questions will be helpful!)
3. Was this question Important to your PICO question?
4. Is the question sufficiently narrow and well-defined?

**What intervention is being studied?**

1. What interventions are investigated in this review?
2. What is the theory of change? How does this intervention address the problem?
3. What are the core and non-core components of the intervention?
4. Did those who sponsored, funded, or conduct the review have vested interests at stake in its conclusions? (Review authors should report whether any of them were involved in any studies included in the review and whether they have any sort of affiliation with or financial stake in any of the concerns being reviewed.)

**What methods were used for the study?**

1. Was a thorough search done of the appropriate database(s) and were other potentially important sources explored?
2. Was there an attempt to identify gray or unpublished literature?
3. Were its inclusion criteria sufficiently comprehensive?
4. Were its exclusion criteria too restrictive?
5. Does it critically appraise the quality of included studies?
6. Does it sort the evidence according to study quality?
7. Does it sort the evidence according to client characteristics? If so, do its conclusions seem to apply to your clients?
8. Does it inappropriately lump together clinically meaningful outcome indicators and clinically insignificant ones?
9. Did it use at least two independent review authors to assess the quality of the studies and extract findings from the studies?
   1. If yes to question 9, was there agreement between the assessments and findings of the review authors?
   2. If there were disagreements, how were they resolved?
10. Were strategies for dealing with missing data described?
11. Is there anything about the way the review has been done that might produce biased results?

**What implications can be drawn from the study?**

1. Did the study include or exclude people with diagnoses or other characteristics like the client(s) pertaining to your PICO question?
2. Does your community or agency have the resources necessary to implement the intervention studied?
3. How would you go about developing competence for delivering this intervention with fidelity?
4. If the findings carried across different subgroups, to what extent have the authors explained this within their theory of change?
5. What further research do the authors believe is needed, and is this justified?

**References**

Greenhalgh, T. (2010) *How to read a paper: The basics of evidence-based medicine* (4th edition). Hoboken, NJ: BMJ Books.

Olson, J.R. (2010) Choosing effective youth-focused prevention strategies: A practical guide for applied family professionals. *Family Relations: Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Studies, 59*, 207-220.

Rubin, A. (2008). *Practitioner’s guide to using research for evidence-based practice.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.