

# TYPES OF RESEARCH EVIDENCE

The CEBC reviews all research evidence that has been published in peer-reviewed journals for each program and, if applicable, gives the program a scientific rating.



## META-ANALYSES & SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

- Meta-analyses statistically combine the results of multiple studies. Large and diverse analytic samples provide the strongest evidence.
- Systematic reviews summarize and synthesize the findings of multiple studies identified in comprehensive, highly structured literature searches.
- Sources for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses: Cochrane, Campbell Collaboration



## RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL (RCT)

- Study participants are randomly assigned to either the intervention or a control/comparison group. Any differences seen in the groups at the end can be attributed to the differences in the intervention alone, not to bias or chance.
- Example: Comparisons of both groups at pretest and posttest show that the program group experienced less parenting stress at the six-month follow-up than those in the control group.



## QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL

- Measures outcomes across a group of program participants and a control group, without participants being randomly assigned to a group.
- Example: The classroom that completed the program showed significant improvement in behavior compared to other classrooms in the same grade level.



## PRE-EXPERIMENTAL

- Research that does not have a control or comparison group.
- Example: At the end of the mentor program, youth report a higher level of confidence compared to their entry scores.



## DESCRIPTIVE

- Data on participant characteristics, the numbers served by the program, case studies, or observational studies.
- Example: A program reports on participant demographics, retention rates, and satisfaction survey results.



## ANECDOTAL

- Information based heavily or entirely on personal observations or testimony, rather than rigorous or scientific analysis.
- Example: A program participant reports on how a parent training program has helped him become a better father.

**STRONGEST  
TYPES  
OF  
EVIDENCE**



**WEAKEST  
TYPES  
OF  
EVIDENCE**

For more information about the CEBC and our Scientific Rating Scale, visit [www.cebc4cw.org](http://www.cebc4cw.org).