

Mismatch between Complex Interventions and "Gold Standard" Evaluations

ATTRIBUTES OF EFFECTIVE COMPLEX INTERVENTIONS	ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH "GOLD STANDARD" EVALUATIONS
Significant front-line flexibility exists within established quality standards	Intervention is standardized, discretion minimized
Intervention evolves in response to experience and changing conditions	Intervention remains constant over time
Intervention/program design reflects local strengths, needs, preferences	Intervention is centrally designed and uniform across sites
Intake/recruitment into program falls under local control, within broad parameters	Intake is centrally designed to permit random assignment
Multiple components respond to children in family, peer, and neighborhood contexts	Single-factor, single-sector interventions
Interactive components take into account the interrelationships among health, social, educational needs	Components are clearly separable
Training and setting emphasize continuing, respectful relationships and other hard-to-measure attributes	Focus on readily measured inputs
Implementers <i>believe in</i> the intervention and go beyond their job description to respond to clients	Implementation is value-free