

## **Guidelines for evaluating articles:**

---

1. What is the publication source? And, what questions does the article source raise for you about article quality? (peer-reviewed journal, website, etc)
2. What is the author's area of expertise? Do you know anything about the author(s)' reputation?
3. Does the article identify how the author came to know the information? (research, literature review, practice experience)
4. Are there concerns with credibility of the author (s), researcher(s) or research institution (Bronson, 2009)?
  - a. What is the funding source?
  - b. What, if any, financial gains does the researcher get?
  - c. Does the author clearly present the purpose of the research or article?
  - d. Is the report transparent about how and what evidence was used in the article?
5. Do the findings presented match the conclusions drawn by the author? Are author conclusions logical based on the information presented in the article or your pre-existing knowledge? Why or why not?
6. Does the article provide a solid literature base to support the research?
7. Does the article present alternative explanations to consider when interpreting findings or drawing conclusions?
8. What is the quality of the bibliography?
  - a. Does the bibliography include a variety of authors and sources?
  - b. What types of sources are identified in the bibliography?
  - c. Do the sources in the bibliography seem relevant to the article?

**For research articles, continue to the next page.**

**For conceptual articles, stop here.**

**For Research Articles Only:**

9. If a research study, are there threats to internal and external validity? (Bronson, 2009)
  - a. Internal validity: (Are the reasons for the findings a result of the intervention or something else?)
    1. Are comparison groups comparable?
    2. Does the report address the following:
      - Study attrition
      - How participants were selected
      - History-events that happen at the same time that could impact outcomes
      - Maturation- changes over time that could affect study outcomes
      - Response rates
      - Who made the observations
      - Was there fidelity to the intervention
  - b. External validity: (Can we generalize to a larger population?)
    1. Is the sample representative of the people on whom the intervention will be used?
    2. Can study results be generalized to a larger population, a smaller population, or a group of similar size?
    3. Does the study provide detailed information on the subjects, treatment setting and characteristics of those who provided the intervention?
    4. Has the intervention been replicated in other sites, with other populations or with other providers?
    5. Can the intervention be disseminated?

Bronson, D. (2009). Critically appraising studies for evidence-based practice. In A. Roberts (Ed.), *Social Worker's Desk Reference* (pp. 1137-1141). New York: Oxford University Press