


Children Mental Health Research
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Youth-in-Transition Perspective on Services: Study Description and Preliminary Results

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Study Setting & Population Description

- Uniqueness of Population (ages 16-21)
 - Trauma Histories
 - Multiple foster care placements
 - Severe & Persistent Mental Illness - Comorbidity
- Involuntary Treatment
- Transition to Independence Process (TIP)
- YAP vs. REACH – 2 Types of Residences
 - Group Homes
 - Individual Apartments




Research Questions

- How do young adults in a transitional living program understand what it means to have a mental illness, view the services they are receiving, and envision their futures?
- How do young adults become or not become more independent as they approach their transition out of the system?
- What are the characteristics of social networks of young adults in a TLP? Who do the young adults see as important in their lives and what function do they serve?



Social Capital

- As a recent book on social capital puts it, "The thousands of books and articles spawned by social capital theory have probably convinced even the toughest skeptics that better connected people enjoy better health, faster access to information, stronger social support, and greater ease in dealing with crises or everyday problems."
 - What does the social capital look like for this population and how does it work for the young adults (i.e. impact outcomes)?
 - How do organizations create social capital?




Research Design & Methodology

- Qualitative Design
 - Longitudinal
 - In-depth semi-structured interviews
- Researchers interviewed 16 young adults
 - 15 of the 16 were interviewed 3 to 4 times
 - Initial interview occurred between 1 and 1 ½ from program exit and then every 6 months following.
 - Post-exit interviews occurred at approximately 3 months post-exit and at 1 year post-exit.




Data Analysis


- Team of researchers coding interviews
- Descriptive statistics were used to look at demographics, changes in social networks, and daily activities.
- Content analysis techniques (constant comparison)





Demographics


Individual Characteristics (n=16)		Social Network Characteristics	
Mean Age (years) (SD)	20.1 (0.50)	Mother's Education (n=16)	
Gender - Male (%)	62.5%	Don't know	43.8%
Race/Ethnicity (%)		Graduated high school	18.8%
African American	62.5%	Graduated college	12.5%
Caucasian	25%	Completed GED	12.5%
Latino	12.5%	High school incompletion	12.5%
Severe Mental Illness Diagnosis (%)		Father's Education (n=15)	
Bipolar Disorder	37.5%	Don't know	56.3%
Schizophrenia	37.5%	Graduated high school	12.5%
Major Depression	25%	Completed GED	12.5%
Comorbid PTSD	8.3%	Graduated college	12.5%
Comorbid Substance Use	8.3%	Mother's Employment (n=13)	
Education Level (%)		Don't know	46.2%
In 12 th Grade	50%	Full-time	38.5%
Graduated high school	25%	Receiving Benefits	15.4%
Enrolled in College	12.5%	Father's Employment (n=12)	
Working on GED	12.5%	Don't know	41.7%
Employed	12.5%	Full-time	41.7%
Residence Type (%)		Unemployed	8.3%
YAP (group home)	56.3%	Incarcerated	8.3%
REACH	37.5%		
YAP to REACH	6.3%		




- ### Preliminary Results
- Understanding of and Perspective on Transitional Services:
 - "Different World"
 - Describing Services by Relationships
 - Doing versus Didactic Learning
 - Youth and Significant Others' Understanding of and Perspective on Mental Illness
 - Perspectives on Transition and Future
 - Social Capital
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- ### Understanding Services: "Different World"
- *Well I'm grateful for them, of course, but I've been in DCFS since I was born so it's like something I was born into, like some people were born into Indonesia out there you know.*
 - *It's not a normal world.*
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- ### Understanding Services: Relationships
- *They are really helping me out a lot now that I think of it. They put me back in school, they put in group therapy, they got me on medication, stable, they got my SSI, my checks here, they got me right.*
 - *You know when you want to do things on your own, you have to find a way to do it and the services that they're giving me is...I have support, I have walls around me that when I fall down or whatever, when I feel like I'm going to fail, I can bounce on the walls and that can help me to be able to get back up again.*
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- ### Feelings about services... quality of relationships
- *I trust them [case manager and therapist], I like them. They're good people.*
 - *Talking to M [case manager]. Because M is a cool person and she's pretty cool with the way I am, what I do, how I go to school, she really honors me for that. That's why I like her.*
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- ### Understanding and Perspectives on Service: Doing versus Didactic Learning
- *The best part of services is actually getting to do it. Getting to learn how to do it and doing it.*
 - *I was in residential, they didn't do nothing but keep me in groups all day and here I'm actually learning more because we do it instead of just talking about it.*
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Perspectives on Mental Illness

■ Young Adult:

- 14 out of 16 stated they had a mental illness and provided a diagnosis when explaining why they were at the program or why they thought they needed services.

■ Significant Others:

- *Um they're ok with it [mental illness] I think. I think my family is and most of my friends are.... They don't say people do, they just have struggles that they can't control. On proper medications and proper therapy, so they don't think any different of them*



Family

■ Present

- 15 out of 16 listed family members when describing the important people in their lives.

■ Future

- *I have my own space...getting to see my family more...when I have a car, I can drive and see my family more.*
- *I plan on settling down, with somebody and you know, if I'm financially stable, start a family.*
- *I see myself as a married woman, for real, housewife, living in a different country, happy with my kids with enough money that I can fall back on and my kids can fall back on...*



Social Capital – Preliminary Findings

- Social Networks varied by housing arrangement
 - Quality of networks - peers
 - Daily Activities – free time vs. school/groups
- Trust
 - *The system, well, I had to [re]sign that I wasn't able to make my own decisions.*
- Peers
 - *No, well they joke and call me crazy but they know, they understand.*
- Future Implications



Thank you!

Questions?

