



Portland, Oregon



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Research on Family Perspectives, Needs, & Roles

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Family & Youth Roles in Systems of Care: The Evolution of Influence (Symposium)

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Family-oriented Research

A little history

- 1984 found only one study done from the perspective of parents whose children had mental health problems.
- By late 1980s a few descriptive studies using parents as informants.
- 1990s studies of family roles, parent-professional collaboration
 - Measures developed: empowerment, caregiver strain, parent-professional collaboration, family participation in service & educational planning.

Descriptive Studies

What are the experiences of family members trying to find help and resources for their children/youth with mental health conditions?

- Needs (appropriate services, respite, support)
- Barriers
 - Cost
 - Availability of services
 - Stigma
 - Relationships with professionals
 - Questions about condition, medication, parenting
- What helps?
 - Information about the condition
 - Support and understanding from other families
 - Empathetic, competent helpers.

Outcome Framework*

- o How parents influence their children's mental health;
- o Influence of children on parent's mental health;
- o Mutual effects of parent on child and child on parent;
- o Caregiver characteristics affecting child outcomes;
- o Family outcomes as primary goals;
- o Benefits to communities of caregiver and family well-being.

* Friesen, B.J., Pullmann, M., Koroloff, N.M., & Rea, T. (2005). Multiple perspectives on family outcomes in children's mental health. In M.H. Epstein, K. Kutash, & A. Duchnowski (Eds.), Outcomes for children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders and their families, 2nd Ed. Pro-Ed: Austin TX.

Current Research

- Family to Family Initiative (National Federation of Families) working to identify the "essential ingredients" and outcomes of family-to-family support (F2F).
- Exploring how systems of care know about and respond to the mental health needs of caregivers, especially when children are in Child Welfare system.

Research Needed

- Impact of family organizations on individuals, policy development, communities;
- Studies of impact of family participation at system, policy levels;
- Studies of outcomes of family support services;
- Benefits to society of caregiver well-being;
- (More - discussion).

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