



Connecting With Youth: Building a Therapeutic Relationship – Examining the Contributions of Youth and Teacher/Counselors

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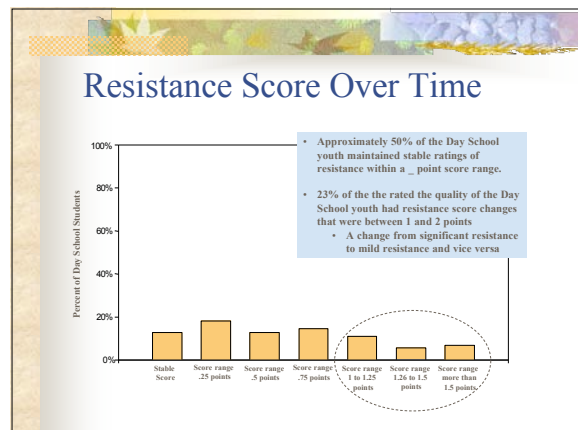
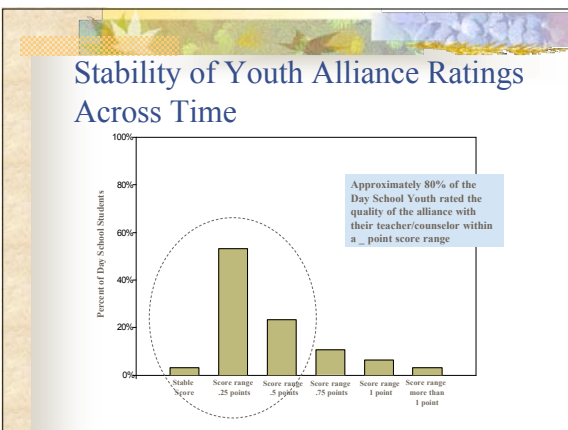
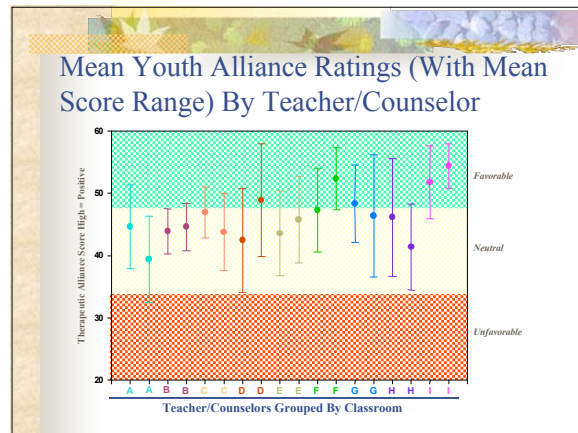
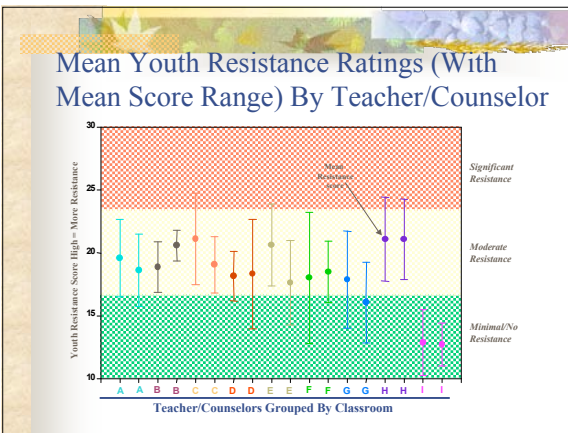
17th Annual Research Conference – A System of Care for Children’s Mental Health

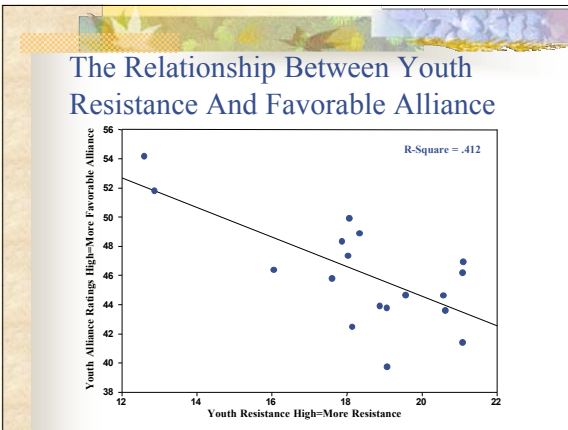
Day School Youth: Background Characteristics

Data used in analyses collected during 2002/2003 school year.

- Age: 5 to 20 years of age, mean age: 14 years
- Race/Ethnicity:
 - Caucasian
 - African American
 - Hispanic Origin
- 72% of Day School students have multiple diagnoses

■ Prevalent diagnoses			
■ Conduct disorder	32%	■ Bipolar	16%
■ ADHD	30%	■ Depression	15%





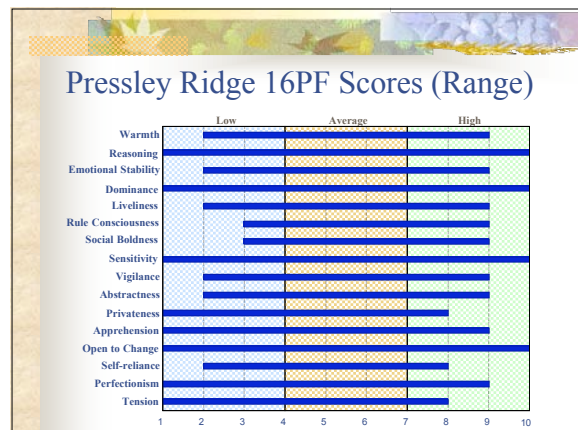
- ### Stability of Youth Ratings Across Time: Alliance and Resistance
- Youth ratings of alliance across teacher/counselors do vary
 - Youth do not appear to generalize across teacher/counselors
 - Youth ratings of alliance are fairly stable across time
 - Youth ratings of resistance are subject to change across time
 - Youth ratings of resistance are associated with their ratings of alliance
 - More resistance → lower alliance

Selected Teacher/Counselor Characteristics

Selected 16 PF Factor Scale Dimensions

LEFT MEANING	FACTOR	RIGHT MEANING
Reserved, impersonal	Warmth	Warm, outgoing, soft-hearted
Concrete	Reasoning	Abstract
Reactive	Emotional Stability	Stable, adaptive, mature
Cooperative, avoids conflict	Dominance	Assertive, forceful, competitive
Serious, restrained	Liveliness	Lively, animated
Expedient	Rule-Consciousness	Rule-conscious, dutiful
Shy, timid	Social Boldness	Venturesome, thick-skinned
Utilitarian, objective	Sensitivity	Sensitive, sentimental
Trusting, unsuspecting	Vigilance	Suspicious, skeptical
Grounded, practical	Abstractness	Imaginative, idea-oriented
Genuine, forthright	Privateness	Discreet, non-disclosing
Self-assured	Apprehension	Self-doubting, worried
Easy going, tolerant of disorder	Perfectionism	More rigid, inflexible standards
Unrestrained	Tough-Mindedness	Reserved, constrained, controlled

- ### Interpreting The 16PF Data
- Scores are on a standardized continuum from 1 to 10
 - High scores: 8 – 10
 - Average scores: 4 – 7 (7 = high average, 4 = low average)
 - Low scores: 3 - 1
 - The direction of the score is neither positive nor negative
 - Both low and high scores are interpreted
 - *Example*
 - **Low Warmth** scores is interpreted as caution about involvement with people and a preference for working alone
 - **High warmth** is interpreted as being outgoing, a “people person”, friendly, etc.



Teacher/Counselor 16PF Scores And Youth Alliance Ratings

- 16PF profile scores
 - More directly associated with youth resistance than with youth rating of alliance
 - Consistency of alliance across time is associated with 16PF

Teacher/Counselor 16PF and Youth Resistance

- **High rule consciousness** → **High youth resistance** ($r = .762$)
 - Strict adherence to rules, regulations
- **High dominance** → **High youth resistance** ($r = .790$)
 - Assertive, forceful, competitive, argumentative, overbearing
- **High independence** → **High youth resistance** ($r = .801$)
 - Autocratic, not a “team player”
- **High social control** → **High youth resistance** ($r = .758$)
 - Need to maintain a sense of control over social activities
- **High perfectionist** → **High youth resistance** ($r = .781$)
 - Disciplined, difficult dealing with unpredictability, preoccupied with tasks and outcomes

Teacher/Counselor 16PF and Youth Alliance Ratings

- **High impression management** → **Low youth alliance** ($r = -.636$)
 - Tendency to manipulate in order to create impression that things are going well
- **Emotional stability**
 - TA ratings from youth over time tend to be more consistent
 - TA ratings across the youth in classroom tends to be similar

Selected Youth Characteristics

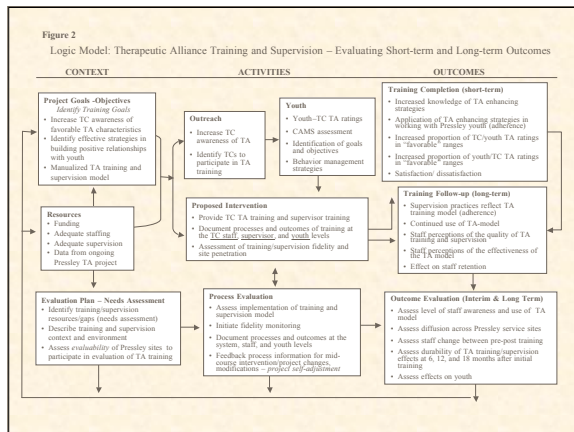
Youth Characteristics – Associations With Resistance and Alliance

	October 2002		June 2003	
	Resistance	Alliance	Resistance	Alliance
Youth Reported				
Social Competence	-.176	.280*	-.268*	.354**
Total Problems	.248	-.042	.255*	-.012
Externalizing	.258	-.022	.277*	-.018
Internalizing	.170	-.080	.172	.005
Alcohol/drug Use	-.280**	.208*	.205	-.234
Physical/sexual Abuse	-.386**	.291**	-.011	-.071
Teacher Reported				
Total Problems	.324**	-.007	.427**	-.087
Externalizing	.294**	-.004	.400**	-.073
Internalizing	.218*	-.012	.223	-.065

*p < .05
** p < .005

Resistance, Alliance, and Youth Characteristics

- **Social competence** continues to be associated with alliance over time
 - Negatively correlated with resistance – resistance increases, social competence declines
 - Positively correlated with alliance – alliance increases, social competence increases
- **Externalizing behavior problems** are positively associated with resistance at the end of the school year as reported by both teachers and youth
- **Alcohol and drug use** is no longer significantly correlated with resistance or alliance at the end of the school year
- Youth report of **sexual and/or physical abuse** is no longer significantly correlated with resistance or alliance at the end of the school year



The Importance of Considering How Youth and Adult Characteristics Affect Alliance

- A key value of Re-Education, Pressley Ridge's guiding philosophy, is that youth can be re-educated to be competent and manage their own behavior with the help of a professional Teacher/Counselor (Hobbs, 1985)
- Alliance is both an end in itself as well as a pre-requisite to re-education.
- Building relationships is a two-way process.
- History has shown that Teacher/Counselors who work well together, achieve consistently high alliance scores with their students.

How Is Therapeutic Alliance Demonstrated on a Day-to-day Basis?

- Supervision to help Teacher/Counselors build alliances.
- Alliance ratings factor into Teacher/Counselor classroom assignments.
- Teacher/Counselors can be evaluated using an observation form designed from the 16pf.
- Therapeutic Alliance serves as a type of "quality assurance" to ensure that the Teacher/Counselors know what is expected of them.

Why Are We Concerned About Therapeutic Alliance and Teacher/Counselors?

- Recruitment of Teacher/Counselors
- Selection of Teacher/Counselors
- Value of Tenured Teacher/Counselors
- Skills Training in building relationships

Acknowledgements

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