

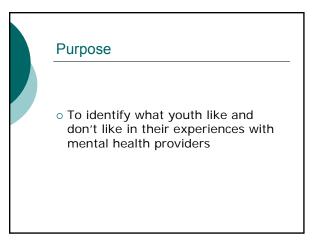
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#### Why Youth Perspectives Matter

- Empower youth to have a "say"
- Inform underutilization of mental health services
- o Guide quality improvement efforts



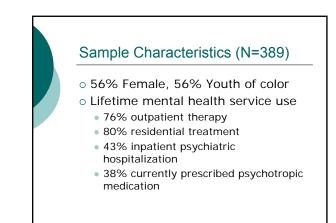
#### Methodology

- Larger study of older youth transitioning from foster care in MO
- 406 youth followed longitudinally
- o In-person interview at 17th birthday
- o Phone interview six months later



#### **Qualitative Analysis**

- Independent reviewers identified emerging patterns
- Themes named, codebook developed
- 30% of data coded to establish inter-rater reliability
- o Overall agreement=.75



#### Results

- 144 youths (37%) shared positive experience
- 101 youths (26%) shared negative experience
- o Specific provider feedback:
  - Primary Therapist (N=89)
  - Residential Case Manager (N=110)
  - Residential Direct Care Worker (N=113)

#### Benefits of mental health services: Helped with personal issues

- o "Helps me with my problems"
- "Mr. \_\_\_\_ helped me cope with my father and brother's deaths. Pushed me to cope even though I got mad"
- "Helped me get my life on track kept me in school, stopped me from some bad stuff"

#### Benefits of mental health services: Helped me feel better

- "Everything changed from dark to good"
- "They made me feel better about myself and things that were going on in my life"
- "She eased my pain with my problems away"

#### Benefits of mental health services: Promoted behavior change

- o "I've changed my ways"
- "Taught me how to control my behavior"
- o "One kept me from harming myself"

#### **Benefits of Mental Health Services**

Theme	Ν	%
Help with personal issues, coping skills	29	20
Helped me feel better	22	15
General helpfulness	18	13
Promoted behavior change	14	10
Help develop insight/self-awareness	13	9
Catharsis/emotional release	10	7
Advocated to help me get what I needed/wanted	10	7
Help with practical and concrete matters	9	6
Medication management	6	4

## Relationship with provider: Listening and attending • "They are good listeners, good to talk to" • "Every experience with my therapist is positive. She listens and doesn't see [me] as something to diagnose"

#### Relationship with provider: Engagement

- "We would take walks and talk about problems"
- "My therapist took me to a conference to try to help me figure out what I want to do with my life"
- o "Our staff takes us places"

# Relationship with provider: Consistency • "I could see him anytime I wanted" • "She would always come talk to me, even if she didn't really have time" • "I can count on him"

Relationship with a Pr	ovider		_
Theme	Ν	%	
Listening/attending	29	20	
Engagement	10	7	
Consistency/accessibility	7	5	
Felt supported	5	3	
Empathy/understanding	3	2	
Authenticity	2	1	
Other personality characteristics	9	6	
	Theme Listening/attending Engagement Consistency/accessibility Felt supported Empathy/understanding Authenticity Other personality	Listening/attending29Engagement10Consistency/accessibility7Felt supported5Empathy/understanding3Authenticity2Other personality9	ThemeN%Listening/attending2920Engagement107Consistency/accessibility75Felt supported53Empathy/understanding32Authenticity21Other personality96



#### Relationship with Provider: Didn't listen

- o "They put words in your mouth"
- "[He] didn't hear what I said and told me that I would never change"

# Relationship with Provider:<br/>Didn't get along/ didn't like• "We clashed, so therapy wasn't<br/>good"• "I got into an argument with my<br/>counselor and was put back into<br/>foster care"

Relationship with Provider				
Theme	N	%		
Didn't listen	28	28		
Didn't get along/ didn't like	10	10		
Stigma	5	5		
Doesn't care about me	4	4		
Allied with system/guardian	4	4		
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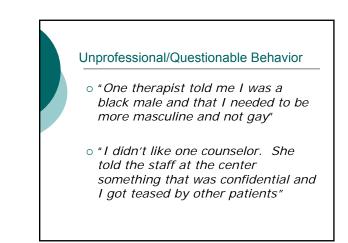
### Treatment Concerns: Medication management "They tell me I'm crazy and put me on meds and I don't like being on them" "They try to drug you up; you can't function"

#### Treatment Concerns: Medication management

- "They try to drill it in my head that I need medicine"
- "Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ slapped meds on me the first day she met me. She didn't even take the chance to listen"



Treatment Concerns		
Theme	Ν	%
Medication issues	23	23
Ineffective/not helpful	10	10
Coerced/mandated treatment	7	7
Physical restraint	4	4
It made me worse	2	2



#### Unprofessional Behavior (continued)

 "She fell asleep one time and I told her pink monkeys flew out of my butt and she said, 'That's nice' and went back to sleep."

#### Unprofessional Behavior (continued)

 "In order to get me to talk, my therapist would wrap me up in a blanket and my foster mom would sit on me.... My therapist would make me sit on her lap like I was a little kid and I was 13"

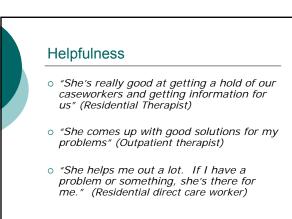
o "They yell"

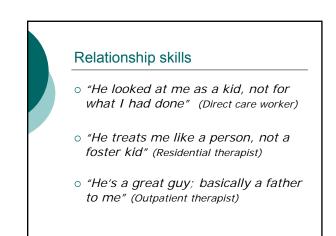
### Feedback for Specific Professionals

• Primary outpatient therapist

- o Residential case manager or therapist
- o Residential direct care worker

# Communication Skills "She's cool and funny. She talks like a normal person" (Outpatient therapist) "She talks to me like I'm normal" (Residential direct care worker) "Easy to talk to and not judgmental" (Residential therapist)





#### Limitations

o Sampling frame

o Methodology

#### Implications

- Youth are able to evaluate care
- Medication management is a key concern
- Youth value relationships with providers