RTC Study 4: Community-Based Theories of Change

Highlights of findings from a national study of community-based theories of change

Presentation at:
18th Annual Research Conference - A System of Care for Children’s Mental Health: Expanding the Research Base
Tampa, FL
March 8, 2005

Study Background and Design
Sharon Hodges

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Elements of Symposium
- Study Background and Design — Sharon Hodges, Ph.D.
- Overview of Findings — Mario Hernandez, Ph.D.
- Structures and Processes Supporting the Mission and Goals of a Family Run Organization — Svetlana Yampolskaya, Ph.D.
- Organizational Structures and Processes within an Evidence-Based Practice — Teresa Nesman, Ph.D.
- Discussant: William Stone, Children’s Board of Hillsborough County

Study Background and Design
Sharon Hodges

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Central Research Question:
- What structures and processes support a child-serving organization’s ability to carry out mission and goals?

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Sharon Hodges

Research Design:
- Multi-Site Case Study conducted in two phases

Among organizations with a widely-held theory of change . . .

Phase I: Can we identify structures and processes that contribute to an organization’s ability to carry out its mission and goals?

Phase II: Can we find evidence to confirm or disconfirm Phase I findings?
Study Background and Design
Sharon Hodges

Phase I:
- Three organizations with different theories of change
- Learn how these agencies conceptualize, operationalize, and implement their theory of change
- Inductive and exploratory

Phase I Research Methods:
- Purposeful Sample involving rigorous site selection process
- Data Collection:
  - Document review
  - Concept mapping
  - Individual interviews
  - Observation
- Data Analysis:
  - Narrative data analyzed to identify emergent patterns and themes within and across respondent types
  - Concept mapping using Concept Systems
  - Inductive inference used to develop and describe results

Phase I Findings:
- Site-specific findings reported to individual sites
- Cross-site analysis suggested the presence of:
  - Four organizational characteristics
  - Organizational facilitators

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Phase II:
- Five organizations agencies with same theory of change
- Learn how these organizations conceptualize, operationalize, and implement their theory of change

Phase II Research Methods:
- Purposeful Sample involving sites using same theory of change
- Data Collection:
  - Document review
  - Concept mapping
  - Individual interviews
  - Observation
- Data Analysis:
  - Phase I findings operationalized and inter-rated reliability established on understanding of these findings
  - Phase II concept mapping statements coded according to Phase I findings
  - Phase II interviews transcribed, coding in process

Overview of Findings

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Overview of Findings
Mario Hernandez

Creating Change
and Keeping it Real

Using a theory-based approach, organization members are compelled to:
- examine the underlying beliefs and assumptions
- link expected outcomes to a specific population of focus
- link expected outcomes to strategies for achieving those outcomes.

As a result, they must focus on why they believe certain services or policies will lead to positive changes in the identified population.
Overview of Findings

Mario Hernandez

Four Organizational Characteristics:

- Identity - Clear and shared understanding of organization’s purpose
- Integration - Organizational structures and functions are aligned
- Initiative - Achievement orientation for the organization
- Innovation - New and creative approaches to achieving vision and mission

Two Organizational Facilitators:

- Leadership
  - Inspiration, guidance and direction
  - Strong and empowering
  - Clear lines of authority
  - Decentralized decision making
- Communication
  - Transmitting information and ideas within and outside the organization
  - Open, multi-directional, continuous
  - Format: staff meetings, written reports, training events
  - Informal: impromptu phone calls, office visits, lunch gatherings

Overview of Findings

Mario Hernandez

Reliance on Power
- Employs Standardization
- Treats Actions as Final
- Filters Out Feedback

Reliance on Information
- Context-Sensitive Design
- Treats Actions as Experimental
- Incorporates Feedback

Regulative Generative

Facilitating the Balance

Leadership
- Identity
- Integration
- Initiative
- Innovation

Regulative Planning and Management

Generative Planning and Management

Communication

Benefits and Challenges:

Benefits
- Focused effort
- Expanded creativity
- Improved ability to demonstrate effectiveness
- Increased engagement
- Reduced turnover

Challenges
- Resistance to change
- Turnover/Training
- Balancing the real and the ideal
- Need for capacity building
- Costs

Regardless of theory of change, sites experienced similar benefits and challenges.
Structures and Processes Supporting the Mission and Goals of a Family Run Organization

King County Blended Funding Project

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Purpose of the Study:
To identify structures and processes within a family-run organization that support its mission and goals

Methodology:
- Concept Mapping (Trochim, 1993)
- Semi-structured interviews conducted with stakeholders of a family-run organization

Concept Mapping Procedure:
- Participants:
  - Twelve stakeholders of the Blended Funding Project
- The Focus Statement:
  - "Generate a list of things that are done in the Blended Funding Project so that you and others understand how to carry out its mission and goals."
  - 77 statements were generated

Key Elements of the Blended Funding Theory of Change:
- Child & family support
- Financial flexibility
- Family empowerment
- Individual & organizational change
- Family collaboration with community
- Family and service system collaboration
- Addressing children’s needs across multiple domains

Six-Cluster Solution Map

Blended Funding Project

Family Empowerment

Sustainability of Change

Family & Service Collaboration

Organizational Flexibility

Internal Support

Values

68 60 48 46 67 65 63 61 59 57 55 53 51 49 47 45 43 41 39 37 35 33 31 29 27 25 23 21 19 17 15 13 11 9 7 5 3 1

54 52 50 48 46 44 42 40 38 36 34 32 30 28 26 24 22 20 18 16 14 12 10 8 6 4 2 0
Robert Friedman
Touch the Lives of Children with Disabilities Conference
Des Moines, Iowa
October 21, 2004

Six-Cluster Solution Map
Blended Funding Project

Concept Mapping Results:
1. The observed clusters represent the major theoretical concepts of the Blended Funding Project Theory of Change.
2. Although one of the key elements of the Blended Funding Project Theory of Change (i.e., "Addressing children’s needs across multiple domains") was not identified as a separate cluster, the structures and processes in place provide ample response to a wide array of children’s needs.
3. One additional cluster identified as “Internal Support” was observed.

Structures and Processes Supporting the Mission and Goals of a Family Run Organization

Blended Funding Project

Point Map With Statement Numbers

Community-Based Theories of Change – Phase I
Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute
University of South Florida
Concept Mapping Results:
- Two dimensions were identified:
  - Conceptualization/implementation of the project mission and goals
  - Collaboration with both families and community partners

Results of Semi-Structured Interviews:
- Primary theme was the creation and functioning of care teams
- Care teams serve as a mechanism that insures achieving Blended Funding Project mission and goals
- Care teams are created as family-centered

Quotes:
- “As a part of the project I have a team of people who support me...”
- “We have a real unusually wonderful wrap-around team...”
- “This is a family empowerment model of change”
- “We let parents have a lot of power... have a voice...”
- “The dollars are actually made available directly to the family and they are all individually designed.”
- “Families don’t always fit into this nice little system we have, so we try to be creative and mold services for families...”
- “Program that takes a look at the whole family”

Conclusions:
- Blended Funding Project has widely held Theory of Change
- There is collaboration with both families and community partners
- Care teams and internal support are mechanisms that allow for achieving the project mission and goals
- The project was created as family-centered: Family is an overseer services provision and family as a recipient of wrap-around services
Organizational Structures and Processes Within an Evidence-Based Practice
Teresa Nesman

Teaching Family Association (TFA) Theory of Change:
- Behavioral problems in children and youth result from a lack of appropriate alternative ways of interacting with their home, school, and community environments.
- Therapeutic change takes place through the implementation of individualized child and family treatment plans.
- Change for professionals and organizations is necessary to achieve client-level outcomes.

Concept Mapping: Participants
- Staff from Organizations Implementing the Evidence-Based Practice of TFA
  - Barium Springs Home for Children (Barium Springs) N=13
  - Bringing It All Back Home (Morganton) N=16
  - Closer To Home (Calgary) N=20
  - Utah Youth Village (Salt Lake City) N=11
  - Devereaux Family Programs (New Jersey) N=11

Concept Mapping: Brainstorming and Rating
- Focus statement for brainstorming: “Generate a list of things that are done at [our organization] so that we understand how to carry out the Teaching-Family mission and goals.”
- Statements generated per site:
  - Barium Springs 101
  - BIABH 97
  - Closer To Home 101
  - Utah Youth Village 53
  - Devereaux 81
- Rating statements on Importance and Effectiveness (Scale of 1-5)

Analysis: Comparison to Phase I Findings
- Analysis of brainstorming statements for the presence of Phase I organizational characteristics and facilitators:
  - Coding statements from each site by categories:
    - Identity
    - Integration
    - Initiative
  - Addition of new codes/modification of definitions
  - Calculating interrater reliability for coding within and across sites
  - Comparing reliability with importance and effectiveness ratings for each statement

Interrater Reliability (Percent Agreement) by TFA Site and Phase 1 Theme (N = 3 Raters)

Overall Interrater Reliability by TFA Site

Robert Friedman
Touch the Lives of Children with Disabilities Conference
Des Moines, Iowa
October 21, 2004
Organizational Structures and Processes Within an Evidence-Based Practice

**Ratings - Identity**

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<td>Teresa Nesman</td>
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**Ratings - Integration**

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**Ratings - Initiative**

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**Ratings - Innovation**

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**Ratings - Leadership**

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**Ratings - Communication**

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Organizational Structures and Processes
Within an Evidence-Based Practice
Teresa Nesman

Next Steps: Cluster Map Analysis

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Utah Youth Village Cluster Map:
Six Cluster Solution
Identity Factors

Conclusions:
- Presence of all organizational factors and facilitators in each TFA organization
- High level of integration between structures and processes across sites (statements incorporate both)
- Exceptions to high reliability in coding vs. high importance and effectiveness ratings suggest the need for further clarification of some factors
- TFA theory of change elements found in statements and clusters across sites
- Analysis of concept maps will illustrate implementation of TFA within different organizational structures