



## Qualitative Research Methods: Useful research tools for front-line services

Ben Stride-Darnley  
McMaster University  
Don Buchanan  
McMaster Children's Hospital



## Support and contributors



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- Children's Mental Health Ontario
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- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
- Client-Students for completing surveys, and interviews, and letting us share their artistic endeavours
- Staff at Cornerstone

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## Our Agenda Today



At the conclusion of this presentation you should know:

- How arts programs can enrich day treatment programs.
- The strengths and weakness of both quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- How qualitative methods can improve our understanding of therapeutic processes.

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## The Setting

- Children's mental health services in Ontario not funded by "health", but by Ministry of Children.
- CMH Is not a universally accessible service.
- Day treatment program seen as reducing need for hospitalization, and reducing length of stay.
- Organized on a Therapeutic Community model.

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## Project's Objectives

- Is there a correspondence between characteristics of client-students and creative program utilisation?
- Do students benefit from creative programs at Cornerstone?
- If so, how do they benefit?

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## Data Sources

- Brief Child & Family Phone Interview (BCFPI)
- Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS)
- Client-student attendance records
- 1 to 1 Staff Interviews
- Client-student small group interviews
- Client-student web-based survey

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## Quantitative Findings



- Both BCFPI and CAFAS are mandatory measures for all children receiving CMH services in Ontario.
- Study design based on sample size of 75, with 80% completion rate.
- "Findable" data was less than 50%.
- System issues contributed strongly to missing data.

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## Qualitative Sources

Table 1 - an Overview of what each methodology generates

METHODS:	Staff perspectives via 1-to-1 semi structured interviews	Client-student perspectives via small group semi structured interviews	Client-student perspectives via site and age specific web-based survey	Client-student attendance records	Client-student characteristics via BCFPI and CAFAS
Generate ↓					
DATA TYPE:	Phrases and words from verbatim Interview Transcripts	Phrases and words from verbatim Interview Transcripts	Phrases and words (from open ended questions), numeric data (from constant sum and other survey questions)	Arts participation grouping	Diagnostic and progress data
Analysis ↓					
RESULTS:	Data analysis generated key themes, phrases and examples which run through each data set, comparable by participation levels and diagnostic characteristics. To confirm accuracy these themes, phrases and examples were corroborated through extensive consultation with staff.			Data used to generate clusters to view qualitative data in various groups and categories, and subsets.	

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## Key Qualitative Results

**Core non-threatening programs**


- Supportive and relaxing atmosphere
- Achievable expectations
- Shift locus of control

**Varied Therapeutic Gains**



- Material benefits
- Facilitate therapeutic process
- Gender division

**Three fold function**

- Activities
- Spaces
- Skill building



*The art room*



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## Creative Program's as ...

*Pathway to success / healing*

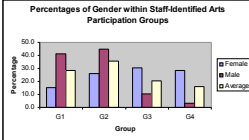
**"I'll go back to the art room every time I finished something and it turned out a way that I liked it, it was a big deal to me because it was like I'm not a complete and utter failure" (High use client-student)**



**"it's like small victories and like when you're really down it's something huge to get [used] to seeing something through to its fruition" (Low use client-student)**

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## Varying gains



- **Gendered Division**
  - Lower and higher groups equally likely to take arts for credit
  - Higher arts participation more likely to be female
  - 'Gendered' and 'negative' comments from lower arts participation groups



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## Creative Program's Roles

- ☞ They are vital to therapeutic processes at Cornerstone
- ☞ They generate and support personal growth
- ☞ They work in complex and interweaving ways

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## Why Qualitative Useful

- Tailored to site specific questions
- Praxis Approach
- Actually accesses clients' / patients' / students' perspectives
- When well implemented generates quality evidence
- Medical Anthropology's validity

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## Questions?

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Further Information:  
Ben Stride-Darnley  
Department of Anthropology  
McMaster University  
1280 Main Street West,  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8S 4L8

*stridebj@mcmaster.ca*

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