Investigating the Relationship Between Services and Outcomes in a Program for Transition-Aged Youth

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Options Program

- Partnership for Youth Transition Program in Vancouver, Washington
- Four years of funding from Center for Mental Health Services
- Transition specialists work intensively with small group of youth
- Specialized employment and housing support
- Strong youth voice in designing and running program

Databases and Measures

- CSM (Creative Socio-Metrics) Management Information System
  - Tracks services by type and hours per youth per day
- ETO (Effort-to-Outcomes)
  - Completed by the Transition Specialist at intake and every quarter
  - Asked questions about how MH problems interfered with the youth's functioning
  - Asked about school enrollment, graduation
- Juvenile court data
  - Juvenile lifetime arrests

Engagement and retention

Category	n	%
Did not engage	26	20%
Engaged but did not enter ETO	18	14%
Entered ETO	84	66%
Total referred and contacted	128	100%

Retention

(n=84)

Data wave completed	n	% retained
3 month	72	86%
6 month	63	75%
9 month	51	61%
12 month	41	49%
15 month	32	28%

Descriptives

(n=51)

- Average age = 16 years
- 59% male
- 92% white
- 61% living with family
- 71% enrolled in high school or GED
- 8% employed at intake
- 39% worked in past 90 days

Outcome domains

- Employment
- Education
- Housing
- Criminal justice involvement

Outcome domains—9 month trends

Positive and negative trends

# domains with trend	Positive trend % (n)	Negative trend % (n)
Four	12 (24%)	1 (2%)
Three	11 (22%)	3 (6%)
Two	12 (24%)	5 (10%)
One	14 (27%)	7 (14%)
None	2 (4%)	35 (68%)

Juvenile Justice involvement

	9 months pre-intake	9 months post-intake
Any substantiated offense	23 (61%)	11 (29%)

McNemar $\chi^2 = .965$, $p=.008$

Frequency of substantiated offenses

	9 months pre-intake	9 months post-intake
No offenses	15 (40%)	27 (71%)
1 offense	9 (24%)	2 (5%)
2 offenses	5 (13%)	7 (18%)
3 to 5 offenses	7 (19%)	1 (3%)
6 or more	2 (6%)	1 (3%)
Mean	1.63	.71

Paired t (37) = 2.06, p = .046

Service hours over 9 months

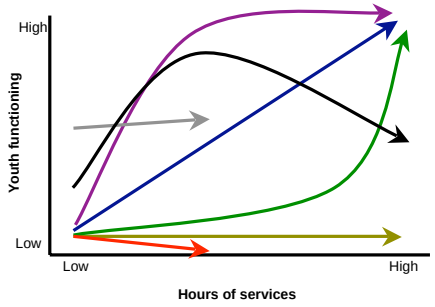
- The services received by the most youth were:

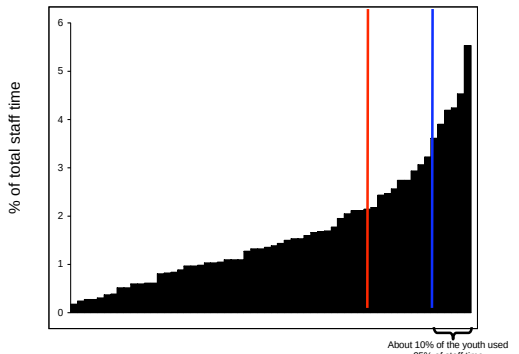
Community life adjustment	90.0%
Employment services	88.3%
Assessment/intake	86.6%
Wraparound	63.3%
Team staffing	55.0%
Educational support services	50.0%
Housing support services	46.6%
Core gift statement	41.6%
Case management	33.3%
Crisis phone calls	1.6%

- Staff time was spent on the following services

Community life adjustment	33.5%
Employment services	27.5%
Case management	9.8%
Wraparound	7.1%
Assessment/intake	5.8%
Educational support services	5.7%
Core gift statement	4.1%
Housing support services	3.6%
Team staffing	2.2%
Crisis phone calls	0.02%

Possible impacts of services





# of positive trends at 9 months by youth

Predicting youth change using service hours

- Multiple regression predicting youth functioning 9 months after intake
- Several models were run
  - looking for preponderance of evidence rather than single significant tests
  - not enough of a sample size to run more complex (but more appropriate) models

Predicting youth change: Models

Model	Predictor variable	Control variable	Outcome variable
1 Education N=45	Education service hours β = -.01	Rating of the extent MH problems interfered with school at intake β = -.11	Nine-month trend in education and training outcomes R^2 = .01 NS
2 Arrests N=55	Total service hours β = .09	Number of arrests 3 months prior to intake β = .21	Arrests between intake and 9 months R^2 = .05 NS
3 Employment N=47	Employment service hours β = .42 *p* < .005	Severity index at intake β = -.24 *p* = .072	Nine-month trend in employment outcomes R^2 = .24 *p* < .005
4 Overall N=47	Total service hours β = .10	Severity index at intake β = -.32 *p* < .05	Summary index of nine-month trends over all domains R^2 = .11 NS

Summary of findings

- Only one model, employment, was significantly predictive of youth functioning
- All of the point estimates (Betas) in all models were in the hypothesized direction, but most were not practically or significantly large.
- This data indicated a weak or no relationship between hours of services and youth functioning when controlling for functioning at intake

Limitations

- Studying the relationship between service hours and functioning ("dose-response") may be confounded by other factors
- The youth have multiple, unique needs and possibly multiple, unique trajectories that are difficult to analyze
- These measures of functioning and progress are not standardized and may have significant error variance

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