

Characteristics of Youth and Families Receiving Informal Support

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Overview

- Informal support is provided to the child and family without compensation from any formal service system.
- Informal support is a strengths-based approach to service provision, an integral aspect of the system of care principles.
- What are the characteristics of youth and families receiving informal support?

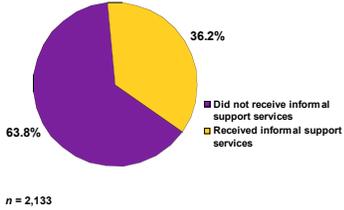


Methods

- The sample was derived from the outcome studies of the national evaluation of system of care communities initially funded in 2002 through 2004.
- The sample was determined by a response to the MSSC-R question at the 6-month assessment: "In the last 6 months, did your child and/or family receive informal support?"
- Other measures included the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), the Columbia Impairment Scale (CIS), and the Caregiver Strain Questionnaire (CGSQ).
- Chi-square tests were used to test group differences in the dichotomous measures, and t tests were used for continuous measures.



Characteristics of Youth and Families 6 Months After Intake



n = 2,133



Characteristics of Youth and Families 6 Months After Intake

Of youth and families receiving informal support services (36.2%):

- 88.5% of families received emotional support (n = 755).
- 35% of families received information support (n = 755).
- 27.4% of youth and families received physical support (n = 755).
- 22.4% of youth and families received financial support (n = 755).
- 22% of youth and families received transportation support (n = 755).

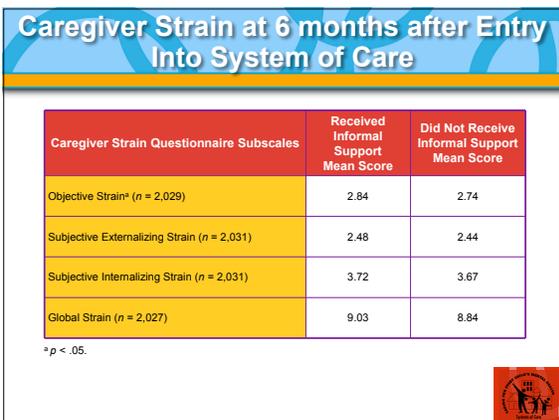
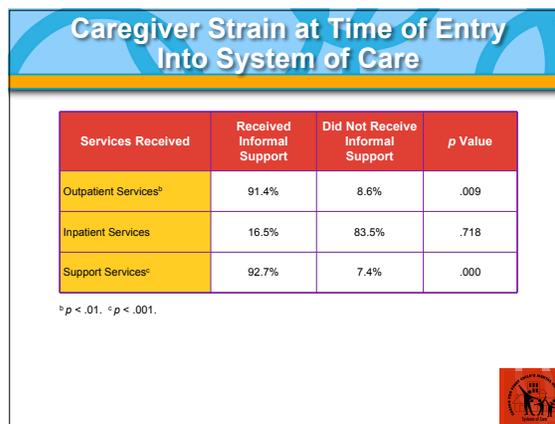
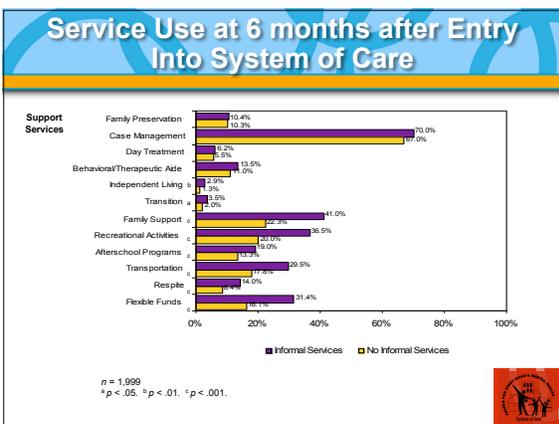
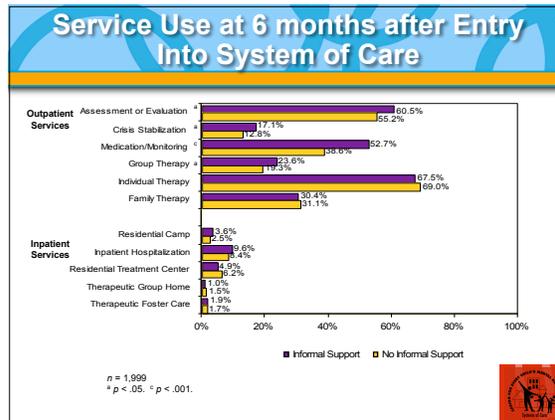
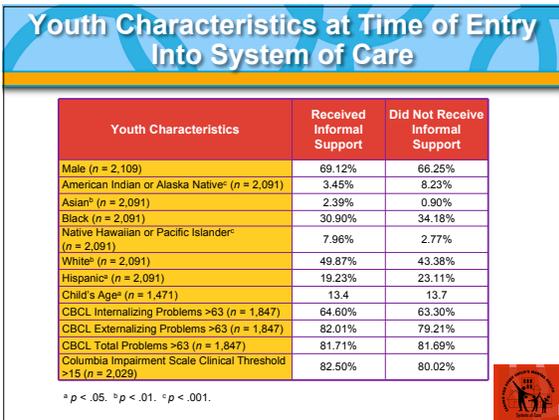


Youth and Family Characteristics at Time of Entry Into System of Care

Youth and Family Characteristics	Received Informal Support	Did Not Receive Informal Support
Caregiver Age ^a (n = 2,036)	39.5	40.6
Parent's Education Grade 11 or Lower ^b (n = 2,031)	24.80%	30.15%
Other Adult Support ^b (n = 2,074)	78.03%	73.17%
Family Income Level (Income < \$15,000/yr) (n = 1,995)	45.73%	46.26%
Sexually Abused ^a (n = 1,964)	19.22%	15.41%
History of Drug Use ^a (n = 2,031)	12.43%	15.57%

^ap < .05. ^bp < .01.





- ### Summary and Implications
- Approximately 36% of all youth and families received informal support services.
 - Emotional support services were the most commonly reported informal support services received by youth and families.
 - Other types of informal support received included information support (35%), physical support (27.4%), financial support (22.4%), and transportation support (22%).
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Summary and Implications

- Few clinical differences existed between youth who did and did not receive informal support services at time of entry into the System of Care, yet caregivers of youth who received informal support services reported higher caregiver strain.
- Although 88.5% of caregivers reported receiving emotional support as a type of informal support service future
- There are a wealth of factors that potentially contribute to the support system that can be helpful to youth and families in the system of care. The analysis explored in this study have yet to identify what these factors are and how they relate to the various ways families cope with strain that they may experience. Future and subsequent analysis will aim to do this.



Summary and Implications

- **Youth and families receiving informal support services were more likely to receive . . .**
 - *Outpatient services:* assessment and evaluation, crisis stabilization, medication/monitoring, group therapy.
 - *Support services:* independent living, transition, family support, recreational activities, after school programs, and transportation, respite, flexible funds.
- **When outpatient, inpatient, and support services were analyzed collectively, the results remain consistent.**



Summary and Implications

- **In spite of similarities in clinical outcomes at baseline, significant differences in service use existed between the two groups at 6 months following baseline .**
- **Future exploration into differences in services received should control for diagnosis and severity of illness.**
- **Subsequent analysis will aim to reveal the factors contributing to the apparent gravitation toward support-focused services among this group.**

