

The Effect of the Wraparound Program on School Performance Among Youth

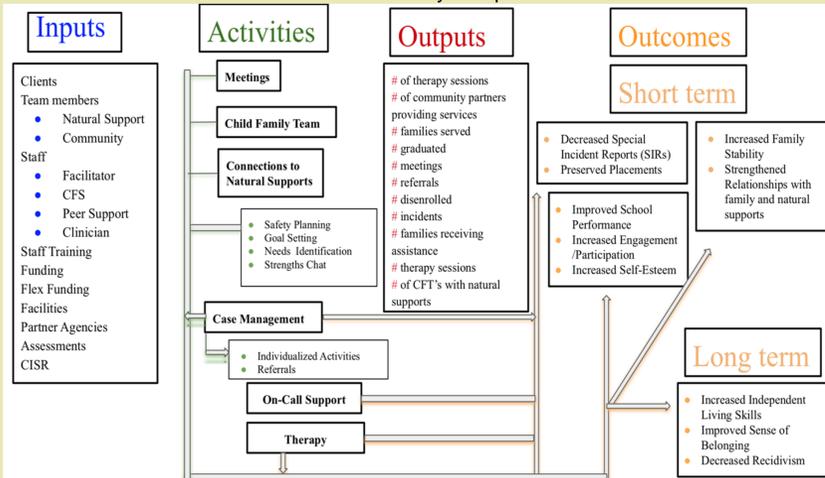
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Abstract

The purpose of Wraparound Program is to improve the mental health of youth and their families by providing personalized services. Vista Del Mar is an agency that has a Wraparound Program. Activities within the program include meetings, connections to natural supports, case management, on-call support, and therapy. The objective of this study is to examine the effect of program participation on school role performance among youth and to examine how providing culturally competent services affects this outcome. The results indicate that role performance in school significantly improved with program participation, and role performance in school at exit was not associated with cultural matches between clients and clinicians during program participation.

Introduction

- Proving that the involvement in Wraparound benefits school performance will allow Vista del Mar to utilize this evaluation to market and expand the program and to justify and potentially increase government funding. This evaluation explains what the youth outcomes are when the family is served by someone that matches their cultural/ethnic identity.
- This evaluation focuses on the following questions: What is the effect of program participation on school role performance among youth? And, how does providing culturally competent services affect this outcome?
- The hypothesis is that participating in the Wraparound Program will improve youth's performance in school. And, youth who receive culturally competent services will perform better than those who do not receive culturally competent services.



Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

- In 1997, Malysiak indicated that this approach, using a strengths-based perspective, wraps individualized supports from various sources around family members. A multidisciplinary team sets up goals in a collaborative system to ensure that youth receive the services they need in the least restrictive and most appropriate environment (Malysiak, 1997). Walker and Matarese (2011) pointed out that the development of the "theory of change" (i.e., program theory) has its basis in the causal association between activities, outcomes, and goals.

Empirical Evidence

- According to Walter and Petr (2011), Wraparound results in considerable changes in emotional, academic, and behavioral aspects of its participants. The National Wraparound Initiative, an inter-university collaborative of child welfare scholars and practitioners, promotes the effectiveness of Wraparound since it leads to engagement between youth and their families, bringing greater consensus regarding goals leading to greater optimism, self-efficacy, social support, and coping skills (Walter & Petr, 2011). The National Wraparound Initiative defines culture as part of the Wraparound model (Palmer et al., 2011). Providers of care that adapt the delivery system to the culture, traditions, and language of their participants witness an organic healing that brings effectiveness to the program (Lazear, 2015).

This Study and Current Literature

- Results from federal research propose that youth with EBD have improved school performance and have more stability in their life after participating in the Wraparound Program. The implementation of a program receptive to racially and culturally diverse youth and their families appears to be more effective than systems of care without such considerations. Consequently, the hypothesis for this study is that participating in the Wraparound Program will improve youth's performance in school. And, youth who receive culturally competent services will perform better than those who do not receive culturally competent services.

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Methods

Design

- The evaluation design is one group pretest posttest.

Sample

- Target population was boys and girls under 18 years of age with emotional or behavioral disorders (EBD).
- The original sample contains 323 youth who participated in Wraparound between 2015-2019.
- These are the youth for whom demographic data were available and who had no missing data on the CAFAS. Among this sample, 227 graduated from the program, 90 were disenrolled, and 6 were neutral or transferred.
- The sample for the current evaluation study includes 97 female Wraparound participants who graduated and completed the program between the years 2015-2019.

Measures

- Cultural competency is the independent variable for the second evaluation question, and it is operationalized as consistent ethnicity between youth and case workers. There are four categorical variables (providers) used for culturally competent services: Parent partner, therapist, child and family specialist, and family facilitator.
- The dependent variable is role performance in school, which is operationalized as behaviors towards the teacher and others in the classroom.
- The scoring is measured from 0-30 with high scores indicating severe disruption or incapacitation and lower scores indicating no disruption of functioning and signifies there is no impaired functioning.

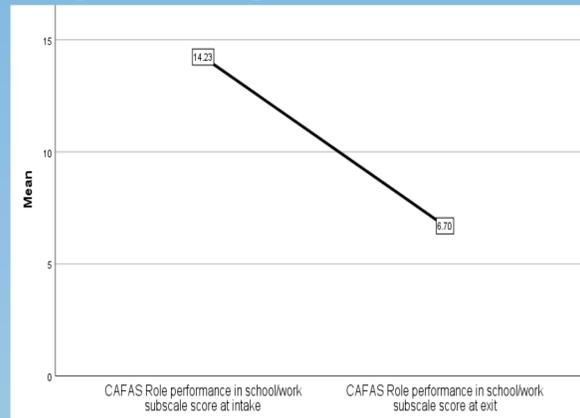
Data Collection

- School role performance scores were evaluated at entry and at exit.
- The assessment in this study was the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS).
- Vista Del Mar provided deidentified data.
- CAFAS was filled by case worker about the youth within the first 30 days of enrollment and in the 30 days leading up to graduation.

Results 1

What is the effect of program participation on role performance in school among youth?

- A Wilcoxon signed-ranks test examined the results of role performance in school at entry and role performance in school at exit. A significant difference was found in the results ($Z = -8.236, p < .001$).
- Mean scores: at intake=14.23, at exit= 6.70. Decrease represents improvement
- Sample size: 227 graduates including 97 female



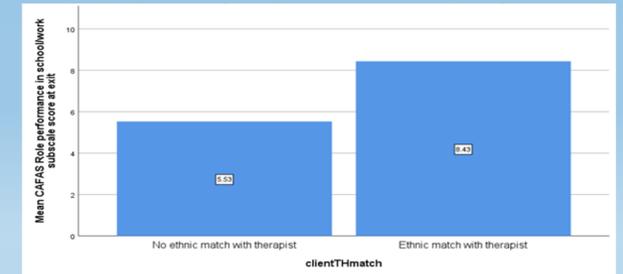
How does providing culturally competent services affect role performance in school?

- A Spearman ρ correlation coefficient was computed to examine the relationship between role performance in school and the cultural matches between clients and clinicians on the team. All team members were considered except for therapist due to a large number of missing data. No statistically significant correlation was found ($r_s(218) = -.056, p = .405$). Role performance in school at exit was not associated with cultural matches between clients and clinicians during program participation.
- The Mann-Whitney U test was used to examine the difference in the role performance in school at exit of youth who had a cultural match with each of their four caseworkers and those who did not.

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Results 2

- Youth who had a cultural match with their therapist had a significantly higher role performance (worse performance) in school at exit score (M the average role performance at exit score for each group = 71.51) than those who did not have cultural match with their therapist (M the average role performance at exit score for each group = 58.96; $U = 2321, p < .05$).
- Cultural competency: ethnic match youth/case worker (Family Facilitator, Child/Family Specialist, Parent Partner, Therapist)
- Three matches with no significant findings
- Matches did not have better outcomes than no matches.
- Matching ethnicity is not a good measure for cultural competency.
- Language is a better measure of cultural competency -no data available
- Lack of training on cultural competency
- The average role performance at exit score for each group was 8.43 and 5.53, respectively. Lower scores indicate better performance, and those who did not have a cultural match with their therapist had lower (better) scores.
- The bar chart below shows the ethnic match with therapist, which reveals a significant finding opposite than expected. This finding shows worse performance.



Discussion

Implications

- Social workers may learn from Wraparound practices, and refer their clients to the program, or they could expand this program in areas where it is nonexistent.
- This study shows the importance of individualized services and social workers can adapt this model to their practice.
- Social workers will be able to see why the ethnic match between client and staff is not enough to achieve cultural competency. Social workers can learn from this study the importance of training caseworkers in cultural competency.

Study Limitations

- There is no data for the staff's language. This data might have revealed different results than the staff's ethnicity when matching with the youth
- There was missing data about the ethnic match between the therapist and the parent.
- Consistent ethnicity between youth and case workers was not the best way to measure culturally competent services.

Conclusion

- Based on the results, there are few recommendations for improving the program.
- The youth should be the firsthand providers of data
- Measuring tool should be designed in the primary language of the youth
- Vista Del Mar should create guidelines to hire personnel that speaks the language of the clients
- Vista Del Mar should train staff on cultural competence, cultural humility, and empathy

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