Best practices for family engagement: Connecting research and parents’ perspectives

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About Pressley Ridge

• Services:
  – Foster Care
  – Education
  – Residential
  – Community-Based
  – Outpatient

Our Residential Programs

• Four locations in West Virginia
• 445 youth served in FY16

Race
Gender
Average Age
88% Caucasian
51% female
16 years old

Objectives

Findings from Systematic Review of Family Engagement
Involving Families at Different Levels
Reviewing & Measuring Family Engagement

Pop-up Discussion

• We will have several “pop-up discussions”
• This is your opportunity to share your thoughts about the topic with your neighbor and the audience

Pop-up Discussion

• Write down the first thing you think about when you hear “family engagement”

One minute timer
End
What does the literature tell us about family engagement?

Defining Family Engagement

Common Themes/Components Among Engagement Definitions

Family Engagement Continuum

Types of Family Engagement

Youth Outcomes & Family Engagement
Levels of Family Engagement

- **System**
- **Program & Organization**
- **Practice & Individual**

Practice & Individual Engagement

- Hold icebreaker meetings
- Practice supportive behaviors
- Develop cultural competence
- Use motivational interviewing
- Employ Solution-Based Casework
- Encourage father involvement
- Establish a family team

Common Barriers to Practice Level Family Engagement

1. **Perceptual Barriers**
   - Cognitive or perception based barriers such as:
     - Mistrust of the system or services from negative experiences
     - Stigma about services
     - Idea that family doesn't need help/treatment
     - Unrealistic expectations

2. **Concrete Barriers**
   - Barriers due to logistical, contextual or agency obstacles:
     - Trouble finding child care for other children
     - No means of transportation
     - Work demands
     - Community & home factors
     - Legal barriers

Strategies for Overcoming Barriers

1. **Perceptual Barriers**
   - Identify during first contact
   - Inquire about prior experiences
   - Identify compelling reasons for participation
   - Give families choice
   - Ask for input to encourage a collaborative relationship

2. **Concrete Barriers**
   - Identify early & address after perceptual barriers
   - Offer flexibility in meeting times, location etc.
   - Provide transportation or childcare
   - Partner with community resources to provide resources

Quote Mingle: Talk to your neighbor about the quotes around barriers to family engagement

3 minute timer

End
Levels of Family Engagement

- Program & Organization
- Practice & Individual

Program Engagement

Parents as paraprofessionals:
- Advocacy, mentoring, board members, etc.
- Incorporate family feedback into decisions
- Experience with program & system
- Connections to communities & agencies

Overcoming Barriers:
- Staff buy-in
- Leadership support
- Adjacent provider support
- Resources (time, finances)

Levels of Family Engagement

System

Program & Organization

Practice & Individual

System Engagement

Example:
- Policy Days

Overcoming Barriers:
- Perceptual
- Belief that it is not our role to affect policy change
- Not feeling competent about ability to cause change
- Concrete
- Expensive
- Time intensive

Audience Poll

- At what level(s) have you successfully been able to engage families? (pick all that apply)
  - Individual or Practice Level
  - Program or Organization Level
  - System Level

Family Engagement: Moving from practice to program level

Organization & staff involvement in system reform
Encourage parents to advocate for policy change

Example:
- Policy Days
Engagement strategies in practice

1. Dedicated role & one point of contact
   - Establishing who is family
2. Attainable & family driven goals
   - Individualized continued support

Becoming a parent advocate

- Engaged at individual level
- Desire to help other parents

Involvement at program level

What is parent advocacy?

- Providing quality & individualized support services
- Encourage family involvement
- Assist parents in meeting needs of their child
- Work with parents to identify & achieve goals

My role as a parent advocate

- Help families understand roles of different agencies
- Share relevant experience with families
- Be a mediator between the system and the family
- Assist families to identify and use necessary services

Organization Level Engagement

- Presenting to Board of Directors
- Presenting & networking at conferences
- Family Support Coordinator
- Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)
- Foster Parent Consultant
Family Engagement at a Program and Organizational Level

Program & Organization Level
- Gather information about family perspectives
- Hear diverse family opinions
- Collect & share ideas about what works
- Improve programs and policy development

Family Focus Groups
- Benefits: Investigate complex issues, Adds human dimension to survey data
- Challenges: Group dynamics, Time consuming
- Best Practices: Family leader, Engagement strategies

Solutions to Challenges
- Perceptual Barriers:
  - Structure purpose
  - Provide ground rules
  - Try adult facilitation techniques
  - Use a standardized script
- Concrete & Logistical Barriers:
  - Join a naturally occurring meeting
  - Split up roles and responsibilities
  - Use of technology
  - Gift cards or incentives

Focus Group Engagement Strategies
- Multi-Voting
- Card Sorting
- Brainstorming & Affinity Diagrams
- World Café

• Brainstorm/Affinity Diagram with Family Engagement Definitions

3 minute timer
End

Pop-up Discussion
Audience Poll

- Which engagement strategy are you most interested in trying in a focus group?
  - Multi-Voting
  - Card Sorting
  - Brainstorming & Affinity Diagrams
  - World Cafe


Family Focus Group Examples

Family Alliance in Residential Treatment

- Is it important for you to have a strong bond/alliance with Pressley Ridge staff?
- Do you have a family goal? How does staff talk to you about these goals/tasks?
- Does your relationship with your therapist have any impact on how well your family gets along?

Insight from Families:

- “Relationships are everything”
- Treating Liaisons like partners or allies
- Parallel process

Family & Staff Working Alliance

Participatory Evaluation for Outcomes

Interviews for Tracer Methodology

Insight from Families:

- Does your relationship with Liaisons impact family functioning?
  - Desire for help with reintegration and aftercare
  - Understanding of the working relationship between them

Insight from Families:

- Are alliances with Liaisons important?
  - “If you don’t have that relationship you aren’t going to be honest with them (Liaisons). If you have a very honest and respected relationship, you are more apt to confide in them because that’s how they are going to help you.”

Insight from Families:

- Do you have a family goal?
  - “We had discussions. I don’t know that we changed anything, but we had discussions about what that meant to him and what it meant to us when we were putting it all together on the goals sheet. We had discussions and decided on whether it was appropriate.”
  - “In order for my child to be successful at home, you need to teach me the basics and I can keep that up at home.”

Family Alliance in Residential Treatment

- Fill out paperwork on what they think needs to be worked on
- Goals only focus on family functioning at the end of treatment

Insight from Families:

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Project Initiatives from Family Alliance
Focus Group

- Development of Family Alliance Form
- Working Alliance Training
- Piloting Effectiveness of Training & Form

Participatory Evaluation

- Focus group with current youth/families
- Gather input – provide a forum for youth/family voice
- Improve evaluation process
  - What would you like to see in reporting outcomes?
  - Do you have any preferences of what you would like to see and how it would be best reported to you?

Results: Focus Group Themes

- Use of color instead of black and white
- More likely to read a pamphlet than a full-sized report
- Liked having something that they could share the information with other families
- Helpful to see results by the different types of services provided at the organization
- Percentages are better to report than average numbers

Annual Outcome Brochure

Purpose of a Tracer Review

- ASSESSMENT: Processes for the delivery of care and services
- UNDERSTAND: Aides in understanding of a program’s day-to-day functions
- IDENTIFICATION: Identifies gaps or risk points that could effect quality of care.
- COMPARISON: Compares a program’s practice vs. what the program’s policies are.
- OUTCOME REVIEW: What is intended vs. what the actual outcomes are?
- PROVIDES DATA: Generates data that can be used to monitor for improvement.

Reviewing & Measuring Family Engagement at all Levels
### Tracers & Continuous Quality Improvement

1. **Study how the parts of a system create the whole**
   - Understand the inter-relatedness of systems
2. **Validate ongoing quality monitoring efforts**
3. **Mitigate unwanted trends in systems & processes**
4. **Provide a better understanding of the care process**

### Individual Family & Practice Level Tracer

- **Selection based on a clinical or priority focus**
- **Use of clinical record as a roadmap**

### Program Level Tracer

- **How are the processes in the program related to engaging families?**
- **Obtain process information from families, staff, & program materials**

### System Level Tracer

- **What processes in the system of care support family engagement?**
  - Sequence of procedures
  - Types of services offered
  - Integration of services across departments

### Pressley Ridge’s Family Engagement Tracer

1. **Planning Phase**
   - Work group formed
   - Decided what components to trace
   - Used multiple approaches

2. **Pilot Phase**
   - Identified pilot sites
   - Reviewed results in work group
   - Made tweaks to process

3. **Implementation Phase**
   - Use in organization
   - Ongoing review of findings
   - Make improvements

### Family Engagement Tracer

- **Review records**
- **Conduct staff and supervisor interviews**
- **Conduct family focus groups**
- **Observe**
- **Review program materials**
**Pressley Ridge’s Family Engagement Tracer**

**Family Engagement Tracer Guide**

**Feedback Form**

**Interview Scripts**

**Chart Review**

**Family Engagement Tracer**

Review for improvements

Make policy & procedure revisions

Add to organizational learning

**Outcomes - QI**

- Initiating revisions to treatment plans to include family domain
- Providing additional staff training
- Reviewing paperwork requirements to make more "family friendly"

**Questions?**

**References**

- Family and youth engagement: A framework for understanding the elements and developing interventions and policies. *Health Affairs, 28*(2), 65-72.