An analysis of Wraparound Barker: Community based holistic treatment for juvenile sex offenders
by Artello, Kristine, Ph.D., University of California, Irvine, 2010, 225 pages; AAT 3412072

Abstract (Summary)

Wraparound programs developed to serve children with severe mental illness to remain in their homes. Since 1990s, wraparound services have been adapted to address issues with other populations, such as sexual offending in juveniles. This study explores the voices of juvenile sex offenders in Wraparound Barker, an award-winning program in the midwest, to understand the effect of the program on their lives through their own eyes. Further, this study aims to discover the wraparound process on the ground to understand how it affects the youth’s experiences, positively and negatively. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with juvenile sex offenders (n=44), case reviews and participant observation for 6 months.

Juveniles responded to Wraparound Barker along a continuum from ownership, empowerment, non-absorption to alienation. Some youth embraced the wraparound process and used it for everything that they could obtain from it, such as clothing for school, therapy, mentors, and activities. These youth used their agency where they could and reframed the court-ordered services to suit their own needs to fulfill the court's wishes, effectively translating their powerlessness into agency. Other youth disengaged entirely from the process by boycotting meetings and missing appointments, exercising their actual agency in such a manner as to harm themselves. Many youth attributed their responses, positively and negatively, to Wraparound Barker to their relationships with their care coordinators, team members, and family to differing degrees.

Relationship, value and change capitals influenced a youth and family's response to wraparound services. Through relationship capital, families and youths may find strength, support and feelings of being special and important. Many discovered ways to decrease the chaos and increase connections in their lives through relationship capital. Value capital affected the decisions-making process of individuals involved in wraparound. When any individual did not embrace the values of wraparound, his/her decisions undermined the process and had the potential to hinder the youth's progress. Through change capital, youth, families, and communities can find ways to improve their lives by providing a catalyst for transformation. These findings have policy and practice implications, which are discussed.

References

- References (73)

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- Committee members: Huff, C. Ronald, Schuele, Donna
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