Outcomes in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare

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Y-OQ Adolescent Self-Reports: Trends from Four Studies

Clinical Cutoff
OBHRC’s Foundational Study, 2003

- 858 participants from 7 different OBH programs
  - Intake, Discharge, 1 year post-discharge
  - Parent and student Youth Outcome Questionnaire
- Significant improvements in behavioral and emotional symptoms for adolescent and parent
- 12 months post – parents report maintained progress and adolescents report continued progress
- Similar outcomes by age
- Females reported higher intake and discharge
OBHRC’s Foundational Study: Qualitative Assessment Two Years Later, 2005

- Interviews with parents and adolescents who had complete intake, discharge, and 12 month follow-up
  - Of the 144: 88 Parents and 47 youths
- 80% parent 95% of youths rated OBH treatment as effective

*The majority of parents believed that their child could not have begun their recovery without the initial impact of OBH treatment*
NATSAP Practice Research Network

- Began in 2007 through National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs
- In 2010 OBHC required members to contribute
- NATSAP Database has become the avenue for OBHC programs to participate in research and validate their programs
- Challenges & Limitations:
  - Few programs represented
  - Inconsistent data collection and missing data
  - Attrition, particularly post-discharge and parents
NATSAP PRN Findings

- Magle-Haberek, Tucker, & Gass, 2012
  - 229 of 278 adolescents from 5 OBH programs
  - Significant mean differences with large effects sizes from intake to discharge
  - Gender and depression related to rates of change in OBH programs (Tucker, Zelov, & Smith, 2011)

- Tucker, Smith, & Gass, 2014
  - 896 of 1,058 were OBH Participants
  - Dramatic improvements in overall functioning from Intake to Discharge for OBH and Residential programs
  - Predictors of OBH change: Gender only
Substance recovery, readiness to change, & symptom reduction

- Bettman, Russell, & Parry 2013
  - 189 clients from a single program, 40 matched data pairs
  - Measures: YOQ-SR, University of Rhode Island Change Assessment, & Adolescent Relapse Coping Questionnaire
  - Data collection: Intake, Discharge, 6 months post

- Clients made major changes from intake to discharge on YOQ and maintained progress post-discharge

- Abstinence focused strategies accounted for significant proportion of YOQ change.

- The change in scores on the change assessment measure was not significantly related to the Y-OQ change, suggesting that clients motivation to change does not necessarily impact actual change made in treatment.
Changes in substance use and conduct problems

Lewis, 2013

- 190 adolescents from three programs
- Measure: Treatment Outcomes Package
- Data collection: Intake, Discharge, 3 & 12 months post

- Persistent and significant improvements in disruptive behavior and substance use at both the 3- and 12-month follow-up
- Coping skills for substance abstinence increased post-discharge regardless of attending additional treatment
Trajectories of in-treatment and post-treatment change

- Massey, Hoag, Roberts, 2014
  - Multi-level modeling (MLM)
  - 659 adolescents from four wilderness therapy programs
  - Data collected 4 times during program and at 6 and 18 months post-discharge

- In-treatment change
  - Being female and healthier parent discharge scores predicted greater rates of change
  - Model accounted for 50% of variance in rate of change

- Post-treatment change
  - Parent change from intake to discharge was only predictor
  - If parent assessed the child as making great changes in treatment, regardless of child’s assessment, the child did better post-treatment.
In-Treatment Growth Trajectories

- **Female, Low Parent PD**
- **Female, High Parent PD**
- **Male, Low Parent PD**
- **Male, High Parent PD**
- **Clinical Cutoff (46)**

**YOQ-SR Score** vs **Weeks in OBH Treatment**
Post-Treatment Change Trajectories.

YOQ-2.01 Score vs. Months Post OBH Treatment

- **Low parent change, High youth change**
- **Low parent change, Low youth change**
- **High parent change, High youth change**
- **High parent change, Low youth change**

Clinical Cutoff
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Trends from Four Studies

Clinical Cutoff

Russel 2003
Bettman et al., 2013
Massey/Hoag 2014
OBH-NATSAP Database

Clinical Cutoff

Intake  Discharge  Post-DC
In Summary

- Dramatic changes intake to discharge in emotional and behavioral functioning
- Data suggesting maintenance of change post-discharge
- Gender differences
- No major differences in outcome by presenting problem, suggesting that OBH is effective for a wide-range of problem issues
Limitations of Current Literature

- No control/comparison groups
- Attrition: post-discharge data and parent data
- Data represents relatively few programs
- Little information on who it works best for and predictors of change
Looking forward

- Growing research base
- Examining mediating and moderating variables
- Goal of greater exposure/acceptance in mainstream mental health
- Collaboration and enthusiasm
Therapy gone wild

Work, stress and health
Expanding school-based care
APA convention award winners