



Rhonda Rhodes  
JoAnn Rollins

Monica Chambers  
Gina-Maria Roca

Dr. Svetlana  
Yampolskaya



# Hillsborough County Children's Services

1. Hillsborough County Children's Services (n.d.). About the Children's Services Division. Mission and Vision. Retrieved from <http://hillsboroughcounty.org/childrensservices/>

# Hillsborough County Children's Services

Serves

experiencing:

- Mental health and substance abuse disorders

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# Child in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services Programs (CINS/FINS):

# Residential Group Care (RGC) Program<sup>3</sup>

- Dependent youth ages 11-17 who cannot remain safely in their home
- Services:
  - Therapeutic Behavioral On Site Services (TBOSS)
  - Medical and nutrition
  - Case Management
  - Behavioral Analysis
  - Recreational Therapy
  - Independent living skills
  - Educational and vocational certifications

3. Hillsborough County Children's Services (n.d.). Residential Group Care. Retrieved from <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?NID=1045>

# Recent Changes at Children's Services

- New directors
- Initial implementation of evidence-based programs
  - Seeking Safety, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Brief and Strategic Family Therapy
- Policy and procedure revisions
- New hires (New hiring requirements)
- Terminations
- Evolving population of youth served
  - Increased trauma



# Purpose

- Evaluate constructs of organizational readiness for change
- Assess suitability of interventions for the population served within the different programs
- Investigate implementation facilitators/barriers to ease the transition process
- Explore the impact of organizational climate on sustainability of the newly adopted EBPs

# Research Questions

1. Are these evidence-based programs appropriate or inappropriate for the population served, as well as within different service settings (i.e. residential, outpatient)?
2. Are more experienced, long-term employees less enthusiastic about change, less willing to change, and do they perceive more barriers to change?
3. Does leadership have a different perception of the change process than staff?

# Qualitative Methodology and Procedures

- 23 participants
- In person and telephonic

# Who Did We Talk To?

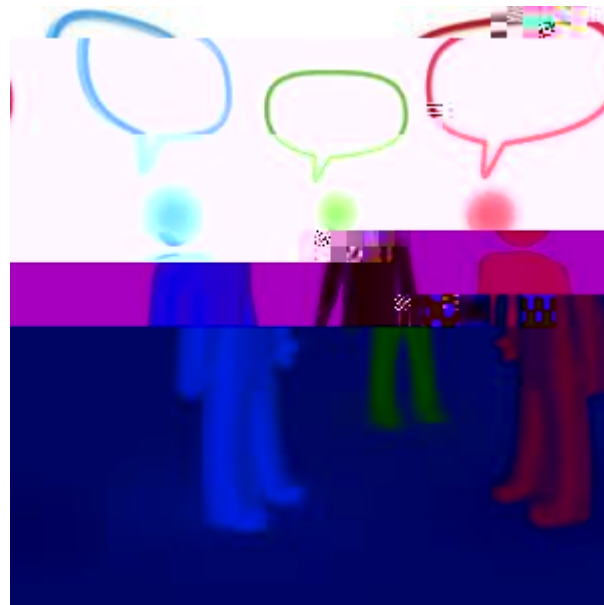
- 6 direct care staff members (tenured and new)
- 5 clinicians
- 2 directors
- 2 administrators
- 2 county analysts
- 2 RSCs
- 2 nurses
- 1 manager
- 1 case manager

# Topics Covered

- Staff attitudes
  - Organization's past, present, and future
  - Clientele served
- Organizational climate
  - Incentives
  - Expectations
  - Morale
- Leadership support
  - Resources
  - Time

# Topics Covered:

# KEY FINDINGS







# Perceptions and Attitudes

- Staff is displaying behaviors that show their lack of commitment and engagement
- The staff have had enough trainings to know how to do their job effectively
- The staff is not dedicated to the work or the clients
- Administration does not respect their expertise and is losing out on years of institutional knowledge
- Trainings are irrelevant or inappropriate for their day-to-day tasks
- The clients are the reason for the job and their work

# Barriers to Implementation

- Difference of perception amongst staff contributes to unclear, ineffective communication
- Miscommunication breeds lack of cohesion and inconsistency
- Perceived lack of support contributing to low morale
- Beliefs that EBPs do not fit with population served or inadequate time with client to be useful
  - (e.g. client without family unsuitable for BSFT)
- Insufficient, formalized training with EBPs
- Lack of follow through on EBPs introduced

# Facilitators to Implementation

- Recognition of other the 7 Dimensions of Wellness and 6 Pillars of Character (Concurrent EBP programming)
  - Felt these were great to use with the youth
- Protective factors among staff members
  - Positivity, spirituality/faith, and self-starting attitudes
- Willingness of clinicians to provide mentorship to direct care staff to create an inclusive environment

# Suggestions for Improvement

- Physical and structural changes to improve communication issues
- Explaining the contractual obligations to increase effectiveness and accountability
  - Develop big picture understanding
- Clinical support and supervision for all employees would create a more cohesive treatment structure
- Continual employee recognition to boost morale
- Let go of the outcome!

# Post-study Outcomes and Goals

- Changes already instated within the organization
  - (e.g. consistent staff members in cottages)
- Follow up with staff to determine how they've changed as a result of this research project
- Post-interview debriefing for staff to avoid re-traumatization and offer support

# Limitations to Current Study

- Paranoia/fear, hypervigilance, lack of trust
- Constructive confrontation
- Scheduling
- Sample size
- Gossip and/or prepared responses
- Accuracy of capturing different themes

# Future Research Opportunities

- Anonymous surveys for employees to further gauge openness/willingness to change
- Evaluate Practice-Based Evidence
- Exit surveys for children and families involved in Children's Services to determine external perspectives
- Secondary data analysis to find correlates with successful client outcomes

# Implications for Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health

- Similar issues in other social service settings
- By demystifying the organizational barriers, Children's Services can provide constructive feedback and set an example for other agencies
- Trickle-down effect between clients and staff
- "Therapeutic reflection" interviewing technique to examine long-term trauma could be helpful to staff retention and continuity



"The people here are very dedicated- that is one of the big draws for me."

"There isn't an individual in this building that big draws for

# References

1. Hillsborough County Children's Services (n.d.). About the Children's Services Division. Mission and Vision. Retrieved from <http://hillsboroughcounty.org/childrensservices/>
2. Hillsborough County Children's Services (n.d.). Children in Need of Services (CINS)/Families in Need of Services (FINS) Retrieved from <http://hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?NID=1046>
3. Hillsborough County Children's Services (n.d.). Residential Group Care. Retrieved from <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?NID=1045>

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# Questions

