



Emerging Adults who have Serious Mental Health Conditions

Empirically-supported and promising practices for engaging young people and improving outcomes

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“Emerging adults”

- Emerging adulthood – term coined to recognize the extended period between end of adolescence and achievement of traditional markers of adulthood
- Other terminology
 - Transition-aged youth/ youth and young adults; TAY, TAYYA
 - Older adolescents and young adults
 - Young adults

This period is challenging...

- While exciting, also a time of decisions, uncertainty, instability and change, all of which can produce stress
- Additional challenges for young people with SMHC
 - Systems experience promotes compliance and models reactivity
 - Lower level of material resources as “buffer”
 - Onset of MH condition challenge to identity
 - Challenges from MH condition itself



Other challenges...

- Challenges related to discontinuities in child/adult systems
 - Mental health and other types of services and supports
- Typically, neither child nor adult providers trained specifically to work with EA
- Research typically looks at child versus adult, sometimes adolescent

Older “children” and MH services

- Do not tend to agree with parents/caregivers or clinicians about need, goals or usefulness of therapy*
- Not highly satisfied with treatment*
- Drop out at high levels/ make few visits**

* *Phares & Compas, 1990; Phares & Danforth, 1994; Garland, et al., 2003; Hawley & Weisz, 2003; Walker & Pullmann, 2012*

** *Harpaz-Rotem, et al., 2004; Olfson et al., 2009; Harrison et al., 2004; McKay and Bannon 2004*



Research on youth engagement

- What does it mean to be “engaged”?
- Telephone interventions targeting parents/caregivers predominant
 - Range from reminders to more elaborate
 - Engagement of youth and parent/caregiver more effective than caregiver alone in one study
- General recommendations
 - Shift in conceptualization of family role
 - Clarity re goals and methods of treatment
 - “Motivational” approach



Young adults and engagement

- Clearly a top issue— age group least likely to seek services, drop out is very high*
- Literature almost non-existent on engagement interventions
- Systematic review: individual versus family approaches

* Gonzalez, Alegria, & Prihoda, 2005; Kim et al., 2012



Enhancing participation

- Increasing “meaningful participation” of young people in Wraparound
 - Part of the core philosophy, often not realized
 - Designed in collaboration with young people
 - Intervention is an enhancement that articulates with Wraparound; does increase engagement
 - Focus on preparing the young person and the team to work together better
 - Preparation (!!!)
 - Team process
 - Accountability



Empirically supported interventions for EA

- Paucity of information*
- Child or adult interventions that are being adapted and tested: IPS, MST, Wraparound, MI
- Use of interventions that are EBPs for adults or children
 - Evidence is often for broad age ranges
 - Studies show different approaches more successful with different age ranges
 - Other findings may exist, but are “hidden”

**Davis, Koroloff, & Ellison, 2012; also 2012 special issue of the Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation*



Interventions developed specifically for EA population

- Ongoing work at Pathways RTC to look at interventions that have some evidence of effectiveness (i.e., “empirically supported”)
 - Randomized designs, added in other forms of evaluation
 - Identified core features of a “positive developmental approach” --extended process of research and review
 - Summarized in conference proceedings (online) and articles in upcoming special issue JBHS&R, “empirically-supported interventions”
 - These features could be incorporated into more targeted MH treatments as well



What young people want to see in interventions

- Positive developmental approach is appealing
 - Goal- and action-focused
 - Young person defines treatment direction/goals and makes decisions
 - Good support is available
 - Strengths focus, hopeful, recovery orientation



Peer support

- Very much desired by young people
- Research on peer support has mixed findings, but...
 - Consensus regarding need to more clearly define role and skills
 - Interventions in development
 - Better Futures/FUTURES
 - AMP+
 - Munson et al., engagement intervention



Wellness

- Also a very high priority for young people
- Meditation, yoga, healthy eating, exercise
 - Supported recreation intervention in development
- Shared decision making regarding medication
 - Most young people quite wary of medication and side effects
 - Some programs are quite successful with a focus on minimizing medication/side effects

Resources

- Pathways RTC: www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu
 - Conference Proceedings
 - Better Futures research page (research->current-> Better Futures, but may be “previous” soon)
 - AMP and AMP+ pages (research->current or previous)
 - Featured publications, rtcUpdates
 - *Focal Point* 2015 issue on trauma-informed approaches



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