



29th Annual Research & Policy Conference on Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Behavioral Health

RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES



Assessing Competency-based Outcomes of Transition Service Provider Training Experiences: Scale Development



Eileen M. Brennan,
Pauline Jivanjee, Maria
Carolina Gonzalez-Prats,
Portland State University
and

Claudia Sellmaier,
University of Washington,
Tacoma

Tampa, FL

March 14, 2016



Presentation Objectives



Participants will learn:

- To assess core competencies of service providers supporting young people with behavioral health challenges, using the Transition Service Provider Competency Scale (TSPCS).
- The scale development processes and psychometric properties of the TSPCS.
- To evaluate the outcomes of training efforts aimed at building the capacities of transition service providers.



Core Competencies

- Working with emerging adults who have experienced serious behavioral health difficulties requires specific knowledge and competences (Clark & Unruh, 2009; Plotner, Trach, & Strauser, 2012; Vander Stoep, Davis, & Collins, 2000).
- Competencies are **measurable human capabilities required for effective performance** (Hoge, Tondora, & Marrelli, 2005, p. 511).
- A competency is a human capability composed of knowledge, a skill or ability, and personal characteristics such as attitudes and values.



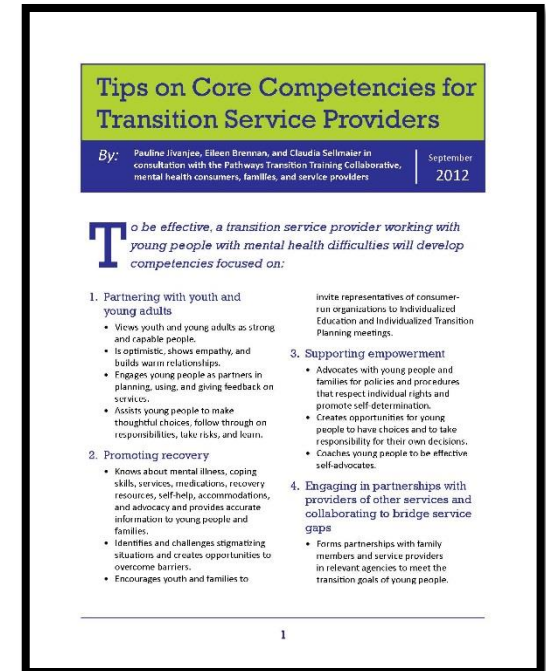
Elements of a Competency

- **Knowledge** is awareness, information, or understanding about concepts, theories, processes, principles, and guidelines acquired by learning or experience that is necessary to perform a task.
- **Skill** is a cognitive or physical capacity to perform a task with a specific outcome.
- **Ability** is a cognitive or physical capacity to perform complex tasks with a wide range of outcomes.
- **Attitude** is the tendency to evaluate a person, situation, or action favorably or unfavorably.
- **Value** is an individual's conception of the desirable, which influences the selection of means and ends of the actions to be taken. (Brennan, Jivanjee, & Roser, 2010).



Identifying Transition Core Competencies

- The Pathways Transition Training Collaborative included peer support providers, family support providers, practitioners, and researchers.
- PTTC Staff reviewed literature—service provider competency education, workforce development, and best practices with young people with behavioral health difficulties.
- Staff identified 10 core competencies—refined by PTTC members. (Jivanjee, Brennan, Sellmaier, 2012)





Example: Using evidence-supported practice and individualizing interventions

Definition: Locates, appraises, adapts, and applies established and evolving knowledge about mental health and a range of effective practices and programs.

- **Attitude:** Open to new evidence of program and practice effectiveness, and values societal, cultural, ethnic, gender, and other sources of diversity, which affect the use of this evidence.
- **Knowledge:** Understands the characteristics of mental health disorders that affect young people, the complications of co-occurring disorders, and practices and programs supported by evidence that are effective in producing favorable outcomes for young people affected by mental health difficulties.
- **Skills:** Taking culture and environment into account, identifies, evaluates, and adapts a range of evidence-supported practices and programs that meet the needs of young people who have experienced mental health difficulties.



Transition Service Core Competencies

Core Competency	Definition
1. Partnering with youth and young adults	Engages youth and young adults as full collaborators in service planning, delivery, and evaluation.
2. Supporting recovery and empowerment	Participates in advocacy by providing accurate information about youth and young adults with mental illness, identifying and challenging situations that are stigmatizing, advocating for policies and procedures that respect individual rights and dignity, and working with youth and young adults to challenge oppressive power structures and overcome legal barriers.
3. Planning partnerships with providers of other services	Forms partnerships with family members and service providers in relevant agencies and systems to develop and implement individualized transition plans for young people.



Transition Service Core Competencies

Core Competency	Definition
4. Providing individualized, developmentally appropriate services	Assists and facilitates the development and implementation of an effective service plan that reflects the preferences, needs, interests, and desired outcomes of the young person participating in the planning and services.
5. Addressing transition domain-specific needs	Collaborates with young people to meet their needs for education, employment, peer support, parenting support, safe and stable housing, income maintenance, participation in community life, and adult well-being in the context of relevant policies and programs.
6. Using evidence-supported practice and individualizing interventions	Locates, appraises, adapts, and applies established and evolving knowledge about mental health and a range of effective practices and programs.



Transition Service Core Competencies

Core Competency	Definition
7. Collaborating to bridge systems	Reaches within and across services and systems to build constructive working relationships focused on assisting young people to achieve their goals when confronted with fragmented systems.
8. Promoting support from family, peers, and mentors	Builds on the capacity of family members, peers, and mentors to provide support in ways preferred by the young person.
9. Meeting the needs of diverse young people	Communicates effectively with, and is responsive to, the preferences of diverse young people and families.
10. Evaluating and improving services	Systematically evaluates the services that he or she offers; uses feedback from young people and their family members, when relevant; participates in program evaluations and research to improve services.



Using Core Competencies for Training

- Produced webinar training experiences and tip sheets based on core competencies.
- Designed graduate interdisciplinary class, **Improving Youth Transitions** co-taught by social work faculty member, young person with MH service experience, and family member.
- Developed **Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood**, a 10-module online training program available to service providers at no charge.



Need for a Measure of Competency Gains

- An assessment and evaluative tool was necessary to measure gains in competency to accomplish key activities for service providers working with young people experiencing behavioral health difficulties.
- The **Transition Service Provider Competency Scale** was developed and tested in education and training programs (TSPCS; Jivanjee, Brennan, Roser, & Sellmaier, 2011)



Methodology



- Generation and testing of items,
- Use of the scale in evaluations,
- Psychometric testing of the instrument with a sufficient sample.



Generation of Items

- Employed Bandura's (2006) scale construction process to generate and test 15 items for the TSPCS.
- For each core competency, one or two items were constructed for service providers to rate their confidence level for successfully performing a competency-related task.
- Rating scales ranged from 0 (very little confidence) to 100 (quite a lot of confidence).
- Reviewed by the PTTC.



Sample TSPCS Items

- **For Competency 7: Collaborating to bridge systems**
 - 10. Reach within and across services and systems to build constructive working relationships focused on assisting young people to achieve their goals.
- **For Competency 10: Evaluating and improving services**
 - 14. Systematically evaluate the transition services offered to young people using their feedback.
 - 15. Participate in program evaluations and research to improve transition services.



Use of Scale in Evaluations

- The TSPCS was part of the assessment process and the post-training evaluation for:
 - *Improving Youth Transitions*, and
 - pilot testing of 2 modules of *Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood*





Pathways Transition Training Modules

Module 1 - Partnering with Youth and Young Adults	Module 6--Providing Individualized and Developmentally Appropriate Services
Module 2 – Promoting Recovery	Module 7—Developing Healthy Relationships
Module 3 – Increasing Cultural Awareness and Building Community Support	Module 8—Planning Partnerships with Providers of Other Services and Collaborating to Bridge Service Gaps
Module 4 – Fostering Resilience and Family Supports	Module 9—Promoting Support from Family, Peers, and Mentors
Module 5 - Promoting Cross-Cultural and Intergenerational Relationships	Module 10—Using Evidence-supported Practices and Individualizing Interventions



Procedure and Participants

- Participants in course ($n = 39$) and in pilot study ($n = 89$) took the TSPCS before beginning and after their training.
- The majority of participants ($N = 128$) were female service providers, less than 40 years old, with some college degree.

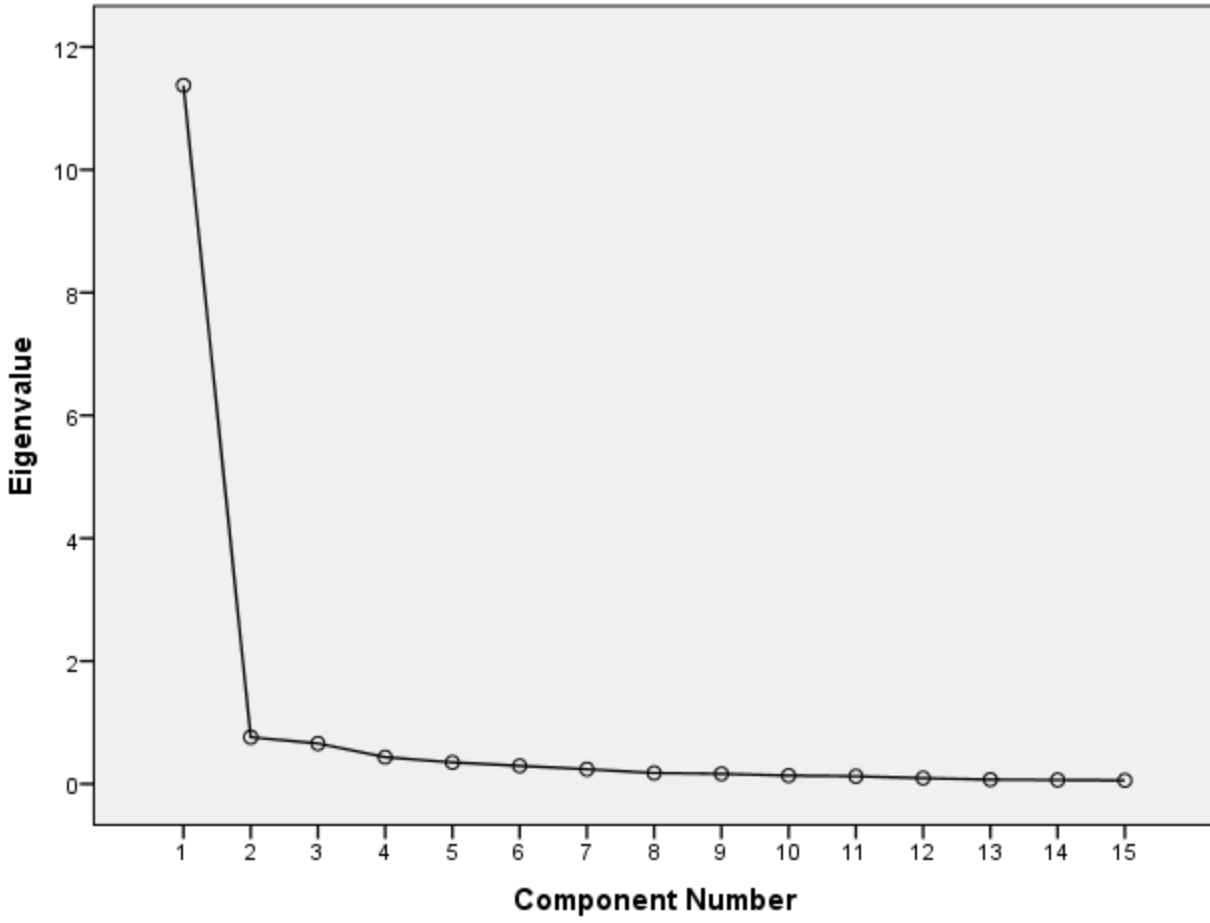


Psychometric Results

- Pre-test scores of pilot test participants were subjected to Exploratory Factor Analysis using Principal Components Factor Analysis.
- The KMO Measure was .948, revealing sample adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < .001$). The analysis yielded a single factor (eigenvalue > 11), accounting for 75.8% of the item variance



Scree Plot TSPCS—Principal Components FA





TSPCS—Means, SDs, Factor Loadings ($n = 128$)

Item Number	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings
1. Engage youth as collaborators	67.4	24.9	.799
2. Provide accurate information	65.1	28.0	.850
3. Challenge stigmatization	67.7	24.8	.840
4. Advocate better policies & procedures	66.5	27.8	.836
5. Challenge barriers	60.0	27.2	.863
6. Partnerships w/ family, service prov.	69.2	27.0	.913
7. Individualize service plan	67.8	28.1	.902
8. Meeting basic needs	72.6	26.1	.911
9. Apply knowledge and best practices	62.9	28.5	.868
10. Bridge service gaps	68.4	27.4	.928
11. Build social support	69.8	25.6	.941
12. Communicate w/ diverse people	76.5	22.7	.821
13. Respond to diverse preferences	76.9	23.2	.827
14. Systematically evaluate services	68.0	26.6	.915
15. Participate in program evaluation	66.6	28.9	.832



Reliability Analysis and Validity Check

- Reliability analysis of pre-test assessments revealed the scale was highly reliable:
 - Cronbach's Alpha = .96 for students in the graduate course ($n = 39$)
 - Cronbach's Alpha = .98 for online training pilot participants ($n = 89$).
- Pre-test TSPCS scores of pilot participants were significantly and positively correlated with education level ($p = .002$), years working with transition aged youth ($p = .005$), years in current position ($p = .009$), and age ($p = .049$).



Use of the TSPCS

- Psychometric testing has provided evidence of the coherence and high level of reliability of the TSPCS, which has been identified as a transitions resource (Ansell & Insley, 2013).
- The scale performed well as a primary measure of the effectiveness of a course preparing social work students to provide services for emerging adults, pilot tests of modules of an online training program, and a performance improvement project for service providers in the North Sound Mental Health Administration (Brennan, Sellmaier, Jivanjee, & Spiegel, 2013; Sellmaier, McCarty, de Losada, & Jivanjee, 2015).



Current Results and Future Research

- Evaluation results in these studies have revealed significant gains in service providers' confidence in their competence from pre-test to post-test, and over time (Brennan, Sellmaier, Jivanjee, & Spiegel, 2013; Sellmaier, McCarty, de Losada, & Jivanjee, 2015).
- Future research studies should investigate the relationship of TSPCS to changes in the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of service providers, and the outcomes of the young people that they serve.



References

- Ansell, D. I., & Insley, S. E. (2013). *Youth peer-to-peer support: A review of the literature*. Elizabeth City, NC: Ansell and Associates for Youth M.O.V.E. National.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales. In F. Pajares & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 307-337). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Brennan, E., Jivanjee, P., & Roser, E. (2010). *Direct service core competencies*. Portland, OR: Pathways Transition Training Collaborative, Research & Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures, Portland State University. Retrieved from: <http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/projPTTC-Compiled-Core-Competencies.pdf>
- Brennan, E. M., Sellmaier, C., Jivanjee, P., & Spiegel, C. (2013, March). *Promoting positive pathways to adulthood: Online training to support young people with mental health needs*. Paper presented at Paper presented at the 26th Annual Children's Mental Health Policy and Research Conference, Tampa, FL.



References Continued

- Clark, H. B., & Unruh, D. K. (2009). Understanding and addressing the needs of transition-aged youth and young adults and their families. In H. B. Clark & D. K. Unruh (Eds.), *Transition of youth and young adults with emotional or behavioral difficulties: An evidence-supported handbook* (pp. 3-22).
- Hoge, M. A., Tondora, J., & Marrelli, A. F. (2005). The fundamentals of workforce competency: Implications for behavioral health. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health*, 32(5/6), 509-531.
- Jivanjee, P., Brennan, E., Roser, E., & Sellmaier, C. (2011). *Transition Service Provider Competency Scale*. Portland, OR: Research & Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures, Portland State University. Retrieved from: <http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/projPTTC-Transition-Service-Provider-Competency-Scale.pdf>
- Jivanjee, P., Brennan, E., & Sellmaier, C. (2012). *Tips on core competencies for transition service providers*. Portland, OR: Research & Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures, Portland State University. Retrieved from: <http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/projPTTC-CoreCompetenciesSvcProviders.pdf>



References Continued

- Plotner, A. J., Trach, J. S., & Strauser, D. R. (2012). Vocational rehabilitation counselors' identified transition competencies: Perceived importance, frequency, and preparedness. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 55* (3), 135-143.
- Sellmaier, C., de Losada, J., McCarty, R. L., & Jivanjee, P. (2015). *Preliminary evaluations of an online training for service providers working with young adults with mental health issues*. Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Council on Exceptional Children, Division on Career Development and Transition, Portland, OR.
- Vander Stoep, A., Davis, M., & Collins, D. (2000). Transition: A time of development and institutional clashes. In H. B. Clark & M. Davis (Eds.). *Transition to adulthood: A resource for assisting young people with emotional or behavioral difficulties*, (pp. 3-28). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.



Access to TSPCS and Training Program

Please visit our website:

<http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/proj-pttp>



Acknowledgments/Funders



The contents of this product were developed under a grant with funding from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, and from the Center for Mental Health Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services (NIDILRR grant number 90RT5030). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this product do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

