ENGAGING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IN JUVENILE DRUG COURT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

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Presentation Overview

- Introductions
- Why Involve Family and Community in JDCs?
- Why is it Challenging?
- JDC/RF National Cross-Site Evaluation: Measuring Family and Community Engagement
- JDC/RF Family and Community Engagement Findings and Policy Implications
- Applications to the Field
- Questions and Discussion
Why Involve Family and Community?
Value of Family and Community in JDC

- Various studies evidence:
  - Involving family in JDCs
  - Involving the community in JDCs
  - Involving JDC youth in the community

maximizes potential for success
Why is Involving Family and Community Challenging?
It Takes A Lot…

Effort

Systematic Approach

Time

Resources
JDC/RF National Evaluation Methods

- Assessing Family and Community Involvement
  - Interviews
  - Observational Data
  - Process Data Collection Instrument
  - Community Resource Mapping
JDC/RF Family and Community Engagement
Findings and Policy Implications
What is Family Engagement?

- Involving family (parent, caregiver, supportive adult) in the JDC process to maximize potential for youth’s success
  - Court proceedings
  - Treatment
  - Relationship-building throughout JDC process
  - Transition out of JDC
Family Engagement: Challenges

- **External**
  - Scheduled times of JDC activities
  - Transportation
  - Frequency of participation
  - Behavioral health conditions

- **Internal**
  - Attitudes, beliefs and values
Family Engagement: Recommendations

- Require parent/caregiver participation
  - Utilize a written agreement to set expectations and define family role
  - Discuss and determine use of coercive power
- Streamline access to JDC services
  - Partner with families to assess individual and community barriers
  - Offer JDC activities at family-friendly times and locations
  - Implement EBP models that include family components
  - Incorporate feedback loop to assess effectiveness of strategies
Family Engagement: Recommendations

- Provide resources specific to family members
  - Employ a “parent partner” to assist with service linkages and support
  - Provide a parent/caregiver support group
  - Sponsor family nights to offer supportive interaction and model positive prosocial activities
  - Link parents/caregivers to behavioral health treatment and other services, as appropriate

- Engage families from the bench
  - Foster unified front between familial and legal authority
  - Leverage input from the JDC team
  - Provide family member incentives
What is Community Engagement?

- Two major components
  - Collaborating with community partners
  - Youth engaging with the community
- Community partners playing an active and collaborative role in JDC/RF
- Establishing community-based services
- Linking youth to community providers
- Youth actively engaging in community services
Community Engagement: Challenges

- Identifying resources/partners
  - Filling service needs

- Approaching and engaging identified partners
  - Who/How to ask
  - What to ask for

- Shortages in resources/funding/capacity at identified partners
  - Securing “slots” for JDC youth without JDC funding

- Linking youth to active partners
  - Cumbersome, slow, and confusing
Community Engagement

Recommendations: Engaging Partners

- Conduct and regularly update a community resource map
  - Incorporate a feedback loop to improve the engagement process
- Educate and leverage all members of the team for community outreach
  - Individual level and PR campaigns
- Ensure that community outreach is managed by specific staff
  - Well-connected and respected in the community
- Make “specific asks”
  - E.g., specific referral systems or JDC advocacy
- Define the terms of collaboration at the outset
  - Mutually beneficial relationships
  - Sustaining collaboration
Community Engagement
Recommendations: Youth Engagement

- Lower logistical barriers for youth
  - Specific protocols
  - Dedicated points of contact
  - Feedback loop: is it working for your partners?

- Establish active linkage protocols
  - Identify resources: paid staff vs. volunteers (e.g., case managers and mentors)
  - Schedule at the time of referral
  - Follow-up on both ends (court and provider)
Applications to the Field
Questions and Discussion
Questions?

Questions: Contact Alison Greene, 520-295-9339 x206, greene@email.arizona.edu

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