Assessment of Strengths among Youths Court-Referred to Residential Treatment

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INTRODUCTION

- Client strengths recorded at intake nationwide in US yet few empirical reports
- Study questions:
  - What are prevalent strengths among adolescents with addiction?
  - Do strengths vary by gender or race?
- Exploratory study (N=195)
  - 52% F, 32% minority, ages 14-18
  - 92% thc dependent, 61% etoh dependent

METHODS

- Counselors recorded strengths at intake
- Open-ended questions to youth, guardian
- Responses coded into Gardner’s 7 multiple intelligence categories + 6 others
- Count of strengths compared across gender and race groups using univariate analyses

RESULTS

- M=3.3 strengths, range=0-9, 9% 0 strengths
- Most and least common strengths (Figure 1)
  - ↑ : interpersonal, hard-working
  - ↓ : intrapersonal (emotional intelligence)
- Race and gender comparisons (Figure 2)
  - African-American girls reported fewer strengths than White girls and African American boys

DISCUSSION

- Self-management/reflection may need bolstering
- Unclear how strengths are used in treatment planning without manualized guide
- A uniform assessment tool may help youth become aware of their strengths

REFERENCES


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the NIAAA or JTF. The NIAAA and the JTF had no further role in study design, data collection and analysis, and writing of the report.

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