

Predicting Outcomes among Adolescents with Disruptive Disorders Being Treated in a System of Care Program

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BACKGROUND: “Systems of care” are strengths-based approaches to treating adolescents and others with disruptive disorders. However, little is known about why some adolescents improve and others do not.

OBJECTIVE: To examine changes in personal strengths and family functioning as predictors of behavioral and social functioning among adolescents with disruptive disorders who participated in a system of care program.

DESIGN: Secondary analyses of data from 114 adolescents (12-17 years of age) with disruptive disorders and their caregivers who participated in the Dawn Project Evaluation Study. Caregivers completed in-depth interviews conducted by trained data collectors using standardized questionnaires. Baseline and 12- month data are reported here.

RESULTS: Improvement in personal strengths was a significant predictor of improvement in adolescent behavioral and social functioning, controlling for demographics ($p < .001$).

CONCLUSION: In adolescents with disruptive disorders, psychiatric nurses should focus on enhancing adolescents’ personal strengths to improve behavioral and social functioning.