

Do You See What I See: Exploring Beliefs and Perceptions in Inter-Agency Collaboration Between Child Welfare, Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Court Organizations

Objective

The purpose of this study is to examine differences in perceptions of parental substance abuse between staff in integrated service organizations (CW, AOD, and courts). Specifically, this study examines the relationship between CW, AOD, and court staff with a spectrum of value-based beliefs including: (a) perceptions of substance abuse as a disease that needs treatment; (b) substance abuse and parenting effectiveness; (c) substance abuse and reunification.

Descriptives

Table 1
Descriptors of Staff Across Organization Types

Variable	Child Welfare	AOD	Courts
	N = 1619	N = 276	N = 299
	<i>n (%)</i>	<i>n (%)</i>	<i>n (%)</i>
Age Quartiles			
18 to 34	302 (29.8)	64 (23.5)	54 (18.6)
35 to 45	284 (28.0)	58 (21.3)	56 (19.2)
46 to 54	221 (21.8)	69 (25.4)	83 (28.5)
55 and Older	206 (20.3)	81 (29.8)	98 (33.7)
Gender			
Male	218 (21.3)	70 (25.6)	99 (24.3)
Female	805 (78.7)	203 (74.4)	196 (66.4)
Ethnicity			
Minority	346 (34.5)	53 (19.6)	44 (14.8)
Caucasian	657 (65.5)	218 (80.4)	253 (85.2)
Org. Position			
Frontline Staff	583 (56.6)	101 (37.5)	198 (67.3)
Manager/Supervisor	351 (34.1)	104 (38.7)	67 (22.8)
Administrator	96 (9.3)	64 (23.8)	29 (9.9)

Results

Compared to CW Staff:

- ❑ AOD staff were 1.6X as likely to agree that parents with substance abuse problems would not be able to provide effective parenting to their children (OR = 1.64, 95% CI = 1.21 – 2.22)
- ❑ AOD staff were more than 2X as likely to agree that full abstinence should be a standard used to determine reunification decisions (OR = 2.28, 95% CI = 1.67 – 3.10)
- ❑ AOD staff were more than 1.5X as likely to agree that parents should face jail time for non-compliance with dependency court orders (OR = 1.65, 95% CI = 1.24 – 2.22).
- ❑ AOD staff were 37% more likely to agree that some parents will never succeed in substance abuse treatment (OR = 0.37, 95% CI .27 – 0.52).
- ❑ Court staff were almost 1.5X as likely to agree that parents who abused AOD would not be able to provide effective parenting to their children (OR = 1.46, 95% CI = 1.09 – 1.95).