


Final Report
Evaluation of 11 Years of Service Data
From

 ***Rapport Youth & Family Services***

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Prepared by



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and Education
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to develop a profile of Rapport's clients, determine the impact of the services provided, and (if possible) to link outcomes achieved to specific best practices. The project involved the extraction and analysis of service data from Rapport's in-house client tracking systems. These data include information on client demographics, type and amount of service provided, client perceptions of treatment outcomes, and client satisfaction. The findings of this evaluation may provide clues for how best to provide community-based mental health services to youth and families.

Description of Program

Rapport Youth & Family Services is a not-for-profit charitable organization serving youth in the Region of Peel, Ontario, Canada. The organization's mandate is to strengthen the social and emotional well-being of youth and families through counselling and related support services. Rapport's target population is youth and families. The agency typically serves 1,500 - 2,000 youth each year. The agency's structure includes three main components, namely; Administration/Community Relations, Programming, and Program Supports (See program logic model; p. 5). The Administration and Community Relations component involves such general management and administrative tasks as; policy development, staff supervision, program development, and regulation of case flow as well as networking with other community organizations, and the marketing and promotion of Rapport's services. Programming has three major sub divisions. These are counselling therapy, group programs and ECLYPSE; multi-service youth drop-in program that was initiated by Rapport in 1999. Program Supports, the third component, involves intake assessment and referral services.

Findings

Rapport Youth & Family Services received over 7,000 new clients between April, 1995 and March, 2006. During this period, the majority of Rapport's new clients came from Brampton (53%) and Mississauga (41%). They were 54% female and 46% male. A majority (90%) of them were in secondary institutions. The average age of new clients was 16.5 years. The average age of new clients increased gradually from 15.9 years in 1995/1996 to a high of 18.6 years in 2003/2004 suggesting a change in Rapport's outreach focus and strategies.

About 15 percent of Rapport's clients sought services from Rapport on more than one occasion. Altogether, the total number of new cases during the 11-period under study was 8,714.¹ The total number of new cases per year showed much fluctuation during the period: the smallest number of new clients received in any one year period was 640 in 1999/2000 and the highest was 1,081 in 2002/2003.

¹ Clients who received service at Rapport for a period of time, and then had their case closed, sometimes returned at a later date for further treatment. Rapport's tracking systems treated these returning clients as new cases.

The demographics of Rapport's clients showed great ethnic diversity. During the first 9 years of the period under study, Rapport served new clients from thirty-two different ethnic backgrounds including Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Eastern Europe, Western Europe and the Middle East. Overall, 25% of new clients were from ethnic minority groups, 45% described themselves as Canadian, and 23% were of European origin. A trend analysis of clients by ethnicity from April, 1995 to March, 2003² showed that the percentage of ethnic minority clients increased from 24% in 1995 to 40% in 2003.

Three main categories of issues emerged as the most common among individuals who used Rapport's services. These were conduct issues, family and peer relational issues, and anxieties, depression and emotional issues. About 41% of all cases presented were conduct issues, 26% were family, peer or relational issues and 16% were anxieties, depression or emotional issues. Male clients were more likely to present conduct issues compared to female clients while female clients were more likely than male clients to present family, peer and relational issues, and anxieties, depression and emotional issues. An analysis of presenting issues by geographical area revealed a similar pattern for Rapport's three main geographical areas.

Outcome evaluation by self-report inventories found that Rapport's services made significant positive changes in the lives of clients and their families. On the average, clients experience significant positive improvements in family dynamics, fighting in the home, and interactions at school. The analysis did not reveal any gender differences in the outcomes indicating that both male and female clients benefited from Rapport's services.

Client satisfaction was high among people who used Rapport's services: 99.5% of clients who completed the client satisfaction questionnaire said they were satisfied with Rapport's services, 93% said they received the services they needed, and 95% said the services they received helped them to better deal with their problems. Consistent with the high levels of satisfaction reported, 90% of clients rated Rapport's services as good or excellent, 93% of them indicated that they would return to Rapport if they needed help, and 95% said they would recommend Rapport if a friend needed help.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A majority of new clients (91%) who participated in Rapport's individual, family and group programs during the period under study said the services they received made positive changes in their lives. Most of them reported decreases in family problems and personal problems. In addition, most clients reported increases in such prosocial behaviours as families' abilities to solve problems and share their feelings and thoughts with each other.

² Ethnicity was not tracked after the switch from CSMS database to the Athena database

The data analyses found no significant demographic differences in outcomes and client satisfaction. This was indicative that Rapport provides effective services for all clients regardless of the type of issues they present with, their ethnic backgrounds, or where they live. These findings suggested that Rapport's services are very effective and inclusive and are making a great difference in the lives of youth and their families in the Peel Region.

The findings of this research further demonstrated that as a key counselling service in the Peel Region, Rapport commands a high level of confidence among its clients. Performance indicators suggested high levels of support for Rapport among its clients. Ninety-one percent of all clients who completed the client satisfaction questionnaire said Rapport's services made positive changes in their lives. According to these clients, Rapport provided them with the services they needed and that the services they received met their needs. A majority of them expressed high levels of satisfaction with Rapport's services and indicated that they were very likely to return to Rapport if they needed help in the future, and would readily recommend Rapport if their friends needed help.

In conclusion, Rapport offers very important services to youth and families in the Peel Region and beyond. Its clients are diverse in gender, ethnicity and types of presenting issues. Performance indicators suggest that Rapport's services are having very positive impacts on its clients and their families. A majority of clients indicated that they were satisfied with the services they received from this agency. It may be inferred from the ethnic and cultural diversity of service users and the high levels of satisfaction expressed by all groups that Rapport's services are inclusive.

Recommendations

Analyses suggest that the new tracking system is working well for Rapport. Although the new outcomes measurement tool is simpler, it appears to track Rapport's impact effectively. Both outcomes measurement tools suggested similar patterns of impact.

Findings presented here suggest that Rapport is reaching youth across Peel Region. It is especially interesting that Rapport appears to be effective with youth in a variety of different life situations. Positive impacts were detected for youth of all ages, who came through a variety of referral sources with a range of presenting issues. Further investigation of this impressive finding may yield useful insights about Rapport's approach that could be shared more broadly.

Given that Rapport often works with youth at risk, the proportion of clients who report that they are satisfied with the service is also encouraging.

Youth from Mississauga and Asian youth emerged from these analyses as populations that Rapport may be reaching less frequently.³ It may be worthwhile to explore these differences more fully and develop outreach strategies where warranted. It may also be constructive to

³ Although Rapport serves many Asian students, they serve a relatively low proportion of the local Asian population.

discuss whether Rapport is satisfied with the degree to which it is reaching clients who need support around separation or abuse.

The proportion of clients who completed the outcome surveys at all three stages in the CSMS database (1995-2003) was 20% while the proportion of clients who completed both stages of outcome surveys in the Athena database (2003-2006) was 27%. Moreover, a significantly higher proportion of male clients (30.8%) completed outcome surveys at both stages in the Athena database than female clients (23.6%) (see table 21 in appendix 1). Although the total numbers of male clients (n = 117) and female clients (n = 105) who were included in the analyses were comparable, we must be cautious in generalizing the findings to female clients because of the differences in completion rates.

Rapport should consider strategies to increase the proportion of clients that complete evaluation forms at posttest. In particular, Rapport should attempt to identify the reasons why girls are less likely to complete posttest evaluations.

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