

Outcome Data for 2014

Jasper Mountain Psychiatric Residential Program

January 2015

Executive Summary

The following outcome data reports on the children discharged from the intensive residential treatment program during calendar 2014. The fourteen graduates were given post-tests to compare with data obtained from pretests at the start of treatment generally nine to sixteen months earlier. The results of data provided by parents, caseworkers, clinical team as well as child self-reports on eight measures over the last year reflected the following:

- Most of the major problem behaviors the children entered the program with were eliminated, and the majority of the remaining problem behaviors were much improved. Major behavior improvement occurred in 65% of the problem areas.
- The data resulted in a 63% average improvement for clinical treatment goals and objectives for all children.
- The children were downgraded in impairment from severe to moderate.
- As measured by the CAFAS, this cohort of children was among the most seriously impaired coming into the program and showed the best improvement of any group of children (65% improvement).
- Children with attachment disorders can be very difficult to treat, but these children at discharge showed improved relationship skills at the end of treatment. Concerning improvement in relationship skills, twice as many children showed improvement as did not.

Overall this group of 14 children reflected among the highest average level of disturbance in our history measured by the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS). Compare this to at discharge these 14 children along with children from the previous year improved more than any two groups of graduates in the last seventeen years. The report ends with a discussion of what is viewed overall as very positive improvement for the 244 graduates coming out of the program the last seventeen years.

Introduction

Since 1998 Jasper Mountain has conducted a comprehensive assessment of the children in its programs. The two primary outcome assessment components are what the organization calls outcomes, consisting of pre and post testing while in the program, and follow-up reflecting the child's progress after discharge for up to five years. The information reported here is based upon data regarding the fourteen children who were discharged from the intensive residential treatment program during calendar 2014, with some reference to all 244 children discharged since 1998.

Outcome data essentially indicates the changes that occur during the process of the treatment program. While very useful, outcome data has limitations. It does not say if the changes are temporary or lasting, for this purpose a longitudinal follow-up study is needed. If long-term and short-term data sets are compared, it is easy to see that lasting changes are of more practical importance than short-term changes. However, it is extremely unlikely that lasting changes are possible without the foundation of initial changes. Because of this, and the ability to identify improvement of children in a particular year, outcome data is very important.

Another reason outcome data is important is to determine if the treatment program is in fact accomplishing what it intends to accomplish during the time the child is in residence. Based upon the answer to, "Do children in the program improve over time?" decisions can be made to improve specific aspects of the program. Follow-up data does not indicate if the child made changes while in the program; to answer this question, outcome data is required. The best outcome data is a comparison of two snap shots--at the point treatment begins and again when it ends. The difference between the two measures indicates changes the child has made during treatment.

The third value of outcome data is to consider the cohort of children the program has been asked to work with over the last year compared to previous years. In this regard the trends in the children will be discussed since 2004. This time period has been picked because the Oregon mental health system changed the way it uses intensive residential treatment in 2005 and again in 2013. At this point referrals to psychiatric residential treatment for children in the Oregon system have been reduced by nearly 90%. Therefore since 2005, most of the children in our program and therefore in this sample are from states other than Oregon.

It must be mentioned that all changes made by children cannot be immediately attributed to the treatment provided. Particularly with young children, there is a developmental or maturational expectation that the learning curve of young children is

greater than for other periods of life. This is one reason that treatment can be most efficient (highest return for the investment) at younger developmental ages. Maturation indicates an expectation that some children would have matured even without treatment. An experimental research design with tightly controlled variables and random assignment would be necessary to indicate exactly what caused the changes. Such a design is impractical with the multitude of intervening variables in residential treatment. With such a research design, there would need to be a control group and random assignment of children to our program and other emotionally disturbed children who would intentionally receive no treatment. This creates ethical problems denying children who seriously need treatment from obtaining it just so a research project can be conducted. The agency has opted to collect outcome data that can measure the changes themselves without definitively identifying the cause of the changes. This type of design is called Outcome Assessment and is a recognized approach in the outcome literature. Our priority is to help children heal and grow regardless of whether we can take any specific credit for the improvement.

There are three types of data or observations of change that have been used. The first is quantified standardized data, the second is personal subjective judgments, and the third is objective behavioral tracking. One or more of these approaches is commonly used in outcome studies, with the most complete assessment coming from a combination of all three. All three have something to add to the reflection of changes the child has or has not made during treatment. Multiple sources of data and observers can provide a more complete picture.

One of the unique aspects of our agency's outcome study is the child has an opportunity to contribute to the process and provide a subjective point-of-view. The child's observations of himself or herself are combined with the observations of parents and the clinical team. All aspects of the outcome data have been quantified to enable measuring various important objectives of treatment.

Measurement Tools

The following eight standardized, judgment, and behavioral tracking measures are used for outcome data:

- State of Oregon Level 5 Criteria--this behavior tracking instrument is used by the State to screen which children need intensive treatment. The instrument identifies eleven areas of serious behavior disorder.
- The Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (Sparrow, Balla and Cicchetti, 1984)--this standardized instrument reviews the important skill areas of Communication, Daily Living Skills, Socialization and Maladaptive Behavior. Information on this instrument primarily comes from parents.

- The Personal Inventory of Kid's Optimal Capacities (Ziegler, 1998)--this scale allows children to assess their own development in multiple areas of skills and capacities.
- Clinical improvement--each child's individualized treatment plan forms the basis of rating improvement on very specific areas that are pertinent to the child. The observations of improvement come from the clinical team in each area of the measurable treatment objectives.
- The Attachment Disorder Assessment Scale--Revised (Ziegler, 2006)--this standardized scale has been used for two decades and recently published with the results of independent psychometric research from six states. It has been shown to be useful in determining the presence and severity of attachment issues.
- Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale/CAFAS (Hodges, 1990)--this is a standardized assessment instrument to determine the level of functioning in multiple areas of the child's life including home, school, community, behavior, emotions and others.
- LaneCare Clinical Evaluation Instrument (Scheck, 2000)--this is a standardized assessment instrument to reflect the overall psychiatric and behavioral functioning of the child in sixteen domains.
- Child and Adolescent Service Intensity Instrument (AACAP, 2005) This measure of mental health acuity has been chosen by the State of Oregon to help determine the level of need for treatment intensity.

Data Results

State of Oregon Level 5 Criteria

The State Department of Human Services uses this instrument to determine if children have a high level of need and are appropriate for intensive residential services. This information is completed by the caseworker or referral source at the time of admission, which represents the major behavioral concerns or target problem behaviors necessitating the referral. This form includes the following behaviors: aggressive, assaultive, abusive, destructive, depressed or suicidal, firesetting, sex offending, feces smearing or soiling, other inappropriate sexual behavior, psychosis, self-abuse, running away, mental retardation or developmental delays. The significance of these issues and behaviors is that they can often prevent a child from living in a family. This measure is more objective than other measures since the child either exhibits the behavior or does not.

As has been the case every year, graduates of the program in 2014 overall showed significant improvement on this particular scale of the eight measurements obtained. The fourteen graduates this year came into the program with an average of 4 major problem areas each, this is the same as the previous year but somewhat lower than in the past several years. This indicates that at admission the children in our Program have multiple serious problem areas, which would be expected. At the end of treatment the average child reduced the serious behavior areas significantly. Significant improvement was noted at graduation in 65% of the problem areas, with 35% of specific problem behavior remaining the same (no child deteriorated on this measure). This rate of improvement is a bit lower than the average over the last ten years. Our data over the years has found a correlation between length of stay and improvement. Oregon children are given shorter lengths of stay due to funding priorities, however with the majority (70%) of children from states other than Oregon the lengths of stay have remained longer than instate. The result is that improvement for the overall cohort is back to pre-2004 levels. It is interesting to note that the children who did not reflect significant improvement in serious behavior over the last year were all from Oregon. The reason for this is unclear but could be related to age and lack of intensive previous treatment at younger ages. The length of stay for the 2014 graduates was somewhat longer than in previous years. This data further underscores the Program's track record of having most of the children leaving this intensive program much improved and most children are able to be maintained in a family in the community.

In addition to the overall improvement of 65%, 33% of the problem areas were completely eliminated, 32% of problems that remained were much improved, and 35% of problem areas persisted at around the same level. Overall the children reflect significant improvement in the behaviors that brought them to intensive residential treatment.

The Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales II

The Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales II is a standardized instrument rating several adaptive "life skills"--communication, daily living skills, and socialization. It provides a reliable and validated means to compare children in the program with children in the general population. This instrument uses the opinions of the family, which is important since a family will be the most likely next step for the child.

The results of the Vineland II for the children discharged in 2014 varied by area. Coming into the treatment program, the children were quite delayed in all three domains, particularly socialization. This has been the pattern every year. At the beginning of treatment, the children collectively were the lowest functioning in the area of socialization averaging at the .1%ile, which is among the lower functioning cohorts of any year. This means that on average these fourteen children would be lowest child in

a line of 1000 children in proficiency of socialization skills. Beginning treatment the children averaged the 3rd%ile for daily living skills and 3rd%ile for communication. These last two scores are also amount the lowest scores of any previous cohort of children. Therefore the children coming in were the poorest functioning group of any previous year. At the end of treatment the children showed improvement in all three areas. In previous years the area of socialization improved the most and this was essentially true for this year with socialization improving 400%. Said another way, the children started treatment very delayed and while in treatment caught up and passed 40 nationally normed peers in a line of 1000 children. Communication improved from the 3rd%ile to the 12th %ile. Daily living skills improved from the 3rd%ile to the 8th%ile. Despite good improvement, the children came into the Program functioning very poorly and left the Program significantly behind their peers in the population. Of the overall Vineland measurements, 74% indicated improvement, 3% showed some decline and 23% remained the same. These are better gains than most other years. Adaptive skills can be learned and improved in less restrictive treatment settings if more serious behavior is under control. This year's graduates showed better improvement compared to previous cohorts in other years in adaptive skills overall but they remain significantly behind most peers of their age.

Research is often cited that congregate care can have adverse results with the contagion of child learning problem behaviors. This may occur in some settings but is not indicated in the data on graduates of Jasper Mountain over time. First of all the vast majority of serious problem behaviors are extinguished and it appears significant opportunities in a residential setting to interact and develop social skills, communicate with peers and adults, and learn daily living skills has helped these children gain ground on their normal peers. Some research has postulated that shorter lengths of stay in residential settings show the same gains or improve gains. This has not been found in our outcome studies over the years. Longer stays have reflected better improvement than shorter stays over the years in all areas measured.

The Personal Inventory of Kid's Optimal Capacities--The PIKOC

The PIKOC provides a unique tool currently available only to our program. This instrument brings an important component of growth to the overall consideration of improvement--the child's opinion. Although some would question the value or truthfulness of the child's self-opinion, research on the PIKOC has shown that children tend to rate themselves more evenly than parents or teachers, in that they rate their weakness slightly higher and their strengths slightly lower than adults (parents and teachers). With this in mind, the self-reflection of the children is of interest given that most have shown significant growth and improvement on several other measures. Consistent with all previous years, the opinions of the children were less positive about their own progress than the opinions of adults. Overall the children rated themselves

statistically the same (less than 1% improved), which is the lowest self rating of any previous year.

Overall the "health integrity index" or total score on the PIKOC gives a picture of how the child views his/her overall functioning in eleven areas. In 1998 there was not a significant change in the pre and post test, in 1999 there was a 6% improvement, in 2000 a 13% improvement, in 2001 a 4% improvement, in 2002 a 3% improvement, in 2003 a 15% improvement, in 2004 a 12% increase, 18% in 2005, 15% in 2006, 18% in 2007, 11% in 2008, 16% in 2009, 8% in 2010, 7% in 2011, 12% in 2012, 4% in 2013, and less than 1% in 2014.

Overall the rate of improvement indicates that the children saw themselves making little improvement in overall health this year, quite different than most previous years. Since other measures indicate that children improved considerably more than this measure reflects, this modest effect may be caused by several factors. Although it can't be determined from this data exactly what each child was thinking, there are a couple useful clues. First, a major aspect of the treatment program is on honest self-reflection (some children gave lower post scores which were more accurate in the opinion of adults). Peer feedback has been built into the program on a daily basis aiding in accurate self awareness. Second, children tend to understate strengths on the instrument. It is conceivable that many of the children may be cautious about their own improvement. It is possible that children have both adjusted their self-perceptions (accurately lowered their scores based on improved self-awareness) as well as raised other scores based on awareness of self-improvement. And finally, the serious issues of this year's cohort as well as the very low adaptive functioning may be one aspect of this perception by the children. As with the data from previous years, the children's self-reports of improvement are the most conservative of any of the outcome measures. Although this surprises some adults, this pattern is consistent with research findings that children are conservative when rating personal improvement.

Clinical Improvement

The clinical improvement is the data that is most specific to the individualized treatment issues of each child. Improvement on clinical treatment issues rounds out the outcome data by adding the opinion of the clinical team who are responsible to develop, implement, and evaluation the treatment plan. Because treatment issues go right to the heart of the child's problems, they can be some of the more difficult improvements for the child to make.

Each of the treatment goals was assessed for the percent of improvement based on the manageable objectives in the treatment plan. Each child's treatment issue scores were averaged, as were the average overall scores for each child's clinical improvement. The

result was significant improvement across the board in clinical treatment areas. The average percent increase was 63%, or 4% better than last year. Since treatment issues are some of the most difficult changes to make, 63% improvement is considered quite good given the intensive population involved.

The Attachment Disorder Assessment Scale--Revised

This instrument was given to all the children the past few years. The reason for this is that most of the children who enter our Program have attachment issues ranging from mild to serious. Assessing the severity of attachment problems involves consideration of the child's developmental history, the quality of relationships with others and problematic behaviors. The instrument has now been given to 175 graduates. Although some children rated in the "severe attachment disorder" range, the average of the children at the beginning of treatment was rated "moderate attachment disorder." After residential treatment, the average score dropped 34%, which is consistent with previous years. Twice as many children improved as did not in developing attachment relationships this year. In considering these results it is important to keep in mind that of the three areas that determine the child's score, one cannot be lowered--the child's history. Therefore the gains came in the child's behavior and quality of relationships, which are important gains and will be needed in the family placements most of the children transitioned into.

The Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale/CAFAS

The next instrument was the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale. To obtain aggregate data, the overall score for the instrument was compared pre and post treatment. On the scale, the higher the score, the higher the dysfunction. The cohort mean score upon entering the program was 146, which is just below the highest score ever (indicating the second highest level of disturbance). When these same children were discharged from the Program the mean score dropped to 101, which still reflects concerns. The improvement rate of 31% is lower than improvement last year but about the same as past years. Different that the last three years, not all the children showed improvement on the CAFAS. 65% improved, 21% stayed the same and 14% were somewhat worse at discharge (all were Oregon children). The CAFAS reflects that the children on average left the program with a score of 101 reflecting continued impairments for the combination of the four areas of Role Performance, Behavior toward others, Moods/self harm, and Thinking. The change in scores reflects improvement for many of the children and most were able to transition to families. The discharge CAFAS reflects that children continue to be a challenge in a family setting which is an issue addressed by the treatment foster care program or other family placement the child moves into.

The LaneCare Clinical Evaluation Instrument

The sixteen domains of the LCEI are: hospitalizations, medications, recent problems, severity of symptoms, intensity of service need, symptom management, duration of symptoms, school/work functioning, daily living activities, family support, stability of housing, community support, quality of life, and self-efficacy.

The highest (most severe) score possible is 52. The fourteen children this year varied widely on this scale at the beginning of treatment ranging from a low of 31 and high of 56. On the LCEI range, the mean pretest score of graduates was 44, which is the same as last year and in the range of severe problems in overall functioning. The posttest mean was 34, which equates to moderate problems in overall functioning. This is an average improvement of 23% on this measure. Considering the full group, 95% improved on this measure. As a group, the children improved in functioning from serious/severe problems to moderate problems. The overall result was that the program's residents exhibited significant psychiatric and behavioral problems in the beginning of treatment but much less so at the end.

Child Assessment of Service Intensity Instrument (CASII)

This is the eighth year that this instrument has been included in the outcome measures. This instrument was designed by psychiatrists to determine the level of intensity of treatment the child needs. It was included due to the fact that the new intensive mental health system now uses it on all children. On the pretest the children had an average score of 26 reflecting serious psychiatric acuity (severity). On the post test they improved to 20. Both scores are the same as the previous year's cohort. 97% of the children improved on this measure, 3% deteriorated slightly in psychiatric acuity at discharge.

Comparison of the Last Ten Years

Comparing children discharging for the program the last nine years reflects more similarities than differences. The children over this period are remarkably similar in overall functioning on several measures, although the level of seriousness has gradually increased. On the Vineland, the children are much more delayed in the last five years and the discharge. CAFAS scores the last five years were the highest in our history. There is no question looking at this data that the system of care is referring more damaged children and they discharge with more severe issues than in the past. Particularly this year there is a major difference between child in Oregon and out of state. It is expected that out of state placements will have severe issues. Because of both of these factors the level of clinical improvement for Oregon children, while good, is far

lower than the decades before the mental health system changed in 2005. Children from other states on the average stay in the program longer and have better outcomes. The children who reflected the least improvement in 2014 were all from Oregon. While Jasper Mountain has a less favorable view of the Oregon system changes, advocates have their own view--higher levels of disturbance indicate the right children are receiving help, while the children are being discharged at higher levels of disturbance the shorter stays mean more children are given the intensive treatment they need.

[+ indicates improvement, - indicates deterioration]

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
PIKOC	+18%	+15%	+18%	+11%	+16%	+08%	+07%	+12%	+4%	>1%
LCEI	+21%	+20%	+09%	+20%	+15%	+14%	+24%	+21%	+30%	+23%
Clinical	+62%	+56%	+63%	+58%	+45%	+59%	+66%	+66%	+59%	+63%
Level 5	+82%	+74%	+77%	+80%	+64%	+76%	+90%	+86%	+96%	+65%
CAFAS	+34%	+36%	+33%	+38%	+29%	+25%	+43%	+44%	+45%	+65%
VIN. Com.	+71%	+14%	+36%	+40%	+160%	+100%	+31%	+138%	+171%	+300%
DLS	+130%	-22%	+30%	+111%	+13%	-59%	+22%	+36%	+44%	+167%
Soc.	+1000%	+22%	+60%	-40%	-50%	-19%	+2000%	+133%	+250%	+400%
ADAS-R	+17%	+37%	+51%	+34%	+22%	+58%	+42%	+44%	+75%	+34%
CASII	--	+20%	+16%	+19%	+12%	+19%	+20%	+31%	+23%	+23%

Discussion

This year's data, when considered with data from all children discharged from the program since 1998, and utilizing several sources of observations, provides evidence that children improved most substantially in these areas: serious behavior, overall disturbance as rated by the LCEI and by the CAFAS, clinical improvement, and functional skills. In fact the children significantly improved on every measure. As can be seen in the multi-year data, 2013 reflected the largest improvement of any year in the following areas: ADAS-R (relationship skills), Level 5 (serious behavior), LCEI (stability), CAFAS (functional level) and CASII (psychiatric impairment). In 2014 some areas were higher than last year and some were lower, but overall very similar. Therefore 2014 reflected some of the most serious children coming into the Program (measured by the CAFAS) and some of the most improved at graduation of any group in the last seventeen years. When the overall impairment of the children is measured, they were downgraded from severe to moderate.

The impact of the changes in the Oregon mental health system is also being monitored, particularly since the system once again changed in 2013. There appears to be at least two impacts we observe in our data. With fewer children in the residential programs in Oregon, the population is anticipated to be more disturbed. The data from our Program

would support this impact, with the children entering the program this year reflecting among the highest levels of impairment of any previous year. The other impact of the new intensive mental health system is somewhat less clear. The trend to shorter stays among Oregon children was counterbalanced with out-of-state children with longer stays in treatment. Although research is sometimes referenced that shorter stays have not hindered outcomes or may even improve outcomes, this has not been the case at Jasper Mountain since the system changed in 2005. Despite our challenges with changes in the system of care, if the Program could guarantee to parents at the point of intake for new children, the following track record reflected in the above outcomes, it would undoubtedly be received with enthusiasm:

- 97% reduction in psychiatric acuity (severity)
- 65% improvement in serious behavior
- Significant improvement in relationship skills.
- Improved attachment skills
- Improvement in global functioning.
- Reduction in overall severity of problems from severe to moderate.

We are now seventeen years into the process of outcome measurements with all 244 children who have been discharged since 1998. However, the results to date are showing an emerging and consistent trend toward significant improvement in all areas. The data to date provides a strong positive reflection of the improvement made by these children at the point they left the Program compared to when they began treatment.