

ScWk 242
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Example of Abstract for Final Paper

Abstract

“The Effectiveness of Functional Family Therapy for Troubled Youth and Families”

This study will evaluate the effectiveness of Functional Family Therapy (FFT) for troubled youth and their families. Based on behavioral theory, FFT is a time-limited structured family therapy procedure designed to increase the family’s ability to identify and implement behavioral change for the purpose of preventing future criminal behavior by the youth. The main research question concerns the effectiveness of FFT as implemented in a community setting. Families referred to mental health agencies in a large county will comprise the sampling frame, and families will be recruited and randomly assigned to FFT vs. the usual available family- and individual-based treatments. The dependent outcome variables will be subsequent involvement with juvenile justice and measures of family functioning. Independent variables will include treatment group assignment, ethnicity of youth, previous arrests, gender of youth, and measures of family structure. Measures will be taken prior to starting treatment (baseline), six weeks after treatment begins, upon completion of treatment, and six months after treatment was completed. Multiple linear and logistic regressions will be used to determine the variables’ impact on the outcome measures. A qualitative component will also include a phenomenological study of the experience of ten families throughout treatment, interviewed at the six week and again at the six-month period. The focus will be parent and youth perceptions of the benefits and limitations of FFT. The study has important implications for evidence-based practices as implemented in community settings with diverse families.