

New Measures to Assess Youth Empowerment and Youth Participation in Treatment Planning

Presented at the
Building on Family Strengths Conference

May 31, 2007 Portland, Oregon

Janet Walker & Laurie Powers



Why new measures?

- Use in research and program evaluation
- Provide reliable ways for programs to measure whether their services are “youth guided”
- Help people understand the different elements that are part of the larger “constructs” of youth empowerment and participation

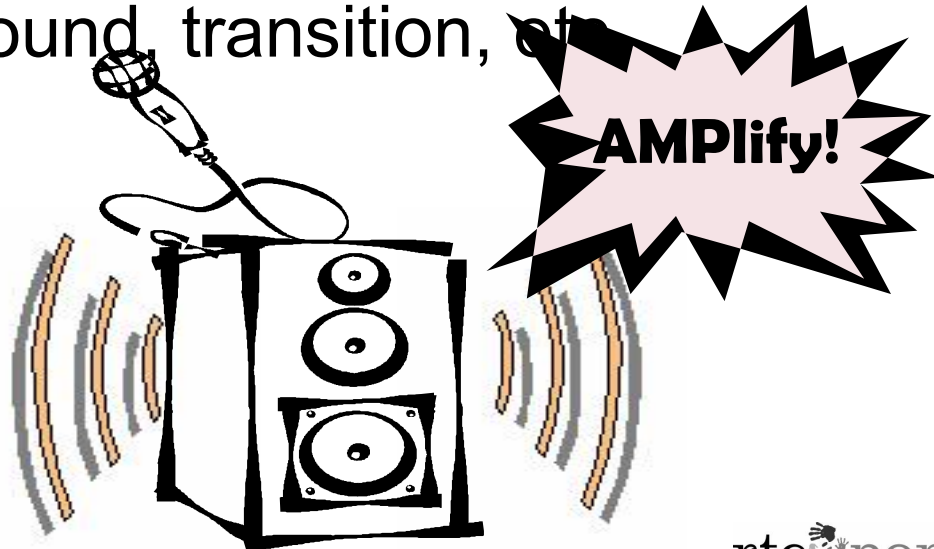


AMPLify!

rtc  portland

AMP = Achieve My Plan

- A research project of the RTC
- A central part of AMP is developing and testing a process for helping youth have more voice in their planning
 - IEP, wraparound, transition, etc.



AMPLify!

What do these terms mean...

- **Youth participation**: extent to which the planning process encourages—and the plan itself reflects—youth perspectives, ideas, and goals
- **Youth empowerment**: extent to which youth feel successful in/confident about making decisions and taking action at three “levels”:
 - Self: Managing one’s own mental and emotional health
 - Services: Managing mental health services/supports
 - System: Helping to improve the mental health system and the experience of other youth



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Developing “candidate” items

- Began with empowerment and participation items from measures previously developed at the RTC for caregivers/parents
- Changed terminology to reflect “emotional or mental health” (vs. generic “problems”)
- Added to the pool of items based on
 - Phone and in-person focus groups with youth
 - Sense that, for participation, standards keep evolving (and high means for responses)
- Included negatively phrased “reversed” items



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

New items- participation

- For **participation**

- Extent to which youth can track whether what's been agreed to at meetings is actually happening

I get an up-to-date copy of my plan.

Team members follow through on what they have agreed to do for my plan.

- Extent to which youth have an opportunity to prepare for and influence the meeting content **before** the meeting happens

I help decide what is on the agenda for my meetings.

Before a meeting, someone helps me decide how I want to express my ideas to the team.



AMPLify!

New items- empowerment

- At the “self” level: Similar to adult items, but focus on own life and include how present situation can impact thinking about the future

I feel I can take steps toward the future I want.

(R) I worry that difficulties related to my mental health or emotions will keep me from having a good life.

I make changes in my life so I can live successfully with my emotional or mental health challenges.



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

More items- empowerment

- At the **service** level: include focus on understanding how services are supposed to work and whether or not they are doing so:

I understand how my services and supports are supposed to help me.

I can tell whether a service or support is helping me or not.



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

More more items- empowerment

- At the **system** level– include focus on school, speaking out:

I take opportunities to speak out and educate people about what it's like to experience emotional or mental health difficulties.

I tell people in agencies and schools how services for young people can be improved.

I feel I can use my knowledge and experience to help other young people with emotional or mental health difficulties.



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

A survey for

- Youth and young adults who
 - Were between 14 and 21 years old
 - Had participated in team-based treatment planning during the past six months
 - Consented/Assented after learning about risks and benefits
 - Youth 14-17 provided “assent” but needed adult consent
 - Young adults 18-21 consented



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

The survey– youth/young adult version

- Included both sets of “candidate” items (participation and empowerment) **PLUS**
- Questions about the goals that are on the plan and the extent to which these goals
 - Are personally meaningful to the youth
 - Can be achieved
 - If achieved, will make a significant improvement in the youth’s life **PLUS**
- Personal information: age, race, diagnosis
- Some youth invited to retake the survey again after one month to six weeks (test/retest)



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

The survey– caregiver version

- To compare responses of youth and caregiver “dyads” (pairs)
- For caregivers
 - Who had participated along with their youth in team planning AND
 - whose youth/young adult
 - was eligible for the survey and
 - completed a survey



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Surveys distributed...

- At conferences
- To people who worked in collaborative planning programs (e.g., wraparound programs)
- To families of students in the Long Beach School District who had an ED label
- To individuals who learned about the survey (e.g. via the rtc listserv)

Youth were paid \$20, caregivers \$15 (for a shorter survey)



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Youth characteristics/demographic

- Male 57%/ Female 43% (youth survey)
- Mean age 16 years (youth)
- Ever taken medication for MH reasons? 74% (youth) 84% (CG)
- Ever received free lunch? 85% (youth) 89% (CG)
- Household median income: \$20,800 (CG)

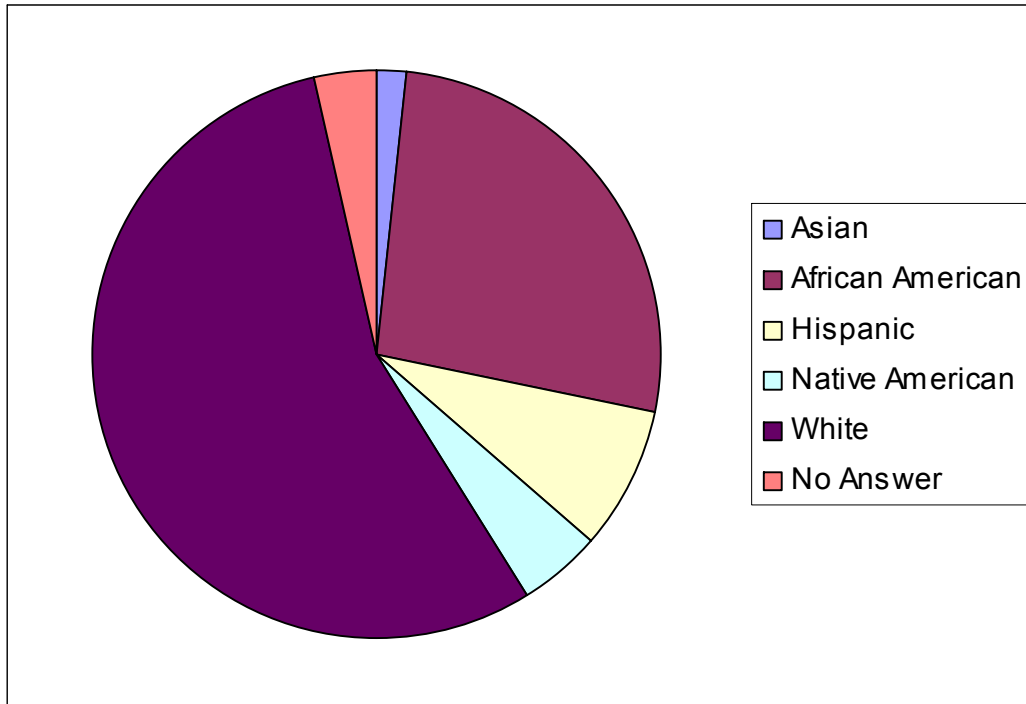
Family income level	Youth (%)	CG (%)
Low	22	39
Modest	29	23
Middle	41	32
Higher	7	1
Highest	2	3



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

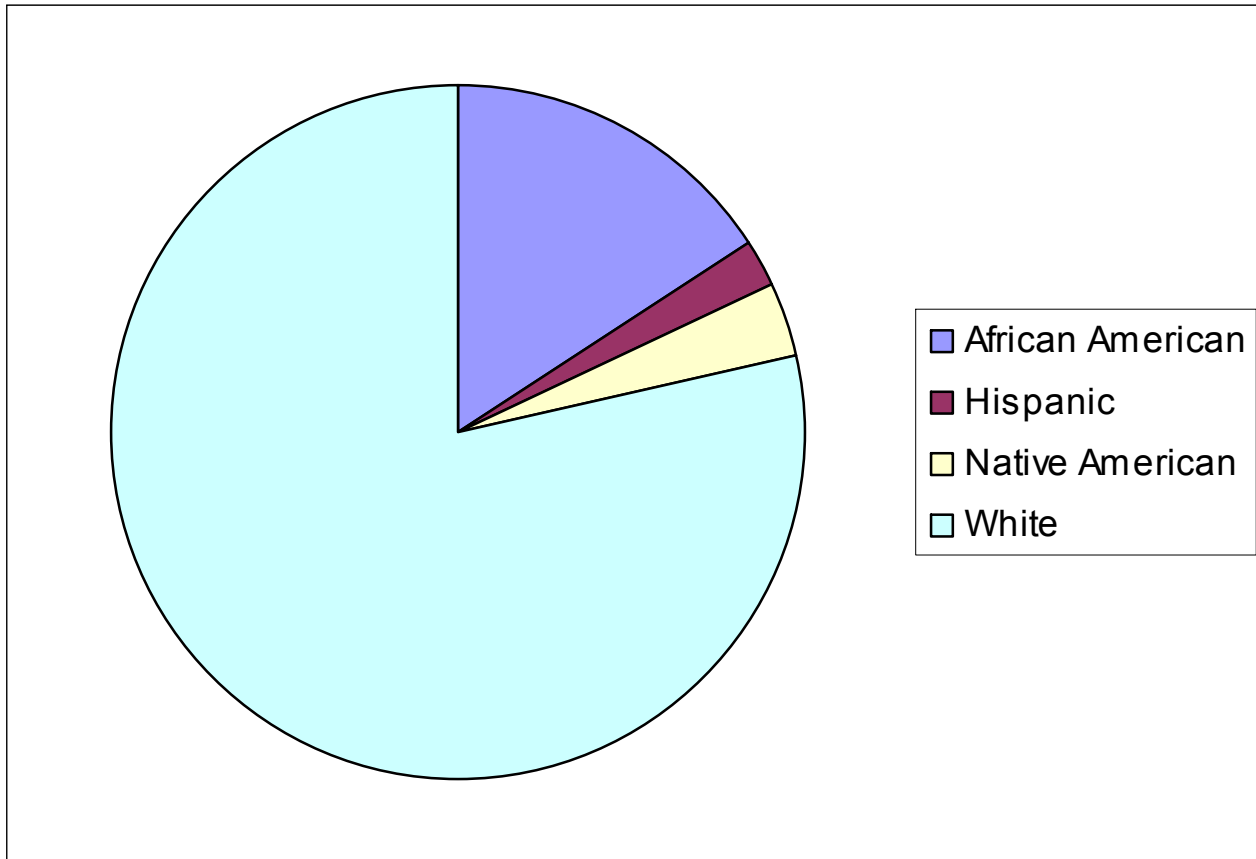
Youth race/ethnicity (youth survey)



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

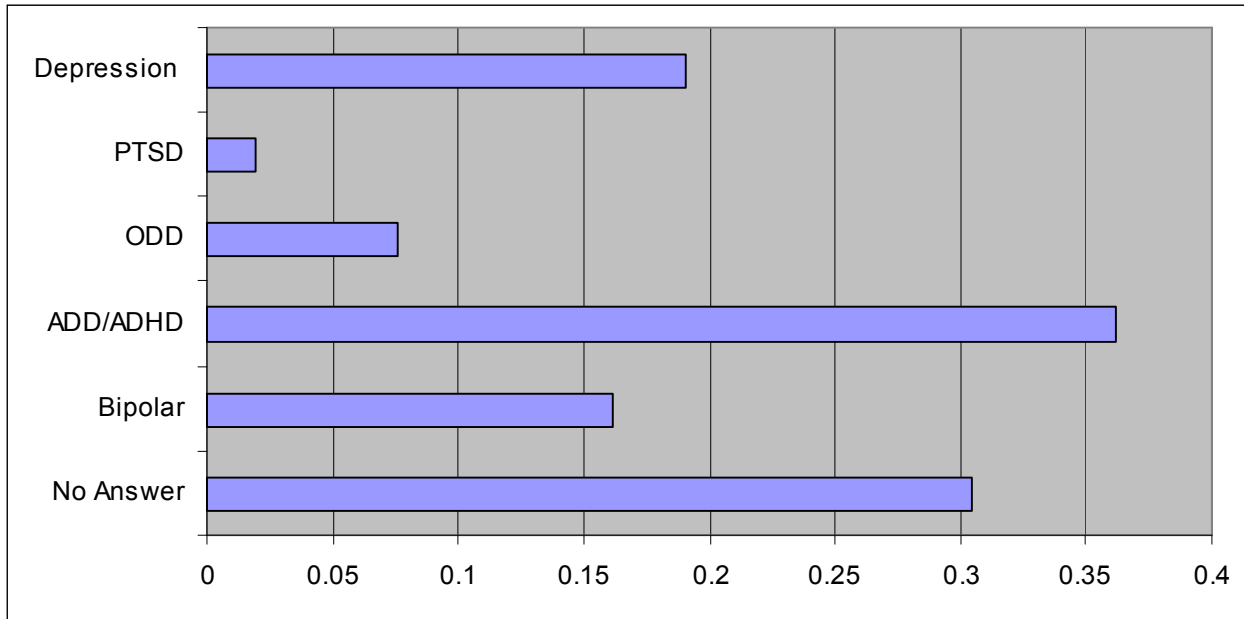
Caregiver race/ethnicity



AMPLify!

Youth diagnoses— youth survey

Percent reporting a diagnosis of...



Sample responses:

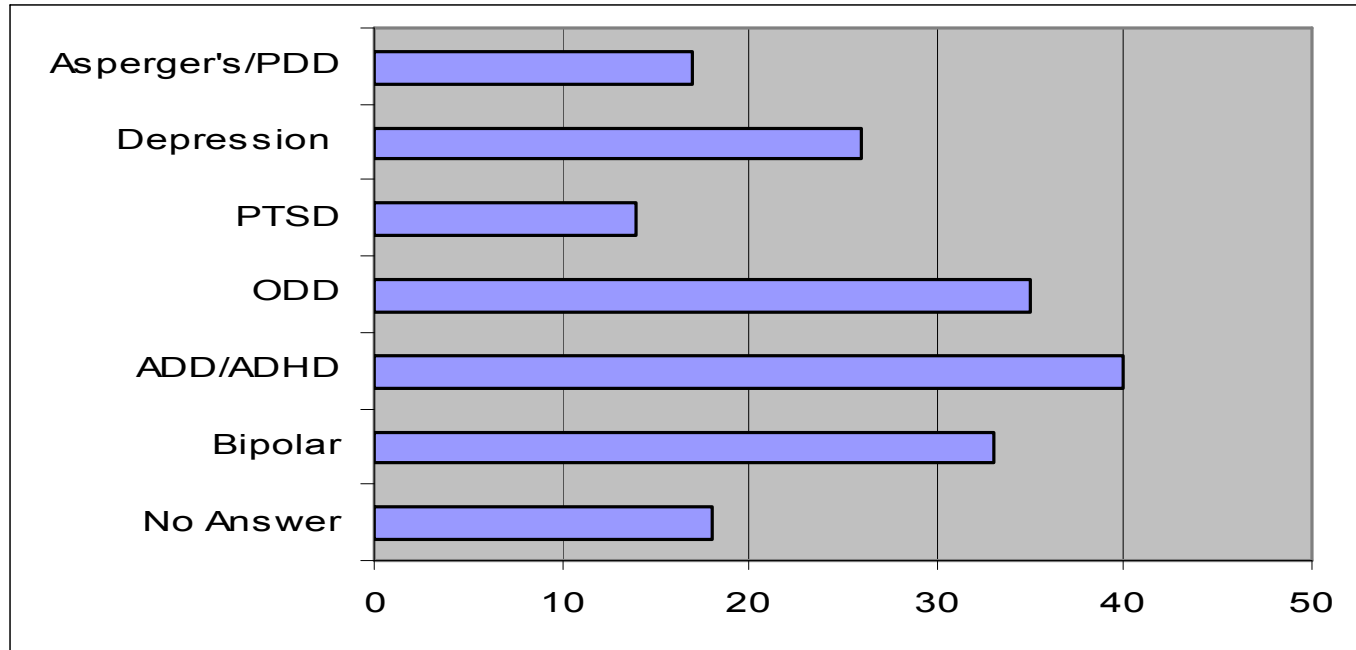
- Bipolar, AHDH, ODD, FAS, Mild Cerebral Palsy, Delayed Development
- ADD, ODD, Anxiety Disorder, Depression, Aspergers



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Youth Diagnoses– Caregiver survey



Examples of responses:

- FAS, Delayed development, Bipolar, ODD, Mild Cerebral Palsy
- odd, ied, depression, blind mentally challenged

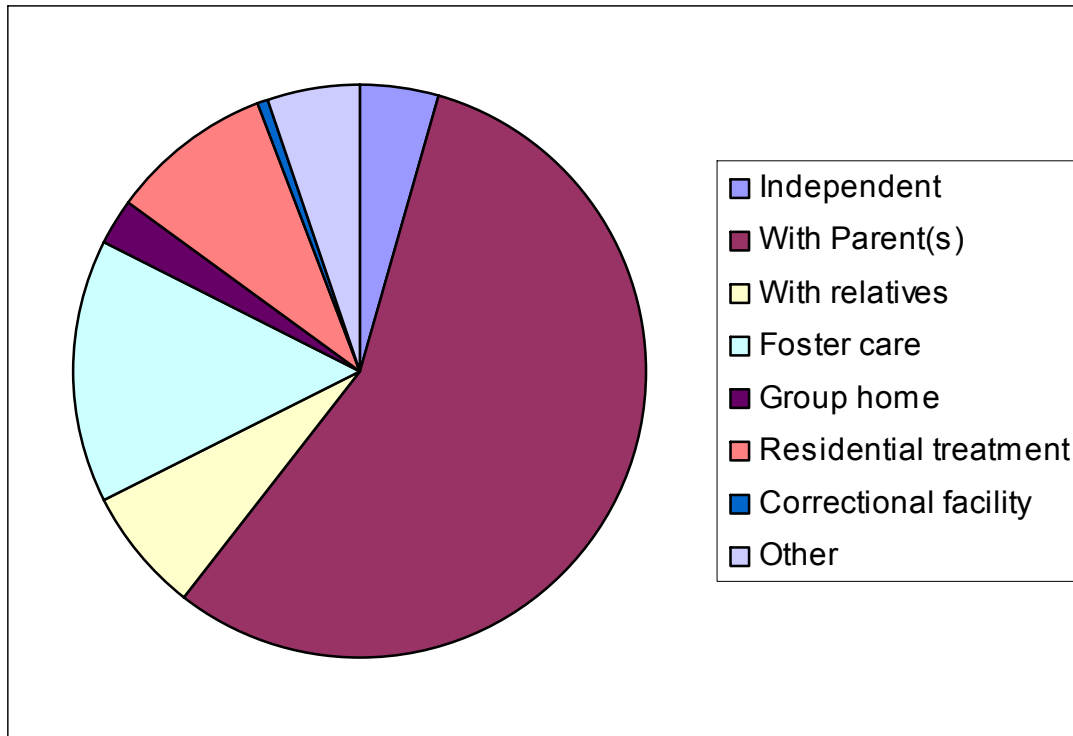


AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Youth- current living situation

Current living situation (from youth surveys):

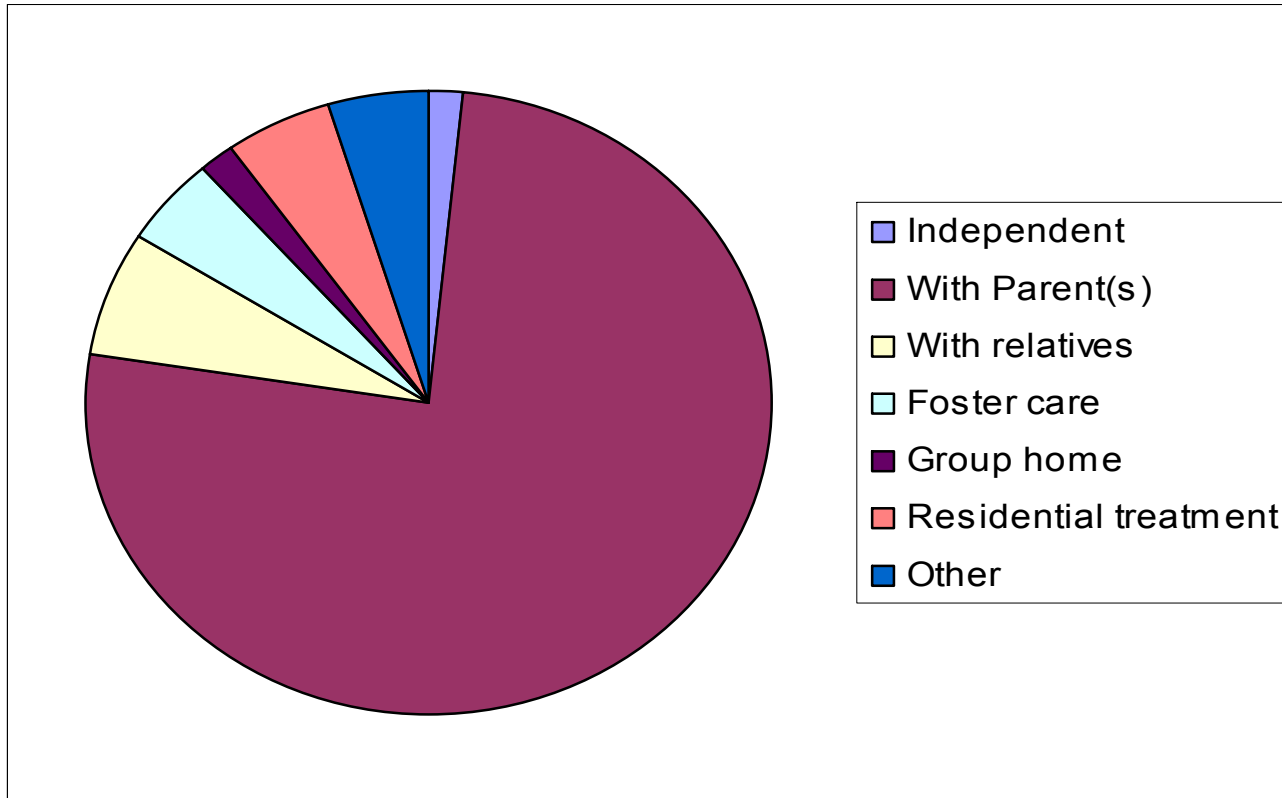


AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Youth current living situation— caregiver survey

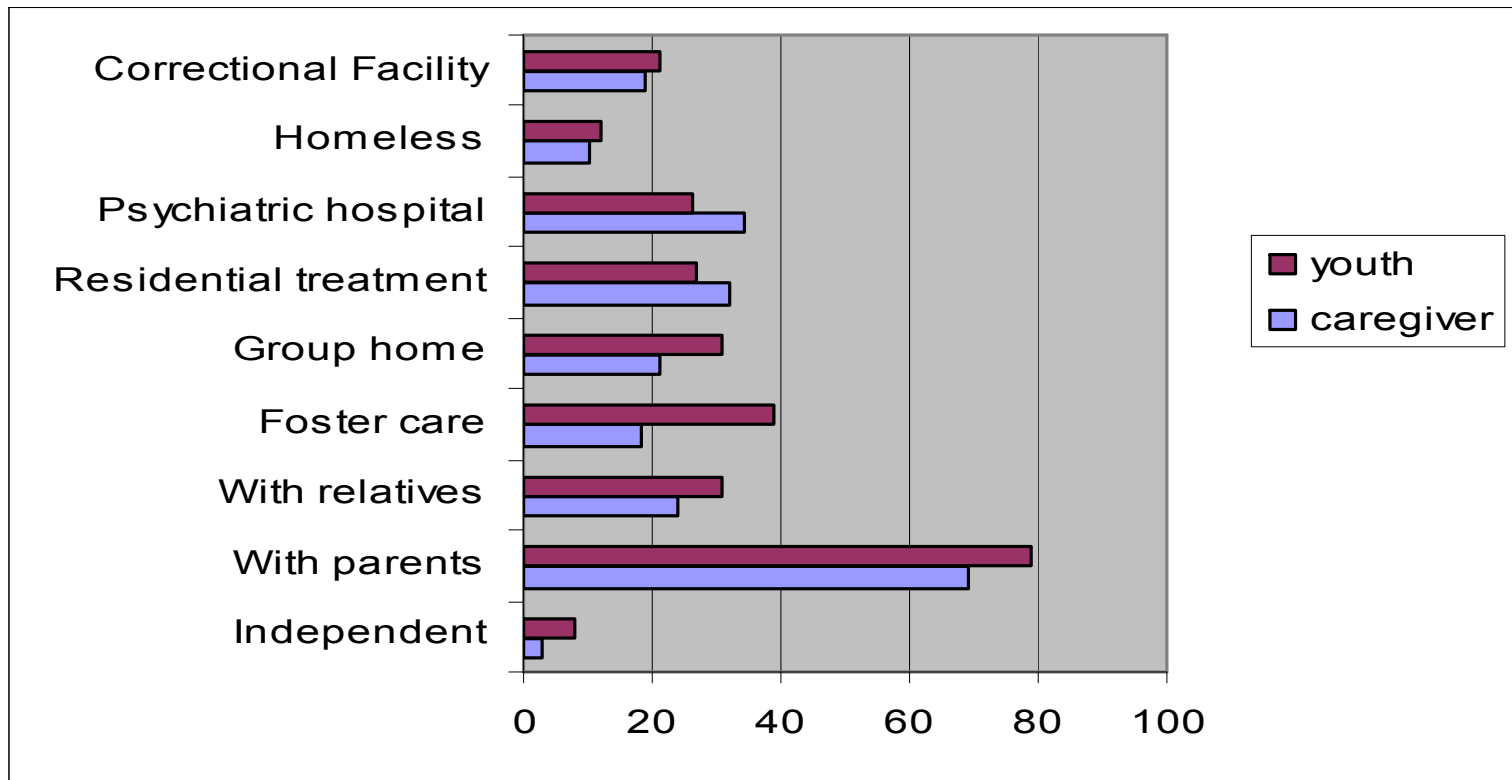
Current living situation ~80% of respondents are mothers.
Many of the rest are other female relatives.



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Percent of youth ever living in various settings...



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Factor analysis

- Look at responses to a group of items to see whether or not there seem to be clear underlying “constructs”
 - Groups of items seem to “hang together”
 - Items in a group fit with a construct
- In factor analysis this looks like
 - A relatively small number of factors explaining a large portion of the total variance
 - Interpretable groups of items with high factor loadings and low cross loadings



Factor analysis

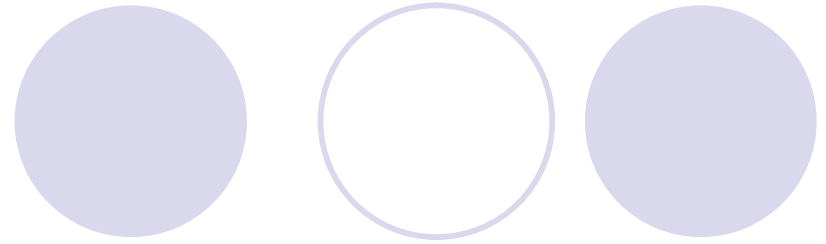
- Choice about how to handle missing data– listwise
- Choices for “extraction”– Principal Axis Factoring
- Choices about number of factors to extract
- Choices for “rotation”– oblique rotation, Promax



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Steps: Participation



- Initial factor analysis
- Deleted reverse items
- New factor analysis: extracted 4 factors, 3 clearly interpretable
 - Developing *my* plan (voice in planning, plan that helps)
 - Preparation– new items
 - Accountability– new items
- Chose items with high loadings (and those with best theoretical fit)



AMPLify!

Preparation subscale: factor loadings, means

Before a meeting, someone helps me decide how I want to express my ideas to the team.	0.500	3.10
Someone from the team helps me plan the things I want to say at the meeting.	0.700	2.74
I am encouraged to take charge of part of the meeting if I want to.*	0.248	3.57
I help decide what is on the agenda for my team meetings.	0.764	3.01
I help decide who is invited to my meetings.	0.570	3.11

α for four items: .75; scale mean 11.94; s.d. 4.49



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Accountability subscale: factor loadings, means

I get an up-to-date copy of my plan.	0.658	3.64
Team members have specific tasks to do for my plan.	0.638	3.90
Team members report to me about what they are doing for my plan.	0.721	3.69
Team members follow through on what they have agreed to do for my plan.	0.727	4.03

α for four items = .76



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Developing *my plan* initial and final factor loadings

I get to approve things before they become a part of my plan**	0.301	0.618	3.72
Team members respect my ideas, even when they disagree.**	0.186	0.605	3.94
During planning, I have plenty of opportunities to express my ideas.	0.655	0.738	4.22
I understand what's in my plan.	0.829	0.644	4.10
My plan helps me.	0.508	0.744	3.99
I understand everything that is decided while we are working on my plan.	0.656	0.678	3.92
My plan fits with my background and values.	0.459	0.688	3.91
My plan includes the goals that are most important to me.	0.476	0.784	4.03
My plan helps me get opportunities to do things I enjoy.	0.408	0.699	3.75
During planning, we make changes to my plan based on my ideas.	0.422	0.752	3.46
My plan helps me get opportunities to develop skills and talents.	0.570	0.720	3.86
I get to make decisions about the best ways to reach the goals in my plan.	0.765	0.799	3.91
I get the information I need to understand the choices I have for my plan.	0.591	0.744	3.94
My plan helps me see that I can use my skills and abilities to reach my goals.	0.674	0.788	4.10
I am encouraged to take charge of part of the meeting if I want to.*	0.426		3.56

Empowerment

- Initial factor analysis: System clearly on own factor
- Remove system items: analyze separately
- Remove reverse items: 3- factor solution
 - Self—managing emotions and mental health
 - Service— working with providers
 - Understanding services and supports- how they are supposed to work (our new items)



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

System: Initial factor loadings, means

I feel I can help improve services or supports for young people with emotional or mental health difficulties.*	0.603	3.68
I feel like I understand how mental health services and supports are organized.	0.341	3.46
I take opportunities to speak out and educate people about what it's like to experience emotional or mental health difficulties.*	0.768	3.26
I have ideas about how to improve services for young people with emotional or mental health difficulties.*	0.709	3.29
I help other young people learn about services or supports that might help them.*	0.932	3.09
I tell people in agencies and schools how services for young people can be improved.*+	0.696	2.79
I know about the legal rights that young people with mental health difficulties have.*+	0.498	3.25
I feel that I can use my knowledge and experience to help other young people with emotional or mental health difficulties.*	0.785	3.69

* α for seven items .89; mean 23.06; s.d. 7.20

+ α with these two items removed .87; mean 17.01; s.d. 5.39



AMPLify!

Empowerment: Self

When problems arise with my mental health or emotions, I handle them pretty well.

0.767 3.59

I feel my life is under control.

0.754 3.60

I make changes in my life so I can live successfully with my emotional or mental health challenges.

0.506 3.79

I know how to take care of my mental or emotional health.

0.724 3.81

I focus on the good things in life, not just the problems.

0.470 3.85

α for five items .840; scale mean 18.65; s.d. 4.08



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Empowerment: Managing services

I choose which services and supports I receive.	.547	3.20
I know the steps to take when I think that I am receiving poor services or supports.*	.423	3.70
I work with providers to adjust my services or supports so they fit my needs.	.543	3.64
My opinion is just as important as service providers' opinions in deciding what services and supports I need.	.420	4.03
I tell service providers what I think about services I get from them.	.772	3.76
I look for information about services or supports that I want.	.510	3.22
When a service or support is not working for me, I take steps to get it changed.	.622	3.56

α for all items .829; scale mean 25.12; s.d. 6.10; α for six items = .809



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Empowerment: Understanding how services and supports help

I am able to get information that helps me understand what's going on with my mental health or emotions.	0.681	4.01
When I need help with my mental health or emotions, I ask for help from others.	0.433	3.40
I believe that services and supports can help me reach my goals.	0.740	4.02
I can tell whether a service or support is helping me or not.	0.641	4.25
I understand how my services and supports are supposed to help me.	0.525	3.98

α for five items .791; scale mean 19.65; s.d. 4.00



AMPLify!

rtc  portland

Next steps

- Re-enter the data and do quality control
- Re-run and check
- Compute individual scale scores
- Examine correlations between empowerment and participation
- Compare youth and caregiver dyad scale scores
- Compare test and retest scores and goals
- Test some hypotheses: e.g. youth with higher participation have goals they like better, goals that look more like “recovery” goals, etc.



AMPLify!

rtc  portland