Crossover Youth in Florida: Current and Future Research

Lodi Rohrer
Roxann McNeish
Flandra Ismajli

May 10, 2019

Florida Institute for Child Welfare
Research Symposium on Racial Equity
Presentation Overview

- Terminology
- System Pathways
- Demographics
- Outcomes
- Best Practices and Solutions
- Florida’s Specialized Treatment Programs
- Racial Equity Grant Proposal
Terminology

Crossover youth refers to youth involved, or at risk of involvement, in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

In most cases, these youth have experienced some form of abuse or neglect and have engaged in delinquent behaviors.

Related terms:
• Dually-involved youth
• Dually-served youth
• Dually-adjudicated youth
• Dual-system youth
• Multi-system youth
**Terminology**

**Crossover:**
An umbrella term for any child who experiences maltreatment and engages in delinquency.

**Dually-Involved:**
A child who has had formal or informal system contact with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

**Dually-Adjudicated:**
A child who has court system involvement with both systems.

Adapted from: Abbott & Barnett (2018)
### System Pathways

#### An Overview of Pathways Leading to Identification as a Dually-Involved Youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathway</th>
<th>Starting Point</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathway 1</strong></td>
<td>Youth has an open child welfare case</td>
<td>Youth is arrested</td>
<td>Youth enters the delinquency system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathway 2</strong></td>
<td>Youth is arrested</td>
<td>Youth has a previously closed child welfare case</td>
<td>Referral is made to child welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathway 3</strong></td>
<td>Youth is arrested—no previous contact with child welfare</td>
<td>Upon investigation, maltreatment is discovered</td>
<td>Referral is made to child welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathway 4</strong></td>
<td>Youth is arrested, adjudicated, and placed in a correctional placement</td>
<td>Time in correctional placement ends, but there is no safe home to return to</td>
<td>Referral to child welfare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Herz et al. (2012)
System Pathways

Source: Vidal, Connell, Prince, & Tebes (2018)
What do we know about crossover youth?

- They are in the child welfare system for longer periods of time
- They are more likely to be female
- Minorities, particularly Black youth, are overrepresented
  - Black youth make up only 30% of the child welfare population but comprise 54% of the child welfare population that intersects with the juvenile justice system (Herz & Ryan, 2008)
- Many have experienced multiple placements out of the home
- They are often truant and have poor school performance
- They are perceived as higher risk and receive harsher dispositions and harsher treatment in out-of-home placements, such as group homes
92 percent of crossover youth are first involved in the child welfare system.5

40 percent of crossover youth are female, which is disproportionately high compared with the general juvenile justice population.7

47 percent greater risk
Maltreated youth are at a higher risk for becoming involved in delinquency than youth from the general population.6

56 percent of crossover youth are African-American, which is disproportionately high compared to their peers from other racial groups.8

83 percent of crossover youth have challenges with mental health or substance abuse.9

Source: Casey Family Programs
Background

These youth need our attention because they are at risk for:

- Mental health challenges
- Educational challenges
- Vocational challenges
- Higher rates of recidivism
- Longer stays in detention
- Poorer placement stability
- Poorer permanency outcomes
What do crossover youth need?

• Multi-system collaboration so that there is coordinated case assessment, planning, and supervision
• Family engagement and focus on youth/family strengths
• Standardized risk and needs assessment tools
• Integration of evidence-based models and practices
Solutions

Need for **integrated** services from multiple systems:
Florida’s Specialized Treatment Programs
Florida’s Specialized Treatment Programs

Each program:
• Serves 20 youth per month
• Ages 11-17
• Youth at risk of being in both systems
• Should use evidence-based practices
• 3 in-person meetings per week

Services provided:
• Screening and intake assessment
• Treatment planning
• Family counseling
• Youth group sessions
• Parenting skills training
• Therapeutic mentorship
• Case management
• School engagement
• Vocational training
• Independent living services
• Mobile crisis support (24/7)
• Discharge planning
• Follow-up services
Program Referral Sources

- **Program A**: DCF 29%, DJJ 18%, Other 53%
- **Program B**: DCF 33%, DJJ 25%, Other 43%
- **Program C**: DCF 58%, DJJ 39%, Other 4%

Legend: DCF, DJJ, Other
Youth Served by Gender and Race

Program A
- Male: 49%
- Female: 51%

Program B
- Male: 77%
- Female: 23%

Program C
- Male: 58%
- Female: 42%

Program A
- Black: 46%
- White: 17%
- Other: 37%

Program B
- Black: 50%
- White: 31%
- Other: 19%

Program C
- Black: 70%
- White: 25%
- Other: 5%
Other Indicators

Approximately 100 youth served by each program since 12/2017
Mean age of youth: 15 years
Mean days in program: Ranges from 96 to 159 days (3 to 5 months)
Proportion of successful completion: Ranges from 22% to 61%
Proportion returning to same or lower level of care: 70% to 90%
Recommendations

Treatment programs should adopt a standard protocol for collecting information on performance measures and other indicators.

All programs should be encouraged to use electronic records to facilitate information sharing.

Treatment programs should agree on a common set of assessment tools and a schedule for administration.
Crossover Youth:
Racial Equity Grant Proposal

**Purpose**: To examine racial disparities in the experiences and outcomes of crossover youth

**Question**: Are different treatment models for crossover youth effective in meeting the needs of minority families and producing equitable outcomes?

**Method**: To compare experiences and outcomes for youth served with a program with a model in place as compared to those served without a formal model.
Mixed Methods Approach

1. What are the perceived challenges and opportunities when providing services to minority families?
2. What agency policies and programs support/impede the provision of culturally responsive services?
3. How does the agency’s values, training, service delivery, and communication enhance cultural competency?
4. Do minority families feel comfortable, understood, and treated fairly?
5. How do outcomes differ for minority youth and families within each treatment program?
Questions or Suggestions?

Lodi Lipien Rohrer, MSPH
Senior Social and Behavioral Researcher
Department of Child & Family Studies
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences
University of South Florida
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MHC 2418
Tampa, FL 33612-3807
llrohrer@usf.edu | 813-974-0517