

# Research Methods Designed for Residential Treatment Contexts: Ethnographic Elements of Mixed Methods Approaches

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# Doing Research In Residential Settings

- \* A brief history of research in residential settings in the US and Canada
- 1. Focus on Client-Level Outcomes
- 2. Focus on Organizational Outcomes
- 3. Focus on Youth Perspectives

# What We Can Learn from Research

- \* Program design – from intuition to promising practice to evidence-informed and evidence-based practices
- \* Interventions – what does what?
- \* Outcomes – limited to point of discharge or one-time follow up

# Current Limitations in Research

- \* Lived experiences of young people, including:
  - \* All young people
  - \* Black Youth
  - \* LGBTQ2s
  - \* Specific MH constellations

# Current Limitations con't...

- \* Fidelity issues – what actually happens?
- \* Congruence issues – how does what happens fit with what we say happens?
- \* Control & Laboratory issues – what do we have to do to achieve the outcomes we aim for?

# Research Innovation

- \* Learning as Intervention Project
  - \* Goals and Objectives
  - \* Description
  - \* Structure
  - \* Research Methods – Surveys, interviews, ethnography

# Ethnographic Approaches in Residential Care and Treatment

- \* Observing the things not recorded
- \* Getting a full view of engagement, action, space, movement and sensory contexts
- \* Experiencing the lived reality of youth and staff
- \* Experience of observing researchers

# Data from Ethnography

- \* Field Notes:

- \* Documentation of contexts
- \* Descriptions of interactions by third party
- \* Candid moments
- \* Actions and nuanced reactions
- \* Documentation of activities not documented anywhere else
- \* Observer experience as data



# Data Comparison and Enrichment

- \* Interviews – youth & staff
- \* Surveys – youth & staff
- \* Dialogue and Discussion
  - \* Academic/Practice Leader
  - \* Practice Leader/Practice Leader
  - \* Canadian/German

Engagement at all levels: youth, staff, supervisors, leaders