



Family and Youth Justice Programs

Rural Family Treatment Courts Resources and Research

June 28th, 2022

Members of Family Treatment Courts and Healing to Wellness Courts in Washington State met to discuss the challenges and opportunities of working in rural communities in Washington. This meeting is facilitated by the Family and Youth Justice Programs of the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts. Below you will find resources related to this meeting.

A video of the topic overview will be uploaded following the meeting as well as any new resources brought to the group.

Published Research

June of 2022. Other sources are available using a variety of search tools. Please contact the FTC Training Coordinator if you would like to add another article to this literature review. Note: The descriptions identified with a “summary” were written by Meghan Fitzgerald and are her interpretation of the relevant pieces of information in this article. Those descriptions identified with “abstract” were written by the original author of the piece. All articles are available via download and the original authors are cited in the annotated bibliography below.

National Center for State Courts (NCSC)

NCSC has put together multiple recent and ongoing pieces of research on virtual court hearings and dockets and includes tip sheets, training videos, and direct links to articles on the [NCSC website](#). In particular we’d like to draw your attention to the [Virtual Hearing Tip Sheet NCSC](#) has developed based on this work. They also have a paper on trauma responsive hearings that is worth reading.



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Family Treatment Court Research

[Family treatment court participation and permanency in a rural setting: Outcomes from a rigorous quasi-experiment.](#)

Lloyd Sieger, M. H., Becker, J., & Brook, J. (2021). *Child & Family Social Work*, 26(4), 540–549. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12836>

This article is focused on reunification rates in a rural FTC.

Excerpt from Abstract: FTC children were 170% more likely to reunify, and 58% more likely to achieve permanency, than comparison cases. The effect of FTC participation on likelihood of reunification and likelihood of permanency was stronger when models estimated outcomes from FTC start date, rather than child removal date.

[The Effectiveness of a Home-Based Delivery of Triple P in High-Risk Families in Rural Areas.](#)

Abate, A., Marek, R. J., Venta, A., Taylor, L., & Velez, L. (2020). *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 29(4), 997–1007. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-019-01684-2>

Summary: This study assesses benefits of Triple P, positive parenting intervention when used in-home with 171 caregivers described as “high-risk, rural families from diverse backgrounds” and found improvements in parenting skills across these self-assessment scales: PAI Anger intensity, PAI Problems, PS Laxness, PS Over-reactivity, PS Hostility, ECBI Intensity, ECBI Problems across all demographic groups. They speculate that cultures with high family connection may be particularly appropriate for home-based parenting services.



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SUD and Mental Health Services

[Closing the Gap: Increasing Community Mental Health Services in Rural Indiana.](#)

Schultz, K., Farmer, S., Harrell, S., & Hostetter, C. (2021). *Community Mental Health Journal*, 57(4), 684–700. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-020-00737-x>

Summary: This study of the services available in a rural county in Indiana provides useful methodology for conducting a needs assessment in your local community. Many Washington State Counties could benefit from systematic identification of needs to ask for additional county or state level assistance at barrier reduction. The result of this study was four recommendations for a community task force to address, including: a community-based resource guide, place-based services, university partnerships, and a hybrid telehealth model. Details of these recommendation are also included.

[Strategies Adopted by Addiction Facilities during the Coronavirus Pandemic to Support Treatment for Individuals in Recovery or Struggling with a Substance Use Disorder: A Scoping Review.](#)

de Vargas, D., Pereira, C. F., Volpato, R. J., Lima, A. V. C., da Silva Ferreira, R., de Oliveira, S. R., & Aguilar, T. F. (2021). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(22), 12094. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182212094>

Abstract: This review aimed to identify and synthesize strategies and actions adopted by addiction facilities to support and maintain treatment during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. A scoping review was conducted using the following information sources: Virtual Health Library, SCOPUS, Web of Science, PubMed, CINAHL, and Latin American and Caribbean Health Science Literature. From a total of 971 articles, 28 studies were included. The strategies to maintain the care offer were telehealth/telemedicine, counselling/screening, 24-h telephone, webinars, conducting group therapy and support among users, adaptation for electronic health records, increased methadone/naloxone dispensing, restriction in the number of medication dispensing/day, and electronic prescription and home delivery medications. These



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strategies can be used to support health professionals in addressing the impact of the pandemic on the treatment of those in recovery or struggling with a substance use disorder when in-person treatment is not possible

[Consumer perceptions of telehealth for mental health or substance abuse: A Twitter-based topic modeling analysis.](#)

Baird, A., Xia, Y., & Cheng, Y. (2022). *JAMIA Open*, 5(2), <https://doi.org/10.1093/jamiaopen/ooac028>

Summary: This study looks at comments by twitter users about telehealth services and mental health or substances abuse. Post pandemic twitter user are talking about telehealth services 4 times more frequently particularly in regards to mental health. While this study is looking at a very particular subset of people who are comfortable using a social media platform, the conclusions include information direct from users of these platforms.

[Patient Perceptions of Video Visits Using Veterans Affairs Telehealth Tablets: Survey Study.](#)

Slightam, C., Gregory, A. J., Hu, J., Jacobs, J., Gurmessa, T., Kimerling, R., Blonigen, D., & Zulman, D. M. (2020). *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 22(4), e15682. <https://doi.org/10.2196/15682>

Summary: This study asked patients using tablets for telemedicine visits with the VA about their perception of their care compared to in-person visits. The overall satisfaction with telehealth was high with many preferring or listing video visits as about the same as in person visits. The reasoning of those who preferred video visits included feeling uncomfortable in the VA, communicating concerns, and receiving substance use disorder treatment specifically. Those least likely to prefer telehealth visits were over 65 years of age or had more chronic health conditions.



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[COVID-19 tele-mental health: Innovative use in rural behavioral health and criminal justice settings.](#)

Krider, A. E., & Parker, T. W. (2021). *Journal of Rural Mental Health*, 45(2), 86–94.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/rmh0000153>

Summary: This article discusses the benefits, challenges, and barriers to providing mental health services virtually as seen by senior level professionals in the field from four rural areas in the United States. May be beneficial to those looking for information and other professionals to reach out to about developing virtual programs.

[Rural-Nonrural Differences in Telemedicine Use for Mental and Substance Use Disorders Among Medicaid Beneficiaries.](#)

Creedon, T. B., Schrader, K. E., O'Brien, P. L., Lin, J. R., Carroll, C. D., & Mulvaney-Day, N. (2020). *Psychiatric Services*, 71(8), 756–764.
<https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201900444>

This study looks primarily at pre-covid data, hopefully a comparison study will be done with more up to date numbers! One finding was particularly interesting however: folks in rural areas that received more telemedicine visits also received more in-person services. They cannot determine a cause with this information alone, of course, however, it is possible that an increase in accountability also increases fidelity to treatment (as we see in other research).

Racial and Cultural Disproportionality in Rural Areas

[Child Welfare Practice to Address Racial Disproportionality and Disparity.](#)

Children's Bureau (2021) [Download a pdf](#)

Summary: This bulletin developed by the Children's Bureau in 2021 details the issue of racial disproportionality and factors contributing to this gap. Strategies for addressing disproportionality are discussed at both a system and case level.



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Improving Behavioral Health Services in the Time of COVID-19 and Racial Inequities.

Shim, R. S., Tierney, M., Rosenzweig, M. H., & Goldman, H. H. (n.d.). *NAM Perspectives*, 2021, 10.31478/202110c. <https://doi.org/10.31478/202110c>

Summary: This research opinion piece looks at structural behavioral health reform, with a focus on equity. Suggestions relate to early interventions, prevention services, and crisis services.

COVID- 19: A catalyst for change in telehealth service delivery for opioid use disorder management.

Mehtani, N. J., Ristau, J. T., Snyder, H., Surlyn, C., Eveland, J., Smith-Bernardin, S., & Knight, K. R. (2021). COVID-19: *Substance Abuse*, 42(2), 205–212. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08897077.2021.1890676>

Summary: This study focused on development of telemedicine protocols with low entry threshold and low barriers to use. This is very small study of a covid isolation population in San Francisco. The best information here is in the use of a novel method of services to a very underserved population (67% Black, all marginally housed).

Latino Family Mental Health: Exploring the role of discrimination and familismo.

Ayón, C., Marsiglia, F. F., & Bermudez-Parsai, M. (2010). *Journal of Community Psychology*, 38(6), 742–756. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20392>

Summary: This study gives valuable information on Latino family dynamics, and the role of discrimination and family structure on receipt of mental health treatment.



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Justice in Rural America related to SUD

The Perfect Storm: Substance Abuse, Mental Illness, and Rural America.

Barnes, B. D. (2022). University of New Hampshire Law Review. 19.

Summary: This review article looks at the impact of the “War on Drugs” in a rural community in Tennessee

The next wave? Mental health comorbidities and patients with substance use disorders in under-resourced and rural areas.

Warfield, S. C., Pack, R. P., Degenhardt, L., Larney, S., Bharat, C., Ashrafioun, L., Marshall, B. D. L., & Bossarte, R. M. (2021). *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 121, 108189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2020.108189>

The rapid spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has impacted the lives of millions around the globe. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused increasing concern among treatment professionals about mental health and risky substance use, especially among those who are struggling with a substance use disorder (SUD). The pandemic’s impact on those with a SUD may be heightened in vulnerable communities, such as those living in under-resourced and rural areas. Despite policies loosening restrictions on treatment requirements, unintended mental health consequences may arise among this population. We discuss challenges that under-resourced areas face and propose strategies that may improve outcomes for those seeking treatment for SUDs in these areas.



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Facilitators

Meghan R. Fitzgerald, Ph.D. is the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts FTC Training Coordinator. Meghan is a life long learner and educator, who holds a Ph.D. in Biological Sciences and is soon to complete a Master's degree in Counselor Education with a clinical focus. Meghan enjoys using her education expertise to assist family treatment courts to reach their outcomes and goals through training, facilitation, and communication. She has been teaching in various forms since 2010, a volunteer Guardian ad Litem since 2017, a child abuse survivor, and is passionate about making the dependency system safer, more equitable, and a place where families can learn to thrive.

Adrienne Mason is the Regional Director for the SW Washington location of Children's Home Society of Washington. Adrienne holds a Master's Degree in Social Work and has over 10 years of experience in the community mental health setting. She is the leader of the Southwest team who provides family support and behavioral health services in office, home, community, and virtual settings to both children and families.

Alicia Summers, Ph.D. is an independent consultant with 17 years of experience working with child welfare court systems. She currently serves as the Director of Research for the Capacity Building Center for courts and works nationally and at the local level to conduct evaluation of court practices. Her areas of expertise include hearing quality, judicial decision-making, Indian Child Welfare Act implementation, and performance measurement.



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