



Using the Bioecological model to examine Integrated Youth Services

What is this research about?

Integrated Youth Services (IYS) were developed to respond to a lack of access and coordination of services within the youth population. They are services that use a collaborative and inclusive approach in providing a response to youth needs through various services such as mental health services, vocational assistance and housing support.

The bioecological model, however, helps to identify the components that make IYS effective. The bioecological model is a theory that aims to better understand human development by focusing on four areas: 1) process, 2) person, 3) context, and 4) time. This article focused on contextual systems specifically factors from the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro- system levels. Services that fall under the micro-system level include primary care and family engagement. Influences that fall under the macro-system level include systems such as cultural norms and stigma. Processes and contexts that are categorized under the meso- and exo-level include collaboration and policy makers that influence service delivery respectively.

What did the researchers do?

Researchers looked at how IYS align with the bioecological model. The study used components of the bioecological model to help identify essential

What you need to know:

There are gaps within youth services that require improved collaboration and coordination. This study explores the main components of the IYS model as well as the bioecological model. It looks at how IYS align with the bioecological model and uses the bioecological model to help provide future recommendations for IYS.

areas for IYS practice as well as to provide recommendations for future direction.

What did the researchers find?

At the micro-system level, the review found that family engagement and family and peer support were important components of IYS, as family involvement plays a fundamental role in early development.

At the meso-system level, the review found that care coordination, or the sharing of information between agencies and navigators were critical considerations in improving collaboration.



At the exo-system level, there is a need to improve collaboration between agencies and policy.

Enacting policies that are useful in strengthening collaboration is critical for the functional delivery of IYS.

Furthermore, removing any policy-related barriers is also critical.

How can you use this research

This study can benefit policy makers, IYS workers, and other researchers in understanding how the IYS model aligns with the bioecological model. People working in IYS can use the bioecological model to help identify where their services can be improved. This research can also be used to advocate for policy that promotes multi-level, integrated interventions for youth.

Limitations and next steps

This article provides several recommendations for IYS practice, policy change, and research. For example, the bioecological model provides a framework for positive youth development. This framework is beneficial for reviewing IYS programming because it identifies important service components that lead to successful development. Future research on IYS could focus on exploring youth perceptions of experience and youth engagement in services.

About the researchers

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Keywords

Youth Integrated Services, youth, bioecological model, youth services

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To learn more, visit <http://eenet.ca>. This summary was written by Michelle Kim.