Exploring Educational Preparedness and Challenges Among Youth in Group Home Settings: A Focus Group Study

Presented By:

Date:

Research Overview

+ Understand educational experiences in group homes

+ Identify preparation gaps versus traditional peers (Osei, 2021).

+ Explore specific educational challenges faced daily

+ Evaluate effectiveness of current support systems

+ Determine most impactful intervention opportunities (Clemens

et al., 2017).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions:

1. How do youth in group homes perceive their educational preparedness compared to peers in traditional home settings?

2. What specific educational challenges do these youth identify as most significant?

3. How effective are current educational support systems for youth in group homes?

4. What resources or interventions do youth believe would most improve their educational outcomes?

Hypotheses:

1. Youth in group homes will report significant gaps in educational preparedness related to frequent school transitions.

2. Participants will identify emotional and behavioral challenges as primary barriers to educational success.

3. Current educational support systems will be perceived as inadequate for addressing the unique needs of this population.

4. Youth-identified solutions will emphasize stability, individualized support, and trauma-informed educational approaches.

Methodology

- Qualitative focus group research design chosen

- Twenty-four diverse participants ages 14-19 (Luke & Goodrich, 2019).

- Four separate 90-minute focus sessions

- Semi-structured questions exploring educational experiences

- Thematic analysis with member checking (Kirk et al., 2016).

Key Findings

Key Finding 1 - Educational Preparedness

- Significant academic gaps from school transitions

- Three-fourths experienced at least one retention

- Frequent misplacement in inappropriate classes

- Limited academic confidence among participants

- Consistent pattern of interrupted learning

Key Finding 2 - Educational Challenges

- Delayed enrollment due to records issues

- Classroom behavior expectations versus trauma responses

- Social stigma impacting academic engagement

- Limited technology access for assignments

- Inadequate quiet study environments available

Key Finding 3 - Support Systems

- Dedicated adult advocates critically important

- Consistent tutoring programs highly valued

- Support systems typically reactive, not proactive

- Resource availability varies between homes

- Peer support networks naturally forming

Key Finding 4 - Gaps in Support

- Individualized educational planning rarely occurs

- Trauma-informed teaching approaches mostly absent

- Technology access severely limited

- Post-secondary transition support nearly nonexistent

- Mental health resources disconnected from education

Analysis of Themes

+ Educational disruption creates cascading academic problems

+ Trauma impacts learning in unaddressed ways

+ Support systems reactive rather than preventative

+ Youth voices excluded from solution development

+ Resilience emerges despite systematic challenges (Clemens

  et al., 2017)

Implications

- Schools need trauma-informed classroom practices

- Record transfer systems require urgent reform

- Group homes must prioritize educational advocacy

- Policy makers should establish educational protections

- Teacher training programs need specific preparation

(Berardi & Morton, 2019).

Recommendations

- Develop rapid educational assessment protocols

- Implement trauma-informed training for educators

- Create dedicated educational advocate positions

- Establish technology access programs immediately

- Design group-home-specific educational transition processes

(Morton, 2018).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future Directions

- Conduct longitudinal educational outcome studies

- Develop evidence-based interventions with youth

- Explore trauma-informed educational approaches

  specifically

- Investigate technology access solutions systematically

- Create post-secondary transition pathways deliberately

References

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