The Role of Participant Motivation in the Outcome of a Prevention/Early Intervention Program for Adolescent Substance Use Problems and Illegal Behavior

Alfred S. Friedman
Arlene Terras
Kimberly Glassman

The primary purpose of this study was to determine, for a court-adjudicated adolescent male sample (N = 160) mandated to a residential program setting, the degree to which their expressed motivation for getting help with their alcohol, illicit drug and illegal behavior problems was found to predict to the outcome of an early intervention treatment program.

Results. Those subjects who had reported relatively more severe alcohol and drug problems at admission expressed a significantly greater degree of being "troubled" by having such problems, and that it was significantly more "important to get help and counseling" for these problems. However, no significant relationship was found between the degree of the illegal behavior problems and the degree of being "troubled" by having the problems, or the degree that it was considered important to obtain help for such problems. It is proposed that a possible explanation for this lack of concern regarding having committed serious illegal behavior is the lack of opportunities that was available to these subjects and the influence of the poor neighborhoods in which they grew up.

Those subject participants who rated at admission that it was relatively more important to obtain "help and counseling" for their alcohol problem also tended to re-
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tive of outcome, and the magnitude of the predictions were higher for boys than girls. Three PEI Psychosocial domains of deviance, family dysfunction, and peer drug use were predictive of boys' outcome, and sibling and peer drug use were predictive of girls' outcome. The strength of these predictive relationships was similar to those found in other treatment outcome prediction research. There was limited support for the predictive validity of the PEI. These PEI Psychosocial scales that show predictive associations with outcome may be helpful in treatment planning.

KEYWORDS. Adolescent treatment outcome, predicting outcome, Personal Experience Inventory (PEI)