

At Crossroads: Understanding the Path of Georgia's Children with Co-Occurring Mental Health and Developmental Disability Diagnoses

*Jessica A. Drennan, MSW
Georgia LEND Fellow 2013-2014*

Research Project Overview

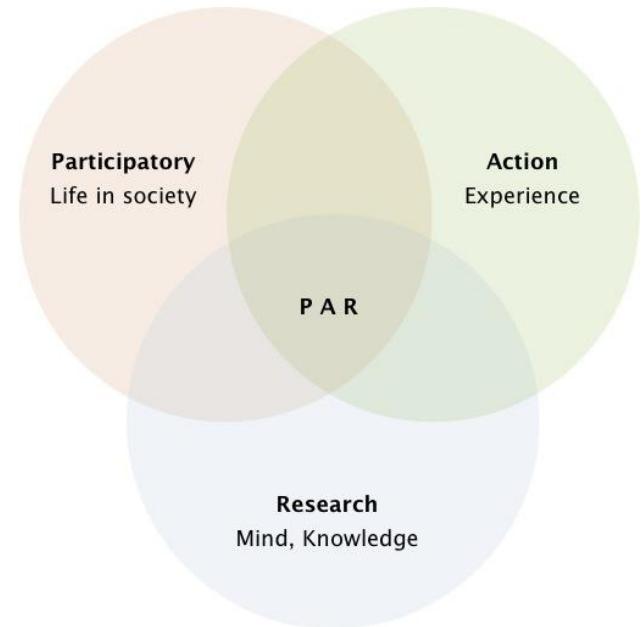
Participatory Action Research (PAR) Project

Participation: *life in society*

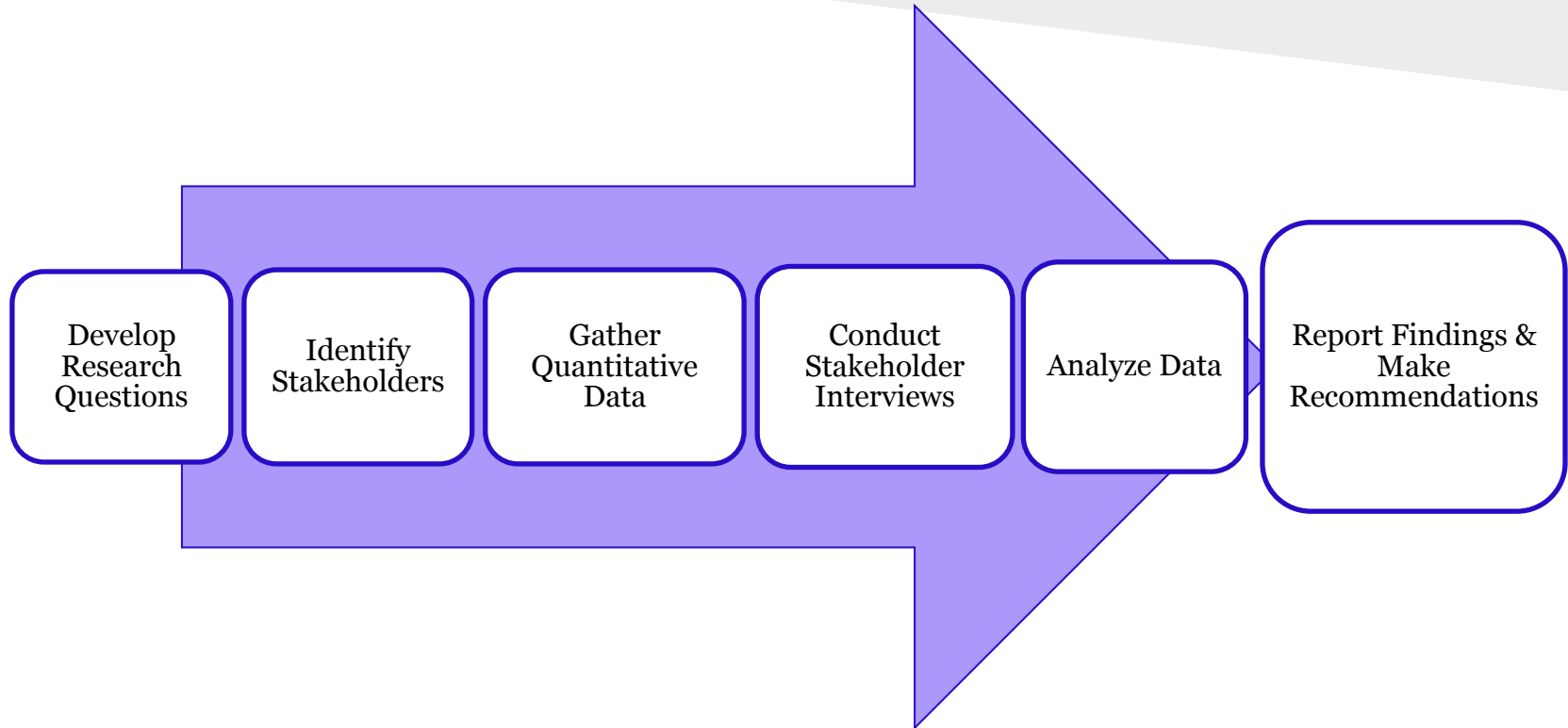
Action: *engagement*

Research: *soundness of thought and growth in knowledge*

Heavy involvement of stakeholders, democratize knowledge, solve problems



Research Plan and Trajectory



Develop Research
Questions



Questions developed in group brainstorming:

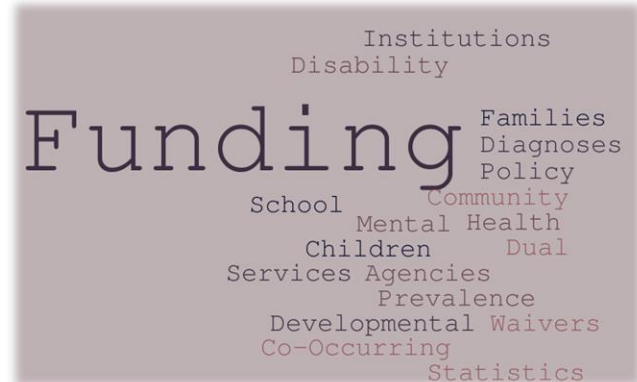
What are best or promising practices?

How does the system of care look now?

How is co-occurring defined?

What is the prevalence rate?

What is happening in Georgia?





Develop Research
Questions

Problem Statement

Children under 18 with co-occurring disorders (DD/MH) in GA and their families do not have access to the public services they need in their homes and communities to promote health, academic success, and independence.

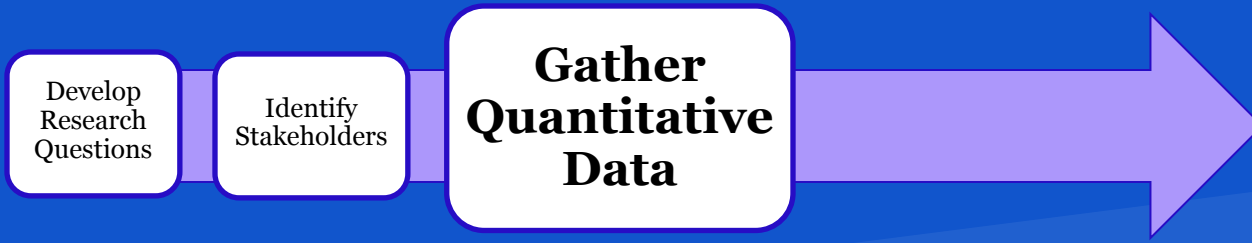
Develop
Research
Questions

**Identify
Stakeholders**

Identify and emphasize those
impacted by co-occurring
disorders

Our Stakeholders

- Children with Co-Occurring MH/DD
- Service Providers
- Agencies
- Policy Makers
- Family Members
- Schools
- Community Members



Best and promising practices in states across the US and internationally

Definition of co-occurring

Criteria for services

Sources of funding for services and programs

Prevalence in the United States and in Georgia

Prevalence: Overview of National Findings

Developmental Disabilities

13.87% of US Children between the ages 3 and 17 have a developmental disability



Mental Health Disorders

- ❑ 18.9% of US children under 18 with chronic conditions experience other mental problems
- ❑ Four million children and adolescents in this country suffer from a *serious* mental disorder
- ❑ A total of 13%–20% of children living in the United States experience a mental disorder in a given year
- ❑ An estimated 40% of children with one mental disorder having at least one other mental disorder

Prevalence: Overview of National Co-Occurring Research

Estimates of prevalence vary widely across sources, with the highest estimate that 30-35% of all persons with developmental disabilities also have a psychiatric disorder

Much of the research on co-occurring disorders is connected to specific diagnoses:

- ❑ Autism Spectrum Disorder

Up to 50% of the cases of Autism studied had a co-occurring mental health disorder

- ❑ Intellectual Disability

Rates for children and adolescents with a mental disorder and an intellectual disability are between 30% and 50%



Co-Occurring Prevalence

Developmental Disability

13.7% of children ages 3-17
have a developmental
disability

Who has both?

Mental Health Disorder

18.9% of children under
the age of 18 have
mental health issues

Georgia's Background



Georgia by the Numbers

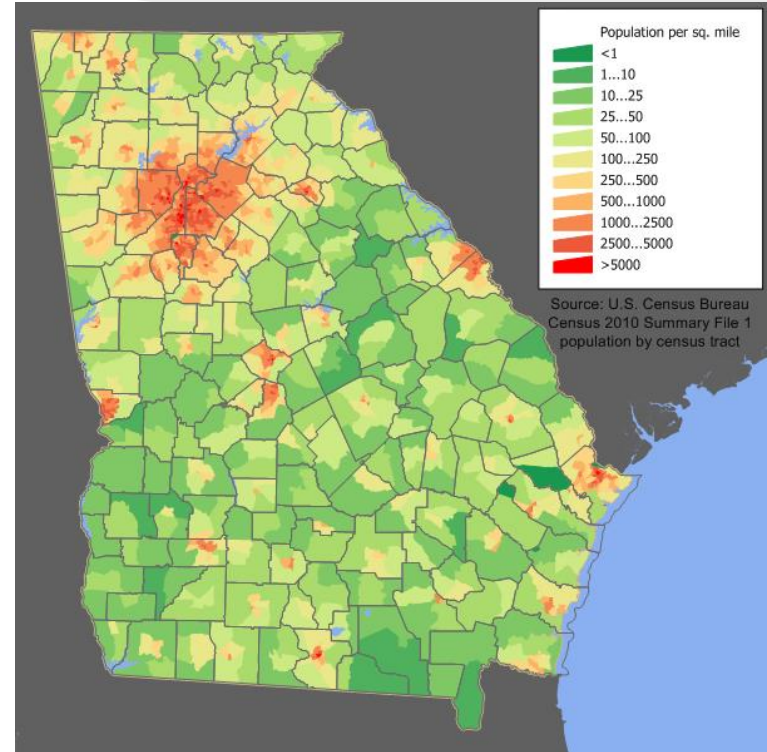
50th in Medicaid spending per patient

49th in statewide health care spending per capita

5th most uninsured residents

4th most uninsured kids

Source: Georgia Budget and Policy Institute



Georgia: What We Do Know

673 children under the age of 21 with Developmental Disabilities receive waivers

82 receive Behavioral Support Consultation Services

The majority of children in need of services are served through the Georgia Public School System

All needs related to the children are the responsibility of the school system

Georgia: What We Don't Know

The number of children in Georgia with co-occurring disorders

The needs of children with co-occurring disorders and their families

Comprehensive services and supports available

The costs of caring for children with co-occurring disorders

Develop
Research
Questions

Identify
Stakeholders

Gather
Quantitative
Data

**Conduct
Stakeholder
Interviews**

**Analyze
Data**

14 Qualitative Interviews:

- Individuals at state-level agencies
- Service providers of children with disabilities
- Families receiving services for their children

Interviewees were identified by LEND faculty and staff

Sampling Methodology: Snowball

Interviews transcribed, coded, and analyzed

Reviewed and synthesized quantitative data



Piecing it together: Georgia at Crossroads

Top Recommendations

Improve interagency communication and coordination

Create a connected system of care of school and community services

Better understanding of prevalence

Support for children & their families



Acknowledgements

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Georgia LEND Faculty and Staff

Research Participants