**Developing a Positive Therapeutic Relationship**

**Drug Free Communities/Family Action Program**

**On the Initial Contact does the Individual Feel Emotionally/Mentally/ Physically Safe?**

**Discussion Items:**

How do you answer the telephone and secure communication?

What is the process for setting up or scheduling the first appointment including the location?

How do you leave the caller/participant with a sense that help and hope are available?

What have you set up for the person between first contact and the initial appointment?

How can we increase the likelihood that the person and significant others will attend the first appointment?

**OUTCOMES:**

* Increase admissions:

1. Attitude of the person answering the phone is important-respectful, sincere, receptive, unrushed, genuine,
2. Attitude of the person responding in the waiting room is equally important to communicate respect regardless of presentation.
3. Matter-of-fact, calm, approachable responsiveness to service and informational requests of all kinds.

* Reduce no show rates:

1. We discussed and agreed that the front desk staff will do reminder calls the day prior to scheduled intakes.
2. We discussed and agreed to offer intake and other service appointment times that are convenient and accessible for participants.

* Reduce waiting times:

1. We discussed and agreed to be as flexible as possible when responding to participant requests for service.
2. We agreed to be responsive to telephone calls and go forward with scheduling first appointments as soon as possible.

**Facilitating Participant Experiences of Belonging and Ownership**

**Discussion Items:**

How do you tailor each experience for each individual participant?

How do you ensure the participant understands what to expect? How do you know that they know?

How do we ensure the services provided are related to the existing problem?

What barriers to participation might we anticipate and prepare for in advance?

How do you identify participants at risk for leaving and intervene?

**OUTCOMES:**

* Increase the participant’s sense of control and ownership:

1. Ask them what they want to get out of services.
2. Allow enough time; don’t rush them, cut them off, or interrupt them.
3. Let them take the lead.
4. Have them generate plan goals.
5. Offer choices for them whenever possible.
6. Review Rights and Responsibilities.

* Ensure the individual plan is meaningful to the participant:

1. Have them generate plan goals.
2. Use SNAP
3. Ask about previous treatment: what worked, what didn’t.

* Retain participants:

1. Check in frequently to review relevance and progress
2. Give choices whenever possible.
3. Make termination/closing planning a regular topic of discussion.
4. Offer flexible scheduling and responsive intervention.

**Participant engages in a change process addressing conflicting values, beliefs and behaviors to identify action steps leading to success:**

**Discussion Items:**

Self-worth and personal power grow through service to others.

Group celebrations are a good way to reward achievements

Participants benefit from reaching tangible goals

Participants benefit from having the support people in their lives involved in their individual plan.

**OUTCOMES:**

**.** Understand the individual’s response to each clinical session.

1. Ask them what they plan to do at the end of the session (e.g. how they will complete their “homework”, what potential supports and barriers they foresee during the time until the next session).
2. Focus on creating specific, measureable objectives that make change obvious.
3. Follow up on how they did at the point of next contact.
4. Follow up with parents, school, attendance office, etc.
5. Observe their nonverbal reactions during session.
6. Listen carefully to what they say!

* Engage the participant’s support people in their ongoing process:

1. When the family is a resource and/or potential support, invite family members in to sessions in partnership with participant.
2. Elicit commitment from other family members regarding individual plan participation and attendance.
3. Involve family in development of individual plan.
4. Share successes with other family members.
5. Acknowledge contributions of family members.

**When the Participant is successfully sustaining new behaviors:**

**Discussion Items:**

Increasing range of options for non- problem behaviors

Developing appropriate hobbies and leisure activities

Following up and maintaining contact

Reaffirming support-seeking as part of independence

Supporting participants’ successes

Relapse prevention strategies- what’s the plan if the undesirable behavior reoccurs?

How can we help people take healthy risks?

How does our program encourage participants to sustain change?

**OUTCOMES:**

* Connect participants to internal/external supports

1. Begin to establish ongoing service needs at admission.
2. Facilitate connections to naturally occurring social support networks throughout services.
3. Bring family members and other support parties in to contribute to discharge and transitional plans.
4. Create potential “danger” scenarios and talk through positive support options with adolescents and adults
5. Especially help adolescents anticipate future high risk situations
6. Create relapse prevention plans and update them on an ongoing basis throughout services in partnership with participants and family members.

* Establish a viable transition plan

1. See strategies for connecting participants to supports.
2. Take time to highlight progress throughout services and frame success as transitioning to the next place in the change process.
3. Enlist participants’ input into planning for future success.
4. Model flexibility during planning processes to underscore the priority of achieving successful outcomes.