Counseling in the virtual world

HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR SKILLS WITH INDIVIDUALS AND WITHIN THE GROUP SETTING
Introducing PROJECT DelAWARE

Project DelAWARE is a collaborative effort between the Department of Education (DOE), The Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (DPBHS), the UD Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS), the Delaware PBS Project, the UD Center for Drug and Health Studies (CDHS), and three local school districts: Capital School District, Colonial School District, and Indian River School District. Funding for the project is provided through a 5 year federal SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) grant.

The overarching purpose of Project DelAWARE is to implement evidence based mental health services in school settings within the context of the Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in order to promote wellness and resilience for school age youth and to improve access to mental health services.
Webinar Overview

**Individual Sessions:**
- Identify comfort and discomfort levels in the virtual setting
- Review principles from the Functional Approach to counseling
  - Mutual Respect Between Practitioner and Client
  - Structured Solution Focused Intervention
- Helpful Hints
- Speaking to Administrators

**Group Sessions:**
- Structuring Group
  - Technology
  - Agenda
  - Rules
  - Transitioning
- Virtual Group Engagement
Questions to Think About

What are you **uncomfortable** with in the virtual setting?

What are you **comfortable** with in the virtual setting?

Please fill out the poll and share your examples in the chat box!
The Functional Approach (to counseling)

Client Empowerment

*Mutual Respect between Practitioner and Client*

Attention to Group-Based Social Inequalities

*A Structured Solution-Focused Process*

Agency Purpose and Function

Planned Social Change

Monitoring Change

Advocating for the Redistribution of Social Resources

Fostering a Climate of Inquiry
Principle #2: Mutual Respect Between Practitioner and Client

The goal is to build **RESPECT**, **EMPATHY**, and **TRUST** through the use of the **SENSE OF SELF** within the helping relationship.
Principle #2: Mutual Respect Between Practitioner and Client

The goal is to build **RESPECT**, **EMPATHY**, and **TRUST** through the use of the **SENSE OF SELF** within the helping relationship

**Question to ask yourself:**

How do you demonstrate this in your **TYPICAL** setting?
YOUR Typical Setting
MY Typical Setting

- Validate Experiences
- Find area of commonality
- Share personal benign piece of information about myself
- Inquire about interests
- Use of humor
Principle #2: Mutual Respect Between Practitioner and Client

The goal is to build **RESPECT**, **EMPATHY**, and **TRUST** through the use of the **SENSE OF SELF** within the helping relationship.

**Question to ask yourself:**

How can you transfer those skills in a **VIRTUAL** setting?
Virtual Setting

Validate Experiences
Find area of commonality
Share personal benign piece of information about myself
Inquire about interests
Use of humor
How can I **TRANSFER** my skills in the virtual setting?
Principle #4: A Structured Solution-Focused Intervention

“Begin with the end in mind.”
Stephen Covey
## Principle #4: A Structured Solution-Focused Intervention

Every session, just like the overall intervention, should have a **BEGINNING**, **MIDDLE**, and an **END**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall Intervention</th>
<th>Individual Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEGINNING</strong></td>
<td>GOALS</td>
<td>What do I want to accomplish?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE</strong></td>
<td>ACTION ITEMS/TREATMENT PLAN</td>
<td>How will this be accomplished?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>END</strong></td>
<td>OUTCOME</td>
<td>When will I know this has been accomplished?</td>
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Scenarios

Scenario #1: IEP Counseling/Caseload Counseling

Scenario #2: On the Fly Intervention
# Scenario #1: IEP Counseling/Caseload Counseling

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<tr>
<td><strong>BEGINNING</strong></td>
<td><strong>What do I want to accomplish?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOAL: Student will learn to implement behavioral strategies to increase emotion regulation when angry.</td>
<td>Introduce the Feelings Thermometer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE</strong></td>
<td><strong>How will this be accomplished?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTION ITEMS / TREATMENT PLAN:</td>
<td>- Review situation from past week when student was angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student will learn how to recognize physical symptoms when angry</td>
<td>- Identify temperature and color it in on Feelings Thermometer Chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student will learn how to identify anger temperature on Feelings Thermometer</td>
<td>- Practice through application to other possible scenarios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student will learn to implement anger coping strategies when angry</td>
<td>- Provide homework to practice skill throughout the week</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Etc.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>END</strong></td>
<td><strong>When will I know this has been accomplished?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOME: Student will be able to recognize anger cues and implement emotion regulation and coping skill techniques 60% of the time when angry.</td>
<td>Student will be able to demonstrate concept by applying it to a specific situation with prompts.</td>
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## Scenario #2: On the Fly Intervention

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<td><strong>BEGINNING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>GOAL:</td>
<td><strong>What do I want to accomplish?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify why student is crying and help the student return to class</td>
<td>- Provide support to the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Identify why the student is crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Help student return back to class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE</strong></td>
<td><strong>How will this be accomplished?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTION ITEMS / TREATMENT PLAN:</td>
<td>- Seek permission from student to talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Meet with the student</td>
<td>- Help regulate student’s emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identify what’s going on</td>
<td>- Probe to inquire why student is crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Problem solve</td>
<td>- Validate student’s feelings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Problem solve with the information that is shared</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Determine next steps (if any)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>END</strong></td>
<td><strong>When will I know this has been accomplished?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>OUTCOME:</td>
<td>Student will be visibly calm, will not be crying, and will verbalize that he/she can return to class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student will regulate emotions and will be able to return to class</td>
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Special Focus: When Does the Intervention End?

**Scenario #1**

**Outcome:**
Student will be able to recognize anger cues and implement emotion regulation and coping skill techniques 60% of the time when angry.

**When will I know this has been accomplished:**
Student will be able to demonstrate concept by applying it to specific situation with prompts.

**Was this goal met?**

If not: develop new plan or REFER OUT

**Scenario #2**

**Outcome:**
Student will be able to regulate emotions and will be able to return to class.

**When will I know this has been accomplished:**
Student will be visibly calm, will not be crying, and will verbalize that he/she can return to class.

**Was this goal met?**

If not: develop new plan or REFER OUT
Helpful Tips

- Outline expectations
- **Establish a routine**
- Allow for several modes of communication
- Eliminate Distractions (but apologize when they occur)
- **Connect with teachers**
- Establish codes for safety issues
- Be transparent
- Make your space inviting and therapeutic
Establish a Routine

- **Start your time with students the same way each session/meeting**
  - Offer an opportunity for your students to answer a “check-in” question either verbally or in the chat feature:
    - What is the best thing that happened since we last met? What is the worst thing that happened since we last met?
    - On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the best) how well is your week going? What would make it better?
    - Provide a different “ice breaker” question in the chat feature each session

- **End your time with students the same way each session/meeting**
  - Ask for feedback on how the session went
    - Thumbs up or thumbs down
    - On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being great) how much did you get from this session? What can be done differently next time?
    - Let them know what you’ll be focusing on the next time you meet and ask for some input
    - Provide some “homework” so your students are keeping your lessons in mind throughout the week
Helpful Tips

◦ Outline expectations
◦ Establish a routine
◦ Allow for several modes of communication
◦ Eliminate Distractions (but apologize when they occur)
◦ Connect with teachers
◦ Establish codes for safety issues
◦ Be transparent
◦ Make your space inviting and therapeutic
Connect with Teachers

◦ Send the student’s teachers an email to inform them of what “homework” you have provided to the student so they can support your teachings throughout the week
◦ Update your problem solving team with outcome information including:
  ◦ Was the intervention successful?
  ◦ Pre/post test information if applicable
  ◦ Next steps (if applicable)
Helpful Tips

- Outline expectations
- Establish a routine
- Allow for several modes of communication
- Eliminate Distractions (but apologize when they occur)
- Connect with teachers
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- Be transparent
- Make your space inviting and therapeutic
Speaking to Administrators

Step 1: Present your concern to Administration

Step 2: Ask for an explanation why Administration isn’t comfortable with Virtual Counseling Services

Step 3: Ask what you can do to help provide comfort level

Step 4: Provide Administration with resources to help support initiation of services
Additional Resources

• Ethics and Limitations of Telemental Health – Webinar Registration for 10/22 Event
  • https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhtcc/event/ethics-and-limitations-telemental-health

• National Association of School Psychologists

• National Center for School Mental Health: COVID-19 Resources for School Personnel Related to Policy, Skills, and Technology (includes a link to “Telemental Health 101” Webinar
  • https://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/COVID-19/

• School Counseling in an On-line World (ASCA)
  • https://videos.schoolcounselor.org/school-counseling-in-an-online-world

• Student Welfare in a Virtual World (ASCA)
  • https://videos.schoolcounselor.org/support-student-welfare-in-a-virtual-setting

• Virtual Crisis Response; A School Counselor Resource Document (DDOE)
  • https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U1AizYMI7paqH_kM1LDnk5wmN5CuclXzOmR_n6jHjTA/edit

• Virtual School Counseling Brings Unique Rewards and Challenges (Counseling Today, ACA)