

Welcome to the COVID-19 BBI/Six Core Newsletter

A Note from the Implementation Support Teams

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a lot of change in a short amount of time. Physical distancing and the spread of the virus has certainly changed how we work and our current priorities, but it's not without its positives. Communities and workplaces have pulled together to support each other in meaningful and important ways, including the residential programs in our state. **As you all focus on serving the children and families in our state, we wanted to shift our model of support to better support you. We have created this newsletter to provide short, digestible tips on how to engage families, support each other and your workforce, and practice positive leadership at all levels.** For programs not currently engaged in implementation of BBI/Six Core, you can find information about these initiatives here:

<http://www.buildingbridges4youth.org/>

Please feel free to write in with topics you're interested in hearing more about and other ideas for ways we can support you. We'll send out tips regularly! We so value and appreciate all you're doing to serve our communities during this time – we thank you!

Family Engagement

Both BBI and Six Core emphasize the need for family engagement and family-centered care. Though it may seem that your agency needs to pause implementation of BBI and Six Core, using these strategies are more important than ever as your agency and staff continue to support youth and families during these uncertain times. These are a few tips and resources to keep this part of your work going during Covid-19:

- **Ask each of your families what's the best way to support them** during this time. For some families, continuing family therapy sessions and check-ins with their family support partners may be feasible and appropriate. If actual therapy sessions aren't possible, simple and quick video updates (remember those school notes from their teachers?) may be just the thing to help them feel engaged and connected. For other families, this might not be an option due to available technologies or unfamiliarity with technologies or competing priorities and time demands from changes in work and school schedules. For these families, connecting via phone calls, text messages, or even snail mail resources may be the best option.

- **Consider what kind of help you can provide or connect them to beyond your usual services.** Many families may experience what we call “secondary adversities” during this time, including changes in employment, financial resources, social resources, and day-to-day changes in their daily schedules. This means that keeping families engaged may go beyond your normal activities. For example, for some families, connecting them to their local foodbank or helping them locate a guide for unemployment services may be more helpful than revising a treatment plan, and some families may be more appreciative of how to go about homeschooling, setting a daily family schedule, keeping teens busy, or talking to their children about Covid-19.
- **Supporting daily contact between youth and families** is another BBI strategy for family driven care, and maybe even more important than ever as youth in your care may be worried about how their families are doing during Covid-19. There are several ways to support daily contact between youth and their families including unrestricted calls/video calls home. Depending on the technology available to have daily chats with families, make sure that equipment (phones, tablets, etc.) are being sanitized between uses!
- **Connecting using telehealth services** (the use of technology, like phones, tablets, and computers to remotely deliver a health service, like a therapy session) can be a little strange for providers, youth, and families. Sometimes it can feel too formal, other times it can seem hard to talk to each other since communication can be a little different. Attached is a tip sheet that includes suggestions for connecting with youth via video and how to introduce telehealth more generally.

Looking for More? Check-out these resources and open the attachments in this email:

- APA Supporting Children with Disabilities during Covid-19 - <https://www.apa.org/research/action/children-disabilities-covid-19>
- NCTSN Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope - <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/parent-caregiver-guide-to-helping-families-cope-with-the-coronavirus-disease-2019>
- FPG Teaching Teens Self Compassion - <https://fpg.unc.edu/news/teaching-teens-self-compassion>
- Sesame Street Managing Emotions & Routines - <https://medium.com/sesame-street-caring-for-each-other/activity-tips-managing-emotions-routines-and-exercise-through-play-6ea0e84b0e3>
- Mitigating the Mental Health Implications of Covid-19 <https://www.research2policy.org/covid19-mitigating-the-implications>
- The Science of Learning and Teaching at Home - https://www.srcd.org/event/home-child-experts-science-learning-and-teaching-home-during-covid-19?utm_source=SRCD+2018+Privacy+Policy&utm_campaign=3513cb0c94-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_07_04_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e4f67ee524-3513cb0c94-293847605&fbclid=IwAR00H7h6D-wCGjoTFMAjNyMlm-j0D71bKOvEKUGo8mloi3-5texlvwbogI

