

BBI Six Core Office Hours: Friday 4/24/20

Topic: Prevention Strategies

Panelists: Janice Lebel (Developer and Consultant, Six Core Strategies) and Sarah Drummond (Clinical Director, Youth Development Institute, Arizona)

NC PRTF Pilot Site attendees: CHA, Cornerstone

Prevention Suggestions from Sarah

- Sensory regulation was very important prevention strategies are important during COVID
- Self-safety assessment and safety plan. Helps identify sensory activities. Also provides a coping box with various tools, which they are allowed to use everywhere (except bubbles in the classroom).
- Also added glider chairs, weighted chairs, oximeters (to help regulate their breathing). YDI is guided by Dr. Bruce Perry's work.

Prevention Suggestions from Janice

- Shift the language from "prevention" or "{crisis" to "joy" or "soothe" for example change from Prevention Plan to Joy Plan
- *Staff nurturance is critical to the role in prevention strategies for youth.* In MA they start by taking care of the staff using the social resilience model (<https://www.thresholdglobalworks.com/about/social-resilience/>) to incorporate four basic skills
- Focus tasks and activities on natural circadian rhythms (active activities vs quiet, reflective activities).
- Biggest benefit from co-opting their fear, by encouraging them to help others.
- Student-advisory board has been important to run through necessary COVID changes

The following are concerns shared with the sites that Janice, Sarah and Mark shared thoughts and ideas.

Concern: Increase in AWOLS

Strategies:

1. Understand why kids are "voting with their feet"
2. Increase monitoring for signs.
3. Peer-to-peer connection is helpful for reintegrating youth when they return.
4. Remind the youth that the door is always open
5. Have an area to quarantine youth that return.

Concerns: Guardians anxiety level increased and they want to bring kids home

Strategies:

1. More zoom and option to connect with families

- Zoom calls for face-to-face time with parents.
- All family therapy is zoom also.
- Zoom calls can occur at any time, which is helpful for parents who work nights, and kids who get dysregulated in the evening.

2. Pulling in other resources for families to access.

- "Ask the Dr. night". Parents can zoom in to ask questions they might have around corona or other medical needs.
- Yard therapy - Therapist goes to house for social distance check ins. Working well for little ones especially!

Concern: Minimizing exposure both for staff and youth

Strategies:

1. Prevent exposure and outbreak by asking staff to self-quarantine at home for multiple days or a week at a time shifts. Then staff stay at PRTF for the next few days or a week.
2. Reshuffling the scheduling of activities between gross motor activities and soothing activities.
3. More telehealth - Staff can still meet with youth when not on site. Still maintaining therapeutic contact.
4. PRTFs will need a specialized unit to care for youth who need medical isolation (suspected COVID)
5. Screening process completed prior to coming to facility
6. Handing out hand sanitizer and increased sanitary procedures
7. YDI has a protocol in place to close off all
8. Therapists have pandemic schedules to promote support on weekends to help with buffer kids and staff.
9. Staffing "sharing" cross agency or even intra-agency but cross department

Concern: Sanitary procedures

Strategies:

- People are being asking to monitor mask wearing
- Routine handwashing and other COVID 19 practice being incorporated into the day to promote

Other Resource Ideas

- Give them the "Role and the Remedy"
- Card-making, letter writing. Put something in the mail for the youth to receive.
- Customized mask making

- Go back to basics- reviewing and updating youth and family handbooks, getting rid of language that aren't in line with values
- Therapy dogs are particularly helpful.