Building Resiliency in Youth in Residential Treatment Facilities: Enhancing Relationships & Increasing Joy Experiences

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Workshop Session A *1:45-3:15pm

OhioGuidestone | Cleveland, OH
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Youth Residential Treatment

How to help Youth Overcome their past adversity and trauma?

How to help them heal and become better equipped to successfully deal with daily and future stressors?

Increase their Resiliency
How’d We Decrease Physical Restraints?

• Enhanced Treatment Milieu with Brain Building Model informed
  • Neuroscience Driven & Evidence Based
    • Neuroscience Theory
    • Validated interventions: e.g. Acceptance Commitment Therapy
    • Unique OhioGuidestone Interventions: e.g. ACT-P
  • Intensive Training
    • Clinical Staff and
    • Direct Care
• On-going Evaluation
  • Program Fidelity
  • Youth Client Feedback Committee
Brain Building Residential Treatment Program Model

• Informed:
  • Both Neurobiological & Psychologically informed
  • Evidenced Based- associated outcomes of effectiveness

• Collaborative:
  • Integrate Administrative, Clinical and Therapeutic Milieu
  • Recognize, Train and Support Direct Care Staff as Therapeutic Agents

OhioGuidestone’s Residential Treatment Program Model: Neuroscience Driven | Evidence Based
Neuroscience Behind Brain Building

- Driven by more than theory
- Technological Advances and Translational Research in Neuroscience, Psychology and Human Development
- Enhances mental health assessment
- Leads to further individualized treatment plans: “Brain Symptom-Driven” treatment delineated by

**6 Brain Building Domains**

- **5 Key Functional Brain Areas + Pharmacology**
  - Pre-Frontal Cortex
  - Executive Functioning Skills
  - Hemispheric Specialization
  - Left-/Right-Brain
  - Limbic System
  - Amygdala & Hippocampal Processes
  - Brainstem Processes

- Other Neuroscience areas strongly inform model:
  - Trauma, Adverse Childhood Experiences and Toxic Stress
  - Attachment and Affective Processes
Trauma, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and Toxic Stress

- **Adversity**: major hardship, troubles or difficulties
  - *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) study correlates 3+ ACES with negative outcomes*
    - Poor academics and attendance
    - High Risk behaviors
    - Self-injurious or Suicidal

- **Trauma**: An event or circumstance that is so strong or impactful that it overwhelms one’s ability to overcome and cope
  - Stress response system continues to be sensitive and release stress hormones after event/circumstance
  - Stress hormone Cortisol has multiple negative effects

- **Toxic Stress**: sustained, significant adversity without adequate support
  - Hypersensitive, Over reactive behaviors that inhibits attachments/relationships
Resilience to Address Trauma, ACEs and Toxic Stress

Resilience:
A child’s perception of safety and protection based on their social-emotional ability to buffer him/herself from the effect of immediate or long term stressors to his/her response system that brings on feeling of fright and or helplessness.

(AAP Trauma Guide)

• Ability to plan, monitor and regulate behavior, and adapt to changing circumstances
• Grit, Fortitude, Skills and Strength to ‘bounce-back’

• Resilience helps stop and even reverse negative effects of ACEs, Trauma or Adverse Events

• Impacts ability to handle stressors in future
  • Increases likelihood of successful life with Families & Communities

Increase Resilience by enhancing Attachment, and Joy Experiences
**Positive Affective Processes**

- **SEEKING** - Connected to Brain’s Reward System (Dopamine)
- **CARE** - Crucial for bonding, especially Maternal Bonding (Oxytocin)
- **PLAY** - Crucial for Brain & Body Development (Opioids & Endorphins)
  - PLAY promotes even more SEEKING and CARE (cycle continues)
  - Builds Resiliency

**CARE+PLAY= Joy!**

- Combination counteracts negative effects trauma, adversity and toxic stress
- High rewarding - promotes further SEEKing
- Playing and having fun, especially within relationships, leads to Joy
- Increased Joy experiences are healing and increase resiliency
PLAY-Joy-Resiliency Connection

Play:
“Children’s social play is believed to be an important practice ground for the development of **executive function skills**. Partly, this is because children need to test for themselves the skills that adults have been scaffolding for them.” (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2011)

- **Executive Function Skills:**
  - Planning, monitoring and regulating behavior, and adapting to changing circumstances

- **Resilience:**
  - Ability to plan, monitor and regulate behavior, and adapt to changing circumstances

Resiliency gained through PLAY and Joy experiences
Relationships and Co-regulation Support Positive Affects and Resiliency

- **Co-regulation**: use of relationships to regulate and modify affective states
- **All people involved with children must co-regulate**
- Engaging Youth in Mindfulness Activities & Joy experiences leads to shared affective experience

*Mindfulness Activities and Joy Experiences perfect opportunity to Co-Regulate to Increase Resiliency*

- OhioGuidestone’s program includes:
  - **ACT-P**: an engagement tool based mindfulness therapy
  - **Intensive Game Play**: to increase joy experiences
- Outcomes that:
  - Demonstrate increased resiliency
  - Youth equipped to successfully reintegrate into home and community
**ACT-P - a Mindfulness Engagement Intervention**

- **ACT-P:** Acceptance and Commitment Training for Paraprofessionals

- Based on *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)*
  - An empirically derived and supported mindfulness-based cognitive therapy ("evidence informed and based")
  - “Psychological Flexibility”: Open Up | Be Present | Do What Matters

- OhioGuidestone copyrighted metaphor posters used to proactively engage introduce youth to:
  - Accept Experiences
  - Commit to behaviors grounded in this acceptance
ACT-P: a Mindfulness Engagement Intervention
**ACT-P** at OhioGuidestone

- Intensive and On-Going training for Staff
- Workbook-style Manual with practice prompts and practical tips provided
- Fidelity tool with basic competencies provided
- 21 Poster Rotation arranged for common areas of Residential Units

- Expect Youth to internalize poster metaphors
  - And make reference to posters in:
    - General conversation
    - Partial Hospitalization (PH)
    - Therapy
Game Play - at OhioGuidestone

- Challenge to “infuse” everyday with multiple games and joyful activities

- Expectations
  - Activities to be:
    - Appropriate for youth
    - Adaptable
    - Non-Competitive
  - Play as often as possible
    - Transition between shifts or activities
    - Group After-School Activities
  - Adult Staff Participate
  - Document on Game Play Log

- Competition doesn’t drive PLAY
- Play helps explore and practice in a ‘safe zone’
- Competition raises the ante and invokes “you – me”
- Troubled and traumatized youth have experienced enough “you – me” and trying to build their capacities to trust, and depend on family and communities to heal and continue growing up

- Play is to be an expectancy
  - Explore what is/isn’t permitted within community
Brain Building Implementation

• Brain Building’s Goals include:
  • High fidelity to program model per cottage
  • Decreased physical restraint rates
  • Improved clinical outcomes (CAFAS)

• 6 Youth Residential Treatment Units to implement
  • Includes:
    • Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (Dr. Ross Greene’s)
    • Youth Feedback Initiative

• Preliminary outcomes
Contact Information

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