

Engaging Individuals in Psychological and Professional Services

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CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Goals and Objectives

- Participants will gain:
 - An understanding of the various professional and psychological services available.
 - An understanding of the right service to meet the individual's needs.
 - Information and skills to determine when an individual needs an accommodation and how to individualize service plans.
 - Information on how to communicate client needs with providers, managed care organizations, and court officials.

Why offering the right service is important

- Individualized service plan
- Window of opportunity-Ability to engage client
- Limited Resources
 - Waitlists/Access/Provider Capacity
- Acknowledge and Respect Client's Rights
- Reduce length of out of home placement
- Connection with local providers
- Connection with culturally appropriate providers
- Increase families/individuals support system
- Encourage progress



Additional Considerations

We have an obligation to investigate the presence of a disability (cognitive, physical, mental, substance use, etc.) and to tailor individualized services. This does not mean ordering additional services or higher-level services.

We can:

- Follow the Policy 6.03 Access to Services for Individuals with Disabilities
- Ask individual what has been helpful for them in past, what do they prefer
- Modify communication and services
- Utilize external resources that can benefit the individual
- Document all efforts that are made
- Consult!
 - Statewide Adults with Disabilities Program Manager, Melissa Wood, Karin Morris, ADA Administrator / ADA Accessibility Team or Regional Program Managers

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Evaluations Versus Services

Evaluations

An evaluation (aka assessment) is a time limited, short-term intervention which is focused on examining a person's current mental health status for the purpose of identifying diagnosis and making recommendations for the appropriate level of care.

Services

Focused on providing long term therapeutic interventions aimed at improving an individual's mental health, well-being, and supporting recovery.



Mental Health Assessment/Intake

- ❖ Conducted by a qualified mental health professional who has specialized knowledge and training in diagnosis and treatment of behavioral health disorders
- ❖ Comprehensive evaluation of individual's psychological, biological, environmental, and support domains
- ❖ Least restrictive, most cost-effective, easiest to access
- ❖ Determines if treatment is needed and appropriate course of treatment
- ❖ Identifies current behavioral health functioning and well being
- ❖ Provides recommendations for additional services and resources
- ❖ Essential for early interventions of mental health conditions
- ❖ Utilizes a review of pertinent records (prior treatment, medical records, etc), face to face structured conversation, symptom measures/testing, and direct observations



Goals of Mental Health Assessment

- Diagnosis of behavioral health disorders
- Consider severity, duration, and impact of symptoms
- Administer screeners and testing to identify behavioral health symptoms and needs.
- Determine ways that individual has managed symptoms in past
- Determine best treatment to manage current symptoms and improve well-being
- Determine if co-occurring or referral to Substance Use Evaluation is needed
- Identify if risk of danger to self, danger to others, danger to property, or grave disability is present and determine if crisis intervention is needed
- Identify strengths and needs in social determinants of health, such as education, housing, employment, etc.
- Determine need for additional formal or informal supports and resources
- Develop treatment plan goals and course of action to reduce or resolve symptoms, prevent further deterioration of functioning, improve well-being, and avoid use of more costly treatment
- Provide referrals for identified needs for further evaluations, medical or psychiatric intervention as warranted.



How to engage individual in a Mental Health Assessment/Intake

- Intentional questions
 - Communication and learning
- Addressing basic needs
- Alleviate barriers to access
 - Transportation, financial supports, food insecurity
- Case planning
- Building rapport through transparency



But first....

Before we go down the psychological, or neuropsychological route we should:

- ❖ Ask thoughtful questions
- ❖ Identify unmet needs
- ❖ Attempt to eliminate barriers to engagement
- ❖ Individualized or modified communication and services
- ❖ Fill in the gaps

Psychological Evaluation

- ❖ Is a direct interview with a psychologist that gathers information regarding thoughts, emotions, behaviors, cognitive abilities, developmental history, and medical history;
- ❖ Diagnostic testing may be used to illustrate patterns of behavioral, personality, and intellectual functioning;
- ❖ Provides clinical recommendations and supports the individual, and/or family needs to be successful;
- ❖ Considerations for working memory, attention span, learning style, reading comprehension, oral comprehension;
- ❖ Can provide insight and information into the individual's needs and ways to make supplemental modifications to communication and services;
- ❖ May provide diagnosis of behavioral health disorder; however, focus is on assessment of cognitive strength, capacity and weaknesses;
- ❖ Provides a comprehensive assessment of individual's behavioral health and cognitive functioning;
- ❖ More complex, more expensive, less access (long waiting lists), often has a legal/forensic focus;
- ❖ Lack of culturally appropriate providers.



Neuropsychological Evaluation

- A neuropsychological evaluation is a series of tests, or assessment batteries, that provides insight into how an individual's brain impacts their behavior, mood, memory, cognition (i.e., thinking), attention span, concentration, reasoning, etc.
- This evaluation can provide a clinical diagnosis for conditions such as:
 - Alzheimer's disease
 - Brain Injury
 - Dementia
 - Stroke
 - Epilepsy
 - MS
 - Parkinson's disease
 - Learning disabilities
 - Without knowledge of an individual's baseline this gives us a limited picture of individual's needs.



Psychological/Neuropsychological with Parenting Component

- This is a psychological evaluation with the addition of time spent **observing** the parent and child/ren interacting.
- The evaluation should include standardized testing to measure parenting skills, parenting stressors, and identify potential for abusive behavior.
- The psychological evaluator should review the individual's family and parenting history to include history of abuse/neglect, domestic violence, substance use.
- The evaluation should include an examination of parent's and child's attachment styles, the parent's current parenting skills, and disciplinary skills.
- The evaluation should also consider the child's unique needs and the parent's ability to obtain resources to meet identified needs.
- The evaluation should highlight strengths and identify any reasonable accommodations available to remedy any skill acquisition needed.



Goals of a Psychological or Neuropsychological

- May provide diagnosis of behavioral health disorder; however, main focus is on assessment of cognitive strength, capacity and weaknesses.
- Utilize standardized measures to assess personality traits and interpersonal dynamics.
- Provide a holistic profile of emotional and social functioning to inform therapy recommendations and intervention strategies.
- Identify disruptions in specific cognitive domains such as memory, attention, executive functioning, language, and visuospatial skills.
- Provide recommendations on necessary accommodations or skill building strategies tailored to individual's strengths and needs.



Psychological & Neuropsychological Evaluations

How we
should use
them:

- These evaluations should be ordered when there is a clinical recommendation from a medical provider, unless there is a specific court order.
- Referral sources could include a primary care physician, mental health provider or a recommendation from a previous evaluation.
- On a limited, case by case basis after exhausting lesser restrictive services and in consultation with a regional lead.



How to use information from a Psychological or Neuropsychological

- Connection to resources
 - Recommendations
 - Services
 - Supports
 - Informal and formal
- Additional applications
 - How to modify programs and services
 - Engagement strategies
 - Parent interactions to include meetings, service letters, email, etc.



Parenting Assessment

A parenting assessment should provide information on the parent's capacity to understand and meet their child's unique needs.

- The provider should utilize collateral record review, direct observation of the parent and child interaction, as well as, a direct examination and interview of the parent utilizing standardized, reliable, and valid measures of parenting and discipline skills, parenting stresses, and potential for abusive behavior.
- The assessment should include an examination of parents and child's attachment styles, current parenting skills, and disciplinary skills.
- The assessment should also consider the child's unique needs and the parent's ability to obtain resources to meet identified needs.
- The assessment should highlight strengths and identify reasonable accommodations available to remedy any skill acquisition needed.

Goals of a Parenting Assessment

- Identification of parenting skill needs
 - Matching appropriate services to meet those needs
- Identification of barriers
- Identify the unique needs of the child and what skills and resources may be necessary to meet needs
- Identify areas of potential risk in relation to child safety.



How to engage an individual in a Parenting Assessment

- Consider requesting a parenting assessment, independently from a psychological evaluation, when:
 - Medical barriers to engagement, (i.e., SUD, disability, MH) have been ruled out, and a parent has completed several services, but continues to struggle with key parenting concepts.
 - The child has complex needs, and more information is needed about the parent's ability to meet these needs.



Completing Referrals to Providers: Questions to ask

- What are the presenting issues? What are your observations? Concerns? Risk Factors?
- What would be the appropriate service to refer individual to?
- What are the most important concerns that you have that the provider needs to know?
- What would your recommendations for goals for treatment be?
- Are there any other referrals or community resources you would recommend?



SO.....

ANY QUESTIONS???

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Thank you!

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