

TREATMENT PLANNING

DESCRIPTION

In collaboration with the student and family, treatment planning involves the consistent and uniform identification and documentation of goals, objectives, and interventions that accurately match program services to the presenting needs of students and their families.

RATIONALE

Effective treatment planning that matches services to student needs will help to direct the clinician, student (and family), in an effective course of treatment, guide clinical decision-making, and improve outcomes for students.

The following recommendations are offered to school mental health providers, schools, families, students and other stakeholders in order to ensure thorough treatment planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In collaboration with students, establish treatment plans that are highly individualized, and identify positive outcomes based on [students' strengths](#) and available supports.
2. Design clear and realistic goals and objectives utilizing interventions and outcomes that are consistent with the student's readiness to acknowledge problems and make changes.
3. Ensure that school mental health providers are knowledgeable about various services in the school and community so that they can address students' problems with the most effective interventions.
4. Define timeline for goals and objectives and maintain regular treatment plan updates (e.g., every 3-6 months).
5. Complete an accurate assessment, using both formal and informal [assessment measures](#), to determine a student's needs.
6. Determine if the student has a diagnosable mental health problem. If so, the treatment plan should be generally driven by [empirically supported treatments](#) for that particular diagnosis.
7. Plan and implement treatment in a way that takes into account:
 - The strengths of the student and family
 - Feasibility
 - [Culture and language](#)
 - Involvement of other relevant health professionals and resources
8. Seek input and agreement from the student and family on presenting problems and needed treatment:
 - Focus on student and families goals
 - Make sure treatment plan takes into account student and family strengths and risks
 - Discuss the treatment plan openly with the student and families
 - Provide student with a copy of the treatment plan

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- Have mechanism in place for how the student/family can make changes to the treatment plan
 - Provide place for the student to sign his/her treatment plan as a way for him/her to endorse the plan and indicate his/her commitment to the plan
9. Brainstorm with the student and family to evaluate whether the current services are matching their needs, and discuss how to improve the match.

REFERENCES

The University of Maryland's Center for School Mental Health (2008). School Mental Health Quality Assessment Questionnaire (SMHQAQ) Quality Indicator Power points, Indicators 6. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/Resources/Clin/QAIRsrc/QAQP>.

RESOURCES

National Institute of Mental Health (n.d.) *Treatment of Children with Mental Disorders*. Retrieved from (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/treatment-of-children-with-mental-disorders/complete.pdf>).

Treatment Planners:

The following treatment planners, organized by presenting issue, are useful for any school mental health practitioner in establishing effective treatment plans. They can be found at any large bookstore, library or amazon.com.

- Jongsma, A.,McInnis, W.; & .Peterson, M. (2002). *The Adolescent Psychotherapy Treatment Planner, 4th Edition*. Wiley: New York
- Jongsma, A.,McInnis, W.; & .Peterson, M. (2002). *The Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy Treatment Planner*. Wiley: New York.
- Jongsma, A. & Knapp, S.E. (2002). *School Counseling and School Social Work Treatment Planner* Wiley: New York.