Behavioral Risk Management

Preventing Critical Incidents in the Field

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Overview & Definitions

Concept 1: Behavioral Risk Management Model

Concept 2: Cascade of Events & Tightly and Loosely coupled systems

Concept 3: Safe Container & Behavioral Expectations

Small Group sessions
Goals

After attending this workshop, you will be able to:

- Develop a training session for staff to explain how behavioral risk factors mirror technical/physical risk factors in the field.

- Choose a recent incident and analyze it using “cascade of events” or the “safe container” to identify contributing behavioral factors.

- Create a set of prescriptive expectations for use with staff to both anticipate behavioral risk factors and help mitigate the risks they create.
Overview
Santa Fe Mountain Center clients

- Youth in the juvenile justice system
- Native American populations; notably local pueblos & people from nearby Navajo and Apache reservations
- GLBTQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) populations & HIV at-risk populations
- Victims of domestic violence & sexual abuse/assault
Reportable Incident

Any of the following will indicate a reportable incident:

- Requires more than simple first aid
- Requires more than cursory staff attention
- Requires follow-up care
- Requires use of prescription medications or evacuation
- Results in a near miss
- Behaviors mount and interventions appear not to be working
- Interferes with participants participation and staffs’ attention to the group as a whole becomes diffuse
Types of Incidents

• Injury: Client or staff is injured.

• Illness: Client or staff is sick or gets sick.

• Motivational/Behavioral: Behaviors or emotions get in the way of program or cause emotional harm to client.

• Near Miss: Whew! Something bad almost happened.
Motivational/Behavioral Incident

- reluctance or unwillingness to participate
- being verbally or physically abusive
- running away
- using alcohol or drugs
- suicidal or homicidal ideation
- any emotional or psychological situation that compromises the students ability to participate in the program.
Case Study:
Is this a reportable incident?
Reportable Incident

- Requires more than simple first aid
- Requires more than cursory staff attention
- Requires follow-up care
- Requires use of prescription medications or evacuation
- Results in a near miss
- Behaviors mount and interventions appear not to be working
- Interferes with participants participation and staffs’ attention to the group as a whole becomes diffuse
Resolution & Learnings
1. Behavioral Risk Management Model

- Technical Risk Factors
  - Tools, Systems & Protocols for Mitigating Risk
- Behavioral Risk Factors
  - Participants, Staff, The Organization, The Field
- Physical Risk Factors
Behavioral Risk Management Model

TECHNICAL RISK FACTORS

Malfunctioning or inadequate Equipment
Inadequate Staff Skills

Equipment Protocols
Staff Expertise

Safety Briefing

Environmental Factors

Activity Related Risks

PHYSICAL RISK FACTORS

Malfunctioning or inadequate Equipment
Inadequate Staff Skills

Equipment Protocols
Staff Expertise

Inadequate Client Skills

Safety Briefing

CURRICULUM

Medical Screening

Medical Screening

Pre-existing Medical Conditions

Pre-existing Medical Conditions

Ongoing Client Assessment

Ongoing Client Assessment

Safe Container

Safe Container

Factors that threaten Emotional Well-being

Factors that threaten Physical Well-being

Participants, Staff, The Organization, The Field

PRE-EXISTING MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Pre-existing Medical Conditions

Individual Client History

Cultural Competence of Staff

Group Composition

Group Composition

TECHNICAL RISK FACTORS

Poor Technique

Technical Protocols

Malfunctioning or inadequate Equipment

Inadequate Staff Skills

Inadequate Client Skills

Behavioral Risk Management Model

Participants, Staff, The Organization, The Field

Medical Screening

Medical Screening

Ongoing Client Assessment

Ongoing Client Assessment

Safe Container

Safe Container

Factors that threaten Emotional Well-being

Factors that threaten Physical Well-being

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Behavioral Risk Management Model

Participants, Staff, The Organization, The Field

Technical Risk Factors
- Malfunctioning or inadequate Equipment
- Inadequate Staff Skills
- Inadequate Client Skills

Behavioral Risk Factors
- Pre-existing Medical History: Depression, ADHD, Anxiety
- Individual Client History: Effects of Racism, Marginalization, or oppression that clients have been exposed to
- Group Composition: Racism, Sexism, Classism, or other isms that may exist within the group and between all clients and staff

Physical Risk Factors
- Environmental Factors: Sunburn, Exhaustion, Dehydration, Hypothermia
- Activity Related Risks: Fatal Falls, Falling Rocks, Drowning, twists, strains

Tools, Systems & Protocols for Mitigating Risk

- Equipment Protocols (industry standards, retirement)
- Staff Expertise (training, certification or assessment)
- Safety Briefing (How to use equipment)
- Safety Briefing (How to take care of yourself)
- Curriculum (How to run activities)
- Safe Container (Including Full Value Commitment)

Factors that threaten Physical Well-being:
- Anything that compromises clients feeling rested, well fed, comfortable, hydrated

Factors that threaten Emotional Well-being:
- Anything that threatens clients feeling supported & emotionally safe

Medical Screening

Cultural Competence of Staff (training & experience)

Ongoing Client Assessment

Pre-existing Medical History: HIV, diabetes, HBP, Thyroid

Individual Client History: Effects of Racism, Marginalization, or oppression that clients have been exposed to

Group Composition: Racism, Sexism, Classism, or other isms that may exist within the group and between all clients and staff
How this applies to your program

- The Santa Fe Mountain Center comes from a therapeutic perspective—your programs and clients may look different from ours. However, you can STILL use this theory on your programs whether it’s a therapeutic program or not.

- Remember, “If you invite the public, the public will come.”
Behavioral Risk Management Model Take-aways

- In order to mitigate critical incidents, it is important to give equal attention to all 3 of the realms where risk factors lie: the behavioral, technical and physical realms.

- There are a number of tools, protocols & systems that your organization can put into place to help mitigate behavioral risk factors.
2. Cascade of Events

- The idea that critical incidents can be caused by a number of preceding events. Often, these preceding events are by themselves not enough to set off people's awareness that an incident may be imminent.
Sprained Ankle
Loose Shoelaces
Poor Safety Briefing
Inexperienced Staff
Staffing Shortage

Behavioral Risk Factors
Poor Behavioral Expectations
Clients running around unsafely

Technical and Physical Risk Factors
Case Study-
Behavioral Cascade of Events
Client threatening self-harm
Another client threatening staff
Other clients wandering off during incident

Technical and Physical Risk Factors
- Poor job assessing appropriateness of clients?
- Clients stressed by difficulty of hike?
- Staff Culture Unsafe
- Incohesive Staff Team
- Poor Behavioral Expectations
- Unsafe emotional environment
- Clients emotionally stressed, acting out and fronting

Behavioral Risk Factors
Resolution & Learnings
Breaking a cascade of events

1. Be aware that a cascade of events is in motion.

2. Understand that behavioral factors may be at play in the cascade.

3. Interventions may be needed on the technical, physical and/or behavioral level to break the cascade.
Loosely and Tightly coupled systems
Behavioral Factors in a Cascade of Events- Take-aways

- There are often a number of behavioral factors underlying a cascade of events.
- Breaking a cascade of events may require interventions in the technical, physical OR behavioral realm.
- When viewing how tightly or loosely coupled a system is, be sure to pay attention to how behavioral factors are involved.
3. The Safe Container

- Safe Container: a safe emotional & physical space where clients can process their experiences and practice positive behaviors.
A Safe Container consists of multiple elements & concepts:

- Behavioral Expectations (Full Value Commitment)
- Challenge by Choice and Comfort Zones
- A prescriptive and flexible program
- Culturally Competent staff
Behavioral Expectations are a way to help clients grow and learn.
But Behavioral Expectations are ALSO a Risk Management tool.
• Client threatening self-harm
• Another client threatening staff
• Other clients wandering off during incident

Technical and Physical Risk Factors

Inadequate pre-program client assessment
Clients stressed by difficulty of hike?

Behavioral Risk Factors

Staff Culture Unsafe
Incohesive Staff Team
Poor Behavioral Expectations
Unsafe emotional environment
Clients emotionally stressed, acting out and fronting
Fronting

- A coping behavior that involves presenting a false “front” or facade to others. With disadvantaged youth, this often comes out as presenting themselves as “tough” by threatening one another emotionally or physically, glorifying negative behaviors, cursing, fighting or putting others down.
Prescriptive
Behavioral Expectations for
“Fronting” behaviors

No threats or violence, including horseplay

No War Stories

Use appropriate language

No put downs
Behavioral Expectations for young men in a detention facility

- Respectful Behavior, including:
  - Listen when others are speaking
  - Respect differences like race, color, gender, ethnicity, body size or shape
- Participation, with Challenge by Choice
- No violence of threats of violence
- No War Stories
- Use Appropriate Language
- No teasing or put-downs
- No horseplay
- Take serious situations seriously (like at the top of a cliff)
- Have Fun!
- No war stories
- Appropriate language
- No horseplay
- Pick up trash
- Be supportive, no put downs
- Participation
- Challenge by choice
- LEAD SWEET
- HAVE FUN
Voyage Beyond Prejudge

No First Things
No Proude
No Jolures

√ your language

Instigating No Horse play

Respect

No put downs

First Names (respectful)

Put aside problems & Arent 71
Behavioral Expectations for 5th graders in an anti-bullying program

- Five finger agreement:
  - **Thumb** (thumbs up)- Support one another
  - **Index Finger** (don’t point and blame)- personal responsibility
  - **Middle Finger** (often used to disrespect)- respectful behavior & respect differences
  - **Ring Finger**- commitment to being part of a group
  - **Pinky Finger** (the most fragile finger)- we are all fragile creatures and need to take care of one another
Behavioral expectations as a risk management tool - Take-aways

- Behavioral expectations are frequently used on programs but are not always thought of as a risk management tool.

- A well-crafted and thoughtful set of behavioral expectations can not only help staff keep clients on track, but can prevent potential behavioral incidents.
5. Small Group sessions

1. Rate your organization on some of how relevant the risk factors are (1= low risk, 5= high risk) and then on the corresponding Tools, Systems and Protocols (1= no tools or protocols, 5= great tools or protocols) that your organization has in place. Do you notice any discrepancies or trends?
Worksheet #1

1) Rate the relevance of risk factors in your organization’s programs (1 = less relevant, 5 = highly relevant)

2) Rate the strength of your organization’s current tools, systems and protocols for mitigating these risks (1 = no tools, 5 = strong tools)

Do notice any discrepancies or trends?

Participants, Staff, The Organization, The Field

**Technical Risk Factors**
- Malfunctioning or inadequate Equipment
- Inadequate Staff Skills
- Inadequate Client Skills
- Poor Technique
- Equipment Protocols (industry standards, retirement)
- Staff Expertise (training, certification or assessment)
- Safety Briefing (How to use equipment)

**Physical Risk Factors**
- Environmental Factors
  - Sunburn
  - Exhaustion
  - Dehydration
  - Hypothermia
- Activity Related Risks
  - Fatal Falls
  - Falling Rocks
  - Drowning
  - Twists, strains

**Behavioral Risk Factors**
- Pre-existing Medical History
  - Depression, ADHD, Anxiety
- Individual Client History
  - Effects of Racism, Marginalization, or oppression that clients have been exposed to
- Group Composition
  - Racism, Sexism, Classism, or otherisms that may exist within the group and between all clients and staff

**Tools, Systems & Protocols for Mitigating Risk**
- Cultural Competence of Staff (training & experience)
- Medical Screening (incl. clinical factors)
- Curriculum (How to run activities)
- Safety Briefing (How to take care of yourself)
- Medical Screening (Ongoing Client Assessment)
- Safe Container (Including Full Value Commitment)
- Ongoing Client Assessment

**Factors that Threaten Emotional Well-being**
- Anything that threatens clients feeling supported & emotionally safe

**Factors that Threaten Physical Well-being**
- Anything that compromises clients feeling rested, well-fed, comfortable, hydrated

**Cultural Competence of Staff**

**Pre-existing Medical History**

**Activity Related Risks**

**Environmental Factors**
Thank you for helping us
Prevent Critical Behavioral Incidents in the Field

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