



# YOUTH TRANSITION GROUPS

*The Ottawa Experience: A review of the early development of pilot youth mental health groups offered in collaboration between social workers from Shared Mental Health in primary care and the Transitional Youth Mental Health Services*

# Agenda

- Background of our pilot project
- Overview of Youth Groups
- Challenges/Lessons Learned
- Youth Feedback
- Future Steps
- Contact Information
- Questions?

# Background

- Transitional Youth Advisory Board – composed of multiple agencies in mental health
- Social Worker hired for Transitional Youth MH Program (via CHEO)
- Partnership with Social Worker from Shared Mental Health (TOH & Bruyere Academic Family Health Teams)

# Pilot Youth Groups

- Two youth pilot groups (6/8 weeks)
- Referrals from Transitional Youth mental health program and Two Large Family Health Teams (Bruyere and TOH Academic FHT's)
- Pre Screening Assessment Interviews
- Co-facilitated by two Social Workers
- Content included CBT, focus on mental health issues mainly anxiety, depression, social anxiety. Focus also on Transitions to adult mental health services and adult roles and responsibilities

# Week-to-week content

- CBT Model
- Bio-psycho-social model of anxiety/depression
- Automatic thoughts, activity monitoring for mood, exposure for social anxiety
- Healthy Relationships (parents, friends, partners)
- Support for transitions in Employment and/or Education Issues (including role plays)
- Coping Strategies
- Relaxation/Mindfulness
- Goal Setting – self reflection
- Peer support
- Resources

# Challenges

- Social Work Professional issues (i.e. documentation, confidentiality, standards of practice (TOH/CHEO/College of Social Work))
- Referral Process
- Documentation/charting issues
- Intervention
- Managing Schedules (meeting times, etc)
- Location of sessions/Meetings

# Lessons Learned

- Importance of Pre screening
- Flexibility (“open” group as opposed to “closed” group)
- Reminder Calls
- Bring Snacks
- Balance between open discussion and “teaching” format

# Tools Used

- Screeners (PHQ-9 GAD-7)
- Consents
- Pre Screen interview guide
- Evaluations



# Youth Feedback

- \*screening was very useful: “I like that I was asked how I am and it gave me a sense of what to expect”
- \*treats/snacks were appreciated
- \*the ice breaker was a nice way to start
- \*enjoyed the role playing/would like more role playing
- \*would like more relaxation techniques
- \*goal setting should be more specific, “it should be about behaviours and examples should be given”
- \*would like for the group to last about 1.5 hrs
- \*there should be more sessions, 8 to 10 would be good.
- \*6 to 8 people is a good size for the group
- \*“if someone shows up when they want that’s ok, I’m not bothered by that, people should show up when they want to be there”

# Youth Feedback Continued

- \*some youth felt they had more determination than others
- \*liked the sessions where we talk about “what we have in common”
- \*youth enjoyed team work/would like more team work
- \* some suggested to avoid “lessons”
- \*worksheets/handouts were helpful
- \*what was most helpful was coming up with ideas as a group and then writing those things down to keep as a handout
- \*would like more discussion about depression, anxiety and social anxiety
- \*self-esteem would be an interesting topic to cover
- \*one youth was unable to participate in group because of location
- \*some youth felt comfortable taking the next step of joining an adult group

# Future Steps

Montfort Hospital Experience

Ongoing groups??



# QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

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