

# Skills Group



# Parent Handbook

## **Skills Group**

Skills Group serves children and adolescents who experience severe emotional difficulties and high risk behaviors across settings. The goal of Skills Group is to help reduce high risk behavior and improve functioning to prevent more restrictive placements.

Skills Group provides treatment interventions based on the Sanctuary Model. The team actively works to create an environment that promotes healing. Clients are educated about specific tools to help manage and recover from stressful or adverse experiences that affect their current functioning. Clients create a safety plan and a self-care plan.

Skills Group staff consists of a Program Manager, a Program Coordinator, and licensed Day Treatment Providers (also known as group leaders). Day Treatment Providers provide direct care and therapeutic programming to help clients maintain personal safety and manage emotional and behavioral symptoms.

## **DISCHARGE CRITERIA**

Decisions regarding level of care and discharge are made in collaboration with client, parent/guardian and the treatment team. Things to consider include the client's functioning across settings, client and parent/guardian input, and stage of treatment.

Possible criteria include: Stable functioning across settings, sufficient progress toward goals, lower level of care (i.e. ongoing services, community resources, and other social support systems) able to meet client needs, maximum benefit of treatment achieved, higher level of care required to meet client needs, or program no longer meets client needs

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Clients are to wear appropriate clothing to program. This includes no tank tops, short shorts/skirts, or graphic shirts.
- Clients are not permitted to bring food, drinks, or snacks from home or school.
- Any items brought from home are put away upon arrival unless given permission from staff. This includes cell phones.
- Clients are to be with staff at all times
- Clients are to ask staff before getting into cabinets, cupboards, closets, office, etc.
- Clients are to be respect to others.
- Clients are to keep hands and feet to self and respect other's personal space
- Clients are to use appropriate words and tone of voice. This includes no threatening or swearing.
- Clients are not use last names to respect privacy and confidentiality
- Clients are to keep conversations appropriate and respectful. This includes not talking about others, inappropriate topics, or making inappropriate gestures.
- Clients are to return any items given to them by staff at the end of the day (pens, art supplies, fidgets, etc.)

## PARENT COORDINATION

It is very important for you as the parent to be involved in your child's treatment! Please make sure to contact us with any concerns, progress, problems, or changes that you feel would be beneficial for us to know while working with your child. The more information we have regarding your child's home/school life and functioning, the better we can serve them!

It is also important to keep us informed regarding any changes in your child's schedule. We understand they might be involved in extra-curricular activities or sports. Please contact the group coordinator to best work through schedule changes or needs.

Staff will discuss any concerns during group as well as progress they are seeing. Staff will communicate with parents by sending daily goal sheets, talking to treatment providers, sending letters, and making telephone calls. We know that the best success comes from a team approach so it is important to us that you have an understanding about what is happening with your child in groups!

*Parent Letters:* As a team, we review your child's progress approximately every three months. This is a good time for the team to discuss any barriers or progress that has been seen during Day Treatment. Afterwards, a Parent Letter will be mailed to you to share progress towards goals. Please feel free to call your child's group leader to further discuss any of the information provided!

## THE TREATMENT PROCESS – HELPING CLIENTS MOVE TOWARD CHANGE

Change involves loss.  
Change is a process.  
Change takes time and practice.

The treatment process involves stages of change.

**Insight-** Developing awareness about treatment goals. Acknowledging that certain behaviors interfere with well-being. Realizing that certain behaviors affect other people. Identifying concerns. Recognizing impact on relationships. Considering changing and developing motivation for change.

### **Planning-**

Developing an after-care plan. Identifying supports. Safety plan. Plan to practice self-care. What to do during stressful times to prevent going back to old patterns.

## STAGES

### **Action-**

Learning and practicing new skills and strategies. Actively working toward things such as: regulating emotions; expressing feelings appropriately; addressing loss; getting needs met appropriately; and/or repairing relationships. Experiencing setbacks and making mistakes.

### **Maintenance-**

Working to sustain the progress and change. Presenting what has been learned and how change has occurred. Envisioning a successful future.

## S.E.L.F. GOALS

Treatment goals are developed using the S.E.L.F. framework from the Sanctuary Model. Four goal areas are targeted to facilitate change: Safety, Emotional Management, Loss, and Future.

Each goal area is defined according to each client's individual treatment needs and treatment phase. Consider these factors when developing goals:

**Safety:** physical safety, psychological safety, moral safety, and social safety

**Emotional Management:** recognizing and handling feelings in non-harmful ways

**Loss:** acknowledging and grieving past losses, stressors, or traumas; working against getting stuck in the past; recognizing all change involves loss

**Future:** re-establishing the capacity for choice; engaging in new behaviors rather than repeating old patterns; hope

Initial goals are designed to address the beginning stage of treatment. Goal definitions are reviewed after initial observation and assessment, during consultation with parents/guardians, during goal reviews, and during client review meetings. Goals are modified as the client makes progress, experiences change, and becomes successful.

## DAY TREATMENT GOAL SHEET

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**SAFETY:** *Identify triggers to unsafe behaviors. Acknowledge unsafe behavior affects self and others. Learn about self-control. Use Safety Plan when encouraged.*

No Progress

Little Progress

Some Progress

Goal Met/Maintained



**EMOTIONS:** *Identify thoughts. Recognize feelings. Use words or pictures to let others know how I feel. Learn about coping skills and ways to calm down. Accept support from others. Practice Self-Care.*

No Progress

Little Progress

Some Progress

Goal Met/Maintained



**LOSS:** *Adjust to changes in routine, structure and expectations. Acknowledge past/ current stressors. Understand working on goals may feel uncomfortable and take time. Think about interactions with others.*

No Progress

Little Progress

Some Progress

Goal Met/Maintained



**FUTURE:** *Think about good things that can happen if I work on your goals. Identify personal strengths and abilities. Recognize power to make choices. Listen to feedback from others.*

No Progress

Little Progress

Some Progress

Goal Met/Maintained



**Staff Comments:**

**Parent/Guardian Signature:**

**Parent/Guardian Comments:**

# DAILY SCHEDULE



**COMMUNITY MEETING  
CHECK IN  
SANCTUARY CONCEPT  
SKILL BUILDER  
COPING SKILL  
SELF-CARE  
GOAL REVIEW**

## **PROGRAMMING**

### **Community Meeting**

Group leaders facilitate community meeting to create a sense of community among clients and staff. Each person is asked three questions: (1) How are you feeling? (2) What is your goal? and (3) Who can help you if you need support?

### **Check-In**

Group leaders facilitate check in to build rapport with clients and explore how they are functioning. Each person is given the opportunity to share current successes, challenges, supports, and/or stressors.

### **Sanctuary Concept**

Group leaders educate clients about a concept from the Sanctuary Model to help them develop tools for healing. Discussions may include topics such as the impact of stress, Seven Commitments, S.E.L.F., Reenactment, Safety Plans, or Self-Care Plans.

### **Self-Care**

Group leaders provide opportunities for clients to practice self-care to promote wellness. Activities may include nutrition, physical activity, recreation, or self-reflection.

### **Skill Builder**

Group leaders lead structured discussions and activities to help clients learn and practice new skills. Topics are relevant to emotional, behavioral, and social functioning.

### **Coping Skill**

Group leaders teach clients ways to manage stressful events and overwhelming emotions to help them develop self-regulation. Clients may practice techniques such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, mindfulness, etc.

### **Goal Review**

Group leaders facilitate goal review to help clients monitor and evaluate progress toward treatment goals. Clients receive feedback, process recent social, emotional, and behavioral functioning, and discuss ways to maintain or improve.

## MEET THE STAFF

**Mindy Bahnsen, Program Manager**  
**Sheryl Reffner, Group Leader**  
**Astasha Perrine, Group Leader**  
**Joseph Stockton, Group Leader**  
**Tabatha Miller, Group Leader**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: Who will be working with my child in Skills Group?**

**A:** Skills Group programming is provided in groups based on age and developmental level. Each group is led by a licensed day treatment provider, also known as group leader. There are times that groups may also have a volunteer or intern. When your child comes to group, s/he will meet the assigned staff person.

**Q: How do I contact Skills Group Staff?**

**A:** CRC is available to take your call at any time. **Call (419) 352-7588 or toll free 1-888-466-kids.** If your call pertains to programming, ask for Mindy Bahnsen or Day Treatment. If your call pertains to transportation, ask for Jeff McIntyre or Transportation. If staff is not working or unavailable, you can leave a voicemail message. For crisis situations, ask to speak to a Crisis Therapist

**Q: What if my child is sick or going to be absent?**

**A:** Parents/guardians are asked to call in advance regarding absences. Clients are not permitted to call themselves off. Please call CRC and ask for Jeff McIntyre or Transportation. This allows transportation time to change routes if necessary.

**Q: How long will my child attend Skills Group?**

**A:** Day Treatment tends to be a 6-12 month program. Successful completion depends on a variety of factors including your child's progress on treatment goals and his/her functioning at home, at school, in the community, and during program. Typically, discharge occurs when clients are able to maintain progress over time. Clients, parents/guardians, and treatment providers provide input regarding discharge planning.

**Still have questions?**

Call (419) 352-7588 or 1-888-466-kids

Ask for:

Mindy Bahnsen, Program Manager  
Jeff McIntyre, Transportation Coordinator