Verbal De-Escalation and Crisis Prevention During COVID-19

May 20, 2020
House Keeping

- Because this is a webinar, attendees are muted
- Please type any questions you have into the Questions Box
- We are recording this webinar and will send out the link to everyone who registered at a later date.
Speakers

Amber Freeman  
*Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator*  
CT Coalition to End Homelessness

Dyshawn Thames  
*Child Welfare Trainer*  
The Academy- Department of Children and Families
Essential Factors

- Rapport
- Knowledge of client
- Communication Skills (Verbal and Non-Verbal)
- Empowerment and Skill Building
- Coping Skills
- Toolkit/ Resources
Verbal De-Escalation and Crisis Prevention Techniques

Dyshawn Thames
Child Welfare Trainer
Department of Children and Families
Levels of Awareness

- Self Awareness
- Environmental Awareness
- Client Awareness
Self Awareness

- What am I feeling & thinking?
- Be selective about personal disclosure
- Jewelry? Should I wear it?
- High Heels? Should I wear them?
- Purse? Should I bring it?
- Should we partner up?
Environmental Awareness

Considerations:

1. What risks are present?

2. Is this environment triggering the client?

3. Is a neutral setting required?
Client Awareness

- Know the level of risk
- History of violence
- Substance Abuse history
- Access to Weapons
- Criminal History
- Mental Health issues
Client Awareness

- Establish the goal of the visit

- Keep a clear path to the exit door

- Avoid the client’s bedroom or isolated space

- Always respect personal space
Crisis Phases

Anxiety Phase

Defensive Phase

Aggression Phase
Anxiety Phase

- Noticeable increase or change in behaviors
- Pacing
- Hand wringing
- Sweating
- Nervousness
Anxiety Phase

Worker Skills:

Engagement

Empathy

Active Listening

Validation of feelings
Verbal Communication

Take into consideration

- Tone of voice
- Volume
- Cadence

This applies to both client and worker
Verbal De-Escalation Techniques

- Identify yourself and your agency
- Explain your reason for being there
- Explain your responsibility to assess
- Emphasize you are there to help
- Do not assign blame to the client
Defensive Phase

May lose some ability to reason

May become belligerent or challenging

Will process messages differently

Will attempt to “push buttons.”
Verbal De-Escalation Techniques

- Affective delivery is important
- Keep your voice volume down
  - (Pace & Lead)
- Project comfort that you are in control
- Project a calm and assured presence
- Give some time
- Don’t push for answers if anger increases
- Clearly explain consequences
Verbal De-Escalation Techniques

- Do not corner the client, physically or psychologically
- Use the client’s name when speaking with him or her
- Be conscious of your non-verbal communication
- Leave if you fear for your own safety
Aggression Phase

- Dramatic changes in behavior
- Invasion of worker’s personal space
- Screaming and threatening
- Physical Assault

Loss of control, which could result in the client physically acting out
Crisis Intervention Techniques

- Terminate the meeting
- Leave as quickly as possible
- Take actions to ensure yours & their safety
- Make efforts not to embarrass client, if able
Resources

Please visit the CCEH website for Updates, Resources, and Webinars: https://cceh.org/2020/03/19/11330/

Mental Health and Crisis
• Call 1-800-273-8255 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
• Text HOME to 741-741 for Crisis Text Line
• Call 1-866-488-7386, text START to 678-678 to chat with The Trevor Project (for LGBTQ youth)
• Call 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22-522 to connect with The National Domestic Violence Hotline

Resources in CT
• 2-1-1
Questions?

Type in questions below