

## Crisis Planning and **Children's** Challenging Behaviors: Making a Plan that Works

Webinar for Educators, Mental Health Providers, Community Support Staff, Parents, and Others

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## Crisis Planning and Children's Challenging Behaviors: Making a Plan that Works

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## Today's Webinar

- Scheduled from 12:00 – 1:00pm, 8/23/2016
- NOTE: If you are unable to listen to the Webinar through your computer speakers you may dial into the Webinar using the phone number listed in the GoToWebinar control bar.
- Participants are muted.
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Page 3



## Today's Webinar

- A link to the on-line evaluation survey will be emailed after the presentation today.
- Please complete evaluation surveys by 8/30/16. Certificates of Attendance will be emailed in return the week of 9/2/16.
- If participating as a group, select one person to email [nelson@pacer.org](mailto:nelson@pacer.org) a list of group participants after the presentation concludes today.

Page 4



## Optional: Question and Answer

1. Type your question in the white box
2. When text is entered, a "send" option will activate
3. Click send
4. Senders of questions are anonymous and will not be identified

Page 5



**Webinar:**  
Developing a Crisis Plan for Children & Youth with Challenging Behaviors

## What we'll cover...

- Some key features of proactive crisis plans
- What we should know about challenging behaviors before developing a crisis plan
- Questions to ask when considering a child's escalating challenging behaviors
- Developing crisis plans based on principles of wellness, recovery, resiliency and that are person-centered
- Examples of crisis planning

Page 6



## What do we mean by crisis?

- Immediate or escalating safety concerns of a child/youth
- May involve safety risk of child/youth and/or others
- May escalate gradually or be a sudden escalation
- May be difficult to predict or respond to
- May be intermittent or recurring for some children/youth

Crisis is not always defined the same way by each person

Page 7

## Plans That Work (no matter the name)

### Different Plan Names

#### Might be:

- Crisis plan
- Crisis prevention plan
- Crisis management plan
- Safety plan

### Plans that work ...

- Actively developed, implemented, reviewed, revised w/child
- Include a designated person to facilitate the review/ updating/ writing of plan
- Person-centered (not agency-centered)
- Based on principles of wellness, resiliency / recovery

Page 8

## Plan to Meet & Meet to Plan

- Determine who will coordinate/ facilitate the plan (written and meetings)
- Determine type of crisis plan & who should participate
  - School-based crisis plan
  - Home-based crisis plan
  - Community-based crisis plan

Page 9

## Be Ready – Come prepared

- Know how you currently view a child's behavior
- Be willing to consider escalating challenging behaviors in new and different ways
- Remember: There are times when a child's behaviors result in a crisis, and this does not reflect failure on the part of the child/youth

Page 10

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## What We Know about Challenging Behavior



- gets our attention
- forces us to respond
- gets results

Page 11

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## Escalating behaviors could look like...

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggressive and/or bullying</li> <li>• Name Calling</li> <li>• Disruptive</li> <li>• Defiant</li> <li>• Tantrums/out of control</li> <li>• Lying/cheating</li> <li>• Disrespectful</li> <li>• Confrontational/Defensive</li> <li>• Disorganized</li> <li>• Frustration</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hyperactivity</li> <li>• Lack of Responsibility</li> <li>• Unmotivated</li> <li>• Impulsive</li> <li>• Lack of Social Skills</li> <li>• Negative attitude</li> <li>• Poor coping skills</li> <li>• Avoidant of places/spaces</li> <li>• Upset/Crying</li> <li>• Inappropriate language</li> <li>• Off-task disruptive</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor peer relationships</li> <li>• Somatic complaints</li> <li>• Unable to work independently</li> <li>• Sad / depressed</li> <li>• Other?</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

\*\*list adapted from  
[www.pbisworld.com](http://www.pbisworld.com)

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## Consequences of Escalating Behavior

### *At school*

- Missed instruction?
- Impacted school performance?
- Difficulty following school discipline policy?
- Suspensions or dismissal from class/school?
- School avoidance?
- Conflict/challenges with other students and/or staff?
- Involvement with school resource officer or police being called? (involuntary service involvement?)

Page 13



## Consequences of Escalating Behavior?

### *At home & community*

- Conflict/challenges with others at home or in community?
- Limited participation in recreational or leisure activities with family, friends or others?
- Risk of involvement with involuntary services / courts (police, juvenile justice, child protection)?
- Other?

Page 14



## Important Considerations

### (1 of 2)

#### ***Change "won't" to "can't"***

Instead of asking... "why **won't** the child/youth do the preferred behavior?"

*Ask...*

"Why **can't** the child/youth do the preferred behavior?"

#### **Remember:**

- Behavior has meaning
- Behavior is an attempt to communicate a need

Page 15



## Help with skill development

### How is this child/youth...

- understanding and managing emotions?
- setting & achieving positive goals?
- feeling & showing empathy for others?
- establishing & maintaining positive relationships?
- making responsible decisions?

**WARNING:** In times of a child or youth in crisis, the ability to practice their social and emotional skills may be limited/impaired (be patient and understanding!)

[www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)



Page 16

## Important Considerations (2 of 2)

- What's the child/ youth like when feeling well?

**TIP:**

- Begin with understanding a child's wellness
- Help a child understand his/her wellness & wellness needs



## Wellness is individualized

### Tara, age 10

- Calm
- Talks positively about friends at school
- Getting along with siblings
- Liking school & attending daily
- Doing homework
- Spending time with friends after school or on weekends

### Gage, age 17

- High-energy
- Jokester
- Spending time in own room listening to music
- Eating meals regularly
- Writing songs to play on guitar
- Taking daily medications and getting enough sleep



## Not feeling well (at risk of crisis)

### Tara, age 10

- Says kids don't like her
- Arguing more with siblings
- Talking more often about feeling sick
- Calling home from school asking to be picked up
- Not doing homework and crying more often

### Gage, age 17

- High-energy is 'out-of-control' hyper energy
- Criticizing & bullying others
- Pacing often
- Skipping classes
- Avoiding guitar
- Saying he doesn't need any help
- Not getting enough sleep




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## Other factors

### ***Is the behavior ...***

- in response to something in the environment?
- in response to an unmet need?
- an automatic or involuntary response?
- Influenced by the child's culture?
- Influenced by the child's health or disability?
- Due to other life experiences (family, poverty, etc)

Page 20




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## When a Crisis Occurs

### Tara, Age 10

- Refuses to get out of bed to go to school (more than 3 days in a row)
- Avoiding daily routines (hygiene)
- "Clingy" with parent
- Saying "I hate myself", "everyone hates me," and "I wish I were dead!"

### Gage, Age 17

- Getting less than 6 hours sleep for 3 nights in a row
- Threatening others
- Self-harm (cutting)
- Unable to weigh the risks of actions or contract for safety
- Not following prescriptions (more than 7 days)



Page 21

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## When a crisis occurs...

- It helps for everyone to know what steps to take to support safety and being well.

Page 22



## Proactive Crisis Planning

- Developing a plan *before* the crisis
- Knowing what to expect
- Being part of the plan's development
- Making changes if it isn't working
- Keeping what does work
- Working together towards goals and outcomes that are positive to / for the child or youth and others

Page 23



## Decide on a Crisis Plan Template

Where can we find sample templates?

- Consider examples of crisis plan templates available online through disability-specific or health-related service-specific websites
- Mental health service providers including therapist, social workers, crisis response workers
- See Resources slides at end of this PowerPoint

Page 24





## What to Include in a Crisis Plan

- Identifying information of child/youth
- Child's preferred name (how to address child when in a crisis)
- Any medical information such as diagnoses, medications, allergies, doctor/s
- What child looks like when not in crisis
- Signs of a crisis / Signs when child is no longer in crisis
- Clear steps that will be taken to help during the crisis
- What to do/not to do when responding to the child in crisis
- Who to contact & when (or sometimes, who not to contact)

Page 25



## What to Include in a Crisis Plan: 5 Key Recovery Concepts

- Hope
- Personal Responsibility
- Education
- Self Advocacy
- Support

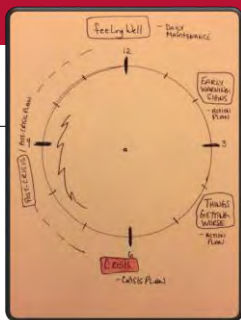
Crisis Plans  
should  
include the  
5 Key  
Recovery  
Concepts

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) / Mary Ellen Copeland, PhD  
/ [www.copelandcenter.com](http://www.copelandcenter.com)

Page 26



## Planning for wellness includes a plan for crisis



Walter Hudson, Advanced Level WRAP Facilitator, Copeland Center taught the WRAP components using the visual of an analog clock. For more information on WRAP: [www.copelandcenter.com](http://www.copelandcenter.com) & <http://www.kaposis.com/services/what-is-mhes/wrap-training-registration/>

Page 27



## Know the progression of challenging behaviors Tara, Age 10, Grade 5

Attends school; enjoys friends & learning; will try new things when she feels confident; learns well when in a classroom with friends who share interests in school and learning

May struggle if her friends have disagreements; may struggle when an assignment has many steps; may struggle when in classes or experiences where she does not have friends

Will stop attending school or try to leave school early; avoid friends and school work

Page 28

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## Complex Crisis Planning Example: Tara, Age 10 – Before the meeting

**Crisis Concern/s:**

- Unable to get to school / stay in school; saying "I wish I were dead"

**Meeting type?**

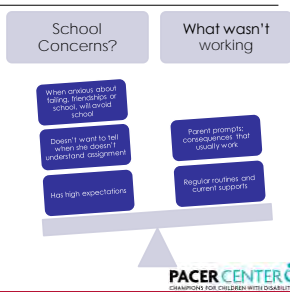
- School counselor/504 Plan coordinator w/parent, Tara & teachers; letter from mental health provider

**Was a crisis plan in place?**

- No

**Before the meeting...**

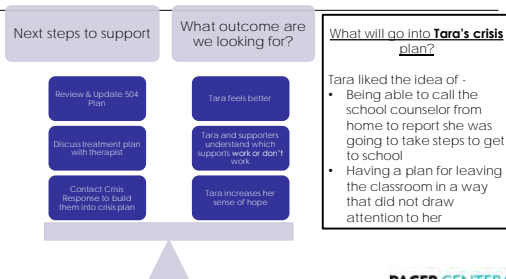
- Reviewed school records & talked with Tara about her goals and challenges
- Contacted Crisis Response Services



Page 29

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## Proactive Crisis Planning Example: Tara, Age 10 - After the meeting

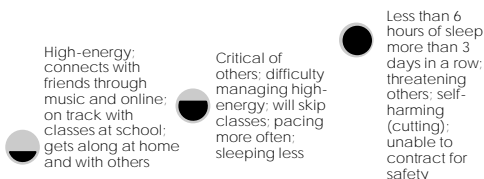


Page 30

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## Know the progression of challenging behaviors

### Gage, Age 17, Grade 11

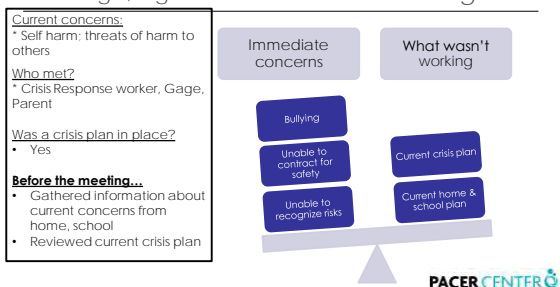


Page 31

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## Proactive Crisis Planning Example:

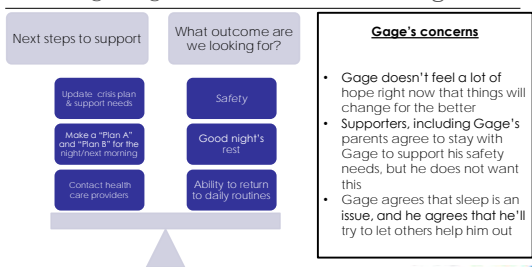
### Gage, Age 17 – Before the meeting



Page 32

## Proactive Crisis Planning Example:

### Gage, Age 17 - After the meeting



Page 33

## “Complex” Crisis Planning

- Writing / Implementing an effective crisis plan that is individualized & based on principles of wellness
- Communicating across different service providers & agencies effectively
- Planning for gaps in services & supports as part of the crisis planning process

Page 34



<http://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/independent-community-living/person-centered.asp>

### Person-Centered Principles:

Can be used for Crisis Planning [1-3]

1. “**The** people have a clear and shared appreciation of the talents and capacities of the focus **person**”
  - In the plan, consider adding a picture, interests and strengths of child, and what child is like when not in crisis
  - Consider including a separate page – Student Snapshot  
[www.pacer.org/parent/php/php-c160.pdf](http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/php-c160.pdf)
2. “**People** have a common understanding of what the focus person **wants**”
  - In the plan, consider how to include information about what the child wants/does not want when in a crisis
3. “**The** group involved agree to meet regularly to review activities”

Page 35



<http://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/independent-community-living/person-centered.asp>

### Person-Centered Principles:

Can be used for Crisis Planning [4-6]

4. The group include a strong advocate or family member assuring that the interest of the focus person is being met.
5. That the group include a person committed to making connection to the local community
  - Crisis Plans should include if at all possible a combination of formal and informal supports
6. This is the beginning of a process that continues throughout a lifetime. Not a product.
  - Crisis plans should not be shelved/filled and forgotten for a child/youth at risk of escalating challenging behaviors over time

Page 36



## In Summary

- Defining crisis and developing a crisis plan is important for children and youth at risk of escalating behaviors
- Understand that wellness and recovery are important concepts when developing effective crisis plans
- Be willing to consider escalating challenging behaviors in new and different ways
- Use person-centered principles when working collaboratively on developing a crisis plan

Page 37



## Resources -- PACER

- Crisis Management Plan: Support at Home for Children and Youth with Mental Health Needs - <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c225.pdf>
- Behavior Intervention or Crisis Plans - <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/php-c141.pdf>
- What is a Functional Behavioral Assessment and How is it Used? <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/php-c215a.pdf>
- Examples of Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies - <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/php-c215b.pdf>
- Planning for a school meeting about your child's behavior needs - <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/php-c144.pdf>
- Skills for Independent Living: Parents Help Build Social Skills - [www.pacer.org/transition/video/topic.asp?se=Social%20Skills](http://www.pacer.org/transition/video/topic.asp?se=Social%20Skills)

Page 38



## Other Resources

- Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) – Crisis Planning: <http://mentalhealthrecovery.com/info-center/crisis-plan/>
- WRAP at Kaposia (classes) - <http://www.kaposia.com/services/what-is-mhes/wrap-i-training-registration/>
- Crisis Response: An Alternative – SAMHSA - [http://www.samhsa.gov/samhsaNewsLetter/Volume\\_22\\_Number\\_4/crisis\\_response\\_an\\_alternative/](http://www.samhsa.gov/samhsaNewsLetter/Volume_22_Number_4/crisis_response_an_alternative/)
- Youth Mental Health First Aid - <http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/take-a-course/course-types/youth/>
- Mental Health Crisis Planning for Children – NAMI-MN - <http://www.namihelps.org/NAMI-MHCrisisPlanforChildrenFeb2016.pdf>

Page 39



## Other Resources

- Dealing with a Mental Health Crisis: Information & Resources for First Responders – NAMI-MN - <http://www.namihelps.org/First-Responder-Pamphlet.pdf>
- Mental Health Crisis Planning for Adults, NAMI-MN - <http://www.namihelps.org/NAMI-MHCrisisPlanforAdultFeb2016.pdf>
- Child Crisis Response Services, Minnesota – [www.childcrisisresponsemn.org](http://www.childcrisisresponsemn.org)
- Text for Life - [www.Txt4life.org](http://www.Txt4life.org)
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline - <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> and How Can A Safety Plan Help? <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/learn/safety.aspx>

Page 40



## Thank you for attending!

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Page 41

