

Family Psychoeducation



Introduction

The information and dates in this presentation are accurate as of the date of this presentation or delivery of content



Overview

- Define Family Psychoeducation
- Importance of Family Psychoeducation
- Psychoeducation across Service Provision
- Family Psychoeducation Models for those with Serious Mental Illness (SMI)
- Resources

What is Family Psychoeducation?

- Providing information and support to youth and their families to better understand and cope with a mental health condition
- Psychoeducation is found in most evidence based programs
- “Family Psychoeducation” also describes a set of evidence based models for adults and older youth with schizophrenia and other serious mental illness (SMI)
- Psychoeducation can be done individually or in group formats in a variety of settings and by a variety of professionals

Why is Family Psychoeducation Important?

- Provides youth and families with the necessary information to make informed decisions about care
- Increases coping skills and builds supportive resources
- Instills hope, reduces blame, and looks towards recovery
- Engages the family in treatment as appropriate

Key stages in service provision to provide psychoeducation

- Initial meetings / assessment period
- Service planning
- Ongoing treatment or service provision

Initial Meetings/ Assessment (in-person or by phone)

- Instill hope and reduce blame
- Understand the family's strengths and resources
- Determine what the family knows or doesn't know
- Clarify misconceptions about the condition and services
- Orient to mental health services and how they work – what to expect

Initial Meetings/ Assessment

- Orientation to services:
 - How do you access services?
 - What are the services? What is therapy?
 - Who will the family be seeing to access the services?
 - Who do they contact with any questions or concerns?
 - What resources are given to the family?
 - What is the role of the therapist, caregiver, and child?

Is all of this communicated to the family?

Service Planning and Setting Goals

- Psychoeducation helps families to participate in shared decision-making with the provider
- Explain the diagnosis, course/prognosis, treatment options, strategies for coping
- Inform family about the risks and benefits of treatments or limitations of services

Service Planning and Setting Goals

WHAT

- What is the diagnosis?
- What does it mean?
- What are the symptoms?
- What is the prognosis?
- What are best practices in treating the illness?

HOW

- Be empowering – does the diagnosis make sense
- Be practical – is this a working diagnosis or a clear one
- Be sensitive – you are diagnosing a child with a possibly “chronic” condition
- Be hopeful (we can develop a plan that can make things better)
- Be collaborative – use of “we” and partnering with family and other services providers

Ongoing Treatment/Service Provision

- Psychoeducation can continue to be provided at any point in service provision
- Continue to share information on coping strategies for youth and family
- Encourage engagement in community supports – formal and informal (e.g., family/caregiver support groups)
- Continue to provide information on treatment and course of illness
- Re-evaluate needs and provide information on options if appropriate

Family Psychoeducation Models for those with Serious Mental Illness (SMI)

- There are a set of evidence based practice models (EBPs) that are also called Family Psychoeducation.
- These models were developed for adults (and older youth) with serious mental illness (SMI), such as schizophrenia.
- These models aim to engage families in supporting the individual with SMI. For younger youth, engaging families in treatment may look different and it is always helpful to use EBPs based on diagnosis and age or developmental stage of the child.
- Two common Family Psychoeducation EBPs:
 - National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Family-to-Family
 - Individual Family and Multifamily Groups

Family Psychoeducation for SMI: NAMI Family-To-Family

- Peer Facilitated; 12 sessions for family members of adults (including older youth/young adults) with serious mental illness
 - provides information and research on major mental illnesses
 - provides information on treatment and recovery options
 - builds empathy/understanding of the individual with the illness
 - skills training on problem-solving, communication, and handling crises
 - caregiver coping strategies
 - identifying local community services and supports
 - advocating for improvement and expansion of services

<https://www.naminycmetro.org/family-to-family-course/>

Family Psychoeducation for SMI: Individual Family and Multifamily Groups

- Professional/provider facilitated with family and consumer
- Goal is to improve consumer outcomes, quality of life, as well as to reduce family stress and strain. Components include:
 - joining (establish working alliance between provider-family-consumer)
 - education (understand illness and what they can do about it)
 - problem solving (work with family/consumer to identify strategies for handling difficult situations)
 - structural change in the treatment (help family/consumer develop strengths based, respectful environment optimal for recovery)
 - multifamily contact (connection to other families, support groups to reduce isolation and stigma)
- Duration – 9 months to multiple years

<https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/buildingyourprogram-fp.pdf>

Psychoeducation Messages



- Examples of key messages to share with families:

- No one is to blame for the problems
- Take care of yourself
- Don't forget the positive (reinforcement is a powerful tool)
- Together we can make real progress (what is my role, your role and the child's role. "We are partners working together.")
- Change takes time
- You are not alone (your child's problems have been experienced by others)
- Dangerous situations need our immediate attention (self-harm and harm to others and property)
- Ask questions (important that we have a shared understanding)
- Important to reach out to and use your social supports
- Be hopeful (we can develop a plan that can make things better)

Resources for Psychoeducation

NAMI

- <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Fact-Sheet-Library>

AACAP

- https://www.aacap.org/aacap/families_and_youth/facts_for_families/fff-guide/FFF-Guide-Home.aspx

APA – Topics and Help Center

- <https://www.apa.org/index>

SAMHSA

- <https://store.samhsa.gov/>