



Evidence Based Treatment

Timber Ridge School uses evidence based approaches to treat adolescents with serious social, emotional and behavioral problems. In addition, therapeutic staff relationships are an important aspect of the program. In 2001, a comprehensive research summary published in the journal *Psychotherapy* found that a strong therapeutic alliance was more closely correlated with positive client outcomes than any specific treatment interventions. We encourage solid helping relationships between all staff and students.

Currently, the evidence based approaches we use include the following.

- ❑ **Family Inclusion.** According to some researchers, family involvement is crucial for long-term outcomes following a teen's discharge from residential care. Family-centered residential care is an emerging best practice. The key components of family-centered residential treatment are consistent with the *Building Bridges* resolution, such as scheduling frequent family engagement activities in addition to regular family counseling sessions. Involvement of the family and other natural supports has been shown to have a stronger positive impact on treatment than any particular individual treatment technique.
- ❑ **Contingency Management.** Contingency management is based on the principle that behavior is a function of its consequences. That is, what people do – how they behave – is related in a predictable way to the consequences of their behavior. For example, if an action is followed by a positive consequence (reinforcement), then the individual is likely to repeat that action. In contrast, if an action is followed by a negative consequence, then the individual is unlikely to repeat the action and decreases the unacceptable behavior. Timber Ridge School utilizes a comprehensive Behavior Support System (BSS) that outlines positive behavior interventions, negative consequences, and supports to teach the student to replace their problem behavior.
- ❑ **Therapeutic Crisis Intervention.** Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) is an internationally research-based, trauma-informed system for preventing crises, de-escalating potential crises, promoting safety and responding to acute behaviors as part of the overall organizational culture. In 1979, with a grant from the National Center of Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) staff of the Family Life Development Center (FLDC) at Cornell University undertook a study of child abuse and neglect in New York State group care institutions. The purpose of this study was to assess the nature and extent of child abuse and neglect when it occurs in the institutional setting, and to identify those factors associated with its incidence. The Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) program for direct care staff is a competency-based model to teach staff how to help children learn constructive ways to handle crisis. The skills, knowledge, and professional judgment of staff in responding to crises are critical factors in helping children and teens to learn constructive and adaptive ways to deal with frustration, failure, anger, rejection, hurt, and depression.
- ❑ **Trauma Informed Care.** ARC is recognized by the National Child Trauma Stress Network (NCTSN) as "a promising practice." ARC is a comprehensive framework for intervention with

youth exposed to complex trauma. ARC identifies three core domains that are frequently impacted among traumatized youth, and which are relevant to future resiliency: Attachment, Regulation and Competency. ARC provides a theoretical framework and a guiding structure for providers working with children, teens, and their caregivers or caregiving systems.

- ❑ **S.E.L.F Curriculum.** Under the terms of an NIMH grant to study the implementation of a trauma informed (Sanctuary) model, the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services created a psychoeducational curriculum S.E.L.F. – Safety, Emotions, Loss, and Future. The psychoeducational curriculum is designed to provide clients with a “coherent cognitive framework that can create a change momentum”. The developers compare S.E.L.F. to a compass “through the land of recovery that can help guide individual treatment, staff decision, and team treatment planning.” There are lessons that introduce the S.E.L.F. framework as a whole and the concept of trauma. The remaining four sections of the book contain lessons focused on Safety, Emotions, Loss, and Future. In all there are thirty-six lessons.
- ❑ **Living in Balance.** *Living in Balance* was developed by Danya International, a company renowned for product development and research in substance abuse prevention, treatment, and related issues. According to the developers, *Living in Balance* is a research based, flexible, practical substance abuse treatment curriculum that helps clients address issues in lifestyle areas that may have been neglected during addiction.
- ❑ **Cognitive Behavior Therapy.** Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) is a type of therapeutic treatment that helps teens to understand the thoughts and feelings that influence their behaviors. CBT is often used to treat a wide range of disorders including addictions, trauma, depression, and anxiety. CBT works to change attitudes and behavior by focusing on the thoughts, images, beliefs and attitudes (a person's cognitive processes) and how these processes relate to the way a person behaves, as a way of dealing with emotional problems.
- ❑ **Psychopharmacology.** Timber Ridge School's Director of Psychiatric Services evaluates the students to determine if medication could be effective in treating their adolescent disorders.
- ❑ **Character Education - Wisdom for Life Curriculum.** This curriculum was developed for Live Wire Media: organized around 10 monthly Character Themes with a variety of character-building ideas with inspiring quotes and exercises to discuss character-related issues with their students. We believe that values are the foundation of a successful, positive life. We teach choices and personal responsibility and identify different behaviors as "right" or "wrong."