

## **Intensive Therapeutic Group for Bilingual Adolescent Females who have Experienced Sexual Abuse**

### **Description**

This workshop will focus on discussing a week-long intensive therapeutic program for Hispanic adolescent females who have experienced sexual abuse. This workshop is intended for those who provide counseling/therapeutic services. We will discuss the supporting research, the group experience, cultural concepts, and quantitative and qualitative outcomes obtained from the group.

### **Narrative**

This workshop will focus on discussing the implementation of a week-long intensive therapeutic program for Hispanic adolescent females who have experienced sexual abuse. The group was designed to increase coping skills anti-victimization skills, and social support in a supportive and therapeutic environment by utilizing research from brain development (Gaskill & Perry, 2012; Perry, 2005), group dynamics (Yalom, 2005), trauma research (Anda et al., 2006), and art therapy techniques (American Art Therapy Association, 2015; Adams, 1990). Our intended audience for the workshop will consist of those who work directly with victim and non-offending family members who have been affected by abuse. We will discuss our work at the Children's Advocacy Center and more specifically, discuss aspects of working with Hispanic clients in a therapeutic setting. We will discuss how culture influences abuse dynamics, family dynamics, and treatment (Halgunseth, Ipsa, & Rudy, 2006).

Additionally, we will highlight the specific interventions used during the group by sharing photographs of client work (permission to use was obtained) and discussing how the interventions were utilized to achieve therapeutic goals. We will discuss how assessments were used to determine the effectiveness of the group, which included assessments measuring social support, coping skills, and parent's perception of behavior (Hernandez, Vigna, & Kelley, 2010; Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarason, 1983). These assessments were administered at the beginning of group and at the end of group to track the effectiveness of the summer intensive.

We will discuss the curriculum created as well as the purpose of the group, goals of the group, the group experience, and quantitative and qualitative outcomes obtained from the group through the use of practical examples, experiential experiences, and information obtained from evidence-based sources. The following objectives will be addressed:

1. To increase understanding of struggles experienced by Hispanic females who have been sexually abused, including low confidence, low self-esteem, difficulties seeking support, and other struggles (Halgunseth, Ipsa, & Rudy, 2006).
2. To discuss the use of various therapeutic techniques to help increase coping skills and increase social support. These techniques include journaling, art activities, kinesthetic interventions, and relaxation skills (Yalom, 2005; Adams, 1990).
3. To demonstrate how group cohesiveness and shared experiences can be an effective tool for cultivating change in adolescents (Perry, 2006; Yalom, 2005).

## **References**

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