

# Crisis Services in Montana

Crisis Prevention and Response Team  
Developmental Disabilities Program

# What does the crisis program do?

- Responds to a statewide need for:
  - Assessment of difficult cases
  - Stabilization of difficult cases
  - Technical assistance for difficult cases
  - Identification of needs and resources
  - Recommendations for treatment options

# What does the crisis program do?

- On-site consultation
- Collaboration with service providers/family
- Behavioral observation/assessment
- Training for staff/family
- Assist in determining what services are appropriate
  - Additional supports, utilization of mental health services

# Crisis team goals

- To maintain the person in the least restrictive environment (their home)
- To enhance quality of life
- To maintain the person's strengths
- To facilitate positive communication
- To enhance collaboration between all parties, including the person in crisis

# A person is having a crisis when:

- Their behavior is dangerous to themselves or others
- Their behavior has compromised the ability of caregivers to provide support
- They need relief from their situation

# Crisis prevention

- Proactive and comprehensive assessment and treatment planning
- Designing ways to protect an individual's current and future security
- Prioritizing needs
- Reducing/eliminating risks
- Changing environments/attitudes

# Prevention vs Intervention

- Prevention is proactive
  - Keeps the crisis from happening by implementing specific strategies based on a multimodal functional assessment
  - Occurs before (and may prevent) the crisis cycle
- Intervention is reactive
  - Buys time to reduce the immediate impact of the situation
  - Occurs during the crisis cycle

# Prevention strategies

- Consult with professionals (M.D., counselors)
- Recognize antecedents or predictors
- Examine historical patterns
- Balance structure with empowerment
- Use evidence based strategies
- Prepare action plans
- Avoid power struggles
- **Focus on what is “positive and possible”**
  - **The power of yes**

# Action steps for Prevention

- Add in-home supports
- Reduce demands
- Update assessments, revise behavior support plans
- Get consultations from psychiatric, behavioral, and/or medical services
- Staff training
  - Collaborative Problem Solving, Safe Haven, DBT-based Approach, Trauma Informed Care, Dual Diagnosis
- Listen to the person
- Our goal is calm, not control

# Action steps for Intervention

- Hold team meetings to explore all ideas and options
- Remove stressors
- Look at the meaning(s) of behavior
- Monitor interactions

# Active intervention

- Problem solving depending on situation
- Reality testing
- Avoid increasing stress or conflict
- Treat crisis as a learning opportunity
- Ensure bridges are built

# Caring for the caregiver

- Validating their experience
- Connecting with others, sharing the experience
- Giving them information and resources
- Walking them through the process



# Parting thoughts

- People are extremely complex and there are no easy answers
- Be realistic – not every strategy will work in every situation, with every person.
- Give it time.
- Know your limits.
- Know your own triggers and buttons.
- The person is doing the best he or she can – and so are you!

# Contacts

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