Building Quality Youth Services through Strong Supervisory Practices

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Youth Development Institute

April 29th 2011

Presenter: Annie Moyer, Deputy Director

Overview of Session

- History of YDI
- Rationale for Building Capacity at the Supervisory Level
- Supervisory Capacity Building Series
- Outcomes
- Lessons Learned

History of YDI

- **Mission**
- **Approach**
- **Scope of Work**

Rationale for Building Capacity at the Supervisory Level

- **Beacon's Young Adolescent Initiative**
- **Evidence Across our Programs**
- **Research**

Supervisory Capacity Building Series- Context

- **School Partnership between the Department of Education and Community- Based Organizations**
- **Serve over-age and under-credit youth ages**
- **Features of Programs: Academics, Social Support, Career Readiness, Internships, Youth Development**

Supervisory Capacity Building Series- Context (continued)

- **Members: Supervisors from 12 Community Based Organizations**

- **Purpose: To increase supervisors' capacity to understand and apply fundamentals of strong supervisory practices in their work with staff, in the service of positive outcomes for youth.**

- **Theory : Supervisor > Line staff > Youth**

Elements of Effective Supervisors

- **Administrator**
- **Educator**
- **Supporter**
- **Collaborator**
- **Leader**

Series Components

- **Application and Selection**
- **Monthly Network Meetings***
- **On-Site Coaching***
- **Observations**
- **Leadership Engagement**

Monthly Network Meetings

- **Model Good Practices for Running Learning Communities Based on Social Group Work**

- **Structure: Spotlight Practice, Content, Implementation, Dilemmas of Practice**

Monthly Network Meetings (continued)

Examples of Content/Tools

Supervisor as Educator/Supporter:

- **Observation of Staff**
- **Developing a Learning Community**
- **Engaging in 1:1 Supervision of Each Staff Member**

On site Coaching

- **Develop Individual Capacity Building Plans**
- **Reflection**
- **Supervisor as Leader**

Outcomes of Series

Participants:

- **Observed and assessed staff capacity**
- **Developed and maintained and infrastructures to support Staff**
  - **consistent 1:1 supervision**
  - **weekly/bi weekly meetings**

Outcomes of Series (continued)

- **Improved the Quality of Program**
  - **Advisory programs**
  - **Intake processes**
  - **Seminars**
  - **Town Halls**
- **Initiated next steps in their career pathways**

Lessons Learned

- **Stronger Screening Process**
- **Stronger Leadership Involvement**
- **Environmental Challenges**
- **Self Report vs. Observation**
- **Connect process with programmatic outcome right away**

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YDI
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Building Quality Youth Services Through Strong Supervisory Practices

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Presentation Materials

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Positive Outcomes for Youth

(The Handbook of Positive Youth Outcomes, YDI)

Young people demonstrate ability when they gain knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for adulthood.

Originality	Creative Competency The ability to explore and develop one's own self expression
Understanding Self & Others	Personal Competency The ability to act in ways that reflect an understanding of one's own opinions and thoughts and those of others in order to handle situations appropriately and non-violently
Thinking & Reasoning	Cognitive Competency The ability to gain and use intellectual development and the integration of information into operational functions
Civic Engagement	Civic Competency The ability to understand, respect and value the civil rights of oneself and others; and the recognition that one can further these rights for oneself and one's community by participating in the governmental process and in community service and organization
Our Bodies	Physical Health Competency The ability to maintain one's well-being and to identify, understand and practice healthy behavior
Mental Health	Mental Health Competency The ability to identify, understand and deal with one's emotions and feelings
Employability	Employability Competency The ability and motivation to gain the functional and organizational skills necessary for employment, including an understanding of careers and options and the steps necessary to reach goals
Social	Social Competency The ability and motivation to respect and affirmatively respond to difference among groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds, interests, and traditions

Core Competencies of Youth Work Professionals

(Excerpt from Core Competencies Flip Books, YDI)

1. **Program Development**
    - Knowledge of Youth Development Framework
    - Knowledge of Agency Mission
    - Knowledge of Organizational Policies and Procedures in Regards to Youth
    - Knowledge of Adolescent Developmental Stages
    - Ability to Foster Youth Empowerment

2. **Communication**
    - Ability to Develop and Maintain a Relationship of Trust with Young People
    - Ability to Convey Information so it is Received in a Manner that is Intended
    - Ability to Communicate Effectively

3. **Implementation**
    - Knowledge of Group Work
    - Ability to Facilitate a Group
    - Knowledge of Planning Activities
    - Ability to Plan and Implement Activities
    - Ability to Motivate and Engage Young People
    - Ability to recognize and Respond to Youth Needs and Interests

4. **Advocacy/ Networking**
    - Knowledge of Youth Rights
    - Ability to Network with a Variety of External Systems
    - Knowledge of School and Career Options
    - Knowledge of Social Context of Youth

5. **Assessment**
    - Ability to Reflect on One's Practice and Performance
    - Ability to Organize and Manage Workload

6. **Community and Family Engagement**
    - Ability to Understand and Respect the Culture of Young People and Families
    - Knowledge of Community Especially in Regards to Youth and Family

- Knowledge of Family Structures

7. **Intervention**
    - Ability to Recognize Need for Intervention
    - Ability to Deal with Conflicts
    - Knowledge of Intervention Strategies

Key Elements of Effective Supervision

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

Administration: The promotion and maintenance of good standards of work, coordination of practices with policies of organization, the assurance of an efficient and smooth- running office

- Managing time and promoting efficiency
- Being accountable to the mission of the organization
- Defining and clarifying staff roles
- Budgeting/ allocating resources
- Establishing a process and protocol by which to assess staff
- Developing organizational structures around schedules, communication and contract requirements
- Developing a process by which to assess programmatic outcomes

Education: The professional development of each individual worker and the collective staff through intentional skill building

- Identifying and building knowledge around the core competencies of effective youth work professionals
- Identifying and building knowledge around youth development
- Developing a learning community
- Engaging in 1:1 coaching with each staff member
- Connecting staff to outside resources
- Establishing program planning processes that integrates the use of data

Support: The development of positive relationships with individual staff and the promotion of a strong and cohesive team

- Establishing caring and trusting relationship with each staff member
- Establishing harmonious relationships between team members
- Working with staff to articulate the connection between personal and professional goals

Collaboration: The development of key organizational relationships that pool common interests, assets and professional skills to promote positive youth outcomes

- Establishing open and frequent communication with DOE partners
- Establishing a process by which decisions are made with DOE partners
- Building positive relationships between DOE staff and CBO staff
- Communicating/ building partnerships with external partners (such as internship sites, colleges and employers)

Leadership: The development of a clearly articulated vision and strategies to align and mobilize staff around programmatic practices that lead to positive outcomes for youth

- Setting the vision and direction of the program
- Motivating and inspiring staff to take action and ownership of the program
- Shepherding staff through change processes

Stages of Group Development- Beginnings

(Excerpt from: Teaching a Methods Course in Social Work with Groups, Kurland and Salmon)

Where the Members are	**What Needs to Happen**	**Role of the Worker**
Anxious about the unknown Trustful vs. distrustful Approach vs. Avoidance Approach: • want a relationship with worker and other members • want to accomplish purpose • want to reveal themselves • desire closeness • want acceptance Avoidance: • fear of the unknown • fear of not being accepted • fear of not succeeding • fear of being hurt • fear of being vulnerable • fear of getting involved • fear of no confidentiality Wary Exploring Noncommittal Giving themselves a chance to draw back Keeping their distance	Orientation: • worker to group • members to situation • members to worker • members to other members • members to time, place, frequency • members to plans for group • members to time, place, frequency of meetings A group must form, and the ways the group will work become established: • norms • values • patterns of communication Purpose of group needs to be made explicit- discussed, agreed upon, accepted. Even if purpose was discussed with each member individually, this needs to be done with everyone so it becomes a reference point (important later on).	• Help effect what needs to happen. • Respond when members look to worker for direction, structure, approval, and help. • Be more active – group members are more dependent on worker at this point. • Help each member enter the group, allay anxiety, help members communicate and explore, yet keep some distance. • Acknowledge everyone's anxious feelings, express confidence in group's potential to accomplish purpose. • Help members examine and discuss purpose, reach agreement. • Make connections among the members, help them see what they have in common. • Help establish group norms—achieved largely through what the worker does, verbally and non-verbally.

	Commonalities need to be recognized as a basis for cohesiveness.	

Stages of Group Development – Middles

(Excerpt from: Teaching a Methods Course in Social Work with Groups, Kurland and Salmon)

Where the Members are	**What Needs to Happens**	**Role of the Worker**
<u>At the beginning of middle stages members are still:</u> • Exploring and testing the situation • Seeing where they fit • Sizing each other • Struggling for power • Competing for leadership • Finding their roles • Determining their status <u>By the end of middle stage members they:</u> • Have found their place in the group • Have found others they like (subgroups may form) • Feel more accepted and understood • Better accept and understand other members • See themselves and other members as distinct individuals • Recognize similarities and differences and see them as useful • Acknowledge each other's	Group culture, style, way of doing things, and norms of behavior need to develop, be recognized, understood and accepted. Same for norms that define the way conflict and differences are expressed, managed, and resolved. Norms that encourage experimentation, flexibility, and responsibility for supporting and stimulating each other need to be fostered. Patterns of social interaction and communication need to develop. Structure of interpersonal relationships emerges, determining status, ranking, leadership, and roles.	• Help effect what needs to happen. • Support the patterns, play an increasingly less central role, maximizing group leadership and functioning. • Evaluate what is going on: -where the group is at; -how it is moving; -what are the stresses and strains • Assess each member: attitudes, relationships, behavior, motivation, goals, how persons fares in the group. • Help the group clarify goals and purpose, encourage members' questioning, engage members in decision and discussion process. • Continue encouraging development of positive group norms. • Recognize the commonalities: -among members' goals; -way of goal accommodation;

uniqueness • See their own contributions • Feel some affection for and desire to share with other members <u>Members:</u> • See to understand perceptions of the group that the worker and other members have • Begin to understand the meaning of the group for them • Begin to clarify their own goals • See that their goals can be met	A realistic group purpose needs to be re-clarified and redefined. Members' own needs and goals must be understood in relation to that purpose and to the needs of other members. Harmony needed between member and worker perceptions of group. Members need to test the working and other members and come to trust that they can	-interrelated member concerns. • Recognized the difference: among members, between worker and members • Help members get to know each other, see how they can help each other; help identify common interests, concerns, and feelings. • Allow member to test worker and group rules, but maintain limits; do not let people hurt (demolish) each other • Promote flexibility in roles so members can try out and modify ways of contributing to
Where the Members are *Continued…*	**What Needs to Happens** *Continued…*	**Role of the Worker** *Continued…*
Members test the worker: whether worker cares about and accepts them, how worker will use authority, whether worker will protect them. Members begin to understand and accept worker's role, become less dependent on worker, develop more reliance on each other, begin to see worker as unique person As they become more self-assured and comfortable, members: • Begin to express themselves more • Share more of themselves-their experiences, feelings, opinions • Are willing to risk exposure of themselves	express their feelings and bring problems into the group without being rejected or punishes. Members need to come to respect the similarities and differences among themselves. Stabilization of membership needs to occur. People need to get involved, committed to the group, its purpose, other members, the worker. Cohesiveness needs to develop.	the group and relation to others. Worker may need to confront members directly if they tend to stereotype others. • Work to improve group communication. Point out when people are not hearing or listening to each other, or that it is OK to get angry. Encourage members to support or question the comments and behavior of others and to bring things to the group. • Step in and regulate conflict if it gets too threatening(conflict and disagreement are expected now) • Confront members about irrational thinking, unacceptable behavior. • Work with members

Discussions become less scattered, more focused. Members can do more sustained work on problems and help each other more. As they experience success, members are more willing to bring in problems to look at themselves. They begin to attach prestige to members' efforts to express themselves and work on problems. Members recognize more similarities and differences. As the group becomes more important to their lives, members view the group experience as unique	The group needs to be seen as a place where members can really work on problems- exchange, argue, confront, try out, really share.	individually, as needed – to encourage them to express themselves in the group, to increase their understanding of something that happened in the group, or after much conflict, to help member understand the tendency to wan to drop out (run away, avoid a difficult situation)

Stages of Group Development- Endings

(excerpt from: Teaching a Methods Course in Social Work with Groups, Kurland and Salmon)

Where the Member Are	**What Needs to Happen**	**Role of the Worker**
Members talk more about successful efforts to try new things or change patterns of behavior outside the group. Communication is free and easy. Member begin to move apart- find	Ending needs to be discussed Gains that have been made need to be stabilized	• Help effect what needs to happen • Prepare members for termination • Assess desirability and readiness for terminations. Can members continue to improve outside the group?

satisfaction in relationships outside the group (may break ties with members, causing group cohesiveness to weaken) and/or new activities Members talk about changes that have taken place in themselves and in the group. They review experiences, reminisce, evaluate, show desire to repeat earlier experiences (to show they can do better). Most members view termination with ambivalence and anxiety-an acknowledgement of improvement, while still they fear losing support of the worker and group. Group experience may have been so good and so gratifying that people may want to continue Many reactions possible: • Denial- of termination and of the possible meaning of the group experience • Regression- return to earlier patters of behavior, inability to cope with relationship and tasks previously mastered; behave as in earlier stages; negative	Members need to be helped to leave the relationship with the worker, with each other, with the group. This group experience, it is made a significant impact on the members, needs to become a frame of reference for the members in approaching new groups and other situations Service to the group needs to be discontinued	• Assess the progress toward achievement of goals • Help members stabilize their gains • Inform members of reality of termination (need for ending discussed well in advance) • Anticipate responses of individuals to ending. Set goals for period of time that remains before the end • Plan timing and content to maximize remaining sessions • Help members express their ambivalence about ending • Help evaluation of the group experience • Support members who have not made as much progress as hoped, or as other members have made • Share observations of progress and confidence in members' abilities to get along without worker and group • Support members' efforts to move away from group, to develop new relationships outside the group, to find other resources • Indicate nature of any continuing relationship with group or with individuals. Be
Where the Member Are *Continued…*	**What Needs to Happen** *Continued…*	**Role of the Worker** *Continued…*
• symptoms may recur as if to show, "We're not better; we still need the group and the worker."		• available for help on and individual basis as needed • Communicate with others

• Flight- miss meetings, quit before the official end; show hostility toward worker and other members (e.g., "I'll leave you before you leave me"). Constructive flight – move to new groups, other relationships, etc.,		who may need to be involved in the termination • Help members tie their group experience more directly to subsequent life experiences Be aware of own feelings of ambivalence about ending. Worker may be pleased about progress by feel a sense of loss and regret not having been more helpful to more members. Worker may have tendency to try to get everything in at the last minute.

Dilemma of Practice

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

During an individual supervisory meeting, Jackie (the supervisor) wants to address her concerns about Elizabeth's difficulty with keeping up with her paperwork and caseload. She has noticed that Elizabeth spends a lot of time on what seems to be personal phone calls and or engaged in small talk with colleagues. Jackie is anxious about bringing the issue up because Elizabeth tends to get very defensive and she has a really hard time hearing critical feedback.

When they sit down to talk, Elizabeth opens up the conversation with how busy she has been making phone calls to students that have been absent; she also shares a success story of student that finally came back to school because of Elizabeth's continued and persistent outreach.

Questions

- What are your immediate reactions to this case?
- What assumptions do you have?
- What questions does this raise for you?
- If you were working with this advisor, what is the first thing you might do to address the issues at hand?

Observation Sequence

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

Part One: Pre-Planning

1. Conduct reflections with staff around strengths and opportunities for growth. Use reflections to spark discussion about potential areas for observation.

2. Conduct pre-observation planning.

3. Determine a purpose and goal for the observation with staff
    - Is it to establish a baseline?
    - Is it for evaluation?
    - Is it to learn about strengths?
    - Is it to support staff around a particular challenge?

4. Choose method and conditions for observation.
    - Consider using rubrics or co-constructed guiding questions.
    - Determine how long and when you will conduct the observation.

5. Ask staff to articulate the purpose and intended outcomes of the activity you will observe.

Part Two: Initial Observation

1. Conduct observation

2. Conduct post-observation discussion.

3. Take notes and create an action plan.

Part Three: Ongoing Observations

1. Establish a timeline for observation series.

- Schedule pre and post meetings.
- Allow ample time between sessions for implementation.
- Develop outcome based plan with staff, based on what is learned from observations.

Staff Meeting Overview

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

Purpose of Staff Meetings:

To provide a space for staff to share information, build relationships, learn from each other and conduct joint planning.

Structure for Staff Meetings

1. Icebreaker
2. Topic/Content of the day
3. Housekeeping
4. Next steps
5. Closing reflection

Tips for Running Effective Staff Meetings

- Make sure there is an articulated purpose for every meeting you hold.
- Develop agendas for meetings and share with staff ahead of time.
- Establish rituals and routines for staff meetings. Also, be consistent with day/time of meetings.
- Provide food for meetings.
- Ask staff for potential meeting topics (i.e. areas of investigation and/or interest to discuss).

- Rotate facilitation-- ask for volunteers to present on selected topics.

- Develop new ways of presenting information to staff that is engaging and interactive (use visuals, pair shares, each one teach one etc).

- Review notes from previous meetings. Illustrate how meetings connect to and build off of each other.

- Ask staff to bring artifacts that will help further the conversation/topic of the meeting. For example, if the topic of a meeting is Post Secondary Planning ask staff to bring examples of Post Secondary Planning activities that they have done with students. Discuss what worked and what might be done differently next time.

- Help staff to see the connection between the work they do and organizational goals/ outcomes for youth. For example, ask staff:
    - What is the impact of our workshops on attendance and graduation?

- Use multiple data sources to push staff members' thinking around a specific topic. For example, if the topic of discussion is attendance, use research, student satisfaction surveys and attendance data as a platform from which staff can reflect and pose new ideas.

- Follow up with notes from the meetings.

Elements of 1:1 Supervision

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

Element	**Practice**
Frequency & Setting	– Meetings occur on a regular basis (at least twice a month) – Meetings last at least one hour – Meetings are held in a private space
Pre-Planning	– Staff develop their own agenda – Staff come prepared with information on a list of program indicators (attendance, # of meetings with students, outreach phone calls etc) – Supervisor identifies areas/topics he/she would like to discuss – Supervisor and staff review notes (next steps and action plan) from previous meeting

Opening	– Staff and supervisor engage in intentional relationship building ritual (personal check-in, highlights/lowlights, "something I've done well," etc) – Staff and supervisor prioritize agenda items – Staff provide update on program indicators (attendance, # of meetings with students, outreach phone calls etc) – Staff provide updates on action plans from previous meeting
Progress & Challenges	– Staff conduct reflections on practice – Staff and supervisor discuss progress and improvements – Staff and supervisor jointly problem solve – Staff and supervisor develop/refine goals and outcome based plans – Staff and supervisor identify professional development opportunities that relate to staff development needs – Staff and supervisor create/update action plans
Closing & Follow Up	– Staff and supervisor articulate next steps that relate to housekeeping issues as well as staff development – Supervisor reviews agenda and highlights what was accomplished – Supervisor and staff save notes/documentation of meeting – Supervisor sends follow up email outlining next steps

Reflection Stem for Professional Development- Strengths

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

One of my <u>areas of strength</u> in my current role is…

I notice this when ….

I have built my capacity in this area by….

The impact that this strength has on my supervisees/peers/students is….

Reflection Stem for Professional Development- Challenges

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

One of my challenges in my current role is…

I notice this when ….

The impact this challenge has on my supervisees/peers/students is…

Therefore I'd like to try…

Outcome Based Plan

(From Supervisory Capacity-Building Series 2009-2010, YDI)

Program Outcome What am I trying to achieve?	**Strategy** What will I do to reach my desired outcome?	**Methodology** How will I do it?	**Indicators of Success** How will I know that I am reaching my desired outcome?