

Examples of Individualized Planning Techniques

Clock Planning

Materials needed: Flip chart or a roll of butcher paper that can be taped to the wall, markers.

- The facilitator welcomes the group and describes the process. A few rules are presented around topics such as participation and respect.
- If this technique is used as part of the initial planning meeting, the strengths inventory that was developed individually with the family members is presented. Otherwise the purpose of this aspect of the planning process is presented. The facilitator explains that the team is going to explore a 24 hour day in detail with the family, and then look at how the family's schedule plays out through an entire week.
- For the goal setting, or normalization phase of planning, a large circle is drawn on a flip chart & is divided into several segments which are labeled with hours of the day. A day of the week is selected and the team is asked to identify household activities that would be fairly typical (for a child and family from a similar background as the family that is the focus of concern that was doing all right) broken down by time & recorded within the inner third of the clock face.
- Then the family and team are asked to identify special activities that are specific to the child and family, such as giving medication or going to meetings with therapists. These are listed by time segment in the middle third of the clock face.
- The family and team are then asked to identify times in which assistance appears to be needed. Each potential need is recorded by the facilitator in the applicable time segment, using the outer third of the clock face.
- If the family's situation changes significantly depending on the day of the week, separate circles are created for each day.
- The team is asked to brainstorm ways of providing the needed assistance and support using methods similar to those in story boarding or bubble planning, but briefer. Basic strategies are proposed and agreed to by the team, then action steps for implementing the strategies are identified. Finally, team members commit to carrying out the various action steps.
- Depending on the type of issues being addressed, but especially when a family has ongoing appointments with multiple service providers, a calendar chart can also be created. On this chart, the days of the week are displayed in calendar form, and broken down into hours. Team members are asked to go to the calendar & write down their commitments to certain times with the family.
- Often this identifies unrecognized conflicts that have caused difficulties in the past. This schedule should also be compared with the clock charts to determine if schedule adjustments can be used to deal with unmet needs or support gaps.
- This process can also be used to help a child or youth get a better sense of structure for his or her days. In the initial goal-setting or normalization step, instead of filling in the inner third of the circle with the activities of a "typical" youth, the young person can be asked to describe a typical day for a friend of the same age, who he or she happens to admire. If that friend can be added to the child and family team, they might help out by describing what their schedule looks like for a typical day.