

Skills for Living: making sure young people matter

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HOW

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

SUT MAE

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YN GWEITHIO

WORKS



Psychological needs of YP leaving care

YP growing up in Local Authority care significantly more likely to experience psychological difficulties than their peers (DH, 2009)

Complex emotional difficulties including:

Attachment and relationship difficulties, inappropriate sexual behaviour, self-injury, trauma-related anxiety, behavioural responses including defiance, hyperactivity, inattention and conduct difficulties

Exposure to traumatic life events that perpetuated care proceedings

Care experiences are often negative, inconsistent, stigmatised with multiple placement moves and associated losses



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Skills for Living

2008 Big Lottery funding to establish Skills for Living in Gwent
(16-21)

DDP and DBT interwoven (both models emphasise transactional nature of relationships and impact of early traumas on ability to self-regulate; intersubjectivity/validation)

Emphasis on safety of relationships, team as a secure attachment figure

Shared formulations with the broader system

Successful outcomes

2016 Welsh Government Communities Grant Skills for Living
Pan Wales (16-24)

Modified version of Gwent model

Three year funding, recently extended by one year

Emphasis on *mattering* as key part of intervention

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Dialectical Behaviour Therapy

- DBT developed for people in severe emotional distress, suicidal, self-harming, can't keep relationships, self-destructive
- Skills for Living is a shorter version - teaches people the DBT skills for "building a life worth living"
- Evidence based

Who is it for?

For people who we think struggle with behaviour and emotions that seem out of control:

- Difficulty regulating their emotions/ feel very out of control with their feelings
- Feeling very distressed by intense emotion and don't seem to have a way of coping
- Having poor relationships, are treated badly by others, can treat other people poorly, struggle to end destructive relationships

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Mattering

"To be of importance to others is to be alive" (TS Eliot)

"The feeling that others depend upon us, are interested in us, are concerned with our fate, or experience us as an ego-extension" (Rosenberg and McCullough, 1981)

"The perception that, to some degree and in any of a variety of ways, we are a significant part of the world around us" (Elliott et al, 2004).

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How we try to demonstrate mattering

Strengthen relationships

Verbal and nonverbal methods

Exploring with YP how they matter, constructing the relationship

Remind clients how much they matter (birthdays, celebrating, Christmas, missed appointments)

Active listening, and demonstrating empathy and compassion

(Rayle, 2006)

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