

Therapist Engagement Checklist

1. Orient to the therapeutic process

Purpose: *Let them listen and get a sense of who you are while you do the talking*

- Introduce the agency.
- Explain the purpose of this first intake appointment
- Make sure they understand the paperwork they are signing.

2. Develop the basis for a collaborative relationship

Purpose: *Be clear that a working relationship will benefit the therapeutic process*

- With the parent, identify a few broad goals for treatment.
- Make it clear to the caregiver that as a mandated reporter, it is your job to keep the family safe and you will continue to provide support and work collaboratively with the family in the event that a report is necessary.
- Remind caregivers that their participation each week will help the child's symptoms and behaviors improve.
- Tell them you want to know immediately if they feel therapy isn't working.

3. Identify and address any perceptual biases

Purpose: *Identify perceptual biases about prior therapy or other stigmatism and reframe them*

- Discuss caregiver beliefs about previous experiences in therapy.
- Discuss caregiver's perceptions of the child's behaviors.
- Discuss caregiver's social support and what they think about therapy.
- Discuss caregiver/child cultural beliefs about therapy.
- IF treatment is part of a case worker plan (or if court is involved), discuss their motivation to attend and adhere to treatment.

4. Identify and problem solve any concrete barriers to treatment

Purpose: *Get concrete barriers to attend sessions out in the open and solve them*

- Address any obstacles to treatment mentioned by the caregiver.
- Discuss options for childcare, bus routes, and/or flexible appointment scheduling.

5. Focus on immediate, practical concerns

Purpose: *Begin active treatment to convey therapy as a helpful process and that you are responsive*

- Discuss and work on any parent concerns that need to be handled immediately.
- Discuss any systems issues that could have an effect on therapy (e.g., school, child welfare).
- Prepare parent for the next session.