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Maximizing Success in Treatment

Research shows treatment is most successful when clients experience an empathic, hopeful treatment relationship that fits their developmental level.

Building empathy

Raven's Way promotes supportive relationships through a family style environment. A small group of 10 youth (called "students") enter treatment together, and learn to work together to solve problems and celebrate successes.

Motivational interviewing is used to build on each student's own commitment to change, and treatment is tailored to the individual needs and issues of each student. Group and individual counseling, talking circles and shared life histories provide opportunities to share feelings and experiences.

Instilling hope

Raven's Way promotes hope for the future by appreciating and developing the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual strengths of the youth. Students face challenges of increasing difficulty throughout treatment, and learn how to work individually and with the group to solve both interpersonal and wilderness problems.

By facing and solving these issues, students gain skills and confidence to face additional challenges after treatment. Students also learn there are others they can count on to help them when needed. These experiences help students develop healthy interdependence, communication and leadership, providing tools and hope for a successful life after discharge.

Meeting developmental challenges

Raven's Way helps students successfully address their own developmental needs. Students explore and share their own cultural knowledge, personal values and choices, and individual life goals and dreams to strengthen their positive self and cultural identity. Students are given the opportunity to examine their roles within their families and with friends, so they can determine what kinds of relationships they want after treatment. A three-day "solo" in the wilderness gives students quiet time to examine their lives and decide their direction for the future.

Developing healthy behaviors

Students develop the skills they need as adults through problem-solving, leadership and communication, and gain direct experience of natural consequences in relationships and wilderness survival. Issues of trust, autonomy, interdependence, initiative and mastery are addressed in the challenges of their daily life at Raven's Way. Students have the opportunity to develop healthy relationships with boys and girls, youth and adults, without the crutch of alcohol or drugs or the distraction of sexual behavior.

These experiences help the students develop the self-respect, hope for the future and life skills for success after treatment.

Additional Resource: Minkoff, K. (2004). "Changing the World: The Design and Implementation of Comprehensive Continuous Integrated Systems of Care for Individuals with Co-Occurring Disorders." *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 27(4): 727-43.
<http://www.kenminkoff.com/article2.html>