



CLIENTS	Caregivers, Whole Family, Youth-Elementary to High School, LGBT
NUMBER	15 youth/families
ETHNICITY	African, Black/African American, Latino, Native American, White/Caucasian
INCOME	\$10,000 to \$19,000
DIAGNOSES	ADHD, Anxiety, Attachment Disorder, Autism, Bipolar Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Depression, Eating Disorder, FAS, ODD, PTSD

So Much Progress!

"My son has made so much progress! Now, his anger is well controlled. He's able to manage his stress and he is better at working with other students and staff. I'm not getting called to the school several times a week to deal with his behaviors and suspensions. And his grades have improved too!"

-Mother

GROUP CTSS- AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

- 69.2% improvement with assignments and homework.
- 61.5% improvement with grades.
- 53.8 % improvement with school behavior.
- 69.2% youth say they are "better at asking for help when they need it."
- 53.8% have better relationships with parents
- 53.8% say they now think before acting.
- 84.6% report that they now say no to things that are dangerous or unhealthy.

DEVIONTE



PROBLEM/CHALLENGE

Devionte had very low self-esteem. Life experience had taught him to think he was not good enough. He had a very negative outlook on life and used avoidance to cope with stress. Devionte ran away from programs, did not complete his intervention work, talked back to his mother and adult staff, and was disrespectful to other kids.

INTERVENTION

Devionte was able to start Group CTSS in September. Every day after school, Devionte worked with a facilitator and a group of his peers to identify unhelpful coping strategies and learn new skills to improve his self-esteem, decision making, and anger management.

IMPACT/SUCCESS

RCCMHC funding made a difference in Devionte's life. By December, he seemed like a different kid! He had learned to challenge negative thoughts about himself and was hopeful about his future. He identified his strengths, built positive relationships, practiced assertive communication, and learned to be kind to himself. Devionte had improved in group and school settings to the point that he could graduate from Group CTSS. While his school attendance has improved, he has also been able to manage his mental health symptoms a lot better. To ensure his success story, we continue to provide him with individual skills training at home and in the community.



Ramsey County Children's Mental Health Collaborative (RCCMHC) Funded Services

FUNDED AGENCY: METRO SOCIAL SERVICES, INC. (MSSI) provides culturally competent, community-based services to meet the needs of children and families with mental health issues. Our primary goal is to provide quality services to our clients in accordance to the highest possible ethical and professional standards.

FUNDED PROGRAM/SERVICE: Group CTSS- After School Program

PROGRAM/SERVICE DESCRIPTION: RCCMHC funding made it possible for MSSI to provide a skills-based after school group program for youth ages 6-15 struggling with severe mental illness and behavioral concerns across multiple settings. Youth attended five days per week. We teach them skills on how to cope and manage their behaviors. The group setting is ideal for youth to practice their social interaction skills and deepen feelings of community engagement. Monthly "Family Nights" expand psychoeducation and support to the whole family with trainings, entertainment, peer support, resources, food, and fun.

LENGTH OF GRANT TERM: June to December 2016

AWARD: \$20,000

DATA COLLECTION: MSSI uses interviews, surveys, and observation. For this service, we used the standardized Strength and Weakness Questionnaire and the CASII (Child and Adolescent Service Intensity Instrument) which measures client functional status. We also used a child evaluation form which was developed with the help of a YIPA (Youth Intervention Programs Association) survey.

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES (and how they relate to RCCMHC vision and goals)

RCCMHC Vision: Every Child in Ramsey County Will Function at the Highest Possible Level of Mental Health. MSSI worked with youth at home and in a group setting. Youth learned how to better manage their feelings and behaviors which resulted in improved mental health and functioning at home, at school, and in the community (see page 1).

Goal A: Cross-System Collaboration. We tailored our interventions to each client so depending on their need, we worked across systems with schools, probation, case management, social workers, child protection, foster care, healthcare and more.

Goal B: Health Equity. We targeted under-served populations and offered services like transportation to reduce barriers and make our program more accessible. Most of our clients were African American families with few resources. Many youth faced multiple challenges such as: lack of financial resources, school suspension, potential for out of home placement, and parents struggling with their own mental health issues.

Goal C: Whole Family Wellbeing. Skills learned in group helped to improve communication and behavior at home. Group CTSS was successful in reducing out of home placement and stabilizing youth and families.

LESSONS LEARNED: Group CTSS is successful because we support families to identify and reach goals they set for themselves. By working with the whole family, we are able to improve family dynamics and youth outcomes. One challenge is transportation to after-school group and family nights. We pick children up from five (5) different schools. To do this successfully we need multiple drivers but our billing does not cover these program expenses. Videos, gift cards and other ancillary costs would help us to engage more families. To expand, additional funds would be needed for staff such as: full-time parent liaison, family/peer support specialist, and full-time program coordinator. Funds for staff training would also help support this program.