

Santa Cruz Advanced Supervision Consult Group Year End Report

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This is the year-end report for the Advanced Supervision Consult Group of the South Bay (Santa Cruz County).

STRUCTURE: The Santa Cruz Advanced Consult Group met monthly between June 2005 and June 2006 at Santa Cruz County Child Welfare from 10-noon. This monthly consult group is held during their regularly scheduled supervisor's meeting and attendance remains constant generally 8-11 people. The group continues to function at the "mature" stage of development, team identity is clear and morale is generally high. They are open to learning with a willingness to experiment with innovative ideas and appreciate the support and guidance they receive in being effective supervisors. We begin each group with a check in on the month, any significant changes, any supervisory challenges they wish to address and I regularly bring information or an activity to stimulate discussion.

ISSUES/THEMES: We began the new fiscal year with review of group agreements and inquiry as to whether any changes needed to be made. Utilized several self-assessment tools including how as supervisors they tend to use their influence, do they approach supervision from a strength-based perspective and self-care.

Common themes throughout were "managing up", use of authority, working with workers who have a difficult time receiving feedback, how to distribute workload to already over extended workers and use of parallel process.

An example of transfer of learning was when one of the supervisors was preparing to do give some feedback to a worker. This worker demonstrated a great deal of resistance to the style of supervision that this supervisor was providing. The previous experience was one that allowed for this person pretty much do as she pleased, little direction, little follow through and rather unclear expectations. Through the use of role-play and group feedback the supervisor received some possible ways in which to approach this worker, utilizing personality styles use of authority and the parallel process.

Another theme has been CHANGE, a constant in this profession and the changes have been in management and in position for supervisors and new workers coming into the agency. Some of the changes have added additional stress as well as a greater self-awareness of how to utilize their own strengths and enhance those

around them. Once again the use of parallel process and understanding styles of authority have proven to be effective transfer of learning tools.

We also discussed avenues in which they receive feedback as supervisor. They concluded that they receive it from their manager and from their colleagues. I suggested that their workers could also be apart of the feedback loop. The following month I circulated a handout that they might consider using or adapting with their workers. It is a Likert Scale Tool that assesses their effectiveness as a supervisor.

The last month of the fiscal year, utilizing verbal feedback the supervisors concluded the following:

What is working: safety in the group, activities, confidentiality, the support and guidance from colleagues and facilitator, one of few places to vent, humor, appreciate bringing situations to the group and receiving great ideas and feedback.

Change: less time venting, more activities and handouts, food, reduce cross talk.

METHODS USED: Group process, role-plays, facilitated discussion, problem solving, and handouts, including self-assessment tools.