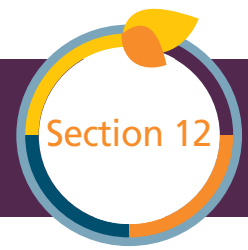


Building Compassion-Based Relationships with Caregivers



Section 12

WI Office of Children’s Mental Health – Language Guide

Deficit-Based Language	Strength-Based, Recovery-Oriented, Person-First, Trauma-Informed Alternative
Describing a Person	
schizophrenic, a borderline, bipolar	person diagnosed with..., person who experiences the following..., in recovery from...
addict, junkie, substance abuser	person who uses substances; a person with substance use issues
consumer, patient, client	person in recovery, a person working on recovery, a person participating in services
frequent flyer, super utilizer	frequently uses services and supports, is resourceful, a good self-advocate, attempts to get needs met
Describing Behavior	
good/bad, right/wrong	different, diverse, unique
high- vs. low-functioning	doing well vs. needs supports
suffering from	person is experiencing, living with, working to recover from
acting-out, “having behaviors”	person’s behaviors may indicate a trauma memory has been triggered, person is upset
attention-seeking	seeking to get needs met, seeking assistance to regulate
criminogenic, delinquent, dangerous	specify unsafe behavior, utilizing unsafe coping strategies
denial, unable to accept illness, lack of insight	person disagrees with diagnosis, person sees themselves in a
manipulative	strength based way. (Honor the individual’s perception of self.)
oppositional, resistant,	resourceful, trying to get help, able to take control in a situation to get needs met, boundaries are unclear, trust in relationship has not been established
non-compliant, unmotivated	the constraints of the system don’t meet the individual’s needs, preferred options are not available, services and supports are not a fit for that person. (Assume that people do well if they can.)
DTO, DTS, GD (Danger to Others, Danger to Self, General Danger)	people should not be reduced to acronyms; describe behaviors that are threatening
entitled	person is aware of her/his rights, empowered
puts self and/or recovery at risk	person is trying new things that may have risks
weakness, deficits	barriers, needs, opportunity to develop skills
unrealistic	person has high expectations for self and recovery