

Priorities

STICKY MOMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Sticky moments takes a number of incidents or situations similar to ones which students will experience during the placement. Students are asked to make priorities in relation to these incidents and to think about the criteria which they have used to make these priorities.

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to think about how they make decisions when there are conflicting priorities. Too often, these kinds of decisions are made without an awareness of the knowledge, values and beliefs which underpin them. This activity makes these factors explicit and teaches students a framework which will help them to continue to review the way they make decisions.

Method

The activity can be done by two people (you and the student) or by a small group of practice teachers and students. A group of students in different settings (group care and field work, for example), can address both parts of the activity, which provides interesting contrasts.

Students should study *Sticky moments* before the practice tutorial. Ask them to prepare whichever of the two situations relates best to their own setting. The three questions at the bottom of the exercise apply to both settings. Students should write down their responses to these questions.

In the practice tutorial, ask students to describe their responses to the three questions, using their prepared written notes. Subsequent discussion should focus on the *criteria which* the student developed. (45-60 minutes.)

Write the criteria up on a piece of flipchart paper, adding your own and any further criteria which come out of the discussion.

Decide on priorities for these criteria; re-write them in this new order on a fresh piece of flipchart paper.

Finally, use these newly ordered criteria to look at the six situations again. How do they change or confirm the student's original priorities?

Variations

You can use the 'Sticky moments' format to prepare six situations which reflect the specific kind of work which the student does in your setting. If you create your own 'Sticky moments', remember that your aim is to provide an opportunity for students to think carefully about the criteria they might use when confronted with choices; you are not seeking to simulate a realistic moment in the life of the unit or the kind of in-tray the student is likely to have to deal with. Each separate situation or referral is realistic, but it is unlikely they would all happen together.

Priorities

STICKY MOMENTS . . .

. . . . in Oakbrook Home

Mary (aged 91) has wet herself.

Harry (76) is having an argument with Kathleen (79) who is very frail and deaf. Harry has a stick and is hitting the wall with it.

A member of staff puts the tea and biscuits out on the trolley and tells you she is going out 'for a few minutes'.

The telephone rings in the office.

The emergency buzzer from the bathroom is sounding.

Avis (88) keeps crying 'Out!', 'Out!' and is heading for the front door.

. . . . in the team's in-tray

A *Referred by Parents*

Mr and Mrs Appleyard are concerned about their eldest daughter (15), who is truanting persistently and 'mixing with bad company.' They want a social worker to visit to 'give her a good talking to.'

B *Referred by a local Councillor*

Councillor requesting help for Mr and Mrs Brzynski who have increasing problems coping with a mentally handicapped daughter, (41). 'All their requests for help have been ignored'. Mrs B. is in reception.

C *Referred by General Practitioner*

Doctor Chaduri is concerned about Mrs Clark (63), whose mother (84) lives with her and is confused, incontinent and increasingly demanding. Mrs Clark is 'getting to the end of her tether'.

D *Referred by anonymous Neighbour*

The caller claims that her near neighbour, Trisha Davies, a single parent, has left her children alone in the house for over an hour several times recently. The children are 4 and 7.

E *Referred by himself, via a Probation Officer*

Tony Ezeshi, a single parent with four children between 9 and 16, has rent arrears and is on the verge of an electricity disconnection. He referred himself to Probation who say they can't help; can we?

F *Referred by Consultant Psychiatrist*

Mr Francis, a divorcee living alone, was discharged from psychiatric hospital two months ago. The consultant wants a social worker to visit because Mr Francis is becoming depressed and drinking again.

Questions

- 1 What priority would you give to these six situations / referrals?
- 2 What further information would you like to gather before taking action?
- 3 What criteria have you used to help you decide your position?

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