This webinar presented for the Community of Practice by Dr. Faye Mishna, Professor with the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and Margaret & Wallace McCain Chair in Child & Family at the University of Toronto, discusses ways service providers can assess for barriers to access and ensure that online services for youth are safe and confidential. Click here to view webinar | Click here to read the literature review | Click here to view presentation slides

Strategies to Applying Trauma-Informed Principles to Online Context

Trauma Awareness

- Maintain an awareness that the home environment is not a safe space for all youth (Dimond et al., 2011).
- Recognize that youth may not have access to a private space in their home in which they can participate in online services.

Safety

- Help youth identify safe places where they can participate in the online intervention (Ford-Gilboe et al., 2017).
- Inform youth that e-mails, messages, or browser history can be viewed by anyone with access to their personal device (e.g., parent(s), friend, or partner (Finn & Banach, 2000).
- Recommend that youth use a trusted device and provide them with resources about safe internet use (Glass et al., 2015).
  - e.g., open a website in ‘incognito mode’ and delete the browser history afterwards (Ford-Gilboe et al., 2017).
  - Include a ‘quick escape’ option on the website to allow users to immediately exit and return to a homepage, such as Google (Hegarty et al., 2015).
- Demonstrate predictability by collaborating with youth to develop a back-up plan in case connection is lost during online service delivery, (i.e. establish understanding that the service provider will phone service user on secure line) (Hassija & Gray, 2011).
- In reviewing confidentiality:
  - Inform youth about the limits to confidentiality
  - Reassure youth that their sessions will not be posted online, recorded or shared with their caregivers (Seager van Dyk et al., 2020).
- Provide **options** for service delivery to promote collaboration:
  - Perhaps service providers can offer **asynchronous intervention** (e-mail or text) for youth who cannot identify a safe space to participate in a real-time intervention; or they can use the chat option on Zoom.
- Incorporate a **debrief** at the end of sessions, seek feedback and collaborate to adapt intervention as necessary (Ford-Gilboe et al., 2017).
- Use a **desk-sharing** feature to share psychoeducational materials (Goldstein & Glueck, 2015); promote drawing by the youth.
- Using the **picture-in-picture** function can be helpful in-service providers monitor their own responses and expressions (Goldstein & Glueck, 2015).

**References**


