

SWK 409

(Ragg, 2010, Garvin 2011-2013)

GROUP PLANNING AND FORMATION EXERCISE: INSTRUCTIONS

SYLLABUS: Group Planning/Formation Exercise (30 points)

Small groups of students are expected to think through the planning stages of a group. Students will receive a scenario describing potential group members. This description of group members will be used by the students to apply theory and class concepts in identifying who will be included in the group. Students will decide how they will proceed with screening, how they will contract with the members, how the room will be set up and how they will open the group to get it started. **This paper should be about 8-12 pages in length.**

1. The student will demonstrate knowledge of group formation and composition guidelines as they decide which members to include in the group. A rationale will be provided for including all members.
2. The student will demonstrate knowledge of individual contracting and motivating strategies for engaging members in the group.
3. The student will demonstrate knowledge and skill in thinking through the agency and systemic issues involved in starting a group. The student will identify the type of group and their activities in establishing and setting up the group program.
4. The student will demonstrate knowledge and skill in identifying and responding to member needs through identifying the purpose, model of group intervention and general plan for proceeding with the group.
5. The student will demonstrate the ability to tune into and prepare for prospective group members by identifying potential issues and concerns that the group members may have upon entering the group program.
6. The student will identify what outcomes are expected from the group and develop a plan for how they will measure success.
7. **Include a minimum of 3 pages describing your group process you observed about your group while conducting this project.**

GROUP PLANNING DIRECTIONS

1. You can only include six members in the group. Review the potential members and select which members will you include in the group program. Explain why you selected these six and how/why you decided to exclude the members who will not be part of the group program.
2. Think about the need being met by the group and the members that you are thinking of including. What will you say about the group to the members to try to get them to come into the group program (what do you think might motivate the different members to attend, how will you suggest it to them, what role will you try to suggest that they might be good in for the group).
3. In your setting, plan out the group room considering issues of placement in the agency/setting, space requirements, furnishing requirements, equipment etc. How long will you book the room (from what time to what time) and why would you run the group at these times. Also consider how you would approach member recruitment given the setting, purpose and the needs being addressed by the group.
4. Plan the approach to group that you will take. Consider the purpose of the group, your theoretical base for intervention and what model of group will you use. Also consider what style of leadership you might use for this group. Include your rationale for the model and style that you have selected. Describe a plan for how you will proceed in establishing the group program.
5. Think about the group that you are forming and identify the shared concerns that they might have coming into the group program. Knowing the members, also identify some of the individual concerns that specific members might have about this group.
6. What goals will you try to set up for the group? If the membership wants these goals, how will you measure success and how will you know that the goals have been met.

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GROUP PLANNING AND FORMATION EXERCISE

Children's School Based Group

You have just been hired as the social worker at a school in a small rural town in the middle of Michigan. You are working on getting a group together for grade six children who might be at risk of developing social problems. You feel that as this is a first group you can only handle six or seven children. Teachers and guidance counselors who work in the school have identified the following children to be considered for the group.

Bobby is a fourteen year old Caucasian youth. He has a learning disability which has caused him to repeat grades three times. Bobby is very self conscious about his disability and tends to become volatile when others make him feel stupid. Bobby comes from a difficult home with some suspicion that there is both domestic violence and possible child abuse. Bobby was referred by his guidance counselor who believes that Bobby needs to increase his self esteem.

Betty is a ten year old Caucasian child. Even though she is doing well in school, she tends to hang out with some of the more troubled children and has been in trouble for fighting with another youth. She missed school for about one week after being suspended for the fight and some teachers think that she might have been beaten for getting into trouble at school. Betty is large for her age and seems to be moving into puberty. Little is known about her family as they never come to school or interact with any school personnel. Betty was referred by the vice principal who wants to see her change her group of friends.

Frederick is a nine year old Caucasian boy. He is an excellent student but tends to be somewhat impulsive in social situations. He was referred to group by his teacher who was concerned that his impulsivity is starting to make him aggressive. His parents are newly immigrated from Germany. Apparently his father is an engineer for a large firm. Frederick's mother did not move to the US with the family and apparently a divorce is forthcoming.

Anthony is a ten year old African American boy. Anthony has just moved to town from another state after his mother and father separated. Anthony is slightly overweight and withdrawn in social situations but when teased can become quite volatile. Anthony's mother complained about the father indicating that he was "a tyrant" and would be very strict with the children often using corporal punishment. She reportedly has adopted a much more lenient approach with him and is asking the school to cooperate with her new approach to discipline. Anthony was referred to the guidance department and then to the group to improve his social skills.

Fiona is an eleven year old Caucasian girl. She has lived in the area all of her life and has a large family all of whom have attended this school. Many of the children were considered the ideal children by teachers because they never spoke out in class and always tried hard to please the teacher. Fiona used to be like this but recently has become moody and mouthy with teachers. Fiona is the first in her class to begin growing breast tissue and has drawn much male attention as they try to get her to go on dates with them. Fiona has become unpopular with some of the girls in her class and was beat up by Betty.

Michael is an eleven year old Caucasian boy who tends to antagonize other children in the class. He has been suspended twice for picking on other children and causing fights in school. He also apparently torments

Frederick after school by making fun of his language. Teachers have reported Michael's behavior to his parents but they do not seem to do anything about it. The teachers have said that his parents are drinkers who tend to let the children stay up until all hours of the night and never make sure homework is done.

Roberto is a ten year old Hispanic boy living with his mother and her new husband. Roberto has traditionally done very well in his academic work. Recently, however, he has become quite aggressive with some of the other children and his grades have began to slip. The teachers feel that there might be something going on at home but Roberto's mother denies any problems. Roberto was referred to guidance and then was later referred by the guidance counselor to the group program.

Tonja is an eleven year old African American girl living with her mother and her father. Tonja was recently diagnosed as having a language based learning disability which has impacted her grades. In the past Tonja has always felt that she was just stupid and that is why she was getting bad grades. The diagnosis of a learning disability did not seem to alter her perceptions of herself and the teacher referred her to group so that she would start to understand that a learning disability does not mean that you are stupid.

Frank is a ten year old Caucasian boy diagnosed with attention deficit/hyperactive disorder. He takes ritalin to control the disorder but often forgets his noon pill which creates problems with the teachers. When the medication wears off, Frank tends to forget things, get out of his seat and bother his classmates. The teachers have tried to engage his mother in helping but she is a single parent who has to work so is of little help. The teacher referred Frank to the group hoping that he would learn to be more responsible about his disease and do things to keep himself under control.

Wanda is an eleven year old African American girl who lives with her mother and father. Wanda is a good student and has been doing well in school, however, teachers have been concerned because she seems depressed and withdrawn. Her parents did not seem to know what might be bothering her and reported that she seemed quite normal at home. The teacher thought that there may be some problem with her friends at school and referred her to the group to see if she might talk about whatever seemed to be bothering her.

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GROUP PLANNING AND FORMATION EXERCISE

Elder Group

You are a new worker in a community agency serving older people in a community of about 100,000 people in South Eastern Michigan. You just graduated and this is your first job. You are planning a growth group for people who are retiring. You don't know much about how the last worker ran the group because he never did his paperwork. Being a community agency everyone is busy and you have to think through the group program and get it started right away. The following people are on the waiting list for group.

Webster is a sixty-eight year old Caucasian widower who has been teaching at a local college for about ten years. He was referred to the group by his EAP at the college due to his upcoming retirement. He has been working beyond retirement age on a year to year contract but the contract will not be renewed this year. He did not welcome this news and seemed quite upset with the people in human resources so they referred him for the group. In the initial contact with Webster he mentioned that he is planning on selling his home and moving to Florida after the retirement. He reportedly has some friends there that he used to teach with and they are thinking of opening a consulting business.

Bonita is a sixty-four year old Hispanic female who has been a corporate lawyer in the community. Bonita is divorced from her husband but remains close with her children. She has been active in some of the Hispanic and women's professional organisations and is well respected in the community. She referred herself to the group because she has not thought much about retirement. In the initial phone call she expressed that so much of her identity has been associated with her job and she doesn't know what she will do with herself after her impending retirement next year.

Joyce is a sixty-three year old African American woman who has owned a clothing store for the past twenty-five years. Joyce is married but apparently does not feel overly close with her husband who rebuilds antique cars and goes to car shows around the country. This hobby was taken up because Joyce has spent almost every day working at the store. She has found that working almost seven days a week has cost her physically and socially and she is enjoying life much less these days. She spoke of the young people who work in the store with some fondness but stated that she does not feel like she belongs with that crowd anymore. She has the store on the market and is planning on retiring as soon as it sells. She referred herself to the group because she feels that this will be a drastic change for her having put so much of her life into the store.

Stan is a sixty-two year old Caucasian man who has been working for the past twenty-five years at the Ford plant. His time is up now and he is being retired. The EAP referred him as they do with most employees who are coming up for retirement. In the referral they stressed that he might need the group because he has not been the ideal employee and often had to file grievances to keep his job. Reportedly Stan drinks heavily and is out at the bars with his friends almost every night. Stan's wife left him about five years ago and he has little contact with family members preferring to spend time with his drinking friends.

Betty is a sixty-four year old Caucasian woman who is the single mother living with her twenty year old developmentally disabled son Brian. Betty has been working at K Mart as a cashier and works her hours around Brian's schedule at the sheltered workshop. K Mart has just implemented a mandatory retirement policy and Betty will have to retire on her next birthday. The human resources department at the head office referred her to the

group to get her ready for retirement. In talking with Betty she spoke of her connection to the local ARC where she is on the board of directors and talked at length about her concerns for her son's future.

Francis is a sixty-five year old African American woman who has been working at the Ford plant since she was forty. She is being retired and the EAP referred her for the group to help her get ready for retirement. She apparently does not look forward to retirement and tried to get the human resources department to make an exception for her because most of her friends still work at the plant. She was very popular at work and many people took her side as she attempted to stay on. Unfortunately, it was not possible under the contract. She has family in the area and plans on remaining in town after retirement. Beyond that, she has no concrete plans for her future.

Frank is a seventy year old African American male who has been working in a garage as an automobile mechanic. Frank never married but has many members of his family or origin in town. He was referred to the group by his sister Francis (above) who told him "if I'm having trouble with this...its going to kill you". Apparently he will be let go this upcoming summer because his health is failing him at times and the work is becoming difficult. When he called in to get on the waiting list, he informed the worker that he was planning on continuing as a mechanic in his back yard just doing work for friends an family to keep himself busy.

Anthony is a sixty-one year old African American business executive at the local Ford plant. He has a wife who has been working for a local church but no children in the area. Ford is downsizing management and Anthony has been retired. He has a healthy severance package but his retirement came as a bit of a shock as they announced it and then had him clean out his desk and leave the property that same day. The EAP referred him for the group knowing that the shock would likely leave some unresolved feelings about his retirement. Anthony was a bit of a trouble shooter for the company and tended to move often, he just moved to the community about two years ago to clean up some of the personnel problems at the plant.

Julie is a sixty-three year old Hispanic woman who has been working as a retail chain store district manager for the past ten years. This chain of stores moves their middle management every two years to make sure that they do not form strong bonds with store management. Consequently, Julie moved to this community about eighteen months ago. She anticipated another move but apparently the chain is downsizing middle management and she has been forced into early retirement. The human resource people at the head office phoned in the referral when this decision was made. She lives alone because her husband died about six years ago and her children are all grown and living in different areas of the country. She has few friends because of her job and the multiple moves.

Sophie is a sixty-four year old Caucasian woman who has worked as a telephone operator for the past thirty years. Sophie is divorced from an abusive husband who forced her into giving up custody and has not seen her children for about fifteen years. She has lived in the area all of her life and tends to participate in church related activities. Other than that, she has some friends she goes to Bingo with once in a while. Sophie was referred to the group by the EAP at the phone company as part of the regular package of handling retirements.

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GROUP PLANNING AND FORMATION EXERCISE

Community Planning Group

You are a new worker hired by the school board to help with problems of violence in the local middle school. Your job is to convene a group of interested community people to explore what might be done about some recent incidents of violence in the school. The group will be fairly short term and will advise the administration on some of the options that might be considered in helping to stop the violence. You have decided that the group will contain about six community representatives plus yourself and maybe one other person from the school board. You have the following list of community people who have expressed an interest in being part of the planning group.

Tom is a forty-three year old Caucasian male who has lived in the community for twenty years. Tom works in a factory that is considered the largest employer in the community. Tom has never married and lives with his mother. Tom has been active in some of the local service clubs and has helped out on the United Way Campaign as an industry representative during their most recent fund raising campaign.

Richard is a forty-nine year old Hispanic male. Richard lives in the community with his wife and two children who attend the local middle school. Richard moved into the community from a large city about five years ago. Richard works as a chef in one of the local restaurants. The restaurant is considered one of the finest dining establishments in the community and is attached to a dinner club which he helps to run. Richard suggested that the club might be a good place to meet when he offered to be part of the group.

Yvonne is a fifty-two year old African American female who has moved to the community in the past year. She moved here from Buffalo where her grown children still reside. Yvonne works for a large corporation as a management specialist. She came to town to help the local office develop a new management information system. Yvonne was active in many community activities in Buffalo and feels that that might help the planning group.

Mike is a fifty-three year old Caucasian male who has lived in the community for about fifteen years. Mike works as a manager in a factory in one of the neighbouring towns. Mike is divorced from his wife who moved to another state with their two children about five years ago. Mike has run for city council in the past but has never been elected. Mike felt that his management experience and his venture into politics can be used by the group in their planning.

Katherine is a twenty-nine year old Caucasian female who just returned back to the community after completing her degree in history and economics at a well known university that is out of state. Katherine lived in the community and attended public school before going off for college. She is currently living with her parents and looking for work. Katherine feels that her abundant free time and lifetime of experience in the community can be helpful to the group.

Tony is a thirty-three year old African American male who has lived in the community all of his life. He is married and has two children currently in elementary school. Tony manages a local chain store that sells men's clothing. His wife works for a local homeless shelter on a part time basis. In the evening Tony helps out at an athletic club. Tony feels that his management experience and background in athletics can help the group in planning for this situation.

Marjorie is a thirty-two year old African American female who has lived in the neighborhood for the past five years. She moved here after marrying her husband who has always lived in the area. They have one child who attends the local elementary school. Marjorie works for a local manufacturing plant that makes auto parts. She is on steady days. Marjorie feels that because her children are coming up in age and because her family has roots in the community that she would be a good candidate for the group.

Thomas is a forty year old Hispanic male who grew up in the neighborhood. He works as a mechanic at a local auto dealership. He has worked there four fifteen years. Thomas has two children, a boy who has just entered highschool and a daughter who is in middle school. Thomas did not say how he might serve the group but did say that he wanted to see the problems at the school get resolved and would do anything that was needed.

Alicia is a thirty-nine year old Hispanic female who is currently on the city council. She has lived and worked in the community for about twelve years after moving here from the west side of the state. Alicia lives with her husband and three children ranging in age from ten to sixteen. Alicia stated that her connections to city council might be helpful to the group and that she could help out that way if she were to be invited to participate in the group.

Frank is a thirty-seven year old Caucasian male who has lived in the community all of his life. He currently lives with his wife and their two elementary school aged children. In the past, however, he had run into some problems as he was a member in one of the local gangs. He quit the gang when he was twenty-two after doing some time for assault. When he called to offer his services to the group he mentioned that he did not want to see the types of problems he was in impact the school anymore.

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GROUP PLANNING AND FORMATION EXERCISE

Mental Illness Client Group

You are a new worker in a community mental health agency serving people who have been diagnosed with mental illness. The agency has a residential component, a sheltered workshop, a case management department and a supportive services branch. You were hired into the supportive services branch. One of your tasks is to run a group for people who are getting prepared for more competitive job situations. The goals of the group are usually to help improve social skills and coping. You can take six members in this group (trying to keep it low because you are new) and must select the members from the people on this list.

Chris is a twenty-seven year old Caucasian male diagnosed with schizophrenia. Chris was hospitalized several times from the age of fifteen until the present but has not needed hospital attention for more than one year. Chris currently lives in a group home and attends a sheltered workshop for job training. Chris has never worked outside of the sheltered setting but has picked up well on his training. In the workshop he has served as a janitor for several months and he is being considered for work site placements. Staff still have some concerns about some of his sexual behaviors. Apparently, he tends to touch his private parts when stressed out. He is referred to group to help him develop other methods of coping.

Robert is a twenty-nine year old Hispanic male diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. Robert lives at home with his mother and father. There are few pressures placed on him at home and his mother tends to cater to him. Robert has never worked but is in the sheltered workshop. He is doing well in the workshop setting but tends to want others to do things for him. If people refuse to cater to him he will escalate to the point of a tantrum to try to force people to do as he wants. This is interfering with his ability to perform on the job. He has been referred to the group to help him develop coping skills and more self responsibility.

Galdys is a thirty year old African American woman diagnosed with major a depressive disorder and dythymia. She worked at MacDonald's just after highschool but had to quit her job when the depression became severe. Gladys lives in a supported independent living apartment and attends a local workshop for people who have a mental illness. She does well in her apartment and keeps the place clean with enough support. At work, however, she still wants staff to do things for her and will tend to withdraw if they refuse. She was referred to group by her case manager because this type of behavior will interfere with her ability to hold down a job.

Darlene is a thirty-five year old Caucasian woman diagnosed as a borderline personality disorder. Darlene has worked up until recently and has had two businesses that she has had to fold due to her financial mismanagement. In her most recent business she was hospitalized as suicidal after ripping off her business partners for about \$69,000. She moved home to live with her mother after coming out of the hospital. Her case manager referred her to group to increase her coping skills so she can become employable.

David is a forty year old Caucasian male diagnosed as having an antisocial personality disorder. David has problems all of his life and many people who have operated as support people quit shortly after beginning to work with him. David tends to manipulate others and can be very aggressive when he feels he is being criticised. He has had jobs for very brief periods of time but no job has lasted for more than two weeks. Typically he loses his job for either being aggressive to a co-worker or for stealing. David's case manager referred him to the group feeling that he needs help to get things under control so he can keep a job.

Frank is a forty-one year old African American diagnosed as being schizophrenic. Frank has been hospitalized several times in the past. This usually occurs when he goes off his medication or when it needs to be adjusted. Frank lives in a group home for people with mental illnesses and attends a local sheltered workshop. Frank has been doing well in both settings but tends to be socially inappropriate at times and will point and giggle at others when nervous. He was referred to group by the case manager who hoped that the group might help Frank develop different ways of coping with tension.

Tammy is a thirty-six year old African American woman diagnosed as having a bi-polar disorder. Tammy has been hospitalized twice in her life. The first time was after finishing highschool when she went off to college. The second time was about four years ago. Her husband left her while she was in the hospital the last time because she tended to escalate so much that she was keeping both him and the baby awake all night. He took the baby with him when he left and has had not contact with her since that time. Tammy has adjusted well to this loss and has excelled in her job training. She is being prepared for competitive employment and has been referred to the group to strengthen her social skills in preparation for this move.

Angie is a thirty-eight year old Hispanic woman diagnosed as being depressive. She has been in and out of the hospital several times but has been able to stay in the community for about two years without the need for hospitalization. Suicidal thoughts have been under control and she has lived in a group home for mentally ill adults for several months. While in the group home she attended a sheltered workshop and it is felt that her work skills are developed to the point that semi-competitive work placements are being considered. There is concern, however, that she might not be able to cope with the social situations in the workplace. This is why she was referred to the group program.

Doris is a forty-four year old Caucasian woman diagnosed as having a borderline personality disorder. Doris lives with her elderly father who has asked the agency for help as he will eventually be too old to respond to Doris's multiple demands. He has asked the agency to help Doris get settled in an apartment and a job. Doris has had many jobs in the past but usually flies into a rage and quits when she does not get her own way. She tends to get co-workers fighting with each other and often will tell gossip to start the fights. Doris has been married in the past but was divorced about ten years ago. Her ex-husband has custody of their two daughters and has disallowed access due to her rages when dropping off the children. Doris's case manager in the agency referred to group hoping that she might develop better coping skills that can help in achieving her goals.

Fred is a forty-four year old Caucasian male diagnosed with a bi-polar disorder. He has had several hospitalizations and was once considered a long term patient. In the last twenty years his stays in the hospital have become shorter and there has been more expectations that he be able to function in the community. His mother used to keep him at home but she had a stroke which made it impossible for her to keep him. He is currently stabilized on medication and living in a supported independent living apartment. He has finished some job training and is considered ready to try competitive employment. He was referred to group by his job coach to help him develop social and coping skills.

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GROUP PLANNING AND FORMATION EXERCISE

High Risk Families Group

You are a worker in an outreach program of a family service agency. You are expected to conduct groups in the community for families considered at high risk for child abuse. You have just been hired as the social worker in this program and are considering starting a new group. You are thinking about possible including parents and children both in the group but you might just include parents or children. You are meeting with a team of professionals to decide how to proceed and who you will include in the group. You are limited to six of the families (or part thereof) that are on the following list.

Bobby is a fourteen year old Caucasian youth living with his mother and father. Bobby comes from a difficult home with some suspicion that there is both domestic violence and possible child abuse. Both mother and son have been witnessed to have bruises consistent with being punched but this has been denied by the father. Bobby also has a learning disability which has caused him to repeat grades three times. Bobby is very self conscious about his disability and tends to become volatile when others make him feel stupid.

Betty is a twelve year old Caucasian child. Even though she is doing well in school, she tends to hang out with some of the more troubled children and has been in trouble for fighting with another youth. She missed school for about one week after being suspended for the fight and some teachers think that she might have been beaten for getting into trouble at school. Her parents deny problems with parenting but complain about her being difficult to control. Both mother and father have attended meetings with school personnel and with social workers smelling like they have been drinking. Betty has bragged to her friends that she never has to go to bed until she wants to go because her mom and dad don't care.

Frederick is a sixteen year old Caucasian youth who has started to hang out with kids who are members of a local gang called the Mind Benders. Frederick lives alone with his mother who is on FIA benefits that require her to work every afternoon. Her work placement keeps her away from the home after school. When she comes home he is not there. Often he does not return until well after midnight. His mother explains to him why he should come in but he just brushes her off. When she escalates he has pushed her away and stomped up to his room. This family was referred by the FIA worker who is concerned that he may become more involved as a gang member.

Anthony is a fifteen year old African American boy. Anthony has just moved to town from another state after his mother and father separated. Anthony is slightly overweight and withdrawn in social situations but when teased can become quite volatile. Anthony's mother complained about the father indicating that he was "a tyrant" and would be very strict with the children often using corporal punishment. She reportedly has adopted a much more lenient approach with him and expects him to set his own limits. Anthony talks well to his mother but has been skipping school to hang out with a gang known as the C.D.M. Anthony was referred to the guidance department at the high school hoping to keep him in school and from becoming more involved with the gang.

Fiona is an twelve year old Caucasian girl. She lives with her father because her mother died when she was seven. Her father has been reported several times to CPS for being too harsh in his punishment with her but

there has been no substantiation of abuse. Fiona's father works long hours at the factory and is often gone leaving her alone. Fiona was referred by the school because she has recently become moody and mouthy with teachers. Fiona is the first in her class to begin growing breast tissue and has drawn much male attention as they try to get her to go on dates with them. Fiona has become unpopular with some of the girls in her class and was beat up by Betty.

Michael is a sixteen year old Caucasian boy who tends to antagonize other children in his class at school. He has been suspended twice for picking on other children and causing fights in school. He also apparently torments a younger immigrant youth by making fun of his language. Teachers have reported Michael's behavior to his parents but they do not seem to do anything about it. The teachers have said that his parents are drinkers who tend to let the children stay up until all hours of the night and never make sure homework is done.

Roberto is a fifteen year old Hispanic boy living with his mother and her new husband. Roberto has traditionally done very well in his academic work. Recently, however, he has become quite aggressive with some of the other children and his grades have began to slip. The teachers feel that there might be something going on at home but Roberto's mother denies any problems. Roberto has been staying out late and is reported to be hanging with a gang known as C.D.M. Roberto was referred to guidance and then was later referred by the guidance counselor to the group program.

Tonja is an fourteen year old African American girl living with her mother and her father. Tonja was recently diagnosed as having a language based learning disability which has impacted her grades. In the past Tonja has always felt that she was just stupid and that is why she was getting bad grades. The diagnosis of a learning disability did not seem to alter her perceptions of herself. The school has tried to include the parents but they do not come in for meetings. One of the teachers has reported that both parents are heavy drinkers and often out at the bar. The same teacher reported that they often yell and swear at Tonja. The guidance counselor at the high school referred her to group because she is hanging out with guys who are likely to be taking sexual advantage of her. The school thinks she is putting herself at risk due to low self esteem.

Frank is a fourteen year old Caucasian boy diagnosed with attention deficit/hyperactive disorder. He takes ritalin to control the disorder but often forgets or sells his drugs to other kids so they can get high. Frank tends argue allot at school and never turns in his assignments. The teachers have contacted the parents but they both have similar learning disabilities and dropped out of school after grade eight. When on the phone with the family, teachers reported hearing loud yelling and swearing at the children. The school referred the family for the high risk group.

Wanda is a twelve year old African American girl who lives with her mother and father. Wanda is a good student and has been doing well in school, however, the parents have been concerned because she seems depressed and withdrawn. This seems to have coincided with her hanging out with a new group of friends. As the parents have tried to get her to open up she has withdrawn more and stayed out later with her friends. This has created heated arguments and the parents are fearing that she may be into drugs. The parents are also fearing that the arguments may turn violent so they referred to the group.

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GROUP PLANNING AND FORMATION EXERCISE

Teen Group

You are a worker in a children's mental health center in a program for teens from difficult family situations. You have just been hired as the social worker in this program and are considering starting a new group. You are meeting with a team of professionals to decide how to proceed and who you will include in the group. You are limited to six of the teens on the waiting list.

Bobby is a fourteen year old Caucasian youth living with his mother and father. Bobby comes from a difficult home with some suspicion that there is both domestic violence and possible child abuse. Both mother and son have been witnessed to have bruises consistent with being punched but this has been denied by the father. Bobby also has a learning disability which has caused him to repeat grades three times. Bobby is very self conscious about his disability and tends to become volatile when others make him feel stupid.

Betty is a twelve year old Caucasian child. Even though she is doing well in school, she tends to hang out with some of the more troubled children and has been in trouble for fighting with another youth. She missed school for about one week after being suspended for the fight and some teachers think that she might have been beaten for getting into trouble at school. Her parents deny problems with parenting but complain about her being difficult to control. Both mother and father have attended meetings with school personnel and with social workers smelling like they have been drinking. Betty has bragged to her friends that she never has to go to bed until she wants to go because her mom and dad don't care.

Frederick is a sixteen year old Caucasian youth who has started to hang out with kids who are members of a local gang called the Mind Benders. Frederick lives alone with his mother who is on FIA benefits that require her to work every afternoon. Her work placement keeps her away from the home after school. When she comes home he is not there. Often he does not return until well after midnight. His mother explains to him why he should come in but he just brushes her off. When she escalates he has pushed her away and stomped up to his room. This family was referred by the FIA worker who is concerned that he may become more involved as a gang member.

Anthony is a fifteen year old African American boy. Anthony has just moved to town from another state after his mother and father separated. Anthony is slightly overweight and withdrawn in social situations but when teased can become quite volatile. Anthony's mother complained about the father indicating that he was "a tyrant" and would be very strict with the children often using corporal punishment. She reportedly has adopted a much more lenient approach with him and expects him to set his own limits. Anthony talks well to his mother but has been skipping school to hang out with a gang known as the C.D.M. Anthony was referred to the guidance department at the highschool hoping to keep him in school and from becoming more involved with the gang.

Fiona is a twelve year old Caucasian girl. She lives with her father because her mother died when she was seven. Her father has been reported several times to CPS for being too harsh in his punishment with her but there has been no substantiation of abuse. Fiona's father works long hours at the factory and is often gone leaving her alone. Fiona was referred by the school because she has recently become moody and mouthy with teachers. Fiona is the first in her class to begin growing breast tissue and has drawn much male attention as they

try to get her to go on dates with them. Fiona has become unpopular with some of the girls in her class and was beat up by Betty.

Michael is a sixteen year old Caucasian boy who tends to antagonize other children in his class at school. He has been suspended twice for picking on other children and causing fights in school. He also apparently torments a younger immigrant youth by making fun of his language. Teachers have reported Michael's behavior to his parents but they do not seem to do anything about it. The teachers have said that his parents are drinkers who tend to let the children stay up until all hours of the night and never make sure homework is done.

Roberto is a fifteen year old Hispanic boy living with his mother and her new husband. Roberto has traditionally done very well in his academic work. Recently, however, he has become quite aggressive with some of the other children and his grades have began to slip. The teachers feel that there might be something going on at home but Roberto's mother denies any problems. Roberto has been staying out late and is reported to be hanging with a gang known as C.D.M. Roberto was referred to guidance and then was later referred by the guidance counselor to the group program.

Tonja is an fourteen year old African American girl living with her mother and her father. Tonja was recently diagnosed as having a language based learning disability which has impacted her grades. In the past Tonja has always felt that she was just stupid and that is why she was getting bad grades. The diagnosis of a learning disability did not seem to alter her perceptions of herself. The school has tried to include the parents but they do not come in for meetings. One of the teachers has reported that both parents are heavy drinkers and often out at the bar. The same teacher reported that they often yell and swear at Tonja. The guidance counselor at the highschool referred her to group because she is hanging out with guys who are likely to be taking sexual advantage of her. The school thinks she is putting herself at risk due to low self esteem.

Frank is a fourteen year old Caucasian boy diagnosed with attention deficit/hyperactive disorder. He takes ritalin to control the disorder but often forgets or sells his drugs to other kids so they can get high. Frank tends argue allot at school and never turns in his assignments. The teachers have contacted the parents but they both have similar learning disabilities and dropped out of school after grade eight. When on the phone with the family, teachers reported hearing loud yelling and swearing at the children. The school referred the family for the high risk group.

Wanda is a twelve year old African American girl who lives with her mother and father. Wanda is a good student and has been doing well in school, however, the parents have been concerned because she seems depressed and withdrawn. This seems to have coincided with her hanging out with a new group of friends. As the parents have tried to get her to open up she has withdrawn more and stayed out later with her friends. This has created heated arguments and the parents are fearing that she may be into drugs. The parents are also fearing that the arguments may turn violent so they referred to the group.