

8/23/2017

RE: COS-P CLASS LENGTH

Nebraska Circle of Security-Parenting Facilitators and Sponsoring Agencies:

For the last four years, Nebraska has had an established multi-disciplinary leadership team that provides guidance and leadership for Circle of Security-Parenting. Recently it has come to our attention on several occasions that some facilitators are shortening the length of the COS-P class series by condensing classes or skipping class sessions all together. While we are not of the belief that this practice stems from ill intent on the part of the Facilitator or sponsoring agency, we feel it is important to address the multiple reasons this not recommended.

First, and most importantly, the COS-P model has only been shown effective at the dosage in which it is presented in the COS-P Facilitator's Manual—8 class sessions, 1.5 hours each—and following the proper protocol of discussion and reflection as presented in the manual. The bulk of the COS-P protocol is based in discussion and reflection and this is where we see participants experience cognitive shifts that change behavior. Shortening or skipping portions of the protocol will lead to less effectiveness and minimal outcomes for class participants. If a facilitator does not feel comfortable leading these parts of the protocol he/she should enter a Facilitator Consultation Group or go through Fidelity Coaching to further strengthen his/her skills.

Secondly, COS-P is supported widely through the court system and is used as a strategy for parents involved in Alternative Response and those on a wait list for Child-Parent Psychotherapy. It is also increasingly supported through lower level intervention efforts such as Head Start (and is now one of their options for parent curricula as required by new federal regulations), the Early Development Network, and Sixpence. It is especially critical that COS-P is implemented to fidelity when working with our most at-risk populations. Offering shortened class series is not supporting fidelity of implementation.

Finally, shortening the length of classes has the potential to negatively affect the overall statewide data. Data from a class that is four weeks in length is not the same at that from an eight-week class. We need data that shows consistent, positive outcomes to secure future funding and support for COS-P in our state.

While we understand the challenge of getting parents to commit to 8 weeks of classes, offering a shortened version of the COS-P model is not the solution as parents will not benefit in the ways that we want. We all want parents to attend COS-P classes and benefit from them, but it's important that the classes we offer them are being completed to fidelity.

Sincerely,

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