

# An Adjunct Group Intervention for Youth with Mood and Anxiety Disorders Transitioning to College

Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, University of Pittsburgh

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# Disclosures

## Tina Goldstein PhD

- Grant funding: NIMH, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, The Brain and Behavior Foundation
- Royalties: Guilford Press
- Employers: University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, University of Pittsburgh Physicians

## Dara Sakolsky MD PhD

- Grant funding: NIMH
- Consulting Fee: LEK Consulting
- Employers: University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, University of Pittsburgh Physicians

# Transition-Age Youth: A High-Risk Population at a High-Risk Period

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## Mental Health Concerns are Significant for Transition-Age Youth

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college-aged youth
- One in 12 college students makes a suicide plan
- In the past year, 31% of college students reported depression and 50% reported anxiety that impacted their functioning

## Mental Health Concerns Impede College Success

- Depression and anxiety are the largest impediments to academic performance (American College Health Association, 2011)
- 64% of young adults who dropped out of college cite mental health-related reasons (most commonly mood and anxiety disorders)
- Youth with mental health disorders are more likely to misuse alcohol, experience academic distress and sexual victimization on campus

## College Students Rarely Seek Mental Health Services

- 40% of college students with diagnosable mental health conditions do not seek help; 57% do not request accommodations

# Aims

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To create an adjunctive group to assist transition-age youth (i.e., 17-20 years of age) build independence and optimize success in the transition to college/community and independence.

# Who is the Group For?

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- Youth preparing to graduate from high school
- Relatively stable symptoms
- Engaged in individual therapy

# Group Structure and Timing

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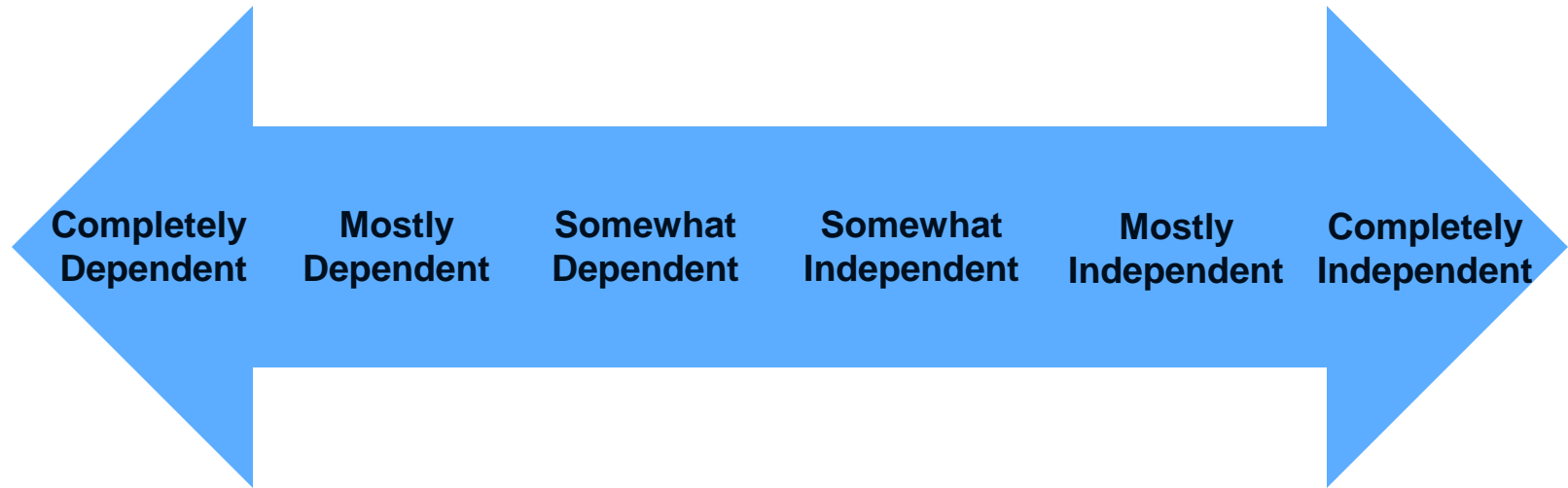
Young Adult Group: Monthly for 6 months



Concurrent Parent Group: Bi-monthly for 6 months



# Independence as a Continuum



# Domains of Independence

## Health

know my diagnosis  
manage my medications  
make my appointments

## Academics

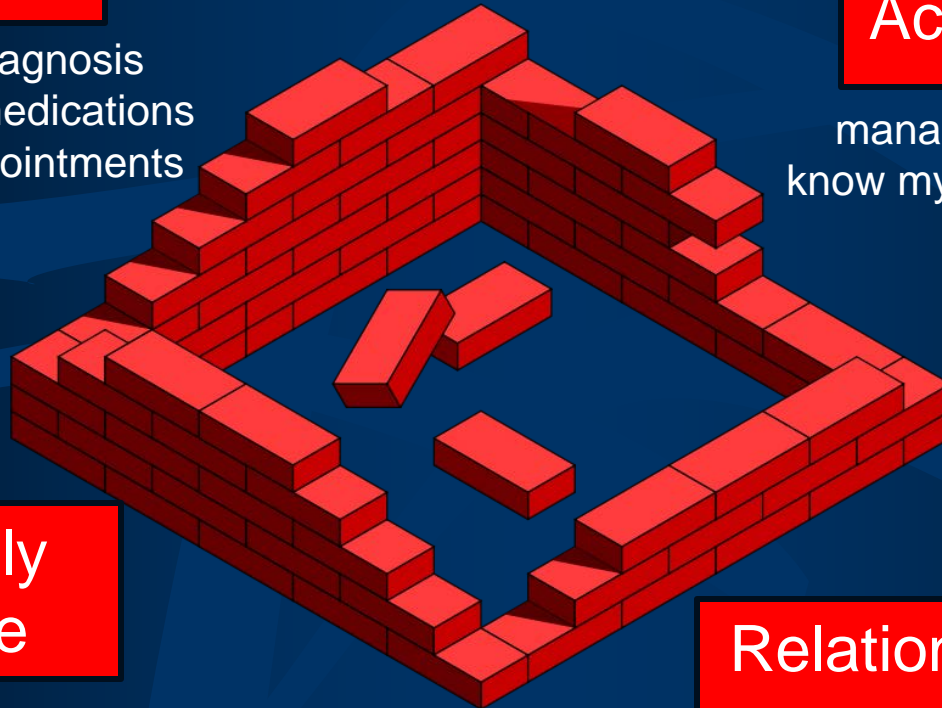
manage my workload  
know my accommodations

## Daily Life

get myself up in the am  
do my laundry  
manage my time

## Relationships

solve problems with others  
get what I need from others  
know where to get support





# Young Adult Group Structure

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- Ice breaker
- Snacks
- Feedback from last meeting
- Session content
- Wrap-up



# Young Adult Session Content

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Session 1: Knowing My Body & Mind

Session 2: Advocating for Myself

Session 3: Managing my Academics

Session 4: Living Independently

Session 5: Managing My Relationships

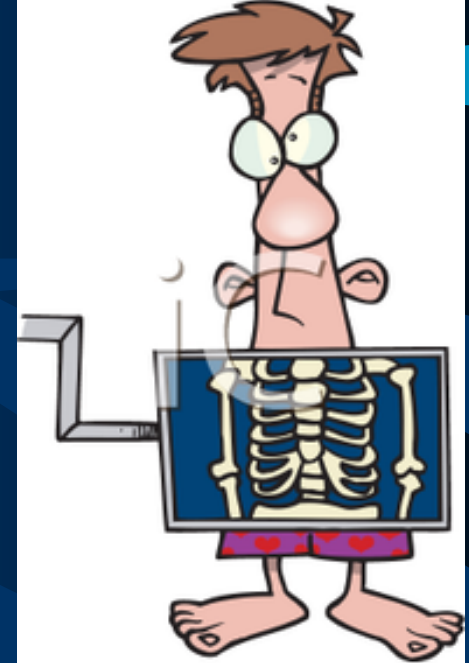
Session 6: Graduation

# Session 1: Knowing My Body & Mind

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Importance of having accurate knowledge of:

- diagnosis/symptoms
- baseline behavioral patterns  
(e.g., eating, sleeping)
- treatment
- warning signs
- coping skills



# Session 1: Knowing My Body & Mind

## Self-Assessment

Circle the number that indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of these sentences.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I know my diagnosis.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know the warning signs of a relapse.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I know the names and doses of my medications.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know what my insurance does and does not cover.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I take my medications independently.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I make and track my own appointments and can fill my own prescriptions.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I can name my providers and reach them.	1	2	3	4	5

# Creating a Health Portfolio

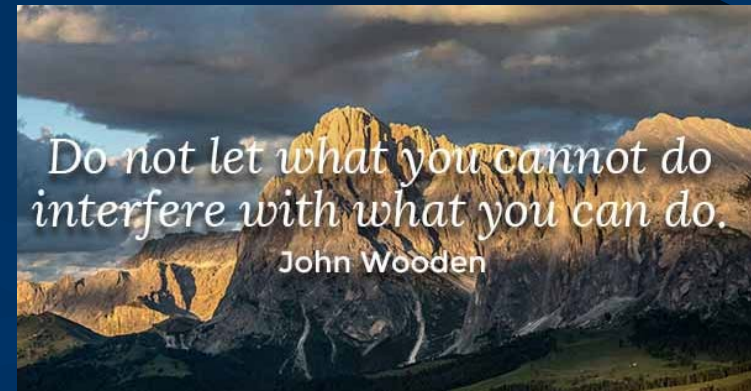
- Personal Health History
- Family History
- Emergency/Contact Information
- Treatment History
- 504/IEP
- Safety Plan
- Health Insurance Information



# Session 2: Advocating for Myself

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- Understanding the importance of self-advocacy
- How to communicate with (potential) providers
- How to handle emergencies/crises
- How to find services on campus/in the community (and what to look for...)
- Who should I tell about my mental health condition?
- Making independent decisions



# Session 2: Advocating for Myself: Self-Assessment

Circle the number that indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of these sentences.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have checked out available mental health resources on campus and/or in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know and have copies of the documentation that is required to receive accommodations at most post-secondary institutions.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I know the accommodations that work best for me to effectively participate at school and in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I maintain a folder with my health documents and insurance card.	1	2	3	4	5

# Session 3: Managing My Academics

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- Academic accommodations
- Differences between high school and college
- Note taking
- Structuring time
- Asking for help





# Session 3: Managing My Academics

## Self-Assessment

Circle the number that indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of these sentences.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I know what I need to do to graduate from high school.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know my academic strengths and weaknesses.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have a system for managing assignments and can complete assignments in a timely fashion.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have a system for studying for tests and exams.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I understand it is important to know how to take good notes.	1	2	3	4	5

# Session 4: Living Independently

- Managing money
- Managing time
- Doing laundry
- Grocery shopping



# Session 4: Living Independently

## Self-Assessment

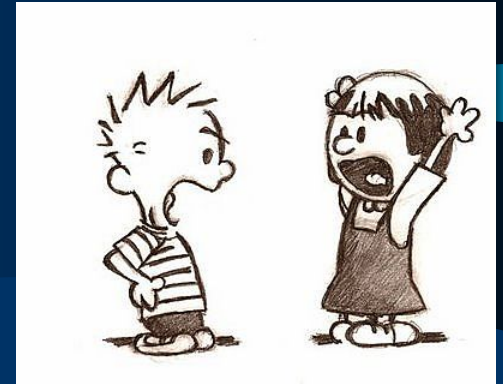
Circle the number that indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of these sentences.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I set and respond to a wake up alarm.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know how to manage my sleep.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have a system for scheduling and managing time.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I maintain a reasonable diet.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I know how to do my own laundry and basic cleaning.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have a driver's license and/or use public transportation.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I know how to manage my finances (i.e., use an ATM card, debit/credit card, write a check).	1	2	3	4	5

# Session 5: Managing My Relationships

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- Relationships with parents
- Relationships with friends from high school
- Building new relationships



# Session 5: Managing My Relationships

## Self-Assessment

Circle the number that indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of these sentences.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I understand my relationships with family will change.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can express my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I understand my relationships with peers will change.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have friends who are supportive.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I know how to resolve conflicts with people.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have strategies to deal with peer pressure and bullying.	1	2	3	4	5

# Session 6: Graduation (Joint group with parents)

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- Presentation of the Health Portfolio
- Review of lessons learned
- “Graduation” party



# Parent Group Session Content

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Session 1: Before College Checklist

Session 2: University Counseling Centers

Session 3: Graduation

# Session 1: Before College Checklist

Planning for:

- continued mental health care (includes health portfolio)
- communication and monitoring
- how to intervene if needed



“Yes mother, I told you I am doing *fine* on my own at college...Hey, could you log on and find my schedule, order my books, and call me when it’s time for class?”



# Session 2: University Counseling Centers

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- Services offered
- Timeline
- Limitations
- Common pitfalls



# Parent Group Session Content

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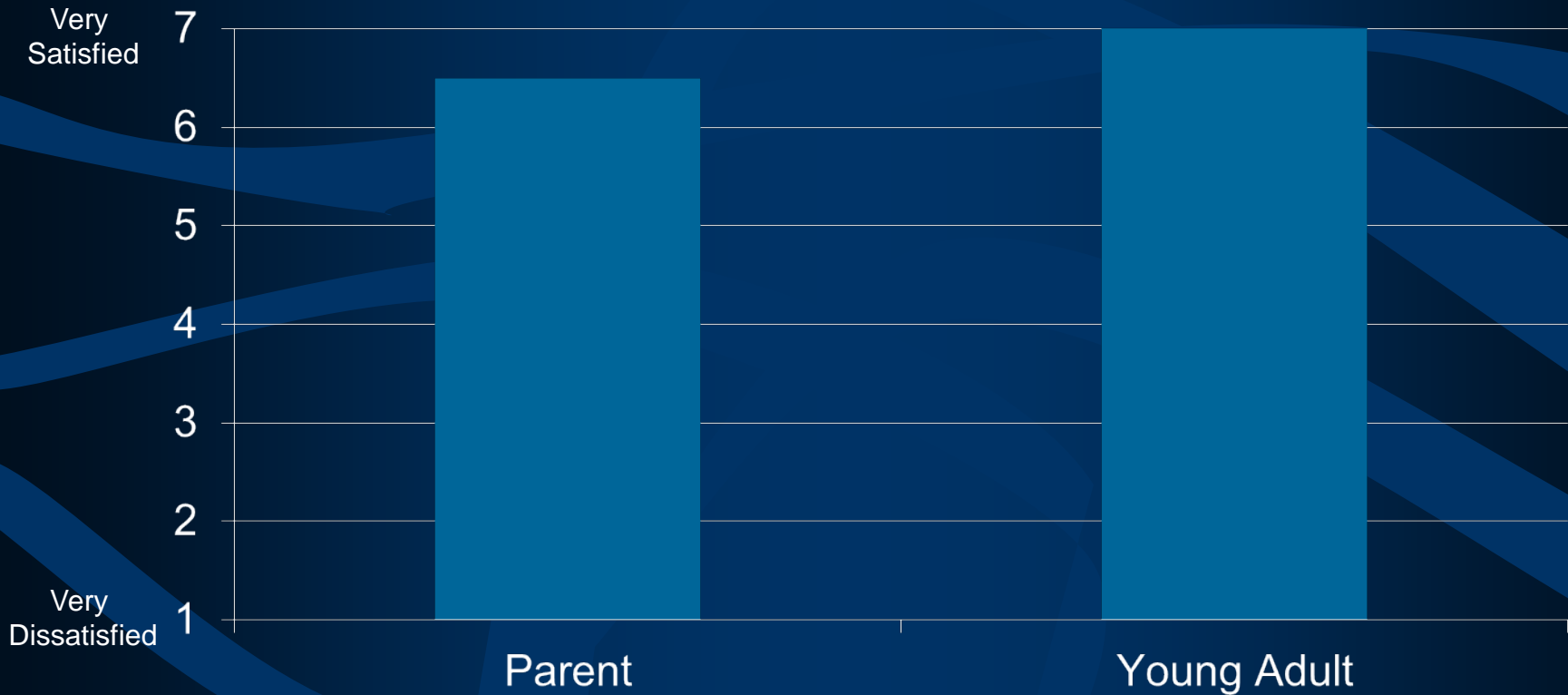
Session 1: Before College Checklist

Session 2: University Counseling Centers

Session 3: Graduation

# Participant Feedback: Satisfaction

Overall, my level of satisfaction with the quality of the Transition Age Group Program is:



# Participant Feedback: Length of Program

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The length of the Transition Age Group Program was:

1 Much too short	2 Too short	3 Slightly too short	4 Appropriate	5 Slightly too long	6 Too long	7 Much too long
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Parent Mean: 4.0 (Appropriate; Range 4-4)

Young Adult Mean: 3.7 (Appropriate; Range 3-4)

# Participant Feedback: Frequency of Visits

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The frequency of the visits in the Transition Age Group Program was:

1 Much too frequent	2 Too frequent	3 Slightly too frequent	4 Appropriate	5 Slightly too infrequent	6 Too infrequent	7 Much too infrequent
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Parent Mean: 4.3 (Appropriate; Range 4-5)

Young Adult Mean: 4.0 (Appropriate; Range 3-5)

# Acknowledgments

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