



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

Nourishing Solid Roots: Strategies to Engage VIEW Clients and Plow through Barriers

Virginia Department of Social Services BPRO Spring 2024 Conference





This workshop will cover ways to navigate activity flow with critical thinking while navigating client barriers such as mental health, transportation, domestic violence, literacy issues, low self-esteem, technology, child care, and lack of opportunity. Additional focus will address providing meaningful assistance to refugee populations.



VIEW Engagement and Barriers

- Strategies to Engage VIEW Clients
- Navigating Barriers
- Interactive Scenarios
- Questions



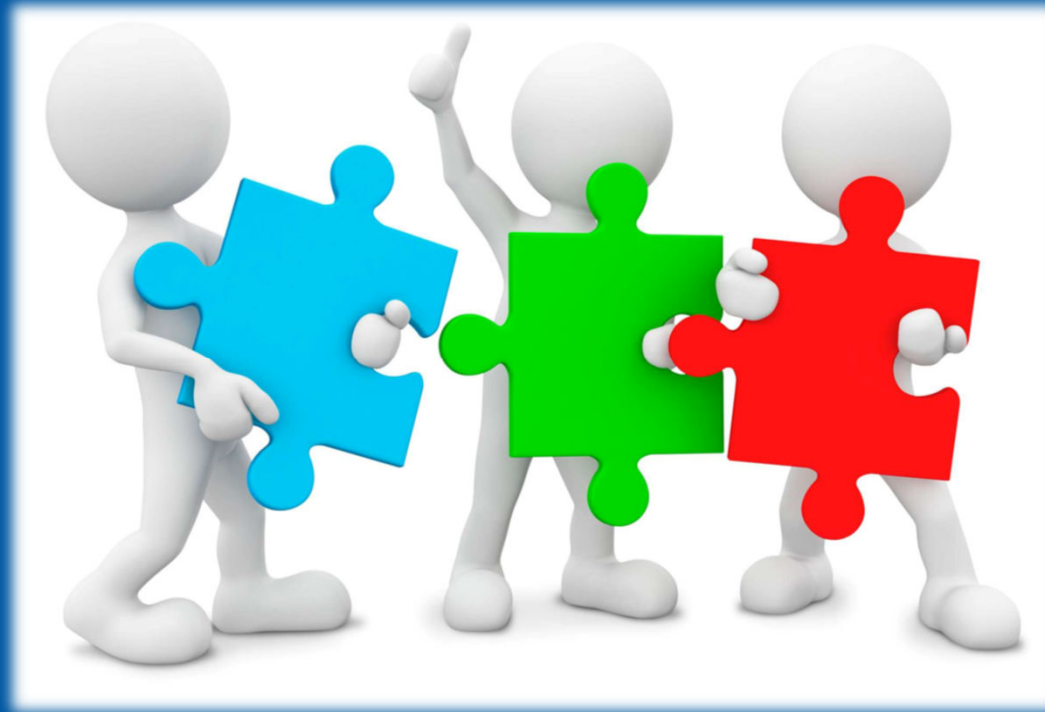
Before we get started.....

In thinking about VIEW client engagement challenges and barriers, what are you struggling with most?

What do you hope to gain from this workshop?

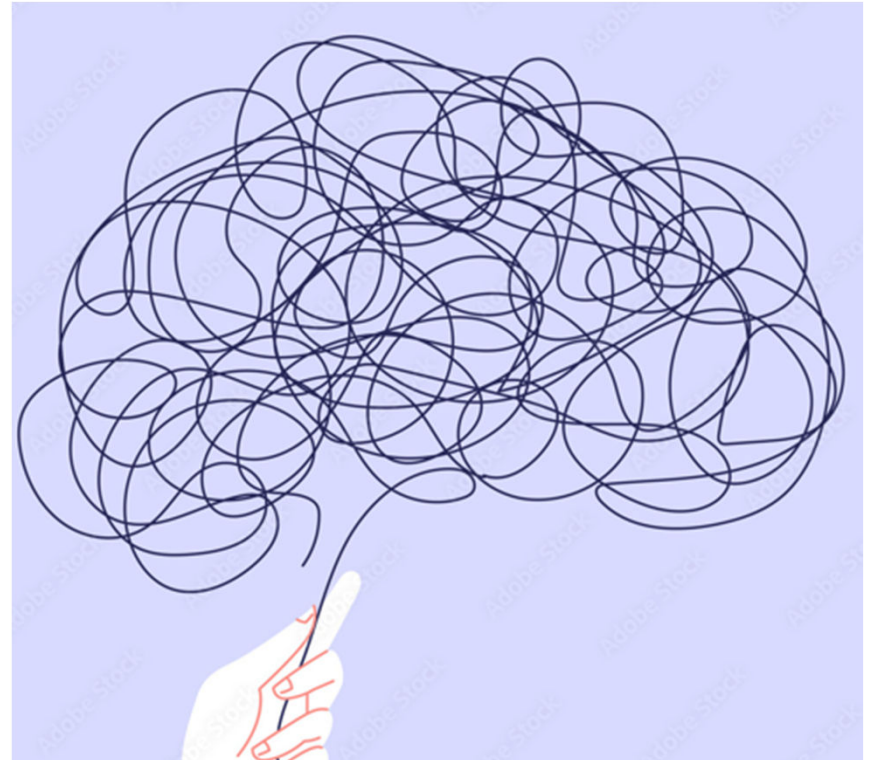


Strategies to Engage VIEW Clients



Engagement Tips for Success

- **Relate to them as a person first, then a client**
- **Be present and take the time to notice conversation themes**
 - It's usually not what someone is saying, but the common "thread" within the topics they share with you
- **Show your client that they have your undivided attention**
- **Remember the foundation of Engagement = Relationship**



Engagement- Food for Thought

- Meet the client where they are, not where you believe they should be.
- Look beyond client's "past" and lay the foundation for a successful trajectory.
- Clients are balancing multiple barriers at once for survival and can sometimes be one situation away from a potential emergency.
- Successes with VIEW clients should be viewed- one step at a time, one achievement at a time.
- Success is not always linear or a measurable statistic. We must pivot with our clients as circumstances change.
- We must celebrate wins of all sizes.
- Metrics, such as the WPR, show one side of the work.



Holistic Perspective on Being a VIEW Worker

Attributes that set you up for success in your role

- Empathy
- Patience
- Flexibility
- Creative thinking
- Unconditional Positive Regard

Challenges

- Competing priorities
- Rapport building timeframe differs with each client
- Client barriers can fluctuate
- Resources



Interactive #1- Engagement

Tell us about some successful engagement strategies you've practiced in your agency

What was the engagement scenario?

What was your approach?

What was the result?



Navigating Barriers

HOUSING

Potential Barriers

- Couch surfing
- Homelessness
- Financial restrictions
- Unstable circumstances
- Strained family relationships
- Limited space for belongings
- Limited access to bathe, get ready for work, wash clothes, etc.
- Negative impacts on school attendance and ability to maintain employment/participation

Potential Solutions



- Legal Aid
- Local shelters
- Community Action Agencies
- Housing Assistance, Section 8, income-based rentals
- Financial assistance through community resources such as churches, organizations
- TANF Emergency Assistance: Eviction Prevention
- Energy Assistance Programs (fuel, cooling, crisis)
- Weatherization and home improvement programs
- Family Services/Prevention
- Utilize VIEW Funds
 - Crisis Intervention-pay rent, utility bills, hotel rooms
 - Include these options in your Annual Plan
 - Modify your plan as needs arise

TRANSPORTATION

Potential Barriers

- DUI
- Fines, fees, no insurance
- No driver's license/suspended
- Lack of public transportation
- No access to a vehicle, unreliable vehicle
- No money for gas, repairs, maintenance
- Long distance from jobs, community resources, childcare



Potential Solutions

- Gas Cards
- Bus tickets
- Bike Purchase
- Virginia Transit Grants
- Cab vouchers/contracts
- Emergency Roadside Kits
- Development of Carpools
- Encourage telework options
- Driving Courses/test preparation
- Ride share services (gift cards, contracts)
- Vehicle purchase, repairs, maintenance, referrals for assistance
- Develop strong relationships with gas providers, cab companies, etc. to encourage their participation

Solutions for overcoming transportation obstacles:

***Emergency Roadside Kits (Results of Regional Collaboration)**

Contents of Kit:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Windshield Scraper | • Small tool kit |
| • Deicer | • Flashlight |
| • Tire gage | • Shovel |
| • Tire pump | • Road Flares |
| • Fix-a-flat | • Container |
| • Jumper cables | • First Aid Kit Blanket |
| • Battery Charger | • Gloves (for working on the auto) |
| • 2 gallon gas can | • Shop Towels |
| | • Hand Sanitizer |
| | • Wet ones |

CHILD CARE

Potential Barriers

- Cost
- Lack of providers
- Location/distance to providers
- Forced to utilize unlicensed providers
- Prior child care debt



Potential Solutions

- Transportation to and from child care
- Assist VIEW clients in obtaining certification to be in home child care providers
- Promote licensed in-home providers
- Utilize providers in neighboring localities
- Build relationships with your child care workers, regional consultant, and providers
- Utilize Head Start and Preschool Programs
- Building relationships with employers who offer remote work and work around school schedules

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & FAMILY CHALLENGES

Potential Barriers

Clients who face domestic violence or family stressors may have difficulty participating in the program due to fear, lack of support, mental or physical health, etc.

Knowing how to identify DV, how to assist, and the available resources will help you be ready to respond if you have a client in this situation.

Potential Solutions

- Complete required training: VDSS-BPSE1001: Understanding Domestic Violence, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Stalking
- Know the available resources (hotline #'s, shelters, police stations, advocates, counseling services, legal aid)
- Encourage them to develop a safety plan
- Be knowledgeable about the Address Confidentiality Program
- Have procedures in place to allow clients to discretely report DV to the agency

IMMIGRANT & NEWCOMER CHALLENGES

Potential Barriers

- Language Barriers
- No driver's license
- Cultural Differences
- No transportation
- Lack of community and support
- No Social Security Number (Primarily Cuban-Haitian)

Potential Solutions

- Develop driver education opportunities with interpreters
- Evaluation of educational transcripts from other countries
- Collaborate with resettlement agencies to ensure common goals and avoid overlapping efforts
- Assign activities that do not require a SSN for clients who are awaiting their number:
 - English as a Second Language/ESL Courses
 - Volunteering (PSP, CWEP), job skills, training, education
 - Utilize inactive as a last resort
- Do not use family or friends to interpret
 - Utilize professional interpreting services
 - Connect with Community Colleges to offer language courses
 - Find virtual options
 - Identify cohorts in the community, employers and areas with similar populations

HOMESCHOOLING

Potential Barriers

- Available time
- Financial strains
- Participation options
- Coordinating schedules
- Personal or religious objections



Potential Solutions

- Encourage virtual and telework options
- Suggest activities that allow flexibility
 - Plan participation around teaching responsibilities
 - Alternate participation for UP Couples
 - **Example:** *mom teaches during the day and participates in the evening; dad participates during the day and cares for the children in the evening*

RESOURCE & OPPORTUNITY CHALLENGES

Potential Barriers

- Limited time
- Vacancies, lack of workforce
- Limited resources
- Lack of opportunities
- Limited internet and phone access for clients

Potential Solutions

- Refer clients to free or reduced cost internet services
- Refer clients to free or reduced cost phone services such as Safelink
- Utilize VIEW budget
 - Develop workstations in your agency
 - Pay for phone and internet bills
 - Purchase laptops and supplies
- Encourage virtual and telework options
- Hold group sessions for Initial Assessments, job skills, etc.
- Support or host job fairs
- Support or develop job skills, employment etiquette courses
- Build relationships with local employers and organizations to foster PSP, CWEP, and FEP opportunities
- Utilize reentry programs, Newcomer services, Bonding programs, workforce services
- Know your communities' resources, build relationships, and utilize their support and services
- Collaborate with similar agencies to gather ideas and develop solutions to meet your locality's needs
- Host workshops or invite community partners to present available programs, services, and resources

Interactive# 2- Navigating Barriers (Multiple Funding Needs)

Tell us about a time that a client had multiple occurring barriers

What was the situation?

How did you navigate with them?



*Please remember as unique situations arise and you must pivot with spending, an Annual Plan Modification Form can be submitted. This may be beneficial to reach a wider range of circumstances in the future.

Resources/Tools

Screening for Employment Barriers: Issues and Tools

Program Overview

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (known as TANF) provides temporary cash assistance and employment-related services to enable families with children to become self-supporting. The program promotes economic independence through participation in the Virginia Initiative for Education and Work (VIEW) program, which offers employment-related activities, education, training and needed support services. The TANF program is managed at the state level by the Economic Assistance and Employment Unit which is responsible for:

- Implementing federal and state policies and procedures
- Establishing employment programs focusing on the "hard-to-serve"
- Maintaining the TANF/VIEW Manual and forms
- Developing training materials
- Providing technical oversight to the program



TANF/VIEW Team
Contacts

Shortcuts

- [2023 TANF Income Levels](#)
- [Income and Eligibility Verification System User Guide \(IEVS\)](#)
- [TANF/VIEW FAQs](#)
- [VIEW Funding Formula](#)
- [VIIS - Virginia Immunization Information System](#)

Program Highlights

- [2023-2024 Employment & Training Plan Word | PDF](#)
 - [E&T Modification Form](#)
 - [E&T Training Presentation \(5/24/2023\)](#)
 - [Recording \(5/24/2023\)](#)
 - [E&T FAQ Document \(Combined questions from 2021-2023\)](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [Guidance \(Manual & Transmittals\)](#)
- [Non-Custodial Parent Pilot Project \(NCP\)](#)
- [Reports](#)
- [WOTC](#)

Browse By Topic

- [Learnfare Program](#)
- [TANF/VIEW Reopening](#)
- [TANF Tidbits](#)
- [TANF/VIEW Events](#)
- [TANF/VIEW Performance Improvement](#)
- [Training Documents \(and FAQs\)](#)
- [VIEW Vitamins](#)

Resources and Job Aids

- [Administration for Children \(ACF\)](#)
- [ALICE \(Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed\)](#)
- [American Public Human Services Association \(APHSA\)](#)
- [Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP\)](#)
- [Code of Virginia](#)
- [Department of Labor](#)
- [Employment Websites](#)
- [Full Employment Program \(FEP\)](#)
 - [Agency and Business Community Resources](#)
- [Peer Technical Assistance Network \(OFA Peer TA\)](#)
- [Resource Directory: Employment Advancement for TANF Participants Program Projects](#)
- [Urban Institute](#)
- [Screening for Employment Barriers: Issues and Tools](#)
- [Spending Funds Guide for VIEW and SNAP E&T](#)
- [Virginia Administrative Code](#)



Screening Tool- Continued



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR EDUCATION AND WORK (VIEW)
&
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM-EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (SNAP E&T)

SCREENING FOR EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS: ISSUES AND TOOLS


A Guide for Local Departments of Social Service



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF BENEFIT PROGRAMS

REVISED OCTOBER 2023

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	Page 3
<u>Screening Tool Matrix</u>	Page 8
<u>Domestic Violence</u>	Page 9
<u>Education</u>	Page 20
<u>Family Needs</u>	Page 25
<u>Learning Disabilities</u>	Page 26
<u>Medical Barriers</u>	Page 28
<u>Mental Health</u>	Page 33
<u>Multiple Barriers</u>	Page 41
 <u>Local Screening Initiatives</u>	
<u>Substance Abuse</u>	Page 75

[Screening For Employment Barriers: Issues and Tools](#)

Professional Development

Professional Organizations/Certifications

- BPRO Committee (TANF & ESP)
- National Association of Workforce Development Professionals ([NAWDP](#))
 - Certified Workforce Development Professional ([CWDP](#))
- Peer TA
- Job Coaching
- Crisis Intervention
- Domestic Violence
- Newcomer Services
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Trauma Informed Care
- Motivational Interviewing
- VIEW Spending & Annual Plan Development

Professional Membership

Dues and membership fees are reimbursable under BL855

Be sure to communicate your interests with supervision

Advocate for yourself



Reimbursable Examples	Non-Reimbursable Examples
<p>expenses for LDSS staff including -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel expenses • Dues and membership fees • Materials and supplies • Trade publications, books and subscriptions • Equipment and capitalized expenses • Capital outlay expenditures • Depreciation and other use allowances • Background checks for LDSS employees • ***Background check for Foster Home re-approvals or renewals, relatives who wish to obtain custody but not be approved as foster parents, and state name searches run through the state police system • Birth certificates for children in foster care • Orders of Publications • Service of Process Orders from Virginia Court Services • Expert witness testimony • Interpreter services • Medical examinations for the purpose of case planning • DMV Driving records for the purpose of hiring LDSS employees, interns, or volunteers who are required to have a driver's license and/or transport clients as part of the job responsibilities. • ****Overtime meals for local workers and Directors • Car Seats purchased for general locality use • Furniture expenditures under \$25K that are reasonable and necessary 	<p>members while attending meetings or engaged in the discharge of their duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Background Checks for foster/adoptive parents • Children's toys for the lobby and common areas • Items for general use by the local office (pampers, meals, baby wipes, etc.) • ****Advertising and public relations costs to promote non-program specific activities. • PPE Cost submitted for reimbursement from FEMA



Questions?

Shea McCracken
TANF/VIEW Program Consultant Sr.
emilyshea.mccracken@dss.virginia.gov

Kathleen Muska
Northern TANF/VIEW Consultant
k.muska@dss.virginia.gov

Melissa A. Cooke
Eastern Region TANF/VIEW Consultant
melissa.cooke@dss.virginia.gov