Drop Off Discussion Video Script

Slide 1:

This presentation focuses on the discussion portion of the drop-off analysis.

Slide 2:

So far, we have watched several videos on the drop-off and data collection. But now that you have your data what do you do next?

The purpose of a drop-off is to not stop with the numbers or a presentation of the numbers but to discuss the reasons for the numbers with your team.

You should be familiar with the drop-off data collection tool. We will use that tool here to help structure our discussion but this time in the consideration’s column the boxes are not empty, instead they have discussion prompts.

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It is important to start with the data itself. Your team can refer to the table on page 5 and 6 of your original toolkit.

If the data doesn’t reflect what is going on in your program, then the first step for your team is to discuss data collection, data management, and data reporting.

Were their barriers to collecting the data? Does the data accurately reflect what you are seeing in your court program? Were their steps in the process that you do not currently track? If so, the team should establish a goal in this area of the drop-off.

Slide 4:

The data collection tool that goes with this video has prompts in the consideration’s column. If your team is stuck and doesn’t know what to discuss first, it might be beneficial to read the prompts and discuss ones that jump out to your team.

Here we can see in our step 5, we can discuss how the court is made aware that SUD is a factor, we can discuss whether the parents are informed about the collaborative courts program, or if they are connected to a peer.

Each step in the drop-off has questions to consider. This doesn’t mean that your team needs to discuss all the questions and have all the answers. They are designed to make you think about that step in the process and what if anything might result in someone entering your program or not entering. Look at your numbers and go to a step that concerns you and see if the prompts help the discussion.

Slide 5:

For Eligibility Requirements, are they too narrow and are they equitable?

For the Referral Process, Who makes the referrals, when, what is said, how is it said, is it consistent, are you reaching everyone that is eligible, are you tracking referrals so you don’t miss someone, can parents refer themselves?

For Buy-In, are attorneys the roadblock, judges or commissioners, social workers, treatment providers? Who do you need to build rapport with? Do you have an elevator speech? Do you have data to share? Are you going into communities so families and treatment providers see you in other spaces? Do families buy-in? Do you have cultural representation and trauma informed practices? Are you following the approach and giving parent’s a voice and listening to their needs?

For length of time to engage services are there barriers to get quality, effective, timely, services that match the approach? Why aren’t they engaging in services? Are you losing certain types of families or individuals at certain places in the process?

Do you have a policy manual? Do you have a participant handbook? Visuals? Pamphlets?

What are you, your team, your court doing to be trauma informed, culturally competent, evidence-based, supportive, and so on?

Slide 6:

It is important for a team to have accountability and transparency, and it is important to be comfortable having conversations that can be confrontational in some ways, but this is not about naming and blaming. This should be approached with a growth mindset, when we know better, we do better. Or a mindset of how can I help? What supports are needed?

It is not about pointing the finger and saying, “that attorney never refers anyone,” rather we should be saying, “what can we do about building rapport with attorneys as a team?”

We know these conversations, especially those about race and sex-based disparities, are hard. Luckily, there are a great deal of resources available to help your team work through the challenges in this together.

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If you’d really like to include and honor a diversity of expertise, you need to prepare a thoughtful meeting that includes and listens to ideas from all of the people at the table. The facilitator needs to prepare for conversations about complex issues. For some this complexity means feeling helpless, for others, it brings up defensiveness or traumatic memories. Therefore, the meeting should allow time for reflection on our own needs, biases, assumptions, and hopes. With more concrete preparation and through developing and sharing a clear purpose for the meeting, you will help to reduce anxiety and help the team prepare for any uncomfortable topics at hand.

Slide 8:

A possible structure for your drop-off meeting might be something like this where you have a welcome activity, time to identify the areas of concern in the drop-off numbers, a discussion from different perspectives about the challenges using the prompts from the toolkit, and then decide on goals and action steps.

Slide 9:

A storyboard breaks down the meeting into concrete chunks, all guided by their end goal or learning outcome. Something like this can help you prepare for the meeting, and structure the meeting in a way that meets the needs of all team members and ends with your goals for the drop-off analysis. For difficult conversations, you want to make people on your team feel listened to and supported. Planning a thoughtful storyboard can help ensure the difficult conversation goes more smoothly.

Slide 10:

For your storyboard –

You first decide on a learning outcome. What do you want the group to achieve by the end of the meeting? Do you want them to understand something better? Design something? And so on.

Once we’ve set our learning goal we have to think, “how will the team best get to the learning outcome?” Is there a liberating structure that fits? Does our group have particular people that have more power or tend to dominate conversation? How can we make sure that all voices are heard, and everyone feels safe to speak up?

For the why- we aren’t asking why we have this learning objective, but are instead asking why is that the method or the “how” we have selected. Why did we select that liberating structure? Why did we select to do breakout groups? The answer can be as simple as, “we want to make sure our team members feel supported and heard.”

Time is important. Are you going to be able to cover all the areas in the drop-off in one meeting? Could you have one meeting to discuss the areas of concern and a separate meeting to come up with goals?

And of course, lastly, for a meeting make sure you have the tools and resources you’ll need.

Slide 11:

Your learning objectives might look something like this.

You want to establish norms for the meeting in the welcome.

You want to look at step 9 in the drop-off.

You want to allow team members time to discuss the possible problems in step 9.

You want to establish goals to address those problems and determine action steps for the team and individuals.

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Then you take time to fill in the rest of the chart. The how would be the activity you choose to do. Perhaps you want to use a liberating structure, a presentation, or breakout rooms with discussion prompts. The purpose of the how is to make sure that you are allowing everyone to speak, it helps the why, time is how long are you going to do that section, and then tools needed are what is needed to do the activity.

You fill in the entire chart the same way focusing on the objective for that section and how to achieve that objective making sure everyone is heard in some way.

Remember the purpose of this preparation is to help difficult discussions go more smoothly.

Slide 13:

Remember preparation is needed when planning difficult conversations with different perspectives. The storyboard will help that preparation, but you do not have to do something that elaborate if you already have a method for starting and ending team discussions that your group has already used in the past.

In addition to the storyboard, here are some other items that can help your drop-off discussion.

Establishing agreements for the meeting will help make sure everyone is on the same page. More on this in a minute.

Being or having a neutral facilitator may help if you know there are strong disagreements about certain items you want the team to discuss.

And make sure to take breaks and eat when needed.

Slide 14:

Norms are the unspoken strategies and assumptions we use in social interactions

For some people (generally those with higher power or privilege) these strategies come naturally

For those who struggle to be heard, shy, slower to speak, lower power, less confident, norms can make having their voice heard more difficult

Some norms we tend to follow:

Boss leads the discussion and talks more than others

Starting on time, five minutes late, five minutes early

Sitting still, pacing, doodling (or not)

How often, how fast, how much we speak in a group setting

And Many More!

Slide 15:

Agreements are discussed and decided on rather than the assumptions of norms.

So, conversation agreements, are what we decide to hold as a rule for our conversations, and they are decided and enforced by everyone in the group.

Some examples – everyone participates. no one dominates. use “I” statements. “listen to understand.” There are a lot of examples on possible agreements you can use including a list on the website.

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As we talk about tough conversations, we have to also talk about neutral facilitation.

Coordinators in the courts often play the neutral facilitator role – their job is to keep up with documentation and coordination of meetings like these, so they often fall naturally into that role. However, a coordinator may also be wearing other hats – case managing, lived expert, S.U.D. expert, or just being a human which means we have a particular view, so being neutral on a team can be a challenge. In some cases it may be best to have someone outside the team play this role. Generally speaking, a facilitator is someone who works with all of the group participants to talk with each other and come to mutually satisfactory decisions.

Here are a few do's that may help, feel free to pause the video and read the list.

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Neutral facilitation is not deciding who is right or wrong, passing judgment or taking sides, giving advice or telling people what to do, or coming up with answers to a problem.

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In short, remember for tough conversations preparation is key, establish agreements, have a neutral facilitator, and focus on the learning objective and improving your court program.

Take time and space to think about your own biases and your own triggers, your own background and how that impacts the work you do. Be solution focused, a learning community, and have a growth mindset. When we know better, we do better.

Slide 19:

There are some additional documents available that can provide more tips and tricks for having difficult conversations and moving discussions along. Please feel free to download them on our website.

And this concludes this video. The next video covers setting goals with your drop-off analysis to make program change!