

Readiness Tool: Incredible Years DINA Small Group Therapy

During program selection, it is important to research and compare possible evidence-based prevention programs to ensure that you are selecting the program that is the best fit for your community and available resources. This tool is intended to help you plan for the implementation of an evidence-based program with a commitment to quality and long-term sustainability.

Program Selection

Is IYS DINA Small Group Therapy a good fit for your community? While researching and comparing possible programs, consider the following information to determine if IYS Small Group Therapy (SGT) is the best fit for the community.

1. Are these the risk and protective factors identified and/or prioritized by your community?

IYS DINA SGT Targeted Risk Factors	IYS DINA SGT Targeted Protective Factors
Child aggressive behavior	Emotional regulation
Low academic readiness (low school commitment & poor academic performance)	Social skills & positive friendships (interaction with prosocial peers)
Poor social skills & emotion literacy	Effective problem solving
Early initiation and persistent conduct problems (Favorable attitudes towards antisocial behavior)	Opportunities for prosocial involvement in education
Poor problem solving skills	
Poor relationships with parents, teachers, & peers	

2. Is IYS DINA Small Group Therapy appropriate for the population you plan to target?

IYS DINA SGT is intended to target children ages 4-8 years old who have been identified as “difficult”, highly aggressive or anxious.

3. What are the outcomes you intend to change in your targeted population?

IYS DINA SGT has been shown to have the following outcomes:

- Reduce children’s aggressive and disruptive behavior
- Increase prosocial behavior
- Increase conflict management skills and social skills when interacting with peers and teachers
- Increase problem solving strategies and increased emotion literacy on assessment

Implementation Planning Steps

4. Is it feasible for you to invest in the following key elements BEFORE IYS DINA Small Group Therapy is implemented?

- **Recruitment:** Strong relationships should be built with local schools, behavioral health organizations, County Children and Youth Services, Judges and other agencies that can provide referrals for the

program. Education with each of the recruitment sources is essential to educate them about appropriate referrals, what IYS DINA Small Group Therapy program targets and what your plan is for working with parents as well as schools for additional support of the program.

- **Therapist Buy In:** Education is vital for therapists/facilitators as to what the program is, how it will be implemented, what the expectations are for implementing, and what type of support they will receive. This should occur BEFORE training days.
- **Training days:** It is vital to train everyone who will be implementing. There is an initial 3-day training requirement. Regular consultation with an IYS trainer is also important to quality implementation.
- **Academic Connections:** If being delivered in a school setting, it is important to be able to help teachers understand the benefit and academic connection of the skills taught in IYS DINA Small Group Therapy and their reinforcement of the skills in their classroom. At the very least, share the Dinosaur Activities and Academic/Social Goals with teachers.
- **Curriculum:** A set of curriculum materials for each therapy group is necessary. Curriculum materials can be purchased by contacting the Incredible Years.
- **Budget:** A budget for annual expenses beyond the initial training and purchase of materials should be developed. A plan for working with behavioral health organizations, managed care organizations, local county Children and Youth Services to sustain the program beyond initial funding should be developed. Currently, Medical Assistance will provide payment for IYS Small Group Therapy but not the IYS BASIC Parent program that is recommended to be run concurrently. Are there other funding sources such as special grant funds or county needs based budget funds that can be used for ongoing program support?
- **IYS BASIC Parent Group:** It is recommended to offer the IYS DINA Small Group Therapy curriculum in conjunction with a weekly Incredible Years BASIC parent group to address how parents can help foster their child's learning in the IYS DINA Small Group as their children are learning new skills.
- **Data collection and analysis plan:** Determine the following: When evaluations (pre and post surveys) will be completed by therapists/facilitators for students receiving IYS DINA Small Group Therapy. Who will be responsible for distributing and collecting the surveys? Who will be responsible for data entry? Who will be responsible for analyzing and reporting the data results?

Implementation Steps

5. Can these expectations for quality and dosage be met within the existing structure and with the existing resources?

- 3 days of training in Year 1
- Recruitment strategies for gaining referrals for the program. Relationships with schools, social service agencies, Children and Youth Services and other organizations that serve the targeted population.
- Appropriate time provided for lesson preparation, case notes, and follow up for each child weekly.
- A regularly scheduled time for lessons to be taught 1-2 times per week either during the school day or after school for 20-22 weeks.
- Easily accessible location for weekly lessons.
- Regular weekly supervisory time for facilitators if not licensed therapists.
- Additional small group practice activities by classroom therapists.
- Promotion of skills throughout the school day by classroom teachers as reinforcement to skills taught in small group therapy lessons if taught during the school day.
- Parent engagement through letters sent home to parents and suggestions of activities to reinforce classroom learning to promote parental involvement.

- Do you plan to implement the IYS BASIC Parent Program in conjunction with IYS DINA Small Group Therapy? Do you have the plans in place to recruit both children and parents for these groups?
- Ability to provide meal for family and childcare for siblings if program is run in conjunction with IYS BASIC parent program.

Steps for Assessing Program Impact

6. Is there capacity to collect outcomes data and to monitor program fidelity?

Data collection:

- Pre student surveys completed by therapists/facilitators after the 3rd lesson before each cycle
- Post student surveys completed by therapists/facilitators at the end of each cycle
- Annual EPISCenter IYS DINA Small Group Facilitator Survey completed.

Data entry/analysis and PCCD reporting:

- A person(s) designated to take completed pre and post student surveys and enter them into the [IYS DINA Small Group Spreadsheet for Outcomes Analysis and PCCD Quarterly Reporting Tool](#)
- A person(s) designated to complete quarterly reporting requirements for PCCD

Fidelity monitoring:

- A person(s) to complete observations (20% of lessons) and provide feedback on implementation quality using the [Small Group Leader Checklist](#) located on the EPISCenter IYS evaluation page. This can be done by school administrators, a guidance counselor or another therapist/facilitator. All observers should complete IYS DINA Small Group training.
- There should be a plan for group time to discuss implementation challenges and successes as part of regular weekly review of the lessons or staff meetings.

Steps for Sustainability

7. Can funds/resources be identified to sustain key implementation elements of the program beyond the initial seed funding? Make sure to carefully consider and designate those responsible for sustainability planning and securing funds/resources.

- Will IYS DINA Small Group program supply costs be built into the annual budget of your agency/organization?
- Will there be funds to provide annual training to IYS DINA therapists/facilitators?
- Will there be funds to provide mentoring support for IYS DINA therapists/facilitators through the Incredible Years?
- Will there be funds to provide training for new therapists/facilitators?
- Will there be capacity to purchase/print evaluation tools and analyze outcomes data?
- Will there be capacity to continue to support staff time to conduct observations and monitor implementation quality?

Addressing Challenges during Implementation

8. **By carefully pre-planning IYS DINA Small Group therapy implementation you will be addressing most of the common barriers encountered, however, it is still important to develop a plan for addressing day to day challenges before starting IYS DINA.**
- Who will be the main point of contact when a therapist/facilitator has question related to IYS DINA?
 - Who will be the contact person with the IYS trainer to relay questions and answers to therapists/facilitators?
 - What additional resources will be available to the families of the children receiving IYS DINA Small Group?

Additional assistance and resources for implementing the Incredible Years DINA Small Group Therapy can be obtained by contacting the EPISCenter at 814-865-2649.

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