Tips for Engaging Participants on Calls: Strategies to Support Distance-Learning

Technical Assistance · https://bridges4mentalhealth.org/hub/technical-assistance/tips-for-engaging-participants-on-calls-strategies-to-support-distance-learning/

This handout offers strategies for engaging participants in distance-learning calls, recognizing the challenges of limited visual cues and diverse learning styles. Key strategies include:

- **Awareness of Learning Styles**: Vary teaching methods and seek feedback to accommodate different preferences.
- **Relationship Building**: Use icebreakers and face-to-face sessions to increase comfort and connection.
- **Pre-Call Assignments**: Provide materials and questions in advance to promote thoughtful participation and shared experiences.
- **Round Robin**: Ensure everyone has a chance to speak by going around the "virtual circle" with structured prompts.
- **Role Assignments**: Engage participants during didactic sessions by assigning roles like Supporters, Naysayers, Questioners, and Reflectors.
- **Open-Ended Questions**: Encourage discussion by inviting input on challenges as well as successes; draw out quieter voices.
- **Case Studies**: Rotate case presentations to deepen clinical learning and peer engagement.
- **Interactive Technology**: Use tools like chat, polls, and document sharing to support non-verbal learners and increase interaction.
- **Role Play**: Offer practice opportunities through individual or group role plays, either live or as homework.

- **Team Co-Facilitation**: Empower participants to lead calls, showcasing their progress and encouraging peer learning.

These strategies help foster collaboration, engagement, and learning in virtual environments.

Source: National Child Traumatic Stress Network

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