

SPARCS

What is SPARCS?

Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARCS) is an innovative treatment for youth who have experienced traumatic or stressful events. The goal is for youth to learn skills to regulate emotions, problem solve, communicate with others, and boost resiliency in the face of high levels of ongoing stress.

What Are Traumatic and Stressful Events?

- Witnessed or experienced violence
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Traumatic loss
- Discrimination
- Racial trauma
- Life-threatening illness or injury
- Chronic conflict in the home
- Addiction in the home
- Unstable living conditions

Common Reactions to Stress and Trauma



Benefits of SPARCS*



*DeRosa & Pelcovitz, 2006

Structure of Treatment

SPARCS is a 16-session group for individuals ages 12–21 and is held one hour weekly either in-person or virtually. Groups are based on age and developmental level. New groups are started throughout the year, contact your local CAC for specific dates and times groups are offered. Prior to starting group, a clinical evaluation to examine symptoms of trauma, ongoing stress, and overall emotional and behavioral functioning will be completed.

What Will I Be Doing in SPARCS?

Group involves going through the treatment with other individuals who have experienced traumatic and/or stressful events. Details of each individual's trauma are not discussed in group. Group will focus on building skills. Sessions involve fun and interactive activities and group discussion to learn and practice skills. Group provides an opportunity to receive support from peers while going through treatment. You will get the most out of SPARCS by attending sessions on a regular basis.

Youth Will Learn

Understanding Stress and Trauma

Managing Your Emotions, So They Don't Manage You

Being Aware of Your Thoughts

Making Informed Decisions

How to Improve Communication Skills to Get What You Want

Relationships: Building the Kind of Support You Want

Create Meaning for the Past, and Purpose for the Future

Goals of SPARCS



Cultivate awareness



Cope more effectively



Connect with others



Create meaning and purpose



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