

Key Components of Effective NMSTART Therapeutic Coaching

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Session Description:

This presentation will give a brief overview of New Mexico START Therapeutic coaching and how to support individuals with ASD and IDD. Therapeutic coaching is an extension of START coordination. The presentation will allow participants to better understand how adaptive strategies, emotion regulation, and strength spotting are used to support individuals and support systems. START Therapeutic coaching implements strength based positive psychology to improve the well-being of individuals enrolled in START as well as build the capacity of caregivers/support systems.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to understand how schedules and communication strategies provide predictability and reduce anxiety not only in individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities but, in their own daily routines.
2. Participants will learn about emotion regulation and will leave with tools and strategies to implement in professional and personal settings.
3. Participants will gain an understanding of strength spotting, it's importance, as well as two strategies to use when strength spotting friends, family members, and individuals they serve.

Tanya Burnett, BA is delighted to have been one of the first two Therapeutic Coaches hired for the NM START Program at the UNM Center for Development and Disability. Tanya has her bachelor's degree in psychology and has spent over thirteen years working in the mental health field in varying capacities. Her experience in the field comprises of working as a mental (or behavioral) health tech in multiple inpatient psychiatric hospitals, including UNMH Children's Psychiatric Hospital, and also having worked in residential treatment settings in NM where she specialized in supporting children with Reactive Attachment Disorder. Tanya is passionate about mental health and the rapidly evolving world of psychology, as well as helping to improve the lives of those effected by challenges in these areas. Tanya's top 5 strengths are humor, creativity, love of learning and appreciation of beauty and excellence and Judgement.

Angelica Gutierrez is a Therapeutic Coach for the New Mexico START Program within the CDD at UNM. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Psychology in 2023 and is currently applying for the Master's in Counseling Program at UNM. Before transitioning into her current role as a Therapeutic Coach, Angelica worked as an Educational Assistant for 2 years. Though early in her mental health career, her top strengths of fairness, kindness, and social intelligence allow her to expand her knowledge and embrace opportunity for growth.

William Szumigala is a NM START Therapeutic Coach with a Bachelors of Science in Psychology. He is passionate about neuroscience (favorite class in college: psycho-

pharmacology) and mental health. He completed his degree in 2022 and worked as a Behavior technician after graduation. Eventually he left the position as a Behavior tech and went into trucking. After trucking, he returned to the psychology field as a START therapeutic coach for New Mexico START at the UNM Center for Development and Disability. William was one of the first START therapeutic coaches to be hired in the new program and remains excited to continue his work. William's top 5 strengths are: 1. Fairness 2. Prudence 3. Honesty 4. Judgement 5. Teamwork.