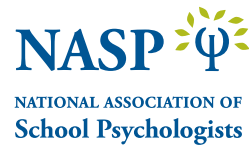




Workshop 2 (3rd Edition, 2019)



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Handout 38: Sample Individual Crisis Intervention (ICI) Dialogue

This crisis situation begins with an intermediate-grade student, Chris, crying in a corner of a schoolyard, just out of view of the playground. Two days earlier, Chris had witnessed a lightning strike on a school playground.

1. Establish psychological contact.



Counselor: Hi. I'm Mr./Ms. Sanchez. What's your name?

Chris: Chris.

Counselor: Are you cold, Chris? Can I get you some water?

Chris: No, I'm okay.

Counselor: Chris, I'm here to try to help the kids at your school deal with the thunderstorm. You look sad. Can you tell me what's wrong?

Chris: (Through silent tears Chris quietly says) I'm scared.

Counselor: I think I know why, but do you think you are able to tell me why you're scared?

Chris: I'm afraid of being hit by lightning.

Counselor: Thunder and lightning storms can be frightening. (The counselor places an arm around Chris's shoulder.) I understand why you are crying. Would it be okay if we talked? I would like to help.

Chris: (Chris stops crying and looks at the counselor.) Okay.

Counselor: Chris, before we talk about the storm, is there anything you need right now? Are you sure you don't want some water (it is a hot and humid day)?

Chris: Yes, I guess I would like to get some water.

Counselor: Before we talk about this, Chris, I need to let you know that I will be able to keep what you tell me between the two of us, as long as it does not appear that anyone, including you, is in immediate danger. However, it will be a good idea for me to share what we talk about with your parents and/or teacher. Is that okay with you?

Chris: It's okay if you talk to my mom.

2. Verify emotional readiness to begin problem identification and problem solving.



(As Chris and Mr./Ms. Sanchez go to get Chris some water, it becomes clear that Chris is able to begin the problem-solving process. Chris is responsive to questioning and, while very scared, appears to have his or her emotions under control. After getting water, they come back outside and stand at the edge of the playground.)

3. Identify and prioritize crisis-generated problems.



Counselor: Do you think you could tell me about what happened to you the other day?

Chris: Yes. I was standing right over there (Chris looks around the corner and points to the kickball field). I was waiting my turn when the lightning came. At first I didn't know what was happening. Then I saw all the kids screaming and running away. My friend Sam was on the ground and not moving. (Chris begins to cry again.)

Counselor: That sounds scary. So the reason you are not going on the playground is that you are afraid, right?

Chris: Yes.

Counselor: You know, you're not alone. A lot of kids feel the same way you do. Before now, have you told anyone about being afraid to go out to play?

Chris: No.

Counselor: Are there people who you can talk to?

Chris: Yes. I would like to talk to Sam.

Counselor: Sam was on the ground and was struck by the lightning, right?

Chris: Yes, and I really need to see Sam. Is Sam okay? Can I talk to her?

Counselor: So you are also worried about your friend, right?

Chris: Yes.

Counselor: I don't know Sam, but I can find out how she is doing right after recess. For now, however, we need to decide what we are going to do about recess. We need to make sure you are safe, and we can't do that if you hide during recess. Is there anyone else who might be able to help you not be scared of the playground?

Chris: My mom, my teacher, my other friends (pause), and you. (Chris looks up at the counselor as the crying begins to subside again.)

Counselor: Yes, I think I can help. Before the lightning storm, what was the playground like for you?

Chris: Fun. I was great at kickball. My friends and I would always play right there. (Chris again looks around the corner and points to the kickball field.)

Counselor: Where are your friends now?

Chris: Right there. (Chris points to a group of eight children playing kickball.) Except Sam. Sam's at home. The lightning hurt Sam. I miss Sam. Sam is my best friend. Can I talk to Sam?

4. Address crisis-generated problems.



Counselor: We can look into talking to Sam after recess. But for now, what can we do about your recess time? What have you done so far about being scared to play outside?

Chris: I've hidden here or in the restroom. Once I stayed in class with my teacher.

Counselor: Look out on the playground and tell me what you see.

Chris: (Chris looks around the corner and at the playground.) Kids are playing.

Counselor: Are they having fun?

Chris: Yes. (A tentative smile briefly flashes across Chris's face.)

Counselor: And what do you see in the sky? (It is a bright and clear day, without a single cloud in the sky. There is no threat of rain, let alone another thunder and lightning storm.)

Chris: Nothing.

Counselor: I think that it is safe to go out on the playground today. And your friends look like they can still have fun playing kickball. Do you think that anyone will be struck by lightning on the playground today?

- Chris: No.
- Counselor: So if it's safe and still fun, why not try going out and playing again?
- Chris: But I'm still scared. (Chris's eyes become teary.)
- Counselor: Okay. Let's see what we can do to help you not be scared. What if your friends helped you? What if I stayed on the playground and watched you?
- Chris: That might help. (Chris's tears subside.)
- Counselor: I'll go talk to your friends and see what I can do about getting them to include you in their kickball game. (The counselor approaches Chris's friends and explains the problem to them. They readily agree to invite Chris to play. One member of the group walks over to talk to Chris.)
- Friend: Chris, kickball is still fun. Will you please come and play with us?
- Chris: Okay. (The friend puts an arm across Chris's shoulders and begins to walk toward the playground.)

5. Evaluate and conclude the session.



- Counselor: Before you go, Chris, can you give me your last name and your classroom? I'd like to be able to check up on you to make sure you are okay.
- Chris: Sure. My last name is Smith, and I'm in Mrs. Wong's classroom.
- Counselor: I'll be standing right over there. (The counselor points to an area just off the playground within view of the kickball field.) I'll be there during the rest of today's recess. When the bell rings in a few minutes come over and see me and we can look into how Sam is doing.
- Chris: Okay. (Chris has stopped crying and is smiling and walking with the group of friends out onto the playground.)
- Counselor: One last thing, Chris. I just want you to know that you have done a great job of thinking through and addressing this problem. I'm pretty sure that with time you will be able to not be nearly as scared. Good work.