Rationale

Psychological assessment is a process of testing that allows mental healthcare professionals to derive core components of a person’s psychological or mental health problems, education, personality, IQ, or some other component at their present functioning. Usually administered and interpreted by trained psychologists or mental health practitioners, assessments help in identifying not just challenges of a person, but also their strengths.

Although, Psychological assessments of children and adolescents are utilized by professionals when making case planning decisions, Kayser and Lyon (2000) underscore the challenges of fully utilizing assessments towards optimally implementing the analysis of the results. One of the critical issues is the sometimes heavy use of clinical terms and jargon within assessments that can restrict a full understanding of the client’s challenges. Additionally, the bridge between these assessments and the everyday lives of the child/adolescent as well as their familial and community context requires a holistic approach in developing an effective treatment plan.

An additional challenge in Psychological assessments is that of cultural relevance where most tests have been designed utilizing North American and European populations. Thus interpretation, analysis and treatment planning must consider the cultural context of the children and adolescents centered on normal developmental milestones as opposed to clinical issues.

The purpose of this programme is to equip participants with a fundamental understanding of assessments, its processes, and interpretation towards application in their respective spheres. It is a means by implementing a common model and language towards enhanced treatment planning for children, adolescents and their families.
Target Audience

The intended audience includes:
Teaching Professionals, Guidance Counsellors, Social Work Professionals, Police and Protective Services, Community Activists, Religious Leaders and advocates for the underprivileged and destitute, Students in Psychology and related fields, Postgraduate students in education and related fields. This is also particularly beneficial to Wards of the State and persons who interact with children and youth regularly i.e. Day Care Owners, Parole Officers, Mentors and NGO’s and parents.

Pre requisite

- A Secondary School Leaving Certificate
- Any Professional Enhancement Certificate or Related Training
- Equivalent years of experience in Social Work, Community Work, Education or Psychological Intervention
- Basic psychological background

Course Duration

This course will be facilitated over three (3) days between 8.00am and 4.00pm.

Course Description

This course will introduce participants to the common concepts (general theory and foundational knowledge), components and skills of psychological assessments. Participants will be able to administer and interpret basic psychological tests towards application of treatment plans for children and adolescents. Additionally, participants will use practical examples in understanding psychological, psycho-educational and psychiatric assessments as it relates to their respective professions.
Course Objectives & Outcomes

Participants will:

1. Gain a comprehensive overview of psychological diagnoses (DSM IV-TR) with accompanying possible symptomatology focusing on child and adolescent psychopathology.
2. Examine the relationship between child and adolescent development and mental illness and be able to distinguish between the two.
3. Understand the utilization of psychological, psycho-educational and psychiatric assessments within the context of child and adolescent mental illness.
4. Be able to administer and interpret basic psychological tests towards enhanced treatment plans for clients.
5. Be able to better understand psychological, psycho-educational and psychiatric assessments towards enhanced treatment plans for clients.
6. Be able to examine the manner in which cultural factors and processes may profoundly influence psychological conditions.
7. Understand the importance of ethical and legal issues surrounding psychological, psycho-educational and psychiatric assessment.

Course Requirements

Reading assignments will be provided by the instructor prior to course commencement. Participants are expected to read articles in preparation for the first day of training.

Course Structure

The objectives of the course will be met through an intensive three-day-seminar which consists of an intensive examination of 3 case vignettes with brief lectures, role play simulations, class exercises, the use of multimedia - films and videotapes, and finally class discussion.
Programme Outline

DAY ONE (1)

8:00AM – 8:30AM: Registration/Refreshment
8:30AM – 9:00AM: Program Overview
9:00AM – 10:30AM: The Theoretical framework for Psychological Assessments
  o Child & Adolescents Clinical Diagnoses – The DSM IV TR
  o Symptomatology and Co-morbidity
  o Developmental Considerations
10:30AM – 10:45AM: Break - Refreshment
10:45AM – 12:15PM: Serious Emotional Disturbance in Children and Adolescence
12:15PM – 1:00PM: Lunch
1:00PM – 2:30PM: Types of Assessments
  o Psychological, Psycho-Educational and Psychiatric Assessments
  o Practical Considerations: Interpretation and Analysis
2:30PM – 2:45PM: Break – Refreshment
2:45PM – 3:45PM: Types of Assessments
  o Psychological, Psycho-Educational and Psychiatric Assessments
  o Practical Considerations: Interpretation and Analysis
3:45PM – 4:00PM: Summary and Close
DAY TWO (2)

8:00AM – 8:30AM: Checking In

8:30AM – 8:45AM: Review (Questions)

8:45AM – 10:30AM: Legal and Ethical Parameters
                   Cultural Considerations

10:30AM – 10:45AM: Break - Refreshment

10:45AM – 12:15PM: Enhancing Your Treatment Plans
                    ￮ The Continuity of Care
                    ￮ Hypothesis Testing
                    ￮ Using Basic Psychological Tests

12:15PM – 1:00PM: Lunch

1:00PM – 2:30PM: Case Vignette 1 - Understanding Diagnoses

2:30PM – 2:45PM: Break - Refreshment

2:45PM – 3:30PM: Case Vignette 1 – Presentations

3:30PM – 4:00PM: Summary and Close
DAY THREE (3)

8:00AM – 8:15AM: Registration/Refreshment
8:15AM – 8:30AM: Review (Questions)
8:30AM – 10:30AM: Case Vignette 2 – Using Basic Psychological Tests
10:30AM – 10:45AM: Break - Refreshment
10:45AM – 12:15PM: Case Vignette 2 - Presentations
12:15PM – 1:00PM: Lunch
1:00PM – 2:30PM: CASE VIGNETTE 3 – Understanding and implementing the results of Psychological Assessments
2:30PM – 2:45PM: Break - Refreshment
2:45PM – 3:45PM: Merge Case Group Presentation
3:45PM – 4:00PM: Close – Certification