



Rainbow Days' Curriculum-Based Support Group (CBSG®) Program Alternative Implementation Strategies, Support Services and Resources

July 31, 2020

“Change is the only constant in life.” (Heraclitus, Greek philosopher)

“Uncertainty is the only certainty there is...” (John Allen Paulos)

As the global COVID-19 pandemic continues, these quotes about change and uncertainty have perhaps never been truer than they are now. As we face future unknowns, what we do know is this: there are a variety of strategies on how schools will re-open throughout our country; community and family needs are greater than ever; and requirements of funding sources for program services is shifting. But the truth that is **most concerning is the mounting evidence that the mental and behavioral health needs of our children and youth are unprecedented in our lifetime.** What is also true is we are resilient—as individuals, families, organizations, businesses and communities we have proven we can bounce back from adversity. For almost 40 years, Rainbow Days has provided the kind of support and tools instrumental in helping tens of thousands of children and youth build upon their strengths and rise above adversity.

Rainbow Days recognizes the traditional implementation of the *CBSG® Program* in-person method may not be possible for the foreseeable future. Yet the need for reaching children and youth with our *Program's* messages, support and opportunities to learn and practice healthy coping skills has never been greater.

The question then is how can we reach the goal of [Rainbow Days' CBSG® Program](#) and meet the critical and immediate needs of schools, families, children and youth effectively? In response to this question, Rainbow Days is suggesting alternative implementation strategies, and is offering additional support services and resources for our *Curriculum-Based Support Group (CBSG®) Program* partners.

Our suggestions include implementing the *CBSG® Program* with fidelity In-person; Virtually; or a combination of the two, as well as implementing in non-traditional ways. These non-traditional strategies, which we are calling “Outside Fidelity”, offer more flexibility and creativity in reaching our populations with messages of hope, along with concrete positive social emotional coping skills. As always, the ultimate decisions as to which implementation strategy/strategies will be approved is between the organization/school and the funding source(s).

If you do not find a strategy or information that will meet your specific circumstances, if you need additional documentation for your funding source(s), or if you have any questions, please contact us (info@rainbowdaystraining.org). In addition to this document, a webinar will be available by mid-August.

CBSG® Program Implementation Strategies (With Fidelity)

Trained Facilitators: Only individuals trained as Facilitators in a Rainbow Days CBSG® Facilitator Training are Certified to conduct a CBSG® Program using one or more of the manual adaptations: *Kids' Connection; Youth Connection; Kids' Connection, Too; Faith Connection*. As a refresher, please review the PDF regarding fundamental [CBSG® Program implementation requirements/guidelines](#). Training is conducted virtually and [details](#), including [registration links](#), can be found on our [website \(www.rainbowdaystraining.org\)](#)

In-Person Groups: The CBSG® Program was designed and evaluated with in-person groups including a trained Facilitator, and in some instances a trained Co-Facilitator, in “closed” groups with 6 to 12 participants, offering 10 to 12 consecutive sessions. **In-person groups are still the preferred implementation strategy and we strongly encourage you to pursue this option when feasible.** Groups can be held during school hours, after-school, in community locations such as places of worship, community or recreation centers, libraries, etc. Safe social distancing can be practiced and when advised or required, masks worn.

Virtual Groups: Many schools are reaching their students through some form of virtual platform (Zoom, Google Hangout, YouTube, Facebook, etc.). If you have access to students through this medium, we encourage you to provide support groups virtually. The Opening (Sunshine & Cloud) and Closing (Major Messages Ritual), Group Promises or Behaviors of Respect, and Guided Discussions can easily be facilitated in a virtual format. Many activities in each Session can be modified for virtual implementation, including modifying the use of printed Handouts. *Kids' Connection* and *Youth Connection* Activity Modification Guidelines will be posted on our website by mid-August. Fewer participants (an average of 6-7) are recommended for Virtual Groups. Most virtual platforms have a variety of tools that can also be helpful in facilitating group discussion and processing (Thumbs Up; Hand Raise; Chat Box; Whiteboard; Screen Sharing; etc.)

Combined In-Person & Virtual Groups: If it is not possible to meet in-person with your group(s) for all sessions then a hybrid of In-Person and Virtual Groups can be conducted. Ideally the first group or two will be in-person to enable more effective group bonding.

Resource Backpacks/Sack Packs/Boxes: When possible, assemble materials and supplies for group participants who may not have access. These can include, markers or crayons, scissors, paper, pens/pencils, glue, etc. Ideally these can be picked up by parents when other material from school is being disseminated or perhaps staff (or even volunteers) can deliver them to a participant's doorstep.

CBSG® Program Alternative Implementation Strategies (Outside Fidelity)

Trained Facilitators: When implementing Alternative Implementation Strategies, only individuals trained as facilitators in a Rainbow Days CBSG® Program Facilitator Training have permission to use Session Activities outside of the traditional support group settings. Training is conducted virtually and [details](#), including [registration links](#), can be found on our [website \(www.rainbowdaystraining.org\)](#) Session Activities can be used from any of the 4 adaptations (*Kids' Connection, Youth Connection, Kids'*

Connection, Too and Faith Connection). Trained Facilitators may purchase additional adaptations by contacting info@rainbowdaystraining.org.

Classroom Presentations: *Select *CBSG® Program Sessions* and/or *Activities* can be implemented with all students in a classroom setting. (For some funding sources these will qualify as Education Presentations or Information Dissemination.)

Individual Presentations: *Select *CBSG® Program Sessions* and/or *Activities* can be implemented with individual students one-on-one or in small groups of 2 to 4 at a time. (For some funding sources these will qualify as Education Presentations or Information Dissemination.)

Virtual Camps/Activities/Presentations: This summer many have had success with virtual “camps” or presentations with various numbers of children and youth attending. Again, select *CBSG® Program Sessions* and/or *Activities* can be implemented in this format. (For some funding sources these will qualify as Education Presentations or Information Dissemination.)

Social Media: Explore how to utilize social media to reach participants with on-going, positive messages as well as ways to connect with you and other group members. Instagram, Podcasts, YouTube and Facebook are a few examples. For more information on how Rainbow Days has utilized these resources please contact leog@rainbowdays.org or robertl@rainbowdays.org. (For some funding sources this will qualify as Social Media contacts or Information Dissemination.)

Video Messages: Consider creating and posting videos of encouragement, positive messages and activities which reinforce *CBSG® Program Session* topics and *Major Messages*. etc. (For some funding sources this will qualify as Social Media contacts or Information Dissemination.)

Connect with School Counselors, Teachers and Community Based Organizations: Connect with your school contacts and community partners to identify ways you can work together to reach children and youth with *CBSG® Program Messages* and *Activities*. Be creative in exploring ways to reach children and youth during these stress filled times. (For some funding sources this will qualify as Social Media contacts or Information Dissemination.)

Select *CBSG® Program Sessions/Activities are chosen at the discretion of each organization, school, facilitator or prevention professional providing the *CBSG® Program*. Rainbow Days will answer questions or discuss plans on a case-by-case basis when requested. (info@rainbowdaystraining.org)

Rainbow Days Training Opportunities

Virtual *CBSG® Program Facilitator Training*: Currently all *CBSG® Program Facilitator Training* is Virtual. There are 3 remaining trainings scheduled in 2020: August 13, October 13, and December 3. Details and registration information can be found at [scheduled virtual trainings](#). The *CBSG® Program Facilitator Training* is 8 hours in length (includes lunch and breaks) and has 7 CEUs. If these dates do not work for you and you would like to schedule a contracted training for your organization, please contact us at info@rainbowdaystraining.org.

Virtual Workshops: A variety of Virtual Workshops are offered throughout the year. This past summer we hosted 23 workshops with over 1,000 participants. More workshops will be coming soon! Please check our website www.rainbowdaystraining.org for updates.

Additional Resources & Support

Additional CBSG® Program Facilitator Manual Adaptations: Remember, the CBSG® Program includes four Manual Adaptations: *Kids' Connection*, *Youth Connection*, *Kids' Connection, Too* and *Faith Connection*. Certified CBSG® Program Facilitators may purchase any of our Facilitator Manual Adaptations.

To assist with implementing some of the alternative options offered, you may want to consider using different adaptations. For example, *Kids' Connection, Too*, is designed as an "open" group, meaning group participants may change from session to session due to the transitional nature of the population being served. There are 5 Units, one for each of the Major Messages (I AM, I CAN, I HAVE, I WILL, I BELIEVE) with 20 to 30 activities in each Unit. *Kids' Connection, Too*, offers the most flexibility for suggested Alternative Implementation Strategies. If you wish to purchase this adaptation, or any of the Facilitator Manual Adaptations, please contact (info@rainbowdaystraining.org). **The regular price of \$150 per Manual is reduced to \$75 (plus shipping) for a limited time.**

Quality Assurance; Fidelity Checklists & Pre/Post Surveys: There are numerous resources available for your use in assessing program implementation, facilitator effectiveness, participant pre/post assessments, and fidelity checklists. Instructions and thumbnail photos of each resource can be found in the last section of each Manual Adaptation and soft copies are located on the USB/CD included with each manual. The use of these resources is not required; however, they can help support the effective implementation of your CBSG® Program.

Evaluation Studies: Links to our evaluation studies can be found under [Research & Evaluation on our website](#).

Monthly CBSG® Facilitator Virtual Meetings: We are excited to announce beginning **August 19th, from 11:00-11:45 Central Time**, Rainbow Days Training will host free monthly Zoom Facilitator calls (3rd Wednesday of the month). This forum will provide you the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals from across the country. Ideas will be shared, questions answered, and support given. Participation is free but registration is required.

Newsletters: Both Rainbow Days and Rainbow Days Training publish monthly newsletters. We will continue to offer program updates, encouragement and suggestions in both these publications. Visit our websites: [Rainbow Days](#) or [Rainbow Days Training](#) to sign up for either of these newsletters.

Point-of-Contact: You can reach us at info@rainbowdaystraining.org with specific questions, suggestions, etc. You may also call Cathey Brown, CBSG® Program Developer, at 214-802-6024. In addition, we will also periodically post resources, etc. on our [Training website](#).

Major Message Domains: For a description of our Major Message Domains and how they align with Social Emotional Learning click here, [Major Message Domains](#).

Sharing: Please share your ideas, successes, videos either via email or Tag Us on social media. We will be happy to share (with your permission) what you send us on our website and in our publications.

Self-and Others-Care: It is important to remember to take care of yourself as you care for your families, neighbors, co-workers and those you serve. Performing small acts of kindness for others is one positive way to lift your spirits and be helpful to others. Whether offering to go to the store for someone, walking a dog for those who may not be able to get out, sending a note of encouragement, thanking grocery store clerks, medical personnel and other front line workers, praying, wearing a mask -- whatever it might be, these small acts of kindness go a long way.

And remember to take time for you - show compassion, grace and perform acts of kindness for yourself. Take stock of how you are mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Identify ways to nurture yourself. Taking a time out for yourself to read, walk or do things that are personally restorative are just as important as serving others. We cannot give away what we do not possess ourselves. And, just like we teach our children, "It is always okay to ask for help from a safe, trustworthy person." Asking for help is a sign of strength – not weakness.

We are all in this together and together we make a difference!



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