

Social Roles - Identification

Socio-emotional development level equivalent to 3 - 7 years of age

Adapting Therapeutic Approaches and Environments

Interacting with Clients

- Clients at this level do not require individual attention on an organized basis, but they should be able to turn to someone they know and trust for support and reassurance when they need it
- An authority figure should be present regularly to serve as a role model and ensure that the rules of acceptable behaviour are followed within the peer group

Adjusting Settings and Demands on Clients

- Provide guidelines for all areas of daily life (including sexuality) and check regularly to ensure that they are followed
- Rules should take account of individual needs and preferences/consumption habits
- Work out a compromise with clients to establish reasonable limits for consumption and individual attention
- Offer alternative choices, but avoid ambivalence
- The consent of a legal guardian is usually required for major decisions affecting clients' lives
- Most clients at this developmental level do well in assisted living arrangements in non-institutional settings
- Productive employment in so-called sheltered workshops or social enterprise is usually possible

Therapeutic Approaches

- Clients at this developmental level can benefit from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (e.g. token plans, DBT-ID)
- Allow clients to learn from mistakes
- Establish consequences for negative behaviour (withdraw privileges, but don't punish)
- Agree on rules and limits together with clients
- Provide opportunities for therapeutic exercise and experiential learning activities

Avoid

- Overly rigid rules
- Preventing clients from having relationships (with a "girlfriend" or "boyfriend")
- Conveying that sexuality is a "taboo" subject