

Angela Diaz: Hi. My name is Angela Diaz, and I would like to talk today about why it's so important to integrate medical and mental health services. Research shows that only 20% of adolescents and 10% of young adult that have a mental health needs get services. So there's a tremendous scarcity of mental health services.

Angela Diaz: Developmentally, young people do not necessarily know how to label their needs. They may be depressed but they may not know that they are depressed, so it is very important to integrate services and to work the way that we work with them because by us asking and screening them for different things, then we find out that they need mental health, and we are right there working with the medical people and the mental health people so that person can benefit from that.

Angela Diaz: Having the integrated primary care and mental health services really remove barriers. It is hard for any person, including adult to be going to different places, different sites for different types of services. There are issues about transportation, geography, learning the different policies or the different systems, learning that they have to show up at this time or that time. So really this integrative services make it easier for the young person to be able to get all those services that they need.

Angela Diaz: When you are doing intake, let's say for mental health in many places, people have this really rigorous process and assessment that they have to take all these information. And sometimes when people are spending all that time trying to gather the information, the young person feel that they are not paying attention to them, they're not being engaged. And when you work with teenagers, the number one thing is engaging them. So you really need to balance the needs to collect whatever information you have to collect, but at the same time, keeping in mind and making sure that that young person is really and truly engaged, and feel that they are the most important thing right now for you, that you're paying attention to them. Because the first purpose, the purpose of the first visit is to get a second visit, and then a third, and then a fourth. You really want to engage the young person.

Angela Diaz: So whatever you need to do to achieve that, that's what you need to do. And maybe the form can be completed in multiple visits or something like that. I also work with young people who are homeless, who have been sex-trafficked and when I know that, I know that it will be hard for these young people to necessarily come regularly. So we have to ... Or to come back if I say, if they go to a place where they say, "You need an appointment for mental health." We know that these young people, it's really, really hard for them to return.

Angela Diaz: So we need to give them as many services as possible and they will see the mental health person right then and there. And the mental health person has to be very flexible, not only in term of balancing whatever information they need while trying to engage the young person, but also understanding that, that young person is not necessarily going to come back on a regular basis. That they

may come back sporadically, that they may come back for medical services and then they will need to see them, all those things are really important.