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Purpose

Guide the planning, organization, and evaluation of sack-racing activities to:

- Promote mental wellness and reduce stress
- Support depression recovery
- Strengthen social connectedness
- Offer healthy alternatives to alcohol use and addiction

Objectives

1. Release endorphins through playful physical activity
- 2 Improve mood and psychological functioning
- 3 Provide positive coping strategies for addiction
- 4 Strengthen community support networks
5. Ensure a safe, inclusive, and fun environment



Sack Racing Definition

Standard: Stand in a sack and hop to the finish line; first to reach wins.

Mental Health Focus: Structured, play-based activity that enhances:

- Stress reduction
- Mood and motivation
- Social support
- Mindfulness and focus
- Safe coping alternatives

Roles & Responsibilities

- Event Coordinator: Planning, safety, mental health messaging
- Mental Health Facilitator: Psychoeducation, monitoring, referrals
- Volunteers/Marshals: Race setup, supervision, safety
- First Aid/Safety Officer: Risk checks, hydration, injury management
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer: Data collection and reporting
- Communications Officer: Publicity and social media

Procedures

- Planning (2-4 weeks prior): Goals, venue, materials, volunteer training, promotion
- Pre-Event: Safety checks, registration, mental health talk, warm-up.
- Implementation: Organized heats, monitoring, hydration, stigma-free support.
- Post-Race: Cool-down, reflection, feedback, mental health support



Safety & Risk Management

- Inspect site for hazards
- Monitor heat, hydration, and fatigue
- Provide first aid and maintain confidentiality
- No alcohol; supportive environment for recovery
- Clear referral pathways

Assessment of Mental Health & Substance Use

Condition	Screening Tools	Key Notes
Depression	PHQ-9, SAD PERSONS, SRQ	Suicide risk screening
Anxiety	GAD-7, Mini-SPIN	Generalized/ social anxiety
ADHD	ASRS, Conners' Rating Scales	Attention, hyperactivity, impulsivity
OCD	OCI-R	Obsessive-compulsive symptoms
PTSD	PCL-5, BTS	Trauma exposure
Bipolar	MDQ	Mood swings
Addiction	AUDIT-C, DUDIT	Alcohol/substance risk
Intellectual Disabilities	VABS, WISC, ABAS	Adaptive & cognitive skills
Conduct Disorders	CBCL, SDQ, CDRS	Behavioral and rule-breaking patterns

High-risk participants receive immediate counseling and referrals

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Track participation, engagement, safety
- Evaluate mood, stress reduction, coping, social connectedness
- Record referrals, incidents, outcomes
- Methods: Attendance logs, observation checklists, surveys, counselor reports
- Reports compiled within 72 hours
- Confidential follow-up and mental health service referral

Sack Racing Metaphors for Mental Health & Addiction

- Depression: Hopping while weighed down, slow progress
- Anxiety: Every step feels risky, fear of falling
- ADHD: Erratic hopping, bursts of speed, sudden crashes
- OCD: Repeated adjustments delay progress
- PTSD: Startled by noises, triggered falls
- Bipolar: Uneven hopping pace
- Addiction: Sack constrains movement, simulates substance dependence
- Intellectual Disabilities: Slower processing, falls behind despite effort
- Conduct Disorders: Ignores rules, disrupts others, chaotic hopping

Escaping the "sack" symbolizes recovery, adaptive strategies, and support

Mind-Body Race Curriculum Highlights

- Orientation & Safe Space
- Empathy & Personal Identity
- Healthy Relationships & GBV Awareness
- Body & Mind Awareness
- Sack Race Experience & Mental Illness Metaphor
- Addiction Awareness & Coping Strategies
- Circle of Support (Peer, Parent, Teacher, Community)
- Resilience, Mindfulness, Goal Setting
- Healthy Lifestyle Choices & Celebration of Achievements

Guiding Principles

- Safety & dignity
- Non-judgment & inclusion
- Confidentiality
- Evidence-based practice
- Cultural sensitivity
- Safe space creation

Final Message

Mental health challenges and addiction are not signs of broken people but signs of heavy sacks, unequal tracks, and lives that deserve compassion, support, and dignity.