



International
OCD
Foundation

OCD and Related Disorders Clinic Profile

Pediatric Psychology Associates' Anxiety and OCD Intensive Outpatient Program (Aventura)

Clinic/Program Director: Samantha Carella, PsyD

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www.southfloridatherapists.com/anxiety-and-ocd-intensive-outpatient-program-iop-treatment-option

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Aventura, Florida 33180

Treatment Providers:

Judith Migoya, PsyD

Samantha Carella, PsyD

Nicholas Maccarrone, PsyD

Danielle Stier, PhD

Payment Options:

Self-Pay

Populations Served:

Adults

Adolescents

Children

Treatment Strategies Offered:

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP)

Family Therapy

Group Therapy

Home Visits

Skills Training

Teletherapy

Treatment for Co-occurring Conditions

Areas of Specialty (in addition to OCD in general):

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)

Hoarding Disorder
PANDAS/PANS
Perfectionism
Scrupulosity
Violent/Sexual Obsessions

Summary of our services:

At PPA, we have been treating OCD on an outpatient basis for over 15 years. In 2015, we established our Anxiety and OCD Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) to address the needs of patients who required a higher level of care than weekly therapy could provide. Our IOP offers intensive treatment for individuals who are experiencing very high levels of interference in their daily lives or whose schedules only allow a limited time frame in which to engage in treatment. IOP treatment aims to reduce symptoms and restore functioning more rapidly than traditional outpatient therapy. Our IOP offers a great deal of flexibility with regards to schedule and location of intervention, as it is customized to meet the needs of each individual.

After intensive treatment, continued weekly therapy sessions are often recommended for a period of time. The focus of this phase of treatment is to help patients continue to use skills learned during intensive treatment in everyday life, quickly identify and address any new problems, and recognize when professional help might be needed again.

Our staff consists of licensed psychologists with specialized training and extensive experience treating anxiety, OCD, and related disorders.

Treatment Planning Process

Our IOP begins with a thorough clinical interview with a licensed psychologist, and a follow up assessment and treatment planning session. During these initial sessions, the primary treating clinician meets with the identified patient and if appropriate, with family members as well. In addition, the clinician will speak with other relevant professionals (psychiatrist, referring therapist, teachers, etc.) to gather additional clinical information. Based on the information gathered during this initial stage, the clinician will provide feedback including diagnostic impressions and specific treatment recommendations.

Core Treatment Components

Our intensive treatment approach follows an evidence-based model that is grounded in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and utilizes exposure and response prevention (ERP) techniques. The program offers a higher level of treatment intensity in order to help individuals and families learn to manage extreme anxiety-driven avoidance behaviors in a shorter period of time than afforded by traditional psychotherapy.

During the first few days of an intensive treatment, the focus will be on providing psycho-education about anxiety and its treatment. In other words, patients will gain an understanding of the nature and causes of anxiety, and most importantly – they will learn about the factors that maintain their anxiety. This information is an important foundation to begin the journey toward beating anxiety. Patients will also learn to use cognitive strategies to begin to question and change faulty, anxious thoughts. In addition, as needed, patients will be taught adaptive

coping skills (e.g., mindfulness, relaxation techniques) to help them learn to manage distress without relying on maladaptive behaviors, such as avoidance.

The clinician and patient will then proceed to the most critical component of treatment: exposure. During exposures, patients learn to gradually face feared stimuli and situations in a supportive and empowering environment. Importantly, patients will be coached to resist the temptation to engage in avoidance behaviors and/or compulsive rituals during exposures. With repeated exposures, patients gradually learn to face the previously feared situations more comfortably, without engaging in avoidance behaviors and/or rituals and compulsions.

In cases where psychopharmacological treatment is appropriate, we work collaboratively with physicians and psychiatrists to ensure high-quality wrap-around care for our patients.

Parents, Family Members, Friends, Teachers, etc. Involvement

When working with children and adolescents experiencing severe anxiety, clinicians will work closely with parents and primary caregivers. In addition, clinicians may work with teachers and other individuals in the patient's life as appropriate (e.g., tutors, coaches, nannies, siblings). Throughout treatment, an important goal is for caregivers to understand the rationale for treatment and specific techniques being used in order to provide appropriate support for the child between sessions and once treatment has ended. Particularly when working with children and adolescents, it is critical to provide guidance and support for the appropriate implementation of exposure and response prevention across multiple settings.

When working with adult patients, family members and significant others will be included in treatment as appropriate.

Treatment of Co-Morbid Disorders

Our intensive outpatient treatment program is devoted to treating individuals with OCD, anxiety, and related disorders, including: specific phobias (for example, fear of vomit, school-related phobias), separation anxiety, panic disorder, agoraphobia, and PANDAS/PANS. In addition, patients with OCD and/or anxiety disorders are often struggling with comorbid psychological difficulties, such as depression, inattention and hyperactivity, and oppositional defiant disorder. Our clinicians address each of these challenges in a thorough and comprehensive treatment plan.

Individual Therapy

Intensive treatment typically entails meeting with a clinician on a daily basis for 2 to 4 hours each day over the course of approximately two weeks (excluding weekends). In addition, support is provided via phone and e-mail between sessions to ensure that any questions about treatment are addressed as they arise. Off-site work may be required (e.g., at school, work or home) to effectively address the presenting problem. We are very flexible with our scheduling in order to provide families with an appropriate level of care that fits within their busy family's schedule.

Length of Stay

Families typically attend our intensive treatment program for two weeks (3 – 4 session each week; 2 – 4 hour sessions). We thoroughly discuss with each family our recommended length of treatment and offer flexibility to adapt to each family’s life. We also provide clear explanations regarding treatment outcome expectations and recommended follow-up care.

“Census” (i.e., the maximum number of clients seen at any given time)

No

School Facilities

Although we do not have school facilities available on-site, we do provide support at a child’s school and work with teachers and other school staff members to ensure continuity of care (as needed). Particularly when working with children and adolescents, we consider the implementation of exposure and response prevention techniques across multiple settings a critical and integral part of our treatment approach.

Other Resources for Outpatients

We provide OCD support groups on site and have relationships with local psychiatrists, schools, etc., in order to provide comprehensive, wrap-around services.