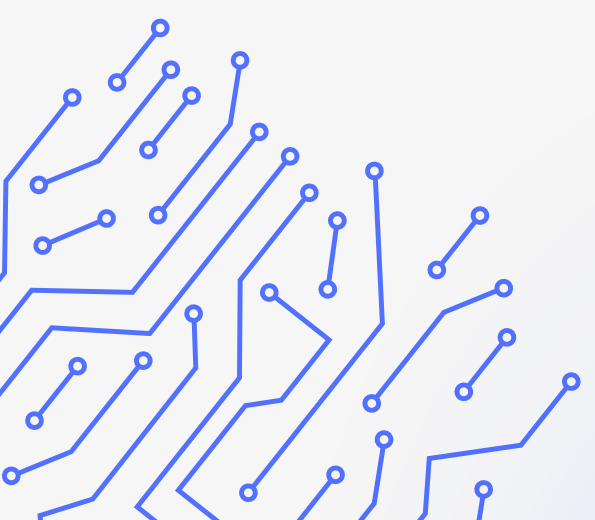


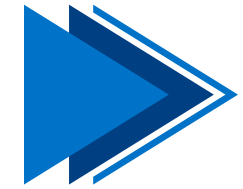
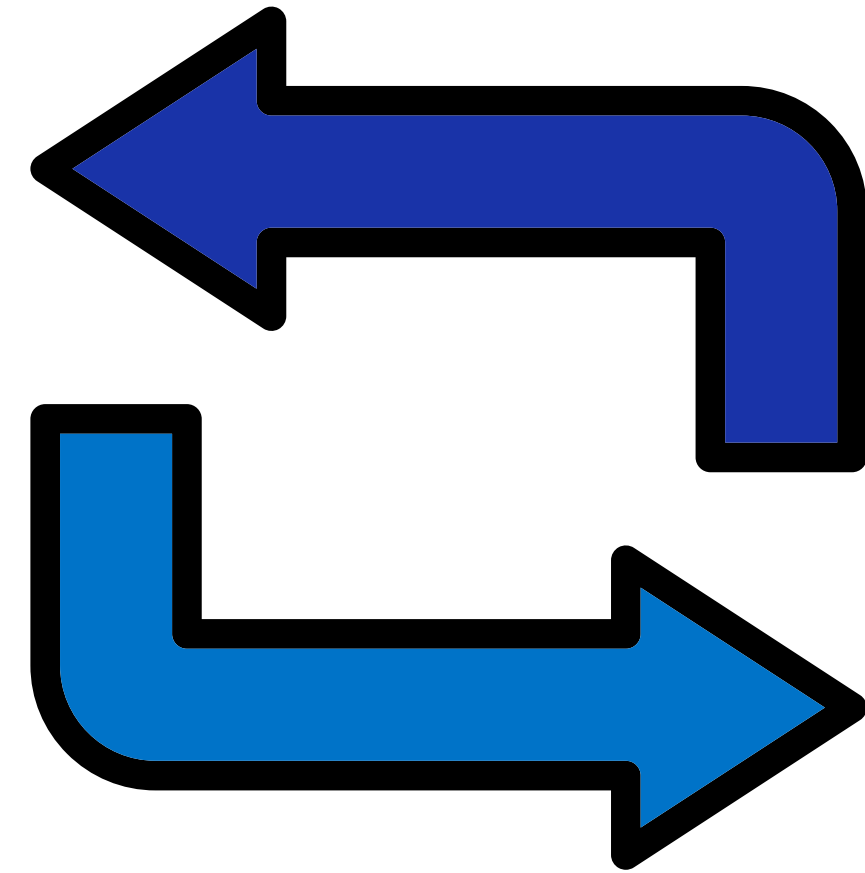
AI IN HUMAN SERVICES

TOOLS, USES CASES, AND PRACTICAL SKILLS

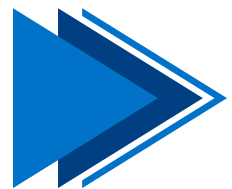


Dr. Angie Elkins
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RECAP FROM SESSION 1



What AI is (and isn't)



Ethical risks: bias, hallucinations, and overreliance



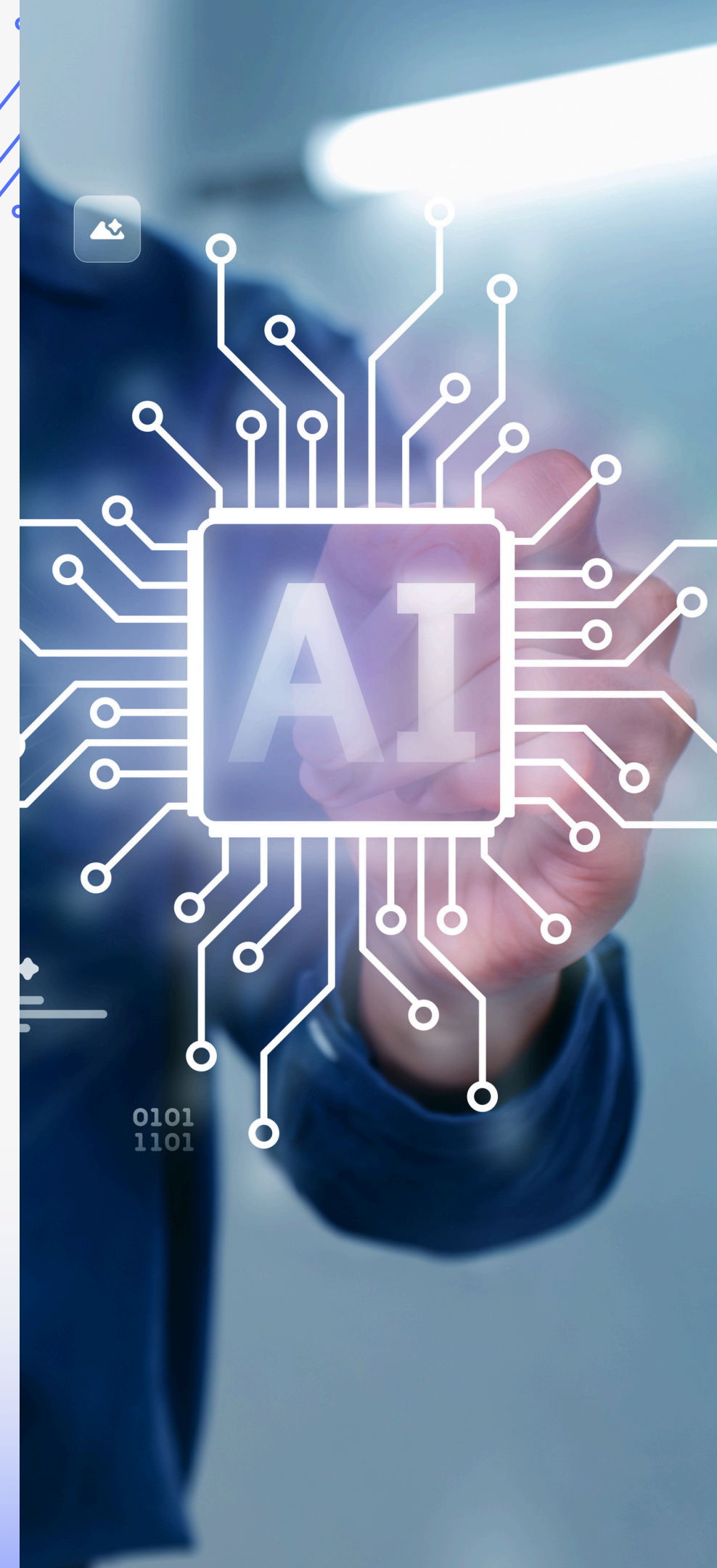
Protecting client confidentiality and PII



Using AI as a support tool — not a decision-maker

SESSION GOALS

- * Recognize AI tools and LLMs and understand how they differ
- * Write effective prompts to improve accuracy and usefulness of AI outputs
- * Use AI to improve productivity, including planning, training, research, and communication
- * Explore safe client-support uses of AI while protecting confidentiality



REMINDER:

Ethical guardrails from Session 1 still
apply today!

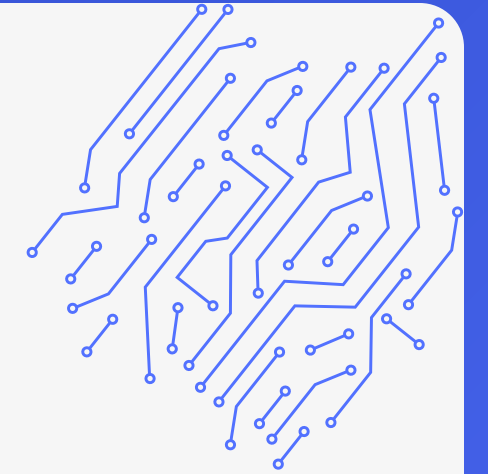


➔ GOAL #1

Recognize AI tools and Large Language Models (LLMs) and understand **how they differ**



IS IT AI?



- ChatGPT
- Grammarly
- Canva Magic Design
- Microsoft Copilot
- Google Gemini
- Email auto-complete
- Predictive text on phones
- Siri and Alexa
- Streaming recommendations

**THEY ARE
ALL AI!**



- ChatGPT
- Grammarly
- Canva Magic Design
- Microsoft Copilot
- Google Gemini
- Email auto-complete
- Predictive text on phones
- Siri and Alexa
- Streaming recommendations

AI TOOLS VS. LLMS

AI Tools (Predictive AI or Data Analytics)

- Analyzes data to identify patterns or predict outcomes
- Uses historical administrative or program data
- Supports risk assessment, prioritization, or eligibility screening

Example: Grammarly

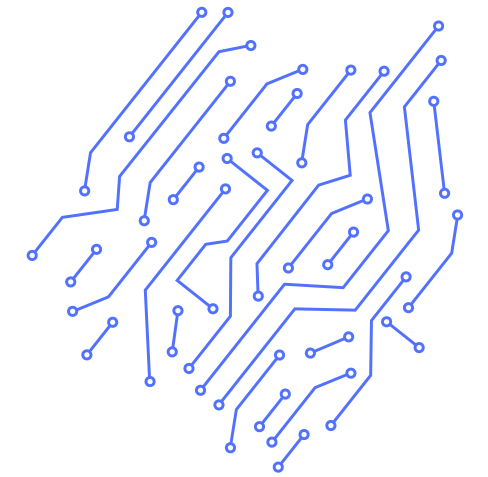
Large Language Models (Generative AI)

- Generates new content such as text, images, or summaries
- Uses large text datasets to learn language patterns
- Supports writing, brainstorming, training materials, and communication

Example: ChatGPT and Gemini



AI AS A SUPPORT TOOL



Both types of AI can support human services work — but neither replaces professional judgment.

PREDICTIVE AI



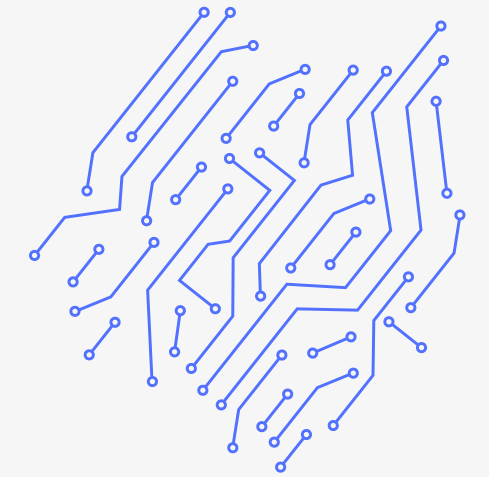
Helps Analyze Data

GENERATIVE AI



Helps generate content or ideas

AI EMBEDDED IN SYSTEMS



- Case management systems
- Risk scoring
- Eligibility screening
- Data analysis

***SOME AI TOOLS MAY ALREADY EXIST INSIDE THE SYSTEMS YOUR ORGANIZATION USES.**



AFST - ALLEGHENY FAMILY SCREENING TOOL

WHAT IT IS

- A predictive risk modeling tool used by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services in Pennsylvania
- Implemented in 2016 to assist with child welfare hotline screening decisions

HOW IT IS USED

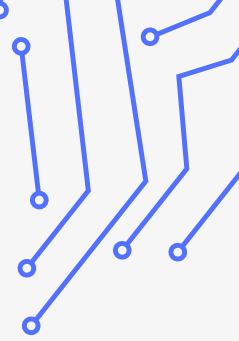
- Helps hotline staff decide whether a report of child maltreatment should be screened in for investigation or screened out
- The score does not replace professional judgment—it provides additional information to support decision-making

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR AI DISCUSSIONS

- Shows how data analytics and algorithms can support human services decisions
- Raises important questions about bias, transparency, and oversight



VI-SPDAT (VULNERABILITY INDEX – SERVICE PRIORITIZATION DECISION ASSISTANCE TOOL)



WHAT IT IS

- A screening tool used by many service systems to help prioritize housing resources for people experiencing homelessness
- Often used in Coordinated Entry systems across the U.S. to assess vulnerability and service needs

HOW IT WORKS

- Service providers ask a structured set of questions about areas such as housing history, health conditions, safety risks, and support needs
- The responses generate a score indicating level of vulnerability

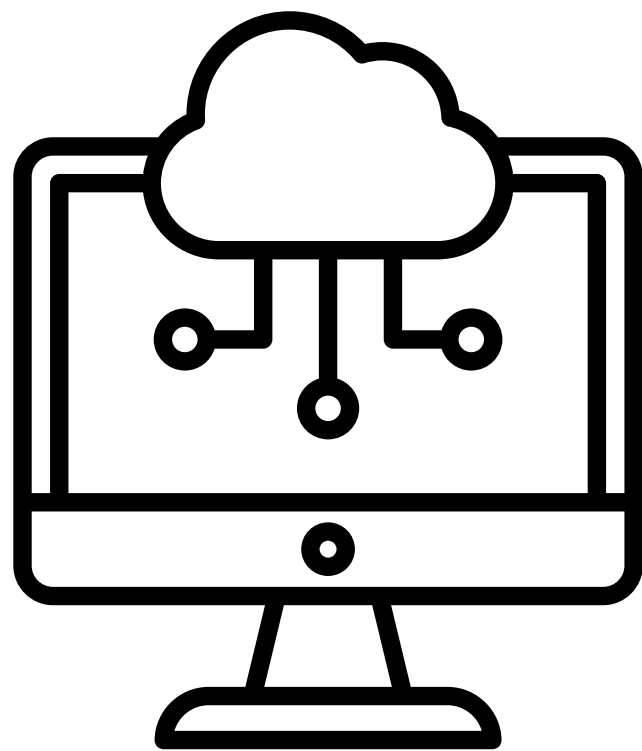
HOW IT IS USED

- Helps prioritize who may receive limited housing resources such as: permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and other housing assistance programs
- Because resources are limited, systems must decide who receives services first



VI-SPDAT PROBLEMS

In late 2020, the creators of the tool announced they would phase out the VI-SPDAT after growing concerns about reliability, misuse, and racial equity.



RESEARCH AND PRACTITIONERS RAISED CONCERNS:

- The tool did not reliably predict housing outcomes
- It produced racial disparities in scoring
- It was often used as the only decision factor, even though it was meant only to guide decisions



- Research has raised concerns about bias and equity in assessment scores.
- Experts emphasize that tools like these should support decision-making, not replace professional judgment.
- Algorithms can help organize information, but human professionals must interpret results and make final decisions.
- AI systems like these are designed to support professionals—not replace them.



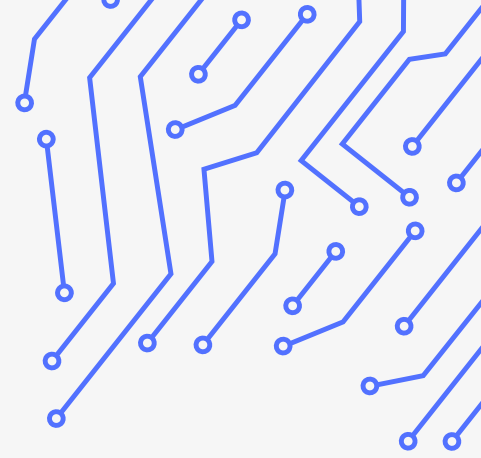
IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

➔ GOAL #2

Use AI to improve productivity, including planning, training, research, and communication



WAYS AI CAN SUPPORT YOUR WORK



ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Drafting meeting agendas
- Summarizing long documents
- Brainstorming training ideas
- Creating program outlines

WRITING SUPPORT

- Email drafts
- Simplifying complex language
- Editing tone

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- Creating worksheets
- Developing discussion questions
- Drafting learning objectives

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- Brainstorming community programs
- Generating outreach ideas
- Drafting grant language

AI drafts — humans review.

CHATGPT PROMPT

Create a short description for a group therapy session on anger management.

This group session focuses on helping participants better understand anger and develop healthier ways to respond to it. Members will explore common triggers, learn how thoughts and emotions influence reactions, and practice practical techniques for managing anger in challenging situations. The session emphasizes self-awareness, emotional regulation, and constructive communication. Through discussion, reflection, and skill-building activities, participants will gain tools to express anger in ways that are safe, respectful, and supportive of healthier relationships.



EVALUATE THE RESPONSE

ACCURACY & APPROPRIATENESS

- Does it reflect real practice?
- What's missing or oversimplified?

CLIENT-CENTERED LANGUAGE

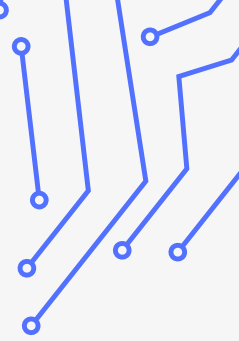
- Respectful and nonjudgmental?
- Safe and supportive tone?

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- Would you actually use this?
- Too generic?

ETHICS

- Any safety or scope concerns?
- Would you put your name on it?



IMPROVING THE RESPONSE

- Add details (population, goals, setting)
- Adjust tone
- Make it usable



➔ DEBRIEF

- What did AI do well?
- What still needs you, as the professional?



CHATGPT PROMPT



Create a printable CBT worksheet for teenagers in a group home.

1. What Happened?

Describe the situation that upset you. Where were you? Who was there? What happened?

2. What Was I Feeling?

Circle or write the emotions you felt:

Angry	Frustrated	Embarrassed	Disrespected		
Hurt	Sad	Stressed	Other: _____		
How strong was the feeling?	1	2	3	4	5
Calm					Very intense

3. What Was I Thinking?

What thoughts went through your mind at that moment?

4. What Did I Do?

5. Check the Thought

Question	Your Answer
Is this thought 100% true?	
Could there be another explanation?	
What would I tell a friend in this situation?	

Write a more balanced thought:

--

6. Choose a Better Response

Take a break / walk away	Talk to staff or a trusted adult
Take 5 deep breaths	Write or draw what you feel
Use respectful words	Other: _____

My plan next time:

--

7. Reflection

What is one thing you learned about yourself from this situation?

--



EVALUATE THE RESPONSE

ACCURACY & APPROPRIATENESS

- Does it reflect real practice?
- What's missing or oversimplified?

CLIENT-CENTERED LANGUAGE

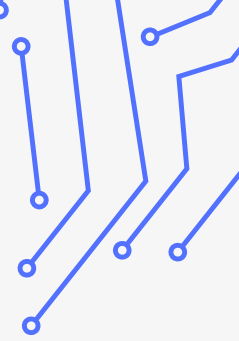
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IMPROVING THE RESPONSE

- Add details (population, goals, setting)
- Adjust tone
- Make it usable



CHATGPT PROMPT



Provide a short general summary of this article.

“Looking Back at the VI-SPDAT Before Moving Forward”

The article reviews the VI-SPDAT, a widely used assessment tool designed to help homelessness service systems prioritize individuals for housing and support when resources are limited. Introduced in 2013, the tool was quickly adopted across the United States as part of coordinated entry systems to help identify people experiencing the highest levels of vulnerability.

Over time, researchers and practitioners raised concerns about the tool's effectiveness. Studies found mixed evidence about whether the scores actually predicted future homelessness, and some research identified racial disparities in how the tool scored individuals, raising equity concerns. The article also notes that many communities relied too heavily on the score instead of professional judgment, even though the tool was intended only to guide decisions.

As a result of these concerns, the creators announced in 2020 that the VI-SPDAT would be phased out. The article emphasizes that while decision tools can help organize information and support fairness in allocating limited services, they must be used carefully, evaluated regularly, and never replace human judgment in human services practice.



EVALUATE THE RESPONSE

ACCURACY & APPROPRIATENESS

- Does it reflect real practice?
- What's missing or oversimplified?

CLIENT-CENTERED LANGUAGE

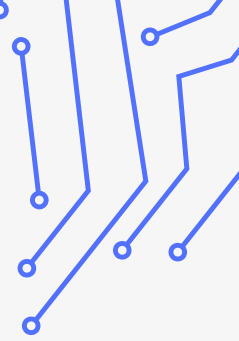
- Does it capture the main argument?
- What important points are missing?
- Is anything misrepresented?

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- Would you actually use this?
- Too generic?

ETHICS

- Any safety or scope concerns?
- Would you put your name on it?

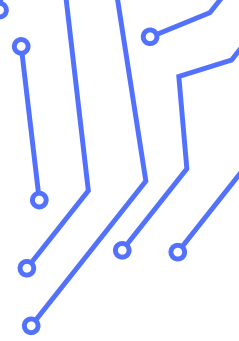


IMPROVING THE RESPONSE

- Be specific about what matters
- Add context (who/why)
- Set expectations for length & focus

Examples of Stronger Prompts:

- “Provide a 3–4 sentence summary of the article ‘Looking Back at the VI-SPDAT Before Moving Forward’ focusing on the main argument and key concerns.”
- “Summarize this article for a human services professional. Highlight critiques of the VI-SPDAT and implications for practice.”
- “Create a brief summary for a class discussion. Include the main point, one critique, and why it matters for client outcomes.”



➔ DEBRIEF

- What did AI do well?
- What still needs you?
- What happens if a practitioner relies on an incomplete AI summary?
- How could this impact decisions about clients (e.g., housing assessments like VI-SPDAT)?

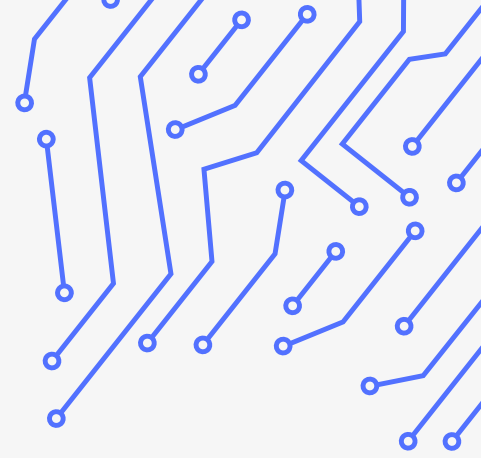


➔ GOAL #3

Write **effective prompts** to improve accuracy and usefulness of AI outputs



PROMPTING BETTER QUESTIONS



Example prompt:

“You are a social work supervisor. Create a strengths-based outline for a parenting support group focused on managing stress during pregnancy. Include discussion questions and keep the language at a 6th-grade reading level.”

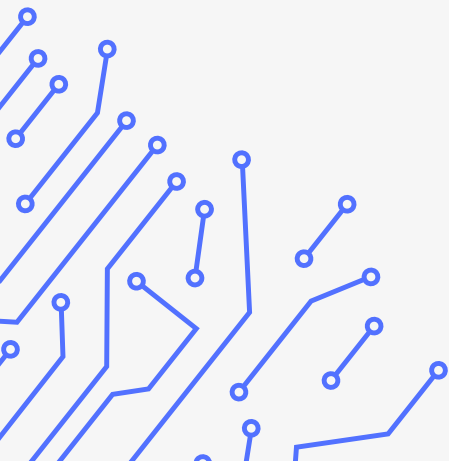
Better prompts = better outputs

CONTEXT

TASK

ROLE

CONSTRAINTS



IMPROVE THE PROMPT

Weak prompt:

“Make a worksheet about parenting.”



BETTER PROMPT

“Create a one-page worksheet for a parenting support group focused on managing stress. Include reflection questions and a small goal-setting section. Use strengths-based language.”

What did we add?

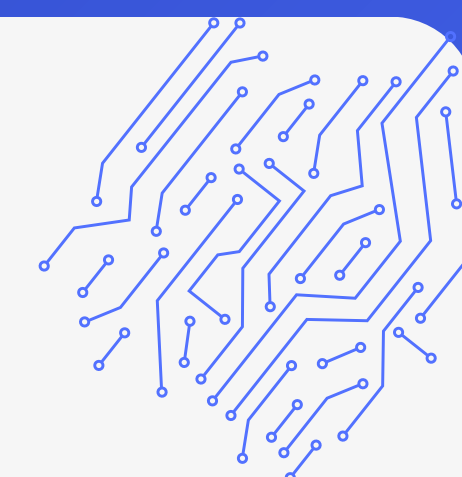
- Context
- Audience
- Tone
- Structure



➔ GOAL #4

Explore **safe client-support** uses of AI while protecting confidentiality





SAFE CLIENT-SUPPORT USE

AI should never replace professional judgment or supervision.



POSSIBLE APPROPRIATE USES:

- Practicing difficult conversations
- Generating discussion questions for groups
- Creating psychoeducation worksheets
- Brainstorming parenting class topics
- Role-playing communication strategies

Never enter client identifying information.

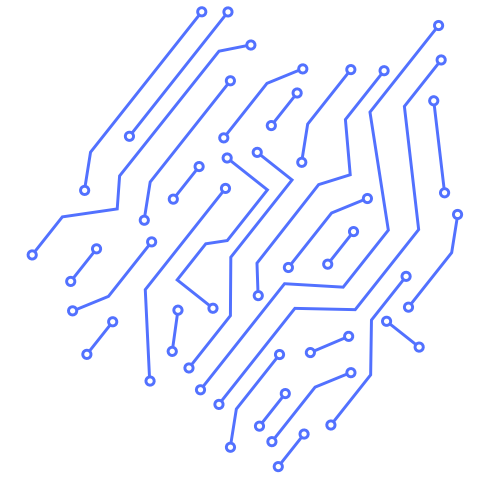


PRACTICING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

AI & Social Work Therapy Practice



ASH AI (MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TOOL)



WHAT IT IS

- ASH is an AI system designed to provide mental health and emotional support conversations through text or voice.
- It offers users a private space to discuss stress, relationships, anxiety, and personal challenges.

HOW IT WORKS

- Uses AI trained on psychological concepts and conversational models to generate responses.
- Learns patterns from user interactions to provide personalized insights and reflection prompts over time.

WHAT IT CAN DO

- Provide 24/7 conversational support
- Offer reflection prompts and goal-setting suggestions
- Help users identify patterns in emotions or behavior

IMPORTANT LIMITATIONS

- The developers state it cannot diagnose conditions or provide medical advice.
- It is not designed to replace therapy or crisis support.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS RAISED



AI may provide support tools, but it cannot replace trained professionals, clinical judgment, or crisis services.



- Should AI ever function like a therapist?
- What are the risks of clients relying on AI for emotional support?
- Where should professional oversight be required?

Note: There have been multiple cases of AI telling people to act in ways that are not appropriate such as encouraging violence.

➔ FINAL REFLECTION

What did these activities teach you about your role when using AI?



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**THANK
YOU!**