Engaging Parents in Treatment, Recovery and Parenting: Effective Strategies of Specialized Treatment and Recovery Services (STARS)

Presented by:
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Children Living with One or More Substance-Abusing Parent

- Used Illicit Drug in Past Year: 10.6
- Used Illicit Drug in Past Month: 8.4
- Dependent on Alcohol and/or Needs Treatment for Illicit Drugs: 8.3
- Dependent on AOD: 7.5
- Dependent on Alcohol: 6.2
- Dependent on Illicit Drugs: 2.8
- Need Treatment for Illicit Drug Abuse: 4.5

Numbers indicate millions
An estimated 70 to 80% of child welfare cases involve families affected by substance use.
Children of Substance Abusers

Common experiences for Children of Substance Users

- Chaotic and unpredictable home life
- Inconsistent parenting and a lack of supervision
- Inconsistent parental emotional responses
- Inconsistent provision of care
- Parent may withdraw both physically and emotionally
Children of Substance Abusers

Commonly noted consequences for children

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)
Alcohol-related neuro-developmental disorders (ARND)
Physical health consequences
Lack of secure attachment
Psychopathology
Behavioral problems
Poor social relations/skills
Deficits in motor skills
Cognition and learning disabilities
Obstacles to Change

- Late-stage addiction
- Resistance to “the system”
- Mental illness
- Fathers often dismissed in dependency cases
- Lack of hope
Late stage addiction

- For parents facing removal of children – rarely in the initial stages of use
- Addiction patterns and behaviors are set and established
- Often not the first attempt at recovery
Resistance to "the System"

- Involved with welfare or corrections
- Pre-existing ideas about government agencies
- Many are products of foster care system
What are the primary objectives of Recovery Support Specialists?

- Help parents complete Alcohol and Other (AOD) requirements ordered by Child Protective Services or the Dependency Courts.

- Affect client change by removing barriers to treatment and providing support.

- Provide CPS/Dependency Courts with accurate and reliable documentation.
Models of Practice

- Paired Counselor and Child Welfare Worker
- Counselor Out-stationed at Child Welfare Office
- Parent Mentors
- Multidisciplinary Teams for Joint Case Planning
- Family Drug Treatment Courts
Purpose Of Utilizing Substance Abuse Recovery Specialists

1. Decrease time to assess and enter treatment
2. Increase compliance with treatment
3. Increase 12 month permanent placements
4. Ensure reasonable efforts
5. Decrease time in foster care
Recovery Specialist Position

Qualifications

- Possess a Bachelors Degree or hold a valid certification from a recognized drug and alcohol counselor certification body
- Experience in evaluating and treating the AOD population

Characteristics

- Empathetic
- Passionate
- Belief in redemption and recovery
- Flexible
The 5 Points of STARS Success

- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Customer Service
- Quality Supervision
- Positivism
Key Points

- Assessment of parents’ for AOD issues as early as possible
- Immediate and ongoing contact with Recovery Specialist – gender specific (if possible)
- Immediate access to treatment
- Supervised alcohol and drug screenings
- Ongoing recovery monitoring
- Support, encouragement, and motivation
- Attendance at significant events
The Three Strategies to Employ

- Use of Motivational Interviewing Techniques
- Role-modeling
- Accountability
Role Modeling

Recovery Specialists are:

- Believable and approachable
- Comfortable with some self-disclosure
- Non-punitive in approach
Accountability

- When an empathetic, supportive environment is coupled with one that stresses accountability, change can be created in a profound way.

- Every parent should be encouraged to accept responsibility every action they are involved in, therefore encouraging personal accountability.
Intangibles

- Belief that recovery is possible
- Overcome prejudices that exist
- Give 100% for client’s 100%
- Passion