



CWTP

Substance Abuse Training Partnership



TOPIC

Best Practice Spotlight – Engaging Families in the Treatment Process

Federal investments over the past decade have tested strategies to improve outcomes for families in child welfare affected by substance use disorders. These investments have generated a knowledge base that points to a set of common ingredients for improved family outcomes. This webinar notes these common ingredients, engagement strategies and collaborative practice models that child welfare, treatment and court professionals can implement in their communities.

Lunchtime LIVE

LEARNING INTERACTIONS
with VALUED EXPERTS



KEY POINTS

1. *We know what works* – There is a growing body of knowledge gained from evidence-based practice, collaborative practice models, and field research on how to best serve child welfare involved families affected by substance use. Common key ingredients demonstrating better outcomes include: early identification and timely access to assessment and quality treatment; successful treatment engagement, retention, and completion; transition to recovery and on-going disease management.
2. *We need to work with urgency* – Improving outcomes of children and families affected by parental substance use demands urgent attention from all the systems charged with promoting child safety and family well-being. No single agency has the expertise and resources to meet the multiple and complex needs of families within mandated timeframes.
3. *We need to work together* – Collaborative practice and policy improves outcomes for families. Sharing information across systems is particularly important since ongoing assessment and decisions regarding child safety and substance use disorders are best made by staff persons working across systems as a team.



CHILD WELFARE APPLICATION

Child welfare system professionals can take a step toward improving services to families by taking a client-focused approach to identifying problem areas (e.g. inconsistency of referrals, delays in accessing treatment, lack of services/involvement from critical stakeholders, problems with engagement and retention, lack of communication across systems) and generate ideas for improving organizational processes. To begin the process, look at, how your community system measures up with these collaborative, best practice approaches across service systems:

- **Identifying Families:** Using a systematic and standardized approach towards screening and assessment ensures that the child welfare client is appropriately identified, diagnosed and matched to the right level of care and services.
- **Access to Treatment:** Research shows that the most positive treatment outcomes occur when clients begin treatment within 7 days of identification; however, treatment admission within 24 to 72 hours is ideal.
- **Retention in Treatment:** The strongest predictors of reunification are treatment retention and completion.
- **Recovery Management:** Strategies proven to be effective include motivational enhancement, contingency responses to participant behavior, co-locating treatment staff in child welfare or court offices, and increased judicial oversight.
- **Parenting:** Family-centered services and evidence-based parenting programs address family relationships affected by addictions and are important to support the family recovery process and repair parent-child relationships.
- **Peer Support:** Parents receiving intensive case management and recovery coaches stayed in substance use disorder treatment twice as long and completed treatment at much higher rates than those who did not receive those services.



LEARN MORE

Webinar Learning Tools

1. [Learning Assessment](#) – Assess your learning and identify areas for improvement. This tool can be used individually or as a team activity.
2. [Individual Learning Guide](#) – Spend some time on self-reflection and application of webinar content.
3. [Team Discussion Guide](#) – Use this guide for conversation with your team applying webinar content to collaborative practice.

Handouts

[Understanding Substance use Disorder Treatment in Your Community: A Draft Discussion Guide](#)

[Systems Walkthrough Handout](#)

[What Works to Improve Outcomes for Families Affected by Parental Substance Use Disorders and Child Abuse/Neglect](#)

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Resources

National Center for Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW):

[Understanding Substance Abuse and Facilitating Recovery: A Guide for Child Welfare Workers](#)

[Screening and Assessment for Family Engagement, Retention, and Recovery](#)

[Drug Testing in Child Welfare: Practice and Policy Considerations](#)

[Substance Abuse Specialist in Child Welfare Agencies and Dependency Courts](#)

California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership (2017):

[A Matter of Substance: Challenges and Responses to Parental Substance Use and Child Welfare](#)

Training

NCSACW (2015). [Identifying Substance Abuse as a Risk Factor in Child Welfare Cases and Understanding How to Respond](#)

Family Drug Court Learning Academy Webinar (2016). [Early Screening & Assessment](#)

NCSACW (2016). [Online Tutorials for Child Welfare, Treatment and Legal Professionals: Understanding Substance Use Disorders, Treatment, and Family Recovery](#)



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