Family Matters:

Transitioning Towards a Family-Centered Approach in All Healing to Wellness Courts

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Learning Objectives

1. Gain a greater understanding of the importance of addressing the needs of children and parent-child relationship as a critical part of family recovery

2. Highlight key strategies on how *Healing to Wellness Courts* can make the transition to becoming more family-centered

3. Identify next steps that *Healing to Wellness Courts* can take to becoming more family-centered
Why is this important?

8.7 million children live with one or more parents who are dependent on alcohol or need treatment for illicit drug use

Source: 2009 – 2014 SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

50-70% of participants in three adult drug courts recently studied have at least one minor child

Lipari, R.N. and Van Horn, S.L. Children living with parents who have a substance use disorder. The CBHSQ Report: August 24, 2017. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD.

Transitioning to a Family Centered Approach: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from Three Adult Drug Courts, 2017)
• **52.7%** had concerns regarding one or more of their children’s social and emotional well-being

• **47.2%** had concerns regarding medical problems or issues with one or more of their children

• **40.0%** had concerns about one or more of their children’s behavior

• **17.8%** had significant concerns about their spouse’s or significant other’s mental health
Elevating Practice
Parent recovery is primary focus

Parent is the focus but have children with them

Services focus on parent-child dyad

Entire family unit receives services

Parent and child receives services and each have case plans

Parent is the focus but have children with them

Parent recovery is primary focus

How Family-Centered Are You?
Rethinking RECOVERY
Addiction as a family disease impacting all relationships in the family unit.
What Practice Tells Us:

• Attachment-based treatment practices have produced **positive outcomes for women and children** in both residential and outpatient settings.

• Family-focused treatment has produced **improvements in treatment retention, parenting attitudes, and psychosocial functioning**.

• Postpartum women who had their infants living with them in treatment had **highest treatment completion rates and longer stays in treatment**.
Serving Families Saves Money

Adult Drug Courts that provided parenting classes had 65% greater reductions in criminal recidivism and 52% greater cost savings than Drug Courts that did not provide parenting classes.

What You Can Do to Be More Family-Centered?

Take the Next Steps
Take the Next Steps
Numbers

What You Can Do to Be More Family-Centered
KEY STRATEGY

Start identifying parents with children (under age 18)

You cannot change what you cannot count
The Judge can:

• Ask clients if they have children

• Ask about other family relationships, such as non-custodial parents (identity, location and quality of relationship)

• Ask questions about family status at intakes
The Team can:

• Reconsider how caseloads are being counted - # of families

• Shift from case managing adults to case managing families

• Ask questions about family structure

• Strategize on how to get entire family into treatment

• Ensure that court information systems including tracking of family members
Identify Key Family Outcomes

What outcomes are most important?
The importance of Data

How Will You Know?

• How are families doing?
• Doing good vs. harm?
• What’s needed for families?

How Will You?

• Monitor and improve performance?
• Demonstrate effectiveness?
• Secure needed resources?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
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| Child Welfare        | • Occurrence/Recurrence of Maltreatment  
                        • Children Remain at Home  
                        • Length of Stay in Out-of-Home Care  
                        • Timeliness of Reunification and Permanency  
                        • Re-entry to Out of Home Care  
                        • Prevention of Substance Exposed Infants |
| Substance Use Disorder | • Access to Treatment  
                          • Retention in Treatment  
                          • Length of Stay in Treatment |
| Parent Education     | • Connection to Parenting  
                        • Completion of Parenting |
| Children’s Intervention| • Connection to Children’s Service  
                          • Completion of Children’s Service |
Take the Next Steps

Needs

What You Can Do to Be More Family-Centered
Family Recovery: Multiple & Complex Needs
Assess and link family to appropriate services to meet identified needs
The Team:

- Can ensure that child’s medical, developmental, behavioral, and emotional needs are assessed
- Ensure children receive appropriate interventions or services for the identified needs
What tool should we use?

What information do we need? What is the purpose?

What are we going to do with the information?

How are we going to share the results collaboratively?
KEY STRATEGY

Provide services that support family needs and the parent-child relationship
Parent-Child: Key Service Components

- Developmental & behavioral screenings and assessments
- Quality and frequent visitation
- Early and ongoing peer recovery support
- Parent-child relationship-based interventions
- Parent Education
- Community and auxiliary support
- Trauma
Knowledge of parenting skills and basic understanding of child development has been identified as a key protective factor against abuse and neglect (Geeraert, 2004; Lundahl, 2006; & Macleod and Nelson, 2000).

The underlying theory of parent training is that (a) parenting skills can improve with training, (b) child outcomes can be improved, and (c) the risk of child abuse and neglect can be reduced (Johnson, Stone, Lou, Ling, Claassen, & Austin, 2008).
When Should We Offer Parent Education?

- Participation in parenting programs can enhance parent motivation and engagement
- Affirms their primary role and identity as a parent
- Focus on their most important need
- Increase self-confidence and equip with needed skills
- Consider any concerns regarding cognitive functioning
- There is no time to lose when it comes to parent-child bond
Parenting Programs

- Celebrating Families - http://www.celebratingfamilies.net/
- Positive Indian Parenting
Things to Consider

• Have you conducted a needs assessment to determine what families need? How will it help achieve desired outcomes?
• Have realistic expectations of their ability to participate - especially in early recovery?
• Does it have a parent-child component?
• Do you have staffing and logistical support for successful implementation?
The Court Can Ask Parents

• “How is your family or parenting (visitation) time with your children?”

• “What are you learning in your parenting class?”

• “Can you share how your substance use disorder has affected your parenting?”
The Court Can Ask Parents (cont.)

- Has everyone in the family been assessed for service needs?
- What services are provided to address specific needs of children and other family members?
- Can children accompany their parent to treatment? If so, are there any restrictions on age and number of children?
- What parenting or family strengthening programs are provided?
- What services are being provided to promote full family wellness?
KEY STRATEGY

Ensure responses to behaviors are sensitive to the needs of families
**Key Principles from FTCs**

**Safety**
- A protective response if a parent’s behavior puts the child at risk

**Therapeutic**
- A response designed to achieve a specific clinical result for parent in treatment

**Motivational**
- Designed to teach the parent how to engage in desirable behavior and achieve a stable lifestyle
Studies indicate that jail sanctions produce diminishing returns after approximately three to five days (Carey et al., 2012; Hawken & Kleiman, 2009).

A multi-site study found that Drug Courts that had a policy of applying jail sanctions of longer than one week were associated with increased recidivism and higher costs (Carey et al., 2012).

Increase the chance of mixing individuals at high and low risk of criminal recidivism; have not been demonstrated to be effective in engaging drug court participants in treatment participation, and may lead to additional trauma for the participant (Edwards, 2010).
When deciding on a response, consider what the impact of that sanction would have on children and the parent-child relationship, and family’s participation in case plan?
Take the Next Steps
Networks

What You Can Do to Be More Family-Centered
The Team can:

• Ask parents if they have an understanding of their child’s identified needs? Are they able to cope with the child’s behavioral, developmental, or emotional

• Ensure that family has access to long-term supportive services

• Provide training and education to the Team, including judicial leaders on the importance of serving children and families
Example: Turning to Community Partners to Serve Families

• Partnered with Linda Ray Center to provide comprehensive family and children services
• Advocated for its treatment partner to provide family therapy
• ADC and treatment provider tracking family outcomes
Things to Consider

• What resources already exist in the community to serve children and families?
• Are you mobilizing and linking to new resources from other agencies that already serve children and families?
• Are child and family-serving agencies on your collaborative team?
• Have you identified shared outcomes to make the case for shared resources?
You do not have to divert resources from treating parents to help their children.

- Children and families have multiple and complex needs.
- Serving these needs will require more resources.
- Build collaborative partnerships and seek out existing resources.
Q&A and Discussion
Big steps
Small steps
Just keep moving
Transitioning to a Family Centered Approach: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from Three Adult Drugs Courts

To download a copy:
3Ns Handout – Taking the Next Steps Towards and Family-Centered Approach

Explore further with your Team about possible next steps you can take to move practice.