



Addressing the Child Welfare and Substance Abuse Link

Working Together to Strengthen
North Carolina Families - Part II
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[Relevant Clinical Issues]

- Clinical issues for parents with substance abuse disorders include:
 - stigma (especially for mothers),
 - pregnancy and motherhood,
 - parenting needs and skills,
 - sexual abuse,
 - domestic violence, and
 - psychiatric issues.

[Stigma: Gender Considerations]

- Addiction is still viewed by many as a moral and not a medical problem.
- Stigma is particularly negative for female addicts and especially for pregnant and parenting women with addictive disorders.
- Family and partner support is different for women with substance use disorders

Adults in Public SA Treatment

(Source: NCTOPPS data)

- During the 06-07 SFY 58% of adult substance abuse treatment clients (male and female) who were enrolled in NC publicly funded programs reported having children under the age of 16.
 - 40% reported that they had custody of none of their children, and
 - 12% reported that they had custody of some of their children.

Women in Perinatal Initiative

- On average, just over half of the women in the NC Perinatal and Maternal Substance Abuse Initiative report being mandated to treatment.
 - Of these, approximately 75% are mandated by DSS to treatment.

Women in Perinatal Initiative

- Women in substance abuse treatment in NC report high rates of past victimization.
 - 52% report they have experienced domestic violence at some time in their lives, and
 - 44% report having experienced sexual abuse.
- Substance abuse treatment clients with PTSD are at high risk for relapse, and without attention to both disorders, they are less likely to complete treatment.

[Clinical Issues for Children]

- Among children exposed to family addiction and violence, studies have found:
 - increased depression,
 - reduced social competencies,
 - anxiety,
 - sleep disturbances,
 - cognitive delays,
 - aggressive behavior, and even
 - intense terror and fear of death.

[Summary of Background]

- The relationship between child maltreatment and substance abuse is complicated by the presence of other personal, health, environmental, social and economic factors that confound the process of securing safe, stable homes for children, as well as hinder the treatment process.
- For substance abuse treatment to be effective and for children to remain safe, the full spectrum of major family problems must be addressed.

[Related Resources and Expertise]

- Maternal and Perinatal Substance Abuse Initiative (22/10)
- CASAWORKS (9)
- Work First QSAPs
- Practice Improvement Collaborative
- Weaving it together - North Carolina Regional Partnership Grant

[Regional Partnership Grants]

- The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 reauthorized the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program with funding for FY's 2007 - 2011.
- As part of this, funding for the RPG grants is \$40 million for FY 2007, decreasing to \$20 million for FY 2010 and FY 2011.
- 53 competitive Regional Partnership Grants were awarded across the nation. Grants range (over the life of the grant) from \$1,500,000 to \$3,742,000.
- Grantees must match awards at varying levels, depending on the grant year.

[Regional Partnership Grants]

- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Administrative Office for Children and Families (ACF) seeks to promote the development of strategies to *improve collaboration* between child welfare and substance abuse services providers in order to improve the *safety, permanency, and well-being of children and their families.*

[NC Regional Partnership]

- NC Division of Social Services
- NC Division of MH/DD/SAS
- NC Administrative Office of the Courts
- Governor's Institute on Alcohol and Substance Abuse
 - And over 60 community service agency, tribal, elected officials, and court representatives

NC RPG – Robeson County Bridges for Families Program

The goal of the Bridges for Families program is to **increase the capacity** of substance abuse treatment providers, the court, and the child welfare system in Robeson County, North Carolina, in order to **improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children** who are in out-of-home placement or who are at risk of out-of-home placement as a result of their parent's or caretaker's methamphetamine or other substance abuse, as well to **improve the overall well-being and functional capacity of their families.**

[Successes at Six Months]

- New FDTC established
- Baseline trainings
 - DSS Meth 101
 - Judges and FDTC team
 - Seeking Safety
 - Strengthening Families
 - Matrix
 - TF-CBT
- Implementation team established
 - Ownership and enthusiasm

NC RPG – the Robeson County Bridges for Families Program

- Strong commitment from core RPG team
- Early enthusiasm and investment by many providers and public officials in Robeson
- This project represents efforts to integrate and implement state-of-the-art or best practices in a rural setting for:
 - Family Drug Treatment Courts
 - Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment
 - Child Welfare

[Strengths]

- To better serve NC families, linkages between agencies are being established and strengthened at the state and local levels
- Lessons learned will inform state policy decisions for this target population and evidence based practices
- Process and outcome evaluations are used to identify areas for early attention, including where additional resources are needed and to determine what is effective in North Carolina

Working Together to Strengthen North Carolina Families

