



# Addressing the Needs of Children/Adolescents of Parents In Recovery from Substance Use and Co-occurring Disorders

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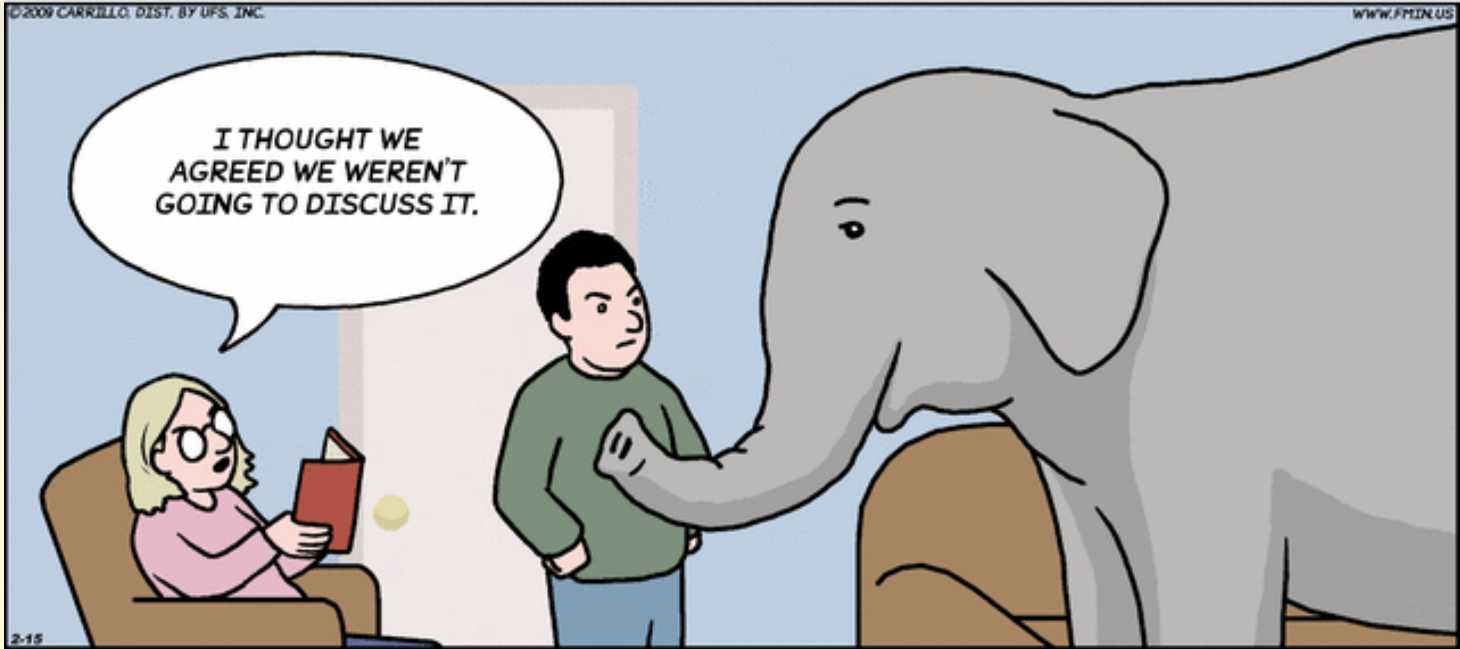
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# Common Effects of Substance Use Disorders on the Family

- Preoccupation with obtaining the substance is the parent's first priority, so children/adolescents' needs may frequently not be met
- Frequent physical absence of parent in order to obtain or use the substance
- Secrecy & isolation







# Common Effects of Substance Use Disorders on the Family

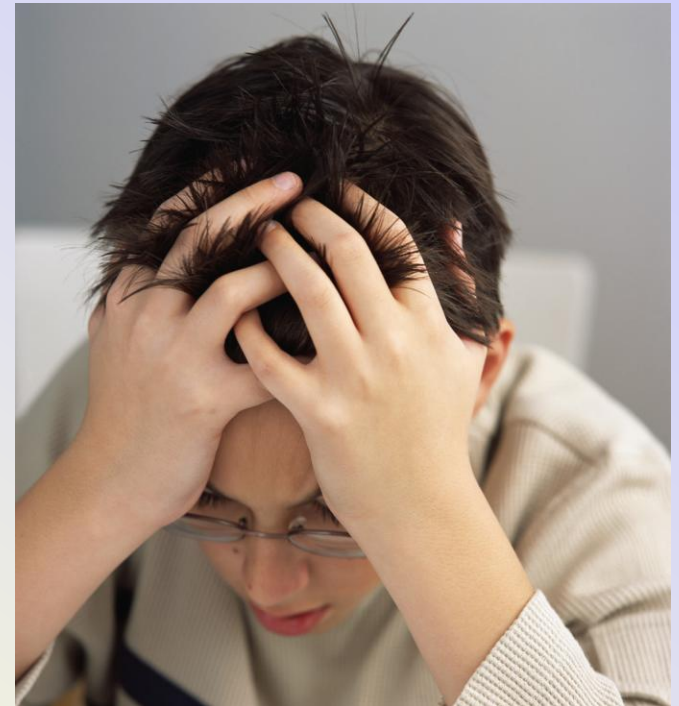
- Inconsistent discipline – may vacillate between lack of supervision & rigid control
- Low self-esteem may lead parents to expect children/adolescents to fill their needs
- Lack of safety – violence in home, unsafe caretakers, unsafe visitors





# Common Effects of Addiction on the Family

- Emotional disconnection caused by the preoccupation, the effects of the substance, or the emotional effects of use & withdrawal such as irritability, anxiety & depression
- Chaotic lifestyles that lack structure & consistency





# Factors that Affect the Parent-Child Relationship

- Parents may lack exposure to appropriate parenting models
- Traumatic memories may be stimulated for parents who were abused as children
- Skill deficits due to parents' own histories
  - Managing affect
  - Self-soothing
  - Empathy
- Shame, guilt and remorse for past behavior
- Balancing recovery needs and needs of parenting



# Possible Impacts of Family Substance Use on Children and Adolescents

## *Feelings*

- Don't feel – numbing
- Can't trust own feelings
- See anger as “out of control,” either imitate this or fearful of it
- Fear – displaced or repressed
- Shame and guilt
- Ungrieved losses

## *Behavior*

- Impulsive behavior
- Lack of internalized image of right and wrong
- Unhealthy, maladaptive roles in family which don't work in the outside world
- Unhealthy coping strategies



# Possible Impacts of Family Substance Use on Children and Adolescents

## ***Relationships***

- Dysfunctional relationships
- Isolation – don't develop a support system – don't talk, don't trust

## ***Self***

- Poor self-esteem
- Underdeveloped sense of own power and mastery
- Don't trust or use own judgment

## ***Emotional Problems***

- Higher levels of anxiety, depression and stress
- Girls – depression, eating disorders, physical stress-related symptoms
- Boys – speech, behavior, conduct disorders



# Children and Adolescents at Risk

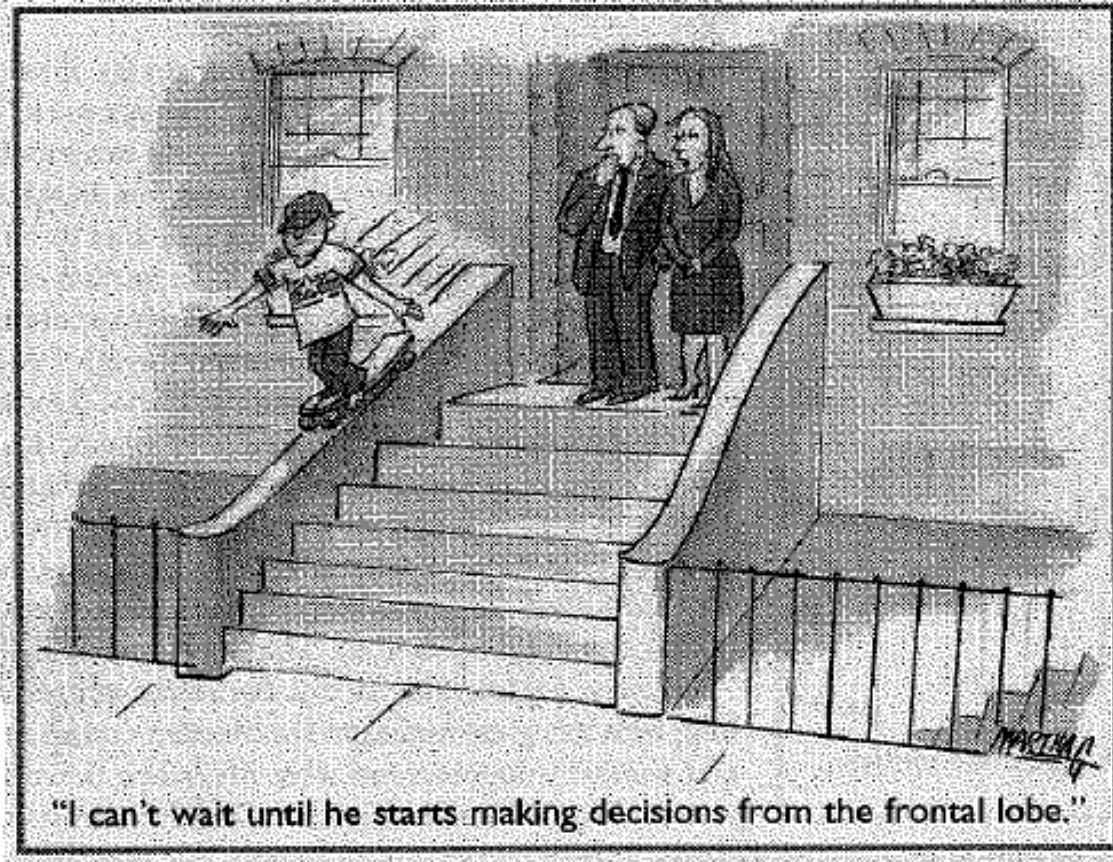
Lack of resources, substance use and mental health disorders, family violence, and increased family stress impact child development:

- **Physical** (motor challenges, unsafe spaces)
- **Social-emotional** (insecure attachment, behavior, low self-esteem)
- **Cognitive** (lack of appropriate stimulation, ability to focus)
- **Communication** (limited or inappropriate language stimulation/interaction)
- **Adaptive** (age appropriate independence and skills for self-care)



# Child Development Does Not Wait







# Stress in Children and Adolescents

- **Positive stress:** moderate, short-lived; normal part of life; essential to healthy development
- **Tolerable stress:** significant but infrequent; nurturing parent or caregiver helps child feel safe; calms stress response
- **Toxic stress:** Strong, frequent or prolonged activation of body's stress management system, can impact brain architecture particularly in the absence of nurturing parent or caregiver



# Reducing Stress in Children and Adolescents

- Safety
- Structure (schedules/routines)
- Clarity
- Expectations
- Calm and appropriately stimulating environments for younger children



# Brainstorm

What are some of the ways that you seek to minimize stress for children and adolescents?



# Family-Centered Approaches

- Parenting/recovery occurs within family systems
- Strength-Based
- Address needs of both parents and children/adolescents
- Education about substance use and co-occurring disorders for all family members
- Impact of trauma integrated throughout



# Family-Centered Approaches

- Developing healthy, nurturing relationships
- Knowledge of parenting and child/adolescent development
- Developing effective problem solving and communication skills between parents and children/adolescents
- Supporting/enabling social and emotional competence of children and adolescents
- Appropriate limit-setting



# Interventions

- Individual Psychoeducation: substance use and co-occurring disorders (for both parents and children/adolescents)
- Groups for parents and children/adolescents (WELL Child, Children's Program Kit, *Nurturing Program for Families in Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery*, Parent Time, Seeking Safety)
- Al-Anon/Al-Ateen
- SCAP, SAFE, LADDER, YARD



# Values Guiding the Nurturing Program

- Love of life & learning
- Respect for self, others & the environment
- Fun & laughter
- Recovery happens in families & in relationships, as well as in the individual
- Parenting is a relationship, not only a set of skills
- Nurturing oneself is the first step toward nurturing others



# Format

## **17 Sessions; 90 minutes each**

- Each session:
  - Information for group facilitator
  - Begins with ice breaker
  - Closes with wrap-up
- Many sessions – additional material on issues or concerns that may come up during that session



## Responds To...

- Array of learning styles
  - Literacy
  - Multiple intelligences
- Exploration of cultural heritage
  - Providing opportunities to explore & appreciate both own heritage & heritage of other participants



# Topics

- Hope
- Growth & trust
- Families
- Feelings
- Self-esteem
- Making connections:
  - Communication
  - Problem solving
  - Body talk
  - What babies teach us
- Building structure
  - Managing stress
  - Setting boundaries
  - Schedules & routines
  - Safety
- Guiding behavior
- Knowing our values
- Recovery: love & loss
- Having fun



**IHR Video:**

# *Hope Rising*

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# Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) and Assertive Continuing Care (ACC)

- Individualized, flexible behavioral approaches focusing on the development of coping skills for both youth and primary caregivers
- Proven to be effective in building community capacity for family centered treatment
- A-CRA is a twelve to fourteen session, manual-guided treatment
- ACC provides continuing care for adolescents
- ACC clinicians are assertive in their efforts to engage both youth and families by using home and other community visits and linking to other needed services
- Interventions utilized in LADDER, SCAP, and YARD Projects



# Ladder Project

## Building Recovery One Step at a Time

- Collaboration between IHR and High Point Treatment Center, funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, sited at High Point Treatment Center
- Assessments utilizing the Global Appraisal of Individual Needs (GAIN) assessment tool; treatment models include Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) and Assertive Continuing Care (ACC)
- Young adults, 18-24 who have been civilly committed to High Point's Men's Addiction Treatment Center (MATC) or Women's Addiction Treatment Center (WATC)
- Treatment is provided by a clinician at home, in the community, or in an outpatient setting – wherever clients prefer

For more information, please contact Maggie Giles, MA

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# Suffolk County Adolescent Project (SCAP)

- Designed to build the capacity in Suffolk County to provide services for adolescents with substance use disorders
- Funded through the Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services
- Partners: Dimock Community Health Center and North Suffolk Mental Health Association

For more information please contact Jennifer Rifkin, LICSW



# YARD

## Young Adult Recovery Destination

- Collaboration of IHR, the Gavin Foundation and the Massachusetts Organization for Addiction and Recovery, funded by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
- Young adults, ages 18–24, in recovery from substance use, located in South Boston
- Individual counseling, relapse prevention, group counseling, home and community based services, case management, education and employment assistance, and services linkage and referrals
- Evidence-based interventions such as Assertive Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) coupled with Assertive Continuing Care (ACC)
- Groups, workshops, speakers, and classes, peer mentoring and support activities (including Recovery Coaches)

For more information, please contact Maggie Giles, MA

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# Focusing on the Child/Adolescent-Caregiver Relationship



- Coach
- Model
- Interpret
- Facilitate
- Encourage
- Provide information
- Skill training



## Rules to practice by:

- Human beings are remarkably resilient
- It's never too early or too late to intervene
- There must be a commitment from us – the professionals – to keep children and adolescents, their voices, and their stories at the core of our work
- We need to understand the full emotional impact of violence on children and adolescents
- Work from a position of constant compassion – easy to say, not easy to do
- Care for your colleagues and care for yourself



# Attributes of Resilience

- ***Social Competence***  
Flexibility, empathy, sense of humor, being responsive
- ***Problem Solving Skills***  
Thinking abstractly, reflective and responsible
- ***Autonomy***  
Self-esteem, impulse control, sense of self
- ***Sense of Purpose/Future***  
Goal directness, achievement motivation, educational aspirations, hopefulness





# Profile of a Resilient Child

“Those who work well,  
play well,  
love well, and  
expect well.”

*Source: Werner & Smith, 1982*



# Resources and References

- Children of Substance Abusers Resource List, <http://womenandchildren.treatment.org/documents/cosa-resource-508v.pdf>
- National Association for Children of Alcoholics <http://www.nacoa.org/>
- TIE Women's Forum, Children & Families page <http://womenandchildren.treatment.org/resources-children-families.asp>
- The National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare [www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov](http://www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov)
- Adverse Childhood Experiences Study website <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/ace/index.htm>
- National Abandoned Infants Assistance Center <http://aia.berkeley.edu/>
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Center for Excellence <http://www.fascenter.samhsa.gov/>



# Selected Curriculum Resources

- The Nurturing Program for Families in Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery  
[www.healthrecovery.org](http://www.healthrecovery.org)
- Children's Program Kit  
<http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/promos/coa/>
- Celebrating Families  
[www.celebratingfamilies.net/](http://www.celebratingfamilies.net/)
- Incredible Years  
[www.incredibleyears.com](http://www.incredibleyears.com)
- Strengthening Families  
[www.strengtheningfamilies.org](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org)



# Resources

- ARC: Attachment Regulation and Competency  
[www.traumacenter.org](http://www.traumacenter.org)
- National Traumatic Stress Network  
[www.nctsnet.org](http://www.nctsnet.org)
- "Adult Children of Alcoholics" by Janet G. Woititz, Ed.D.
- "Understanding Addiction and Recovery Through a Child's Eyes" by Jerry Moe