Supporting Families of Youth & Young Adults With Substance Use Disorders

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Learning Goals

✔ To understand how the family system is impacted by addiction, and key challenges faced by parents/caregivers of youth and young adults with substance use disorders.

✔ To identify best practices (evidence-based) for engaging and supporting families in the recovery process for their loved one.

✔ To review resources to support families of youth and young adults with substance use disorders.
Why Focus on the Family?

• Families need help too - addiction affects everyone.

• Nurture the soil - the plant will have a much better chance of thriving.

• Break the cycle of intergenerational addiction.
Defining Family

“Happiness is having large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.” - *George Burns*

“A dysfunctional family is any family with more than one person in it.” - *Mary Karr*

“I sustain myself with the love of family.” - *Maya Angelou*

“Family is a life jacket in the stormy sea of life.” - *J.K. Rowling*
Family Systems Theory

• Individuals cannot be understood in isolation from one another, but rather as a part of their family.

• The family is an emotional unit; each person affects all the other members.

• Each member plays a specific role. Based on the roles within the system, people interact with and respond to one another in a certain way.

Dr. Murray Bowen; learn more - www.thebowencenter.org/research-in-bowen-theory
How Can Addiction Impact the Family System?

- Stability of the home
- Family unity
- Family dynamics
- Mental health (stress, trauma, anxiety, depression, etc.)
- Increased risk of interpersonal violence
- Increased risk of child abuse and neglect
- Physical health
- Finances
Youth Substance Use Disorders: Developmental Challenges

• Youth are more likely to hide their substance use.
• Youth often mistrust adult intentions.
• Youth often resist treatment, and are less likely to feel they need help or to seek out treatment.
• Stigma leads to secrecy and isolation - for youth and families.
• Healing takes place through connection.
Recovery and the Family System

• For youth who use substances, research shows that family involvement consistently produces better outcomes (vs. individual treatment for youth).

• Family members play a key role in preventing youth from developing substance use disorders, as well as helping sustain them in recovery.

• When parents/caregivers get help for their substance use disorder, the family can recover too.

Challenges Faced by Families of Young People with SUDs

- **Confusion** - what’s going on with my child?
- **Stigma** - parents feel shame, judgment, and fear
- **Sadness and anxiety** - what will happen to my child?
- **Loneliness** - how can I share what’s really going on?
- **Navigating treatment** - how do I know what to do?
Challenges Faced by Families of Young People with SUDs

- **Limited resources** - financial, emotional, etc.
- **Unresolved parent/caregiver issues** - substance use, domestic violence, mental health issues, etc.
- **Cultural barriers** - language, religion, racism, etc.
- **Logistics** - transportation, child care, insurance, etc.
- **Burnout and secondary trauma** - various symptoms
Secondary Trauma for Families

Symptoms are similar to PTSD:

• **Physical ailments**: *Somatization, frequent illness*

• **Intrusive thoughts**: *Flashbacks, nightmares, obsessing*

• **Disrupted emotional regulation**: *Numb, reactive*

• **Disrupted sense of self, others, and the world**: *changes in trust, safety, connection, control, etc.*
Engaging Families in Recovery is Important

• To help caregivers better understand addiction and what their child is going through.

• To reduce stigma and improve the family’s willingness to support their loved one’s recovery.

• To provide information on how to best support young people in treatment and recovery.

• To enhance family resilience and healing for all.
Key Principle: Engaging Families in Recovery

Our role is not to “fix” the family, but to empathize and support positive development of:

- Communication skills
- Healthy boundaries
- Flexibility and resiliency
- Positive coping strategies
- Compassion, understanding, and insight
Key Principle: Engaging Families in Recovery

How can we help families develop in these areas? Through...

- Respect
- Education
- Inclusion
- Referrals
- Resources
Engaging Families in Recovery: Respect

• Respect is essential.
• Focus on empathy and understanding.
• Be nonjudgmental and affirming.
• Use the “spirit” of Motivational Interviewing:
  - Compassion
  - Acceptance
  - Partnership
  - Evocation
Engaging Families: Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

- Working together
- We are both experts
- People are competent

- Everyone has absolute worth
- Nonjudgmental
- Affirming
- Autonomy support (right to make choices)

- Elicit ideas
- Evoke insight
- Focus on strengths

- Empathy; active support

(Miller & Rolnick, 2013)
Engaging Families in Recovery: Education

Help educate families about...

- Addiction
- Recovery, relapse, and safety planning
- Intersection with mental health and trauma
- Navigating treatment and recovery supports
- How to help get your loved one into treatment
- Importance of self-care
What Families Need to Know

• Addiction is a chronic, family disease.

• There is hope! It’s treatable.

• It’s not your fault.

• Relapse is part of the disease; have a safety plan.

• Healing trauma and mental health is important too.
What Families Need to Know

• Recovery takes time - there are no quick fixes.

• Recovery has many pathways.

• You are not alone - getting support is essential.

• Focus on self care - put your own oxygen mask on first.

• Keep learning about addiction and recovery.
Engaging Families in Recovery: Inclusion

• **Emphasize family involvement** as key to their child’s recovery - and involve families as much as possible.

• **Include families in discussions** about treatment. Invite them to participate in family sessions and meetings.

• **Help address barriers to engagement** - transportation, child care, cultural differences, etc.

• **Create a warm, inviting, trauma-informed space** that is welcoming to families from all backgrounds.
Engaging Families in Recovery: Make Warm Referrals

• Connect families with key resources to support their own journeys in recovery.

• Connect families to services and supports to meet their basic needs, health, and well-being.

• Make warm referrals to help families navigate their child’s aftercare plan (for treatment and recovery).
Engaging Families in Recovery: Share Resources

• Share evidence-based best practices for families to help their loved one engage in treatment.

• Share peer recovery supports for families.

• Share resources to help families continue learning about addiction and recovery.

• Share resources to help families with their own “parallel process” of growth and recovery.
Family Recovery as a Parallel Process

• Parents/caregivers can work on their own patterns and issues that may negatively impact family dynamics and their child’s recovery.

• Families learn to support their loved one without trying to rescue, control, or punish them.

• The goal: nurture the soil, so newly healthy plants can be repotted and continue to thrive.
Books to Support the Parental Journey of Healing

• The Journey of the Heroic Parent by Brad Reedy

• The Parallel Process: Growing Alongside Your Adolescent or Young Adult Child in Treatment by Krissy Pozatek

• Not by Chance: How Parents Boost their Teen’s Success In and After Treatment by Tim Thayne

• The Anatomy of Peace: Resolving the Heart of Conflict by The Arbinger Institute
Family Recovery Resources Checklist

- Harm Reduction
- CRAFT / Invitation to Change
- Peer support & parent coaching
- Outpatient Family Services
- Educational Resources

Share these resources with all families in recovery
Harm Reduction: What Families Can Do

- Encourage families to get trained to use naloxone (Narcan) and have Narcan kits on hand, to reverse an opioid overdose and save a life.

- Work with each family to create a family safety plan in case of a substance use or mental health crisis.

- Role model no substance use at home. Lock up any drugs, alcohol, or other substances (e.g. prescription opioids). Create a recovery-supportive environment.

To learn more: www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose/naloxone; www.nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/naloxone
Family Recovery Model: CRAFT and the Invitation to Change

- Imagine if there was a proven way to help families...
  - Reduce their loved one’s substance use
  - Get their loved one into treatment
  - Reduce their own pain, anger, & worry
  - Improve their own well-being

- Luckily, this model exists, along with a compassionate method to empower families to gain these skills. Let all your families know about CRAFT and the Invitation to Change!
CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training) Principles

- **Behaviors make sense** - understand why youth are using substances
- **Active listening** - respond in a way that encourages change
- **Positive reinforcement** - focus on what’s going well (vs. what’s not); reinforcers include a hug, fun activity, favorite meal, etc.
- **Natural consequences** - allow others (teachers, employers, law enforcement, etc.) to provide boundaries around substance use
- **Self-care** - role model healthy coping skills and self-compassion

www.robertjmeyersphd.com/craft
Invitation to Change: Key Concepts

Understanding:
❖ Behaviors make sense
❖ One size doesn’t fit all
❖ Ambivalence is normal

Awareness:
❖ Self-awareness
❖ Willingness
❖ Self-compassion

Action:
❖ Communication tools
❖ Behavior tools

Science + Kindness = Change

Learn more: www.cmcffc.org/approach/invitation-to-change
CRAFT and Invitation to Change: Books

❖ The Beyond Addiction Workbook for Families and Friends: Evidence-Based Skills to Help a Loved One Make Positive Change by J. Foote, et al. (full guide; free handouts from New Harbinger Publications)

❖ Beyond Addiction: How Science & Kindness Help People Change by J. Foote, et al. (Center for Motivation and Change)

❖ The Invitation to Change: A Short Guide - www.invitationtochange.com (free to download)
CRAFT and Invitation to Change: Books

- The Compassion Antidote: A Path to Change for You and Your Child Struggling with Substance Use by Catherine Taughinbaugh

- The Parent's 20 Minute Guide by the Center for Motivation and Change (free to download)

- Get Your Loved One Sober: Alternatives to Nagging, Pleading, and Threatening by Robert Myers and Brenda Wolfe
Resources to learn CRAFT (sample list):

- Partnership to End Addiction: www.drugfree.org/parenting-toward-recovery (CRAFT skills info, free parent coaching using Invitation to Change Approach, etc.)
- Allies in Recovery: www.alliesinrecovery.net (online course and workshops, videos, support, training groups, and expert guidance)
- We The Village: www.wethevillage.co (online course)
- SMART Recovery Family & Friends: www.smartrecovery.org/family (uses CRAFT model)
- CRAFT Certified Clinicians: www.robertjmeyersphd.com/download/CertifiedTherapists.pdf
- Parent CRAFT: www.cadenceonline.com (online course)

For more resources - Helping Families Help: www.helpingfamilieshelp.com
Peer Support Groups for Families and Parent Coaching

- Encourage families to join a peer support group:
  - Connect with others who are going through a similar experience
  - Gain shared understanding, respect, and empowerment
  - Stay updated on resources and continue learning about addiction
  - Stay engaged in the recovery process

- Refer all families to local and/or virtual peer support groups.

- Tell families about free parent coaching too!
Peer Support for Families: 12-Step Groups (sample list)

• Al-Anon/Alateen Groups: www.al-anon.alateen.org
  Peer support meetings for those impacted by a loved one’s alcohol use. Alateen offers meetings and online support for 13-18 year olds.

• Nar-Anon Groups: www.naranonctma.org
  Peer support meetings for those impacted by a loved one’s drug use.

• Families Anonymous: www.familiesanonymous.org
  Peer support meetings for families affected by a loved one’s SUD and behavioral issues.

• Hazelden Betty Ford:
  www.hazeldenbettyford.org/treatment/family-children/family-program
  Weekly virtual family support groups; free, one-day programs (in English and Spanish), including specifically for families of youth and young adults. Hazelden also funds an online community for all those touched by addiction: www.thedailypledge.org
Peer Support for Families: Non 12-Step Groups (sample list)

- **SMART Recovery Family & Friends:** [www.smartrecovery.org/family](http://www.smartrecovery.org/family)
  Peer support meetings based on SMART Recovery and CRAFT offer families and friends tools to effectively support their loved ones, while learning to cope.

- **Herren Project:** [www.herrenproject.org/online-support-groups](http://www.herrenproject.org/online-support-groups)
  Weekly online meetings for families impacted by addiction, support and education (groups for parents, families, spouses, siblings, grief, etc), webinars, consultations.

- **Learn to Cope:** [www.learn2cope.org](http://www.learn2cope.org)
  Peer support network based in Massachusetts offering education, resources, virtual and in-person support groups in English and Spanish, webinars, Well-being Weekends, etc.

- **LifeRing Secular Recovery:** [www.lifering.org/family-and-friends-weekly-meeting](http://www.lifering.org/family-and-friends-weekly-meeting)
  New Family & Friends Weekly Meeting via Zoom (started March 2022)
Parent Coaching:  [www.drugfree.org/article/parent-coaching](http://www.drugfree.org/article/parent-coaching)

- Get support from another parent who has lived experience with a child’s problematic substance use or addiction; free

- Short-term: typically 5 phone calls, over a 6-week period

- Volunteer coaches are trained by the CMC: Foundation for Change, using the Invitation to Change Approach

- Request a parent coach through the Partnership to End Addiction’s helpline: [www.drugfree.org/helpline](http://www.drugfree.org/helpline)
Additional Support Resources for Families (sample list)

- **Grief Support**: Refer families who have lost a loved one due to substance use to a group, such as Grief Recovery After Substance Passing (GRASP): [www.grasphelp.org](http://www.grasphelp.org). Find more resources at [www.drugfree.org/article/grief-resources-for-families](http://www.drugfree.org/article/grief-resources-for-families).


- **Mental Health Peer Support for Families**: NAMI offers family groups, among other peer supports, education, advocacy, and more nationwide: [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

- **Online Support Groups for Families**: One example is Magnolia New Beginnings: [www.magnolianewbeginnings.org/support.html](http://www.magnolianewbeginnings.org/support.html) (chapters by state; chapters by category such as grandparents, grief, siblings, etc.; uses CRAFT).
Outpatient Family Services: Evidence-Based Approaches

Evidence-based models to support families and reduce youth substance use:

- **CRAFT**: [www.helpingfamilieshelp.com](http://www.helpingfamilieshelp.com)
- **A-CRA**: [www.chestnut.org/ebtx/treatments-and-research/treatments/a-cra](http://www.chestnut.org/ebtx/treatments-and-research/treatments/a-cra)
- **ARISE**: [www.arise-network.com](http://www.arise-network.com)
- **Brief Strategic Family Therapy**: [www.brief-strategic-family-therapy.com](http://www.brief-strategic-family-therapy.com)

Promising family therapies:

- **Multidimensional Family Therapy**: [www.mdft.org](http://www.mdft.org)
- **Multisystemic Family Therapy**: [www.mstservices.com](http://www.mstservices.com)
Outpatient Family Service: A-CRA *(Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach)*

- Community-based, brief treatment for ages 12-24
- Includes individual sessions for the client, parent/caregiver sessions, and family sessions.
- Goal is to help young person develop a healthy pro-social lifestyle more rewarding than using behavior
- Promotes abstinence, positive social activity and peer relationships, and improved relationships with family.

To learn more: [www.chestnut.org/ebtx/treatments-and-research/treatments/a-cra](http://www.chestnut.org/ebtx/treatments-and-research/treatments/a-cra)
Educational Resource: Partnership to End Addiction

• Intervention and treatment resources
• Videos (talking with youth about substance use, CRAFT, etc.)
• Toolkits for parents, guides on a variety of topics, etc.
• Interactive online parent community
• Bilingual helpline - 1-855-DRUG-FREE or text HOPEMA to 55753
• Free parent coaching using CRAFT model

www.drugfree.org
Educational Resource: Partnership to End Addiction

Downloadable parent resources (sample list - more at www.drugfree.org):

- MARIJUANA TALK KIT:
  What you need to know to talk with your teen about marijuana

- VAPING:
  What Families Need to Know to Help Protect Children, Teens and Young Adults

- HEROIN, FENTANYL & OTHER OPIOIDS:
  All about the epidemic and what you can do.

- Intervention eBook:
  What to do if your child is using drugs.
Educational Resources: Supporting Youth Impacted by Addiction

NACoA - www.nacoa.org. Focused on supporting children impacted by family substance use disorders. Free toolkit, Celebrating Families curriculum, etc.


Sesame Street in Communities - www.sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/parental-addiction. Activities, videos, and resources to support families in recovery.

Additional Educational Resources *(sample list)*

- **NIDA** (National Institute on Drug Abuse): [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)
- **SAMHSA** (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration): [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)
- **Family Resource Center**: [www.familyresourcectr.org](http://www.familyresourcectr.org)
- **Shatterproof** (resources and help navigating treatment): [www.shatterproof.org](http://www.shatterproof.org)
- **NAADAC** (free recorded webinars): [www.naadac.org](http://www.naadac.org)
- **Addiction Policy Forum**: [www.addictionpolicy.org](http://www.addictionpolicy.org)
- **Institute for Health and Recovery**: [www.healthrecovery.org/trainings](http://www.healthrecovery.org/trainings)
- **AdCare Educational Institute**: [www.adcare-educational.org](http://www.adcare-educational.org)
Help Families Navigate Treatment for Youth and Young Adults

• Help families understand the importance of finding high-quality, licensed treatment programs.

• Help families navigate the continuum of care for youth and young adults with SUDs.

• Help families find recovery supports for their loved ones, including peer recovery support groups, peer recovery centers, and recovery coaches.

www.drugfree.org/article/navigating-the-treatment-system
Help Families Find Treatment and Support - for the Whole Family

SAMHSA - Substance Use Treatment Locator - www.findtreatment.gov
• Find local, licensed substance use treatment. Call 800-662-HELP (4357). Learn about treatment options (levels of care), how to pay for treatment, and understanding substance use and mental health disorders.

SAFE Family Support Locator - www.safelocator.org
• Developed by the Partnership to End Addiction and SAFE Project. Helps families locate support and treatment for themselves and their loved ones, including CRAFT resources.

ATLAS - www.treatmentatlas.org
• Search for and compare addiction treatment facilities to find high-quality care. Currently covers 10 states (hopes to expand) - DE, FL, LA, MA, NJ, NY, NC, OK, PA, WV.
Supporting Family Recovery: Program Recommendations

✔ Develop a Family Recovery Resource Guide - share with families as early as possible in recovery process.

✔ Support Staff Training - help staff learn how to best support families, respond to calls and provide resources.

✔ Offer Family Programming - include families in program activities, counseling, support groups, etc.

✔ Inform Clients of Family Resources - share family resources with clients at admission and in policy manual.
Celebrating Family Recovery and Advocacy

• Family recovery is hard work. Highlight the successes!

• Celebrating recovery helps to...
  ✔ Build community
  ✔ Fight stigma and educate others
  ✔ Empower those who are still struggling to know they’re not alone.

• Join advocacy efforts to help more families in recovery!

Learn more - Faces & Voices of Recovery: www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/resources/recovery-stories
Focus on Self Care: Countering Secondary Trauma

• “An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly.” - Unknown

• “You yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.” - Buddha
Final Thoughts...

• Thank you for taking time to learn!

• Thank you for your hard work!

• Thank you making a difference!
More Resources...

The Beyond Addiction Workbook for Family and Friends (worksheets/handouts):

Navigating Treatment and Addiction: A Guide for Families:
www.addictionpolicy.org/post/navigating-treatment-and-addiction-a-guide-for-families

SAMHSA - Alcohol and Drug Addiction Happens in the Best of Families:

The Ripple Effect: The Impact of the Opioid Epidemic on Children and Families (2019):
www.uhfnyc.org/media/filer_public/17/2c/172ca968-43aa-45f9-a290-50018e85a9d8/uhf-opioids-20190315.pdf

NIDA Principles of Adolescent Substance Use Disorder Treatment: A Research-Based Guide:

How to Navigate the Treatment System (Partnership to End Addiction):
www.drugfree.org/article/navigating-the-treatment-system
Questions, Comments, and Thank You!

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