

## From Abstinence to Recovery: The Transformation of the Travis County Family Drug Treatment Court

Presenters:

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## What to expect for today

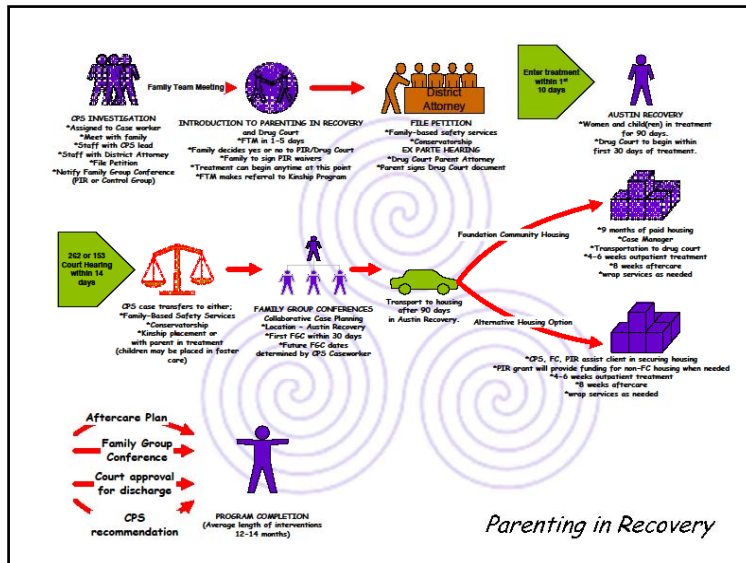
- Introduction
- Ice Breaker
- Process of Transformation
  - Opportunities
  - Accountability
  - Recovery
- Summary – Lessons Learned

## Getting to know you

- Simon Says .....

## Who, What and Where

- Parenting in Recovery (PIR)
  - Five year Federal RPG grant
  - Women & children with child welfare involvement due to mother's substance abuse
  - Continuum of services/care
- Travis County Family Drug Treatment Court (FDTC)
  - One year renewable grant – Office of the Governor
  - Funding for DCC and drug testing, limited services
  - Designated Court docket



## Who we serve

- Demographics
  - Race, Gender, Average Age
  - Mental Health, Cognitive Capacity
  - Education, Work History
  - Criminal History
  - Trauma History
  - Drug of Choice
  - Prior Child Protective Services Involvement
  - Number Served & Graduation Rate

## How we serve

- Abstinence to Recovery: The Transformation
  - From: Traditional child welfare/criminal justice success model focused on abstinence from drugs & alcohol (clean UA's) and compliance with standardized court orders/program expectations
  - To: Non-traditional recovery success model focused on abstinence from drugs & alcohol + recovery from substance dependence (personal growth & change) with individualized case planning that addresses the unique needs of individual participants & their families

## Opportunities



## Opportunities – Community

- Inventory local resources
- Understand local areas of interest / focus
- Be aware of existing partnerships
- Build on your community strengths

## Opportunities - Partnerships

- Diverse Partnership
  - Includes all levels of staff
  - Varied expertise
  - All stakeholders
  - Balance of authority & investment
- Understand needs, strengths, capacity and challenges of each partner
- Know the history of partners
- Identify person whose role it is to develop, nurture and sustain the partnership
- Development of a Charter, Mission, and Governing Bodies

## Opportunities – Training/Continuing Education

- Develop a broad, consistent body of knowledge shared by all partners
- Essential areas of focus: Child welfare, substance abuse, recovery, mental health
- Interdisciplinary focus on core partnership with expansion to the community

## Opportunities – Substance Abuse Treatment

- Integral Partner
- Continuum of Care
- Innovations
  - Length of stay
  - Trauma informed care
  - Progressive programming
  - Case management

## Opportunities – Recovery Supports

- Life Skills Support
  - System Navigation
  - Documents & Identification
  - Applications
  - Resolution of Minor Legal Issues
  - Basic Decorum
  - Transportation
- Housing
  - Sober Housing versus Independent Living

## Opportunities – Recovery Supports

- Mental Health
  - Psychiatric Care & Medication
  - Psychological Evaluation
  - Therapy
  - Trauma Informed Treatment
- Domestic Violence Services
  - Recognition
  - Advocacy & Support Services

## Opportunities – Recovery Supports

- Education/Employment
  - GED to Employment to Job Readiness
  - Balancing Expectations of Recovery, Parenting, & Drug Court
- Parent Training
  - Individualized
  - Home-Based
  - Curriculum, Follow-Up Sessions, Therapeutic
- Peer Recovery Coaching
  - Individualized
  - Life Skills Support
  - Connection to the Recovery Community
  - Overcoming Obstacles to Recovery

## Opportunities – Recovery Supports

- Medical/Dental
  - Untreated medical/dental needs
  - Physical wellness as a part of Recovery
  - Match participants to resources
    - Lack of dental care resources
    - Lack of prescription medication resources



## Accountability



## Accountability – FDTC Team

- Interdisciplinary Team
- Diversity of Experience
- Tolerance of Other's Perspectives/ Mutual Respect
- Shared Understanding of Recovery Philosophy
  - Compliance vs. Inner Change (Surrender)
- Team Members Roles
  - Responsibilities
  - Flexibility/ Ability to Take Risks
  - Decision Making Procedures

## Accountability – FDTC Structure

- Contract
- Hearings
- Pre-Hearing and Case Management Staffings
- Phases
- Incentives and Sanctions
- Graduation / Termination Criteria
- Recovery Related Activities and 12-step meeting requirements
- Drug Testing

## Accountability – Legal Considerations

- Interaction between FDTC and regular Child Protective Services docket
- Adoption and Safe Families Act deadlines
- Placement of children

## Recovery

RECOVERY  
is a process  
not an event



"We are either  
working on  
recovery or  
we're working  
on a relapse."



## Recovery – Shared Understanding

- Substance Use
  - Use to enhance the pleasure of normally pleasurable situations
  - No negative consequences, problems; no unpredictability
  - No limit setting needed or made; natural limits in place
  - No thoughts of using
  - No one complains
  - Action: None required

## Recovery – Shared Understanding

- Substance Abuse
  - Intentional overuse
  - Bad choices re: Alcohol & other drugs
  - Self medication: Mental illness, life problems, grief, despair, anxiety, peer pressure, cultural expectations, immaturity, ignorance
  - Negative consequences trigger behavior change
  - Promises & limit setting sustainable
  - Action: Moderation

## Recovery – Shared Understanding

- Substance Dependence
  - Impaired control
  - Genetic vulnerability
  - Neurochemical dysregulation of MDS-MFB-pleasure pathway of the brain
  - Neuroadaptation
    - Continued exposure of MDS pathways to drugs
  - Negative consequences trigger denial
  - Promises & limit setting fail
  - Action: Abstinence & Recovery



## Recovery – Shared Understanding

- Substance Use Disorders:  
Use – Abuse – Dependence
  - Help partners to understand & respect the differences
  - With knowledge, programs can work with both abuse and dependent populations successfully
  - Assessment is a process
  - Balance early entry into treatment with benefits of accurate diagnosis

## Recovery – Shared Acceptance

- Abstinence
  - An event: “I quit.”
  - External:  
Positive behavior change achieved through:
    - Will power
    - Self-determination
    - Self-control
  - Focus: Not using
  - Traditional Child Welfare & Criminal Justice Success Model: Clean UA’s & compliance with court orders

## Recovery – Shared Acceptance

- Recovery
  - A process: “I change.”
  - Internal:  
Positive physical, mental, emotional, & spiritual change achieved through:
    - Surrender
    - Honesty
    - Open-mindedness
    - Willingness
  - Focus: Getting better
  - Non-traditional Success Model: Improving behaviors, attitudes, & values

## Recovery: Shared Acceptance

- Relapse
  - A process: “I change.”
  - Internal:  
Negative physical, mental, emotional, & spiritual change achieved through:
    - Will power & self-control
    - Denial
    - Compliance (vs. surrender)
    - Dishonesty (vs. honesty); Closed-mindedness (vs. open-mindedness); Stubbornness (vs. willingness)
  - Focus: Things other than getting better
  - Opportunity: Timely & meaningful intervention

## Recovery: Shared Acceptance

- Abstinence – Recovery – Relapse
  - 12-Step meeting attendance
  - 12-Step program home group
  - 12-Step program sponsor
  - Peer recovery coaching
  - Discussion of recovery activities in front of Judge
  - Relapse phase
  - Red flags

## Recovery – Shared Awareness

- A Drug is a Drug is a Drug: Estimated Lifetime Prevalence of Risk for Dependence on Various Drugs of Choice

Simon says...

- Alcohol
- Crack
- Heroin
- Nicotine

## Recovery – Shared Awareness

- A Drug is a Drug is a Drug: Estimated Lifetime Prevalence of Risk for Dependence on Various Drugs of Choice\*
  - Nicotine – 32%
  - Heroin – 23%
  - Crack – 20%
  - Alcohol – 15%
  - Amphetamines – 11%
  - Sedatives – 9%
  - Opioids – 9%
  - Cannabis – 9%
  - Psychedelics – 5%
  - Inhalants – 4%

\* Erickson, C.K., *Science of Addiction: From Neurobiology to Treatment*, W.W. Norton, New York, NY (2007).

## Recovery – Process of Transformation

- Team members understand, value and utilize language of recovery
- Recovery oriented goals tied to program advancement
- Team understands & acknowledges barriers to Recovery
- Everyone has space to risk, fail and progress
- True understanding of Relapse as a part of Recovery
- Acceptance of the need to individualize interventions



## Recovery – Process of Transformation

- Acceptance of the Serenity Prayer as it applies to everyone
- Team places principles before personalities
- Commit to the length of time it takes to support the Recovery process
  - Internal change takes time
  - Building a self-sufficient lifestyle takes time
  - Clearing away the wreckage of the past takes time

## Participant as Team Member

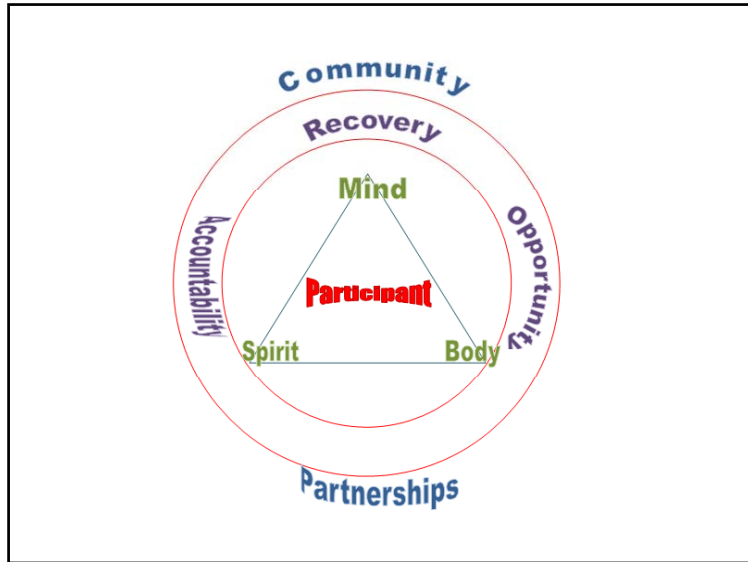
- FTM, FGC, Discharge Plan meetings
- Solicit participant opinions and ideas: Inquiry & focus groups
- Support voice and choice
- Encourage independent decision making
- Respect participant culture
- Offer access to all team members (excluding the Judge)
- Provide legal representation

## Lessons Learned

- Cornerstones
  - Recovery mindset
  - Individualization
  - Participant & family voice & choice
  - Collaboration
  - Interdisciplinary team
  - Flexibility
  - Risk taking
  - Training / Education
  - Community involvement
  - Program analysis & evaluation

## Lessons Learned

- Failure is an opportunity for growth.
- Relapse is a part of recovery.
- Resources alone are not enough.
- Recovery takes time; it is a lifelong individual process.
- Know your participants
  - “We ain’t them & they ain’t us.”
- Success & failure cannot be predicted.
- This is very challenging & rewarding work!



## Contact Information

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