



“Moms in the Hood:” Supporting Recovery Through Collaboration and Community



FRESH (Family Recovery Engagement Support of Hampden County) Start

Debra Bercovitz, Tina Rodriguez,
Debbie Flynn-Gonzalez



Brandeis University



Organizational Overview

- Funded by the U.S. Children’s Bureau (Abandoned Infants Act)
- Partnership between MA Department of Public Health and Department of Children and Families
- Staffed by DPH, Square One, Institute for Health and Recovery
- Evaluation by Brandeis University

Vision

- Parents achieve and maintain recovery
- Babies reach their full developmental potential
- Parents and children build a strong attachment
- Families create a safe, stable, nurturing environment for all members together whenever possible

Clients

- 1/3 pregnant at referral, 2/3 babies under 6 mos
- 1/3 self-referral, 1/4 DCF referred
- Mostly substance-exposed pregnancies
- Past Termination of Parental Rights

Services

- Peer-based
- In-home
- Recovery coaching and case management
- Parenting education
- Clinical treatment
- Developmental assessments, and services as appropriate

Philosophy

- Strengths Based
- Trauma Informed
- Gender Specific

Training and Other Resources

Abandoned Infants' Act Resource Center

www.aia.berkeley.edu

National Center on Substance Abuse and
Child Welfare

www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov

The National Alliance for Drug Endangered
Children

www.nationaldec.org

Collaboration with partners Cooperative Family Conferences

- Helps with engagement and recovery
- Educates providers about addiction and parenting
- Expectation of providing resource is meeting together
- Identify what you have to offer
- Identify common goals
- Assign responsibilities
- Billing codes

Thinking about how we measure change

Do we start with risk factors or problems and then measure whether these have decreased?

Or

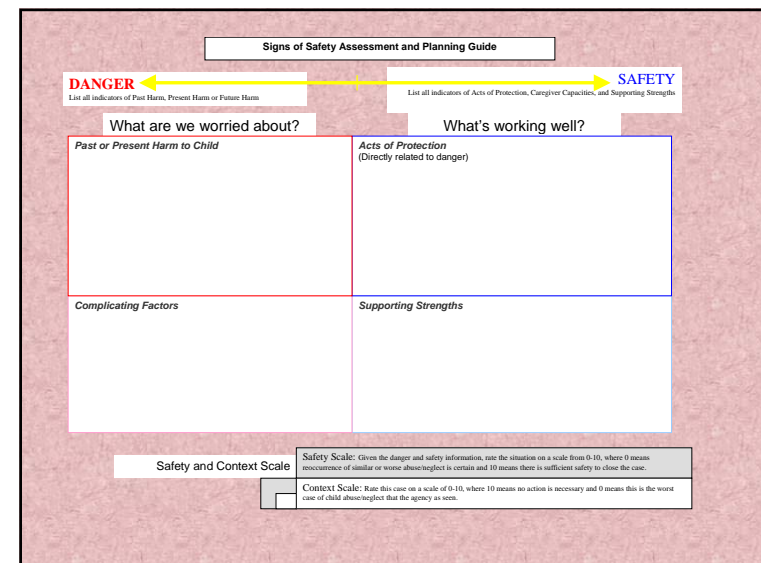
Do we start with hopes, strengths, skills and then measure whether these have increased?

Decision-Making Questions

- What worries us?
- What works well?
- What needs to happen?

Safety Mapping

- Tool for case conferences
- Invites multiple perspectives
- Gets people on same page
- Structure to bridge disagreements
- Helpful for clients



Group Opportunities

- Infant Massage
- Narcotics Anonymous
- GED
- Nurturing Program
- Moms in the Hood

What MITH Means

- “I wouldn’t know what to do without them, they are my second family.”
- “It’s important to me to learn from others. To help others stay clean. If I can inspire someone with my story to open their eyes, that’s a good day.”
- “People can understand what you are talking about. I don’t feel as though I’m being judged. No one is looking down on you.”

Outcomes

Of the 11 regular participants since MITH began 10 months ago:

- 11 maintained sobriety.
- 11 maintained custody of their children. 4 regained custody of older children.
- 4 of 4 subsequent pregnancies were free of exposure to alcohol or illicit drugs.
- 6 of the participants are now taking a FS-sponsored GED class together.
- 3 are taking leadership roles in a new FS-hosted Narcotics Anonymous weekly meeting. Others are attending the meeting.

Parting Thoughts

Maintain a positive, compassionate attitude

Reach for the phone

Provide opportunities for people to shine
and connect

Help people to move from sobriety to
recovery