

National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

Bringing Systems Together
for Family Recovery, Safety
and Stability



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Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

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A Program of the
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
and the
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau
Office on Child Abuse and Neglect



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Administration for Children and Families
www.samhsa.gov





NCSACW Mission

Developing knowledge and providing technical assistance to federal, state, local agencies and tribes to improve outcomes for families with substance use disorders in the child welfare and family court systems





NCSACW Goals

- To improve outcomes for families by promoting effective practice, and organizational and system changes at the local, state, and national levels
- To develop and implement a comprehensive program of information gathering and dissemination
- To provide technical assistance





Technical Assistance

In-Depth Technical Assistance

- Application and acceptance process
- 15-18 month program facilitated by a Consultant Liaison
- Sets priorities for practice and policy changes
- Develops protocols and implementation plans
- Nebraska applied, and was accepted, for IDTA.





US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
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NCSACW In-Depth Technical Assistance Sites
Children's Bureau Regional Partnership Grants
OJJDP Family Drug Courts





Why are we here?

1. *The extent and scope of the problem of substance abuse in the child welfare population*
2. *The types of services provided to this population*
3. *The effectiveness of these services; and*
4. *Recommendations for legislative (policy and practice) changes that might be needed to improve service coordination.*

Blending Perspectives and Building Common Ground: A Report to Congress on Substance Abuse and Child Protection. 1999





Why are we here?

How would Nebraska answer these questions?





Your voice matters!

Throughout this presentation you will have an opportunity to individually answer a few questions that will help us better frame these issues and more importantly to identify opportunities to strengthen some of Nebraska's policies and practices moving forward.





Families affected by SUDs nationally

- One-third to two-thirds of families in child welfare services are affected by substance use disorders (DHHS, 1999). Splitting the difference and applying 45% against NE's 25,279 maltreatment reports in 2009 = 11,376 parents.





The Types of Services provided to this population?

To provide the most effective services you have a good understanding of the types of problems CW parents with substance use disorders are facing.

What are the more typical challenges faced by parents with substance and/or mental health disorders in Nebraska's child welfare system?





Nebraska's typical child welfare consumer ...

- Single women/ head of households?
- Low economic status?
- Educational challenges (completion status, learning disabilities)?
- Substandard, unsafe or No housing?
- Criminal justice involvement, usually with community supervision requirements?
- Little to no vocational skills and/or work skills history?
- Transportation challenges?





Nebraska's typical child welfare consumer ...

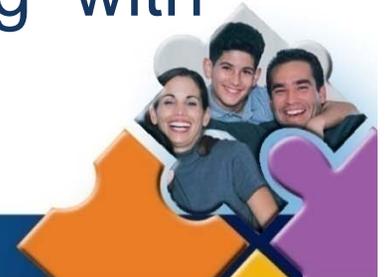
- Substance use history (and family history) and may have been prenatally exposed themselves?
- Own or family history of mental health disorders?
- Health issues (primary health, GYN/OBGYN, prenatal care, STDs/HIV, traumatic injuries from abuse)?
- Domestic violence/PTSD?
- History of failed relationships?





Nebraska's typical child welfare consumer ...

- Lack of positive parenting role models in childhood; own involvement with CW system as a child?
- Lack of family /social support?
- In what ways do poverty, family abuse history, SA and MH issues, and limited family and social supports affect their children and what challenges does this create when working with these families?





Does Nebraska Have a System/Services needed for this population?

What would families with these kinds of challenges experience in Nebraska if they were reported for child maltreatment?





Does NE have a system/services needed for this population?

- Is the Nebraska workforce that has responsibility for working with this population appropriately trained?
- Are the interactions client-centered and non-judgmental?





Critical Issues

- Are parents given sufficient assistance in navigating complex bureaucracies and accessing substance abuse treatment?
- Are recovery supports routinely provided?
- Is the right level of treatment intensity, dosage and recovery support made available?
- Are treatment services evidence-based?
- Is an appropriate plan for on-going recovery management (including a plan for relapse) put in place?





Does Nebraska Have a System/Services needed for this population?

Given all of these considerations, would you say that Nebraska's current efforts put forth with DCFS parents with SUDs is reasonable?





For Behavioral Health Representatives

- Do you know the ASFA timeline?
- What other timelines are running concurrently?





ASFA and behavioral health staff

The Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) “speeds up the clock” when children have been removed from parental custody. Timely, accurate and ongoing assessment, immediate access to the right level of effective care (treatment), on-going engagement and retention efforts, evidence-based treatment and on-going appropriate communication with the CW and courts systems is essential.





The Importance of Cross-Training

- How many hours of substance abuse-specific pre-service training do you think is needed for a child welfare worker to adequately understand SUDs?
- How many hours of child welfare specific training do you think is needed for a behavioral health representative to adequately understand the needs of parents?





Online Training



national center on substance abuse and child welfare

[NCSACW Home](#) | [Tutorial Home](#) |

Understanding Substance Use Disorders, Treatment and Family Recovery: A Guide for Child Welfare Professionals

[Before You Start](#) [Course Modules](#) [Resources](#)

[printer friendly version](#)

◀ 1 of 17 ▶

Pathways to Abuse and Addiction

★ Module 1

★ Module 2

★ Module 3

★ Module 4

★ Module 5

Module One: Primer on Substance Use, Abuse, and Addiction for Child Welfare Professionals

To receive credit for this course, you must complete the Knowledge Assessment at the end of Module 5.

Participant Objectives of Module One

After reviewing this module, child welfare professionals will be able to:

- Understand
- Describe abuse, a
- Understand
- Understand

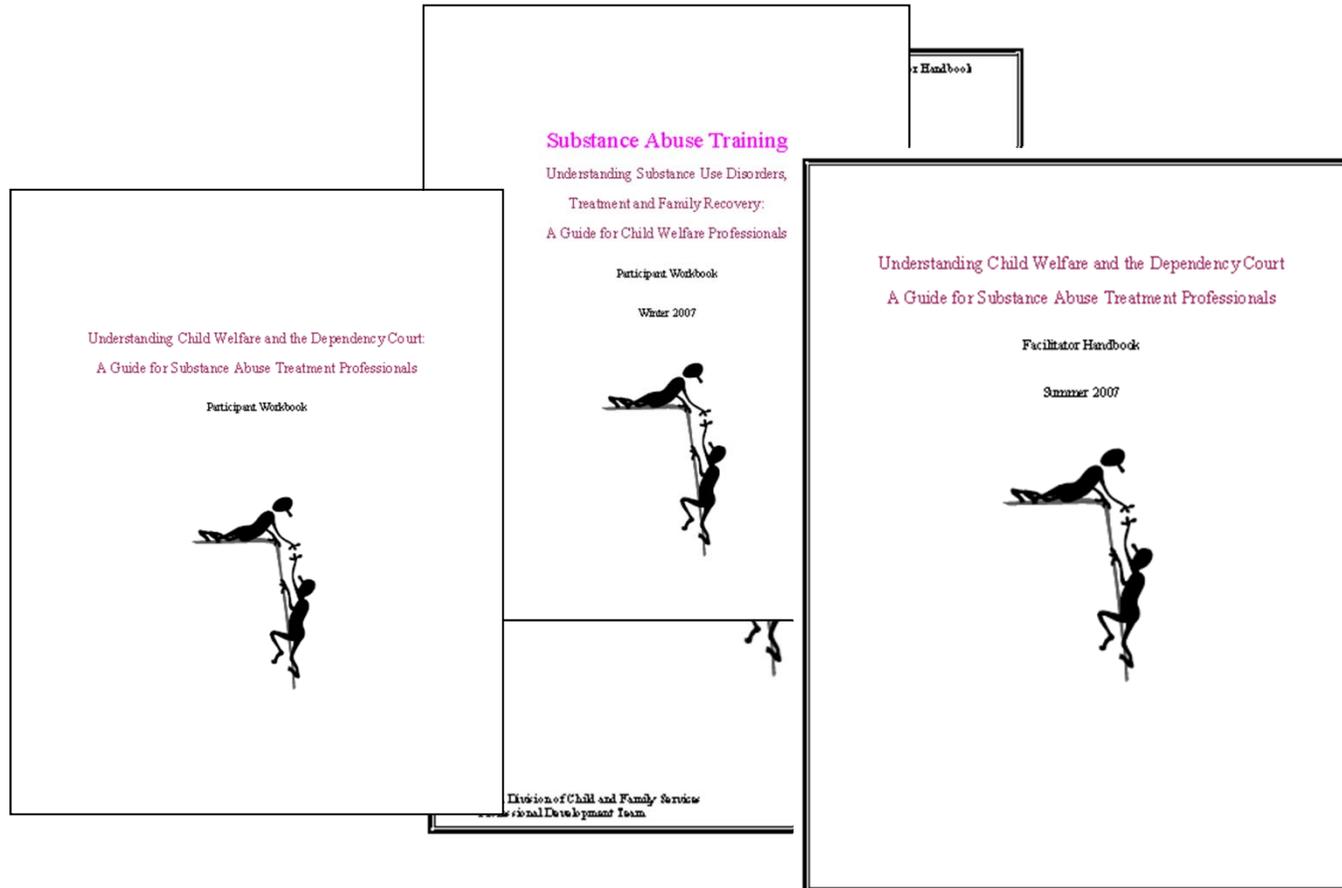
■ *I have completed the tutorial training, and utilized the information to help educate new child protective service workers. The information is very useful, understandable, and very specific to the issues and concerns that child welfare workers will encounter, and how these should be handled.*

■ -Direct Service Provider

■ Available at no charge at <http://ncsacw.samhsa.gov>



Implementing Online Tutorials



- Available for free PDF download at <http://ncsacw.samhsa.gov>



Child Welfare Training Toolkit

Helping Child Welfare Workers Support Families with Substance Use, Mental, and Co-Occurring Disorders

The training package consists of the following six (6) modules:

[Module 1](#): Understanding the Multiple Needs of Families Involved with the Child Welfare System





Child Welfare Training Toolkit

- [Module 2](#): Understanding Substance Use Disorders, Treatment, and Recovery
- [Module 3](#): Understanding Mental Disorders, Treatment and Recovery
- [Module 4](#): Engagement and Intervention with Parents Affected by Substance Use Disorders, Mental Disorders and Co-Occurring Disorders





Child Welfare Training Toolkit

- [Module 5](#): Developing a Comprehensive Response for Families Affected by Substance Use Disorders, Mental Disorders and Co-Occurring Disorders
- [Module 6](#): Understanding the Needs of Children of Parents with Substance Use or Mental Disorders





Child Welfare Training Toolkit

Each module contains:

- Agenda
- Training Plan
- Training Script
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Case Vignettes
- Handouts
- Reading Material





Child Welfare Training Toolkit

- There is no cost to access any of the materials contained in each module. Modules can be downloaded individually or as the entire training package.

Intended Audience

- This training is for use with pre-service or in-service child welfare workers, with a focus on basic information. This training is not designed for advanced practitioners





Early Identification is Essential

The shorter ASFA timelines places pressure on child welfare workers to identify parental substance use disorders and then make decisions regarding their effects on child well-being, the likelihood that parents can recover, and the level of stability in the family.





Screening and Assessment for Family Engagement, Retention and Recovery

Screening and Assessment for Family Engagement, Retention and Recovery (SAFERR)

- Provides screening and assessment tools
- Includes guidelines for communication and collaboration across the systems responsible for helping families
- Assists with developing cross-system communication protocols





Is the Nebraska system effective?

- Timely access to treatment
- Effective treatment
- Planning for adequate supports after reunification/case closure





Persons with SUDs don't "wait"

- *"A lot of times there are waiting lists and that doesn't help. I'm not going to stay sick and I need help right now. I can't wait 2 weeks or even 1 week. I gotta go now...I've been to the point where I've gone to jail because I'm in a situation where I need to get help, and I don't care how I'm gonna get it. So I'm gonna commit a crime because I need something so I can get better. I can't live like this."*





Drop off Points

15,029 cases referred
for assessment

11,469 received assessment
(24% drop off = 3,560)

Number referred to treatment = 7,022

Number made it to treatment
= 2,744 (61% drop off)

844 successfully
completed tx*

Payoff





How do we improve the system?

The national and state trend is to reduce the number of children in out of home care, and increase the number of children remaining safely at home with their parents/families.....

Is Nebraska doing everything possible to ensure families who intersect the child welfare, substance abuse and court systems successfully achieve this goal?





How do we improve the system?

Are their legislative, policy and practice changes that need to be made—or enforced?

- Is NE's Substance Exposed Newborn protocol followed consistently?
- Are under the age of 3 with substantiated child abuse cases referred for screening for developmental delays and concerns (as per CAPTA)?
- Are there eligibility/insurance coverage issues that are preventing parents from accessing services?





Local Recommendations

Effective strategies for consideration:

- Invite behavioral health specialists to be on your local Through the Eyes team
- Out-station behavioral health specialists in child welfare offices
- Use parent partners, mentors and recovery specialists for effective engagement and retention in treatment services
- Train all staff in Motivational Interviewing





Local Recommendations

- Develop protocols for how you will collaborate to serve parents who intersect the CW/SA/Court systems: including:
 - Sharing Information
 - Who screens?
 - How are parents linked to services (warm hand-off?)
 - How do you address relapse
 - What are shared outcomes and guiding principles?





Local Recommendations

- Implement an early screening tool
 - UNCOPE
- Coordinate with treatment staff for those parents who need further assessments
- Other ideas, questions, or comments?





Bottom Line

The problems of child maltreatment and substance use disorders demand **urgent attention** and the highest possible standards of practice from everyone working in systems charged with promoting child safety and family well-being.
(NCSACW SAFERR Manual, p. 3)





How Do I Access Technical Assistance?

- Visit the NCSACW website for resources and products at <http://ncsacw.samhsa.gov>
- Email us at ncsacw@cffutures.org

