County of Santa Cruz: Serving Families Involved with Family and Children’s Services and Alcohol and Drug Programs

Sherra Clinton, MSW
Senior Analyst, Human Services Department
Agenda

• What is the impact of parental substance abuse on children?
• What works?
• How do we collaborate?
• What have we learned?
• Where do we go from here?
What Is The Impact?

• Nationwide in the past 24 hours:
  • 1,640 babies born with prenatal substance exposure.
  • 1200 children victims of substantiated abuse/neglect associated with substance abuse, of these, three died.
  • 205 child maltreatment victims removed from their homes associated with parental substance abuse.
  • 75 parents with a substance use disorder had their parental rights terminated.
What Is The Impact?

• Typically between 2000-3000 children have an allegation of child abuse in Santa Cruz County each year.
• Child abuse is substantiated for approximately 400 to 500 of these children each year.
• Parental substance abuse is a factor in the majority of child welfare cases. In Santa Cruz County, it is estimated that 75% to 80% of children involved with child welfare services have been impacted by parental substance abuse.
What Is The Impact?

• How are children directly exposed to parental use of substances?
  • Prenatally
  • Environmental toxins

• How are children indirectly exposed?
  • Chronic trauma
What Is The Impact?

Parental relationships

- Neglect of basic needs
- Severe or inconsistent discipline
- Disruption of parent and child relationships
  - Attachment Issues

Developmental

- Cognitive growth
- Emotional self regulation
- Social and emotional development
What Works?

- A coordinated approach across multiple systems supporting both parents and children.
- Evidence based practices of collaboration and intervention.
- Early detection and intervention.
- Substance abuse treatment.
- Programs supporting both parents and children.
How Do We Collaborate?

- Invest in joint projects providing case management and treatment for families served by both programs.
- Participate in mutual education on best practices
- Station Alcohol and Drug staff with FCS
- Share data to determine mutual outcomes
- Joint meetings
- Prioritize consistent and clear communication
How Do We Collaborate?

Joint Projects

• Options for Recovery
• Primeros Pasos
• Dependency Drug Court (“Family Preservation Court”)
• Leaps & Bounds
How Do We Collaborate?

- Family Preservation Court
  - Dedicated court for shared families
  - Treatment (Matrix Model)
- Leaps and Bounds
  - Structured, Educational Home Visiting
  - Parent Child Interaction Therapy
  - Stanford Neuro-developmental Foster Care Clinic
What Have We Learned?

Improved interagency services have impacted families by reducing the:

• Reoccurrence of child maltreatment
• Re-entry of children into foster care
What Have We Learned?

Interagency collaboration has demonstrated an increase in the percentage of child welfare involved parents who are:

- Referred for an alcohol and drug assessments
- Receiving early assessment for substance abuse
- Entering treatment
Where Do We Go from Here?

- Community involvement in strategic planning
- Collaboration to ensure treatment is available to parents involved in Family and Children's Services (FCS).
- Sustain funding for intensive services for children of parents in FCS due to substance abuse.
- Increase support for father involvement.
- Enhance trauma informed service delivery.
- Broaden service provider and agency collaboration.
To request a copy of this presentation, contact:

Bill Manov, Ph.D., Director, Santa Cruz County Alcohol and Drug Program

bill.manov@santacruzcounty.us

Or

Sherra Clinton, MSW
Sherra.Clinton@santacruzcounty.us