

Substance Abuse Treatment for Parents



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The Problem

- ❑ In 2007, over 8.3 million children were living in a household with at least one substance abusing parent in the US.
- ❑ 802,000 children in Texas live in homes where a parent abuses alcohol or illicit drugs.
- ❑ *Data retrieved from the Office of Applied Studies, <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/parents.cfm>

Options to Solve Problem

- Take away the children
 - Overburdened system already
 - Traumatizing to the children

- Lock up parents
 - Overburdened system
 - Does not treat the problem in most cases
 - Traumatizing to the children

Treatment Option

- Treat the parent along with the child
 - Cost less than prison and foster care
 - Hands-on parenting education
 - Child remains with mom, less trauma
 - Family unit in structured environment
 - Opportunities for family bonding

Working with Women & Children

Presents special challenges, therefore:

Few treatment options available for a pregnant client

Few treatment options available for a women with custody of her children

Challenges for Women & Children Programs

- ❑ Childcare for preschoolers
- ❑ School
- ❑ Children with special needs Autistic etc.
- ❑ Illnesses & accidents
- ❑ Aggressive children
- ❑ Children with sexual abuse histories
- ❑ Baby's father
- ❑ Grandparents

Challenges in Serving Pregnant Clients

- ❑ Prenatal care
- ❑ High-risk pregnancies
- ❑ Other risk factors
- ❑ Miscarriages
- ❑ Pre-term labor
- ❑ Mood swings

Gender Differences

- ❑ Women expected to care for their children
- ❑ More stigma for women substance abusers
- ❑ Even more stigma for pregnant women using substances
- ❑ Stigma plus legal issues for substance abusing women with children
- ❑ Trauma

Parental Motivation for Treatment

- Children
- Child Protective Services (CPS)
- Pregnancy
- Relationships with other family members closely related to the children

Unique Needs

- Along with traditional substance abuse treatment, in many cases parents also need the following services:
 - Parent education
 - Family therapy
 - Play therapy for children
 - Prenatal care
 - Parenting labs
 - Prevention services for children
 - Resources for activities, and information on family community events

Nexus Specific Treatment

- Rules for discipline:
 - No spanking
 - No hitting or swatting
 - No pinching
 - No profane language
 - No yelling
- Many times the above actions are the only ways parents know to discipline their children. At Nexus, we give them other tools to use.

Discipline and Guidance

- ❑ Redirection – moving a frustrated child to a new activity to de-escalate emotional intensity
- ❑ Modeling – showing the children what to do, instead of telling them what not to do
- ❑ Keeping them busy and engaged in activities
- ❑ Changing adult expectations
- ❑ Focusing on guidance rather than discipline

Pregnant Clients

- ❑ Pregnant clients often have unique health needs due to substance abuse
- ❑ Proper medical care is top priority
- ❑ Pregnant clients attend parent education and parenting labs with infants.
- ❑ Teach basic skills, i.e., feeding, bathing, diapering, bonding
- ❑ Pregnant clients attend local community hospital obstetrics-gynecology group weekly
- ❑ Delivery plan created

Nexus Program Schedule

Clients participate in the following schedule daily:

- Breakfast
- Drop children off in the Child Development Center
- Meditation/Fitness
- Group therapy (three groups)
- Lunch
- AA/NA meetings
- Group therapy (three groups)
- Pick children up from Child Development Center
- Dinner
- Play and homework labs
- Family bonding
- Chores

Nexus Program Schedule

Clients participate in the following groups weekly:

- ❑ Co-dependency
- ❑ Tobacco cessation
- ❑ Healthy relationships
- ❑ Managing emotions
- ❑ Parenting groups
- ❑ Effects of Tobacco, Alcohol and other drugs on the fetus
- ❑ Chemical Dependency Education
- ❑ Seeking Safety
- ❑ Process groups
- ❑ Anger management
- ❑ Life skills
- ❑ Women's issues
- ❑ Planned Parenthood
- ❑ Living in balance
- ❑ Weekend play group
- ❑ Weekend pregnant and newborn group
- ❑ Relapse prevention

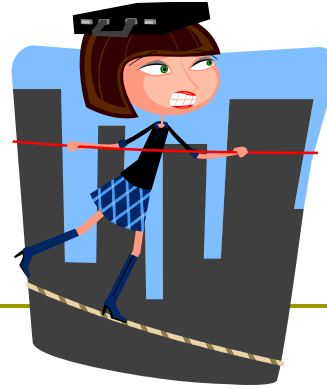
Individual Therapy

- Clients meet with their individual counselors a minimum of once a week and often several times a week.
- We also offer family therapy for extended family and play therapy for children.
- Pet Therapy

Other Services & Partners

- ❑ Rainbow Days provides children's group
- ❑ Betty Ford 5 Star Kids Program
- ❑ University of Texas @ Dallas conducts developmental screenings on most children
- ❑ Early Childhood Intervention we make referrals for developmental delays
- ❑ Dallas Independent School District provides homework labs (parent & child)

Balancing Act



- ❑ Must learn to balance recovery and parenting
- ❑ Total focus on parenting, relapse risk
- ❑ Total focus on recovery, children suffer
- ❑ Need proper balance to succeed

Treatment Success

- How do you measure?
- Strictly based on abstinence
- Other areas of functioning

Treatment and Drug Endangered Children

- ❑ Parental substance abuse treatment serves as a prevention effort for drug endangered children.
- ❑ Nexus offers prevention services to the indicated population of children we serve.
- ❑ Our unique setting allows the children and mothers to heal as a family, which might be the best service we can offer to DEC.
- ❑ If the children are to remain in the home, helping the parents heal will help stop the cycle of abuse for DEC.