

AWAKENINGS

A Bulletin For Professionals on Substance Abuse Services for Women and Their Children

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WORKING WITH WOMEN STRUGGLING WITH TRAUMA *Trauma Informed Approaches in Treatment*

Violence and trauma have impacted many of the women who enter residential and outpatient programs in the North Carolina Perinatal and Maternal Substance Use Initiative. During the 2005 - 2006 SFY, 50 percent of women served reported that they had experienced domestic violence at some point and 40 percent reported having experienced sexual abuse. High rates of trauma and violence are also found nationally, where research indicates that the majority of substance-abusing women have experienced sexual and/or physical violence. (Covington, 2007) The dual diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (one type of disorder that can result from experiencing trauma) and substance abuse is between 30 and 59 percent. (Najavits, 2002)

Experiencing violence and abuse greatly increases the likelihood that a woman will abuse alcohol and other drugs. Women may use substances to please an abusive partner or to numb the pain of violent relationships. Additionally, women who abuse drugs or alcohol have increased vulnerability to violence.

Addressing trauma in substance abuse treatment is critically important for women because without treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), women are at high risk for relapse and are less likely to complete treatment. Sometimes trauma symptoms become worse as women are abstinent from substances. (Najavits, 2002) However, in settings where substance abuse and trauma histories are addressed concurrently, studies have found significant increases in abstinence from drugs and alcohol and decreases in trauma related symptoms. (Finkelstein et al., 2004)



Trauma can be addressed in substance abuse treatment settings through trauma-informed and trauma-specific approaches. Trauma-specific services directly address the impact of trauma on people's lives through treatment, such as the Seeking Safety psychotherapy model created by Lisa Najavits.

Trauma-informed services incorporate knowledge about trauma in all aspects of service delivery. Substance abuse programs can provide trauma-informed services that are designed to reduce re-victimization and empower women by providing them control over their treatment and education about the impact of trauma on their lives. Some of the basic principles of trauma-informed services include:

- ◆ Understanding trauma as a defining force in women's lives. "Problem behaviors" that are often frustrating for clinicians or program staff may be attempts to cope with trauma. Providers ask the question: "How can this behavior be the result of trauma?"

UPCOMING EVENTS

Managing the Effects of Prenatal Alcohol Exposure: Identification and Successful Interventions for Your Community
Asheville, NC
October 16 - 17, 2008
<http://www.mahec.net>

UNC Horizons Annual Conference on Women & Addiction
Chapel Hill, NC
April 15, 2009
<http://www.unchorizons.org/>



RESOURCES

National Center for Trauma-Informed Care

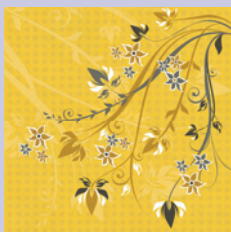
The National Center for Trauma-Informed Care assists programs in shifting to a trauma-informed environment to better support consumers. <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic>

The Institute for Health and Recovery

IHR's mission is to develop a comprehensive continuum of care for individuals, youth, and families affected by alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, mental health problems, and violence/trauma. Great resources on gender-specific treatment! www.healthrecovery.org/

Assessing and Supporting Parenting in Families Affected by Substance Abuse or HIV

Provides practitioners and administrators with guidance in assessing, supporting, and strengthening parenting skills and parent-child relationships. http://aia.berkeley.edu/media/pdf/parenting_guide.pdf



WORKING WITH WOMEN STRUGGLING WITH TRAUMA (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

instead of "Why does this woman keep doing this?"

- ◆ Creating an open, cooperative relationship between providers and consumers, with an emphasis on safety, choice, and control. Providers and clients make decisions together as a team during all phases of treatment.
- ◆ Emphasizing the woman's physical and emotional safety by creating a treatment environment that is therapeutic and welcoming. Confrontations are avoided and practices that may be unnecessarily punitive or invasive are avoided.
- ◆ Providing training for all program staff on trauma and the impact of trauma on women's addiction, recovery, and relationships.

As part of North Carolina's commitment to provide gender-specific treatment for women, the programs in the NC Perinatal-Maternal Substance Abuse Initiative and CASAWORKS programs are working to provide trauma-specific and trauma-informed services. For more information about trauma-informed services for women and children, visit the "Resources" section on this page.

Adapted from The National Abandoned Infants Assistance Resource Center publication *The Source: Trauma Informed Services for Families Affected by Substance Abuse and/or HIV* (Volume 16, No. 1, Summer 2007), <http://aia.berkeley.edu>

EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON A DEVELOPING FETUS Leslie McCrory, LPC, LCAS, CCS

Alcohol use during pregnancy is the leading cause of mental retardation. Alcohol is one of the most deleterious teratogens, which are substances that can damage a developing fetus. When a pregnant woman drinks, the alcohol passes through the placenta to the fetus. The fetus cannot break down or process the alcohol the way an adult can and is exposed to the damaging effects of alcohol for a longer period of time. The effects may include physical, mental, behavioral, and learning disabilities that can last a lifetime.

Alcohol can trigger cell death which may cause abnormal development of the fetus. It can disrupt the way nerve cells develop impacting the brain and other functions. Alcohol can constrict blood vessels which decreases the blood flow through the placenta thus interfering with the supply of nutrients and oxygen that nourishes the fetus.

The birth defects caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy are 100 percent preventable if a woman does not drink alcohol during pregnancy. Fifty percent of pregnancies in the US are unplanned. Even if a woman knew not to drink during pregnancy, she may drink alcohol before she is aware of her pregnancy. The Surgeon General along with professional organizations for obstetrics, pediatricians, and family physicians support that there is no known safe level of alcohol to be consumed during any time of pregnancy.

Information credit to SAMSHA, CDC, NOFAS

Welcome to Leslie McCrory, the new FASD Grant Coordinator at the NC Teratogen Information Service located at the Fullerton Genetics Center in Asheville, NC. The NC Teratogen Information Service serves professionals and the public state-wide by increasing awareness of birth defects and developmental disabilities caused by alcohol and other pregnancy exposures. The service provides a toll free information line, the Pregnancy Exposure Riskline to provide free confidential information and outreach education on teratogen exposure during pregnancy.

Pregnancy Exposure Riskline, at 1-800-532-6302

ROBESON COUNTY BRIDGES FOR FAMILIES: *A Regional Partnership*



A \$2.5 million federal grant will help the North Carolina Division of Social Services restore families affected by methamphetamine and other substance abuse issues in Robeson County.

Robeson County Bridges for Families is a pilot program that will build on existing substance abuse treatment services to provide a full continuum of evidence-based, family-centered care to address substance abuse and trauma in families, including the substance abuse treatment, housing, and Family Drug Treatment Court. **Grace Court**, a transitional housing program in the NC Perinatal Maternal Substance Abuse Initiative, will provide transitional housing in addition to treatment as part of the continuum. Robeson County child welfare staff will receive additional training on substance abuse.

Robeson County was chosen as a site for the pilot program because state data indicated a high number of local child welfare cases with substance abuse as a factor in abuse or neglect. Nationally, many studies indicate that between one-third and two-thirds of substantiated child maltreatment reports involve substance

abuse. The Robeson County Bridges for Families program will serve as a model for statewide strategic planning efforts to support systems-of-care that will enhance outcomes for children and families affected by substance abuse. Expected outcomes include increased numbers of families getting help for addiction, longer treatment time for families, longer periods of abstinence from alcohol and drugs for caregivers, and less time for children in out-of-home placements due to substance abuse.

The five-year grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families as part of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families initiative. In addition to the Division of Social Services, state-level partners include the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, the Administrative Office of the Courts, the NC Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, and the Governor's Institute on Alcohol and Substance Abuse. Local leaders have been very supportive of the grant, and local partners include Robeson Healthcare Corporation, Robeson County Department of Social Services, Judicial District 16B (Robeson County) District Court, the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, Robeson County Guardian ad Litem, and other substance abuse treatment and health service providers.

The Journey

One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began, though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice—though the whole house began to tremble and you felt the old tug at your ankles. “Mend my life!” each voice cried. But you didn’t stop. You knew what you had to do, though the wind pried with its stiff fingers at the very foundations, though their melancholy was terrible. It was already late enough, and a wild night, and the road full of fallen branches and stones. But little by little, as you left their voices behind, the stars began to burn through the sheets of clouds, and there was a new voice which you slowly recognized as your own, that kept you company as you strode deeper and deeper into the world, determined to do the only thing you could do—determined to save the only life you could save.

~ Mary Oliver



EXPANDING PROGRAMS

Four Perinatal & Maternal Substance Abuse Initiative programs are growing! All programs will serve women from throughout North Carolina.

Sunrise CASAWORKS at Horizons, located in Chapel Hill, will be adding six beds for perinatal clients who are pregnant or postpartum.

CASCADE Durham, a Community Choices program, will

be expanding to include an eight-bed CASAWORKS program to serve Work First recipients and their children.

Hope Meadow, a Chrysalis Foundation program, will gain an additional two perinatal beds.

The Village Perinatal and CASAWORKS Program, a Robeson Healthcare Corporation program located in Winterville, will have three additional maternal beds.

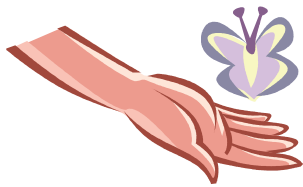
AWAKENINGS

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PERINATAL/MATERNAL SUBSTANCE USE INITIATIVE PROGRAMS

CASCADE Durham, NC	919-490-6900	Grace Court Transitional Lumberton, NC	910-618-9869
CASCADE Charlotte, NC	704-336-4844	Kinton Court CASAWORKS Fuquay-Varina, NC	919-557-6967
The Cambridge Place Smithfield, NC	919-989-8114	Kinton Court Perinatal Raleigh, NC	919-250-1184
The Chrysalis Foundation Hope Meadow Chapel Hill, NC	919-968-8680	Mary Benson House Asheville, NC	828-252-5280
Clean Start West End, NC	919-693-2641	New Visions Wilmington, NC	910-251-5326
Crystal Lake Lakeview, NC	910-245-4339	Our House Pembroke, NC	910-521-1464
East Coast Solutions Kelly House Wilmington, NC	910-763-3524	The Perinatal Health Partners, Adult & Adolescent Asheville, NC	1- 877-628-2562
East Coast Solutions Searise CASAWORKS Wilmington, NC	910-254-0701	Step by Step Raleigh, NC	919-250-4687
Eastern Region Women's and Infant's Project Walter B. Jones ADATC Greenville, NC	252-830-3426	UNC Horizons Program Carrboro, NC	919-960-9803
Family Care Program Duke University Medical Center Durham, NC	919- 684-3850	The Village Winterville, NC	252-752-5555
		Women's and Infant's Services for Health (WISH) Winston Salem, NC	336-713-9720