

TASC | EVALUATION

Recovery Coach Program – Successful Outreach, Engagement & Case Management

Funded by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Recovery Coach Program (RCP) serves families in which children have been removed from parents' custody because of substance abuse–related maltreatment.

TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) is an independent, statewide, nonprofit organization that provides outreach, engagement, and case management services for the program. TASC Recovery Coaches work within the community to access a full continuum of services for their clients such as substance abuse or mental health treatment, parenting classes, individual or family counseling, and assistance with housing and employment. Proactive case management methods are utilized to engage, retain, promote, monitor, and report client progress.

The Study

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) is conducting long-term research to determine if and how the outreach, engagement, and case management services provided by TASC Recovery Coaches improve outcomes for families. The ten-year findings summarized below were prepared by the Children and Family Research Center in the University's School of Social Work, and submitted in a 2009 report to DCFS, which has provided support and data for the ongoing project.

- The study involved 2,406 parents of 3,198 children in foster care in Cook County (686 parents and 949 children were assigned to the control group and received the regular substance abuse treatment services previously available; and 1,720 parents and 2,249 children were assigned to the experimental group, which received the regular services plus RCP services).
- The Juvenile Court Assessment Program (JCAP) provided substance abuse assessment and initial referral services to substance-involved families referred at the time of their temporary custody hearing or within 180 days of it.
- TASC provided intensive outreach, engagement, and case management services. Recovery Coaches encouraged retention in substance abuse treatment and other related services.

The Outcomes

Substance-using parents who received TASC Recovery Coach services experienced the following outcomes, as compared with the control group. Parents who received TASC RCP services were:

- More likely to enter treatment in a shorter period of time (74 days vs. 104 days).
- More likely to participate in treatment (83% vs. 69%).
- More likely to complete at least one level of treatment (27% vs. 14%).
- More likely to achieve reunification with their children (24% vs. 20%) and do so in a shorter period of time (710 days vs. 968 days) than children in the comparison group.

- Less likely to be associated with a subsequent allegation of maltreatment (17% vs. 18%).
- Less likely to be associated with a new substance-exposed infant (15% vs. 21%).

The Cost Savings

Through fewer and shorter foster care placements, expedited reunification and subsidized guardianship and adoptions, TASC Recovery Coach services saved DCFS approximately \$6,996,904 as of June 2009.

The Implications

Intensive outreach, engagement and case management services:

- Increase access to and retention in treatment.
- Reduce episodes of child maltreatment.
- Result in improved client and family outcomes.
- Facilitate a significant cost savings for the child welfare system, court system, and communities.

Sources:

Testa, M., Ryan, J. P., Hernandez, P., and Huang, H. (2009). *Illinois Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse IV-E Waiver Demonstration: Interim Evaluation Report, September 2009*. Urbana, Illinois: Children and Family Research Center, School of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Retrieved November 14, 2011, from http://www.cfr Illinois.edu/publications/rp_20090901_IllinoisAODAIV-EWaiverDemonstrationInterimEvaluationReportSeptember2009.pdf.

Ryan, J. P., Choi, S., Hong, J., Hernandez, P. and Larrison, C. (2009). Recovery Coaches and Substance Exposure at Birth. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 32, 1072-1079.

Prepared by TASC, Inc. TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) is a not-for-profit organization that provides recovery management services for individuals with substance use and mental health disorders. Serving approximately 20,000 clients in Illinois each year, TASC's statewide infrastructure is designed to intervene when alcohol or other drug use has caused people to become involved with the criminal justice system, juvenile justice system, corrections, child welfare and/or public aid. Pursuant to Illinois statute and administrative rule, TASC is the agency designated to assess offenders with substance abuse issues and make treatment recommendations and referrals for the Illinois criminal justice system. For more information, please visit www.tasc.org.

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