



FAMILY SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR FAMILY DRUG COURT

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Value Statement

The societal burden of child abuse is exorbitant and it is of vital importance to find effective interventions for family drug courts to prevent its recurrence. Family skills training programs result in decreased child abuse, decreased time children spend in foster care, substance abuse intervention for parents and prevention of additional cycles of addiction for children.

Abstract

Family Drug Courts (FDC's) operate as alternatives to traditional drug courts in that they work to balance the rights and needs of both parents and children when the adults are affected by substance use disorders (SUD's). Much has been written on best practices of drug courts that are focused on the adult or juvenile client. Alternatively, Family Drug Courts (FDC's) focus on the whole family. Approximately 12.3% of children live with at least one parent who is dependent on alcohol or needs treatment for drug abuse (Lipari and Struther, 2017). A model family-skills training program illustrates an FDC intervention. The program engages all family members in learning healthy living skills, addressing child maltreatment, family violence and SUD's. Simply put, the goals of both FDC's and Family skills training programs are to reduce child maltreatment by treating the parents' SUD, and by keeping families together. Although there is an urgent need, only just over half of FDC's provide family-based services (Children and Family Futures, 2016). The purpose of this article is to describe an effective family skills training program for family drug court and child welfare practitioners that will meet the need for family-centered interventions.

Keywords/Concepts

Family drug court intervention

Substance use disorder

Family training programs

Child abuse

Family reunification

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