Implementing Adolescent Recovery Supports & Developing Resources in our Communities

Reclaiming Futures

Thursday, September 27th 11am PDT / 2pm EDT
Common Myths About Drug Abuse…

- Drug abuse equates to drug addiction
- Alcohol is not a drug
- Addiction is a moral weakness
- You have to hit rock bottom to recover
- You have to want treatment for it to be successful
- Drug abuse is more common among minorities
Biology/genes

Environment

Biology/Environment Interactions
How Do Drugs “Work” ???
Initially, a person takes a drug hoping to change his or her mood, perception, or emotional state …hoping to change their brains.
We know that despite their many differences, most abused substances enhance the dopamine and serotonin pathways.
Natural Rewards Elevate Dopamine Levels

**FOOD**

- NAc shell
- Time (min)
- % of Basal DA Output

**SEX**

- DA Concentration (% Baseline)
- Copulation Frequency
- Sample Number
- Female, Present
- Sample Numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

**Di Chiara et al., Neuroscience, 1999.**

**Fiorino and Phillips, J. Neuroscience, 1997.**
Effects of Drugs on Dopamine Release

Di Chiara and Imperato, PNAS, 1988
Science has generated much evidence showing that... 

prolonged drug use changes the brain in fundamental and long-lasting ways
Implication:
Brain changes resulting from prolonged use of drugs may compromise mental and motor functions.
Implications for Behavior
Activities with high reward and low effort are preferred
Strong emotions and difficulty regulating them
Less able to inhibit impulses
Hard to think about consequences of behavior
This is why addicts can’t just quit

This is why treatment is essential
Treating a Biobehavioral Disorder Must Go Beyond Just Fixing the Chemistry

- Pharmacological (medications)
- Behavioral Therapies
- Medical and Social Services
But, drug addiction is a chronic illness with relapse rates similar to those of hypertension, diabetes, and asthma
Northshore Recovery High School

- Created in 2006 under the Northshore Education Consortium (a Special Education Collaborative)
- Funded by DPH and individual tuition reimbursed by the students’ districts
- Works with students in all phases of recovery...even during relapse.
Academic Competency

- Curriculum and assessments aligned to Massachusetts State Frameworks.
- Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Completion (MCAS)
- Massachusetts State Licensed/Highly Qualified Educators/Counselors
- Continuing Education Planning
Academic Outcomes

- Increased School Participation
- Improved School Performance
- Enhanced Self-Confidence
- Achieve Clarity on Post-Graduate Plans
- Students Receive District Diploma
- Upon Matriculation, Students are College, Workforce and Military Ready
Recovery Support

- Individual Contracts
- Mandatory 14 Panel Drug Screening
- Multiple Pathways to Recovery
- Cognitive Behavior Therapy
- Motivational Interviewing/Strength-Based Approach
- Peer Relationships and Networks
- Daily Groups
Recovery Outcomes

- Decreased Relapse Episodes
- Improved Cognitive Behavior
- Maintain Commitment to Recovery
- Improved Self-Regulation
- Enhanced Social/Emotional Competency
- Enhanced Safe, Secure Relationships
Community Integration

- Risk Assessment
- Self-Regulation
- Community Service Learning Opportunities
- Use of Community Resources
- Employment Opportunities
- After-School/Out of School Recovery and Academic Enrichment
Community Outcomes

- Safe Recreation/Socialization
- Safe, Trusting Relationships
- Partnerships With Inpatient and Outpatient Substance Abuse and Mental Health Providers
- Collaterals Include Social Service Providers, Juvenile Justice, Drug Courts, Workforce Boards and Treatment Programs across the Commonwealth and United States.
Care Management

- Coordination of Multiple Resources
- Behavioral Health Linkage
- Promotion of Health, Safety, Well Being
- Development of Family Relationships
Care Management Outcomes

- Using Resources to Promote Self-Actualization and Success
- Independent Problem Solving
School Collaboration

- Annual Transition Plan
- Transfer of Credits
- Collaborative Planning with School Staff
- Update Individualized Education Plan
- Meet the Special Needs of All Students
School Collaboration Outcomes

• Earn Credits for High School Graduation
• Re-Integration in High School When Appropriate
• Receive High School Diploma
• MCAS Success
School Collaboration Outcomes

• Earn Credits for High School Graduation
• Re-Integration in High School When Appropriate
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Drug/Alcohol Issues

Connection to Treatment
1. Counseling
2. SOAP
3. IOP
4. Residential

Cost to Society
- High Drop Out Rate
- Court Involvement
- Medical Costs due to active use
- Underemployed

Return to Home School or Placed in Alt Education
- 85% using at same level prior to treatment

Recovery High School
1. Academic Competency
2. Recovery Support
3. Community Integration
4. Care Management
5. School Collaboration
6. RHS Continuing Care

Long Term Outcomes
- High School Diploma
- Commitment to Recovery
- Social Emotional Competency
- Complete Higher Education
- Full time Employment
The problem

We are not reaching our youth who need help.
They do not realize they have a problem.

They do not believe that we can help.
Increasing Your Presence
Youth awareness and facilitating a conversation

Display icanhelp posters
Examples of posters related to addictive behavior and issues
icanhelp Website: http://icanhelp.me

The icanhelp program increases early identification of young people in our communities who need a “safe, educated person” to help them access the appropriate service essential to their well-being.

The goal of the icanhelp program is to enhance, link and increase engagement in programs and structures such as school psychologists, drug-free communities, special education services, etc, as well as link students and families to appropriate resources that they may not otherwise feel inclined to address. A recent evaluation of the icanhelp program found that 14% of the linkages were the result of the icanhelp program.
Teachers indicated the largest increase in linkages due to icanhelp.

**Total Number of Linkages Related to the icanhelp Program**

- Don’t Know: 195.0 (24%)
- icanhelp: 113.8 (14%)
- non-icanhelp: 505.2 (62%)

Participants reported a 14% increase in linkages due to the icanhelp program.

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Unknown percentage related to the icanhelp program. Future work will examine the “Don’t Know” linkages to better estimate the icanhelp contribution.
icanhelp℠

a program for early engagement by establishing “safe” places for adolescents to develop a trusting rapport with adults in the community

http://icanhelp.me

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