

Presentation to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

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U.S.A. Context

“An estimated 70 to 80% of child welfare cases involve families affected by substance use.”

Nancy K. Young, Director,
National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

Key Barriers – Substance Abuse, Child Welfare and the Courts

- **Beliefs and Values**
- **Competing Priorities**
- **Treatment Gap**
- **Information Systems**
- **Staff Knowledge and Skills**
- **Lack of Communication**
- **Different Mandates**

Enhanced Capacity for Families to Provide for Children's Needs

- **Improved Screening and Assessment Protocols and Effective Communication Paths Across Systems**
 - **Standardized Screening Tools**
 - **Partnering for Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Expertise**
 - **Standardized Monitoring & Reporting Tool**
 - **Joint Case Management**

Substance-Abusing Parents Have Multiple Problems

- **Co-occurring problems: poverty, mental health issues/past trauma, domestic violence, low educational achievement**
- **Access to treatment issues**
- **Difficulties with treatment enrollment and retention**
- **Relapse common**

Impact of Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) on Children

- **The two most significant risks to children of substance abusers¹:**
 - **Poorer developmental outcomes**
 - **High risk of substance abuse themselves**
- **Children of substance abusers exhibit depression and anxiety more often than children from non-addicted families².**

1. Department of Health and Human Services, Blending Perspectives and Building Common Ground, April 1999.

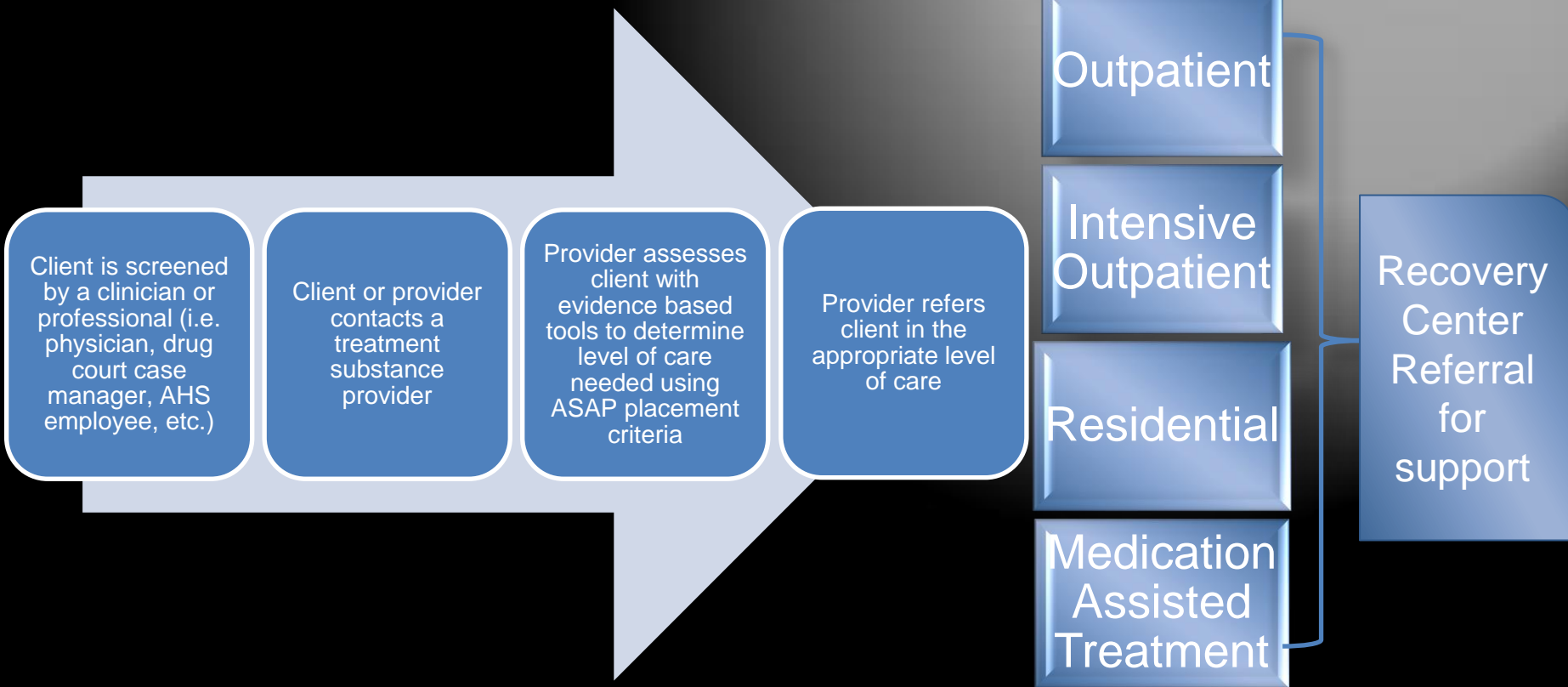
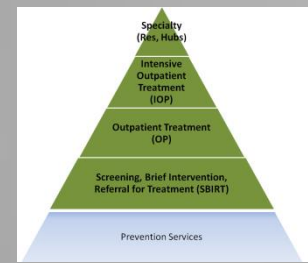
2. National Association for Children of Alcoholics, Children of Addicted Parents: Important Facts, <http://www.nacoa.org>

Key Points

- **Assessment of parents' for AOD issues as early as possible**
- **Immediate and ongoing contact with Recovery Specialist – gender specialist (if possible)**
- **Immediate access to treatment**
- **Supervised alcohol and drug screenings**
- **Ongoing recovery monitoring**
- **Support, encouragement and motivation**
- **Attendance at significant events**

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Process for accessing treatment services in Vermont

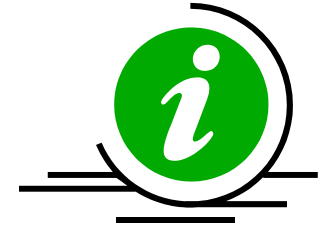


Screening vs. Assessment

Screening is intended to identify people at risk for or actually experiencing harm associated with their drinking and/or drug use.

Assessment is intended to gather detailed information about people's patterns of consumption and consequences to inform intervention.

Resources



<http://healthvermont.gov/adap/treatment/treatment.aspx>

http://healthvermont.gov/adap/treatment/treatment_county.aspx

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