



# Children of Addicted Families (COA)

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Presentation for  
3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Southwest Regional  
Prevention Convention



# Introductions

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- Cheryl Shelvin, LPP
  - Prevention Coordinator, Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority
  - 504-349-8753
  - [cshelvin@jphsa.org](mailto:cshelvin@jphsa.org)
  - Negotiates program contracts
  - Monitors service provision through site visits, etc.
  - Reviews documentation including invoices, attendance sheets, pre- and post-tests, etc.
  - Provides technical support and training on PMIS
  - Provides monthly program reports for state office
- Nita Baucom, LCSW-BACS
  - Program Manager, Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority
  - 504-371-0172
  - [nbaucom@jphsa.org](mailto:nbaucom@jphsa.org)
  - Determines how program will be implemented in community
  - Identifies community providers
  - Assists in monitoring contracts
  - Provides technical support
  - Submits program reports to state office (funding source)



# Introductions

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- Freddie Landry, LPP
  - Executive Director, Healing Hearts for Community Development Celebration Church
  - 504-831-9673
  - [freddiel@celebrationchurch.org](mailto:freddiel@celebrationchurch.org)
  - Identifies and assigns group facilitators and child care providers
  - Prepares documentation for monthly invoice submission
  - Facilitates groups and assists in data entry as needed
  - Provides initial training for facilitators
- Myrna Pockell, LPP
  - Contract Provider
  - 504-349-8517
  - [myrna.pockell@jppss.k12.la.us](mailto:myrna.pockell@jppss.k12.la.us)
  - Facilitates groups
  - Prepares documentation for monthly invoice submission
  - Completes data entry
  - Provides initial training for facilitators



## Video on OAD website

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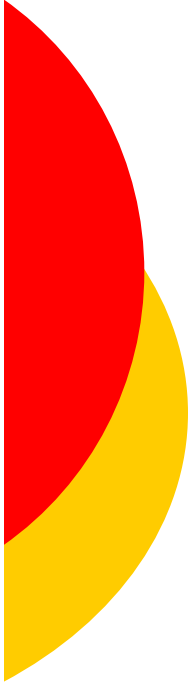
- Completed early 2007
- Can be viewed at OAD website
  - [www.addictionsla.com](http://www.addictionsla.com)
  - Look for the box with 'Current Highlights' that has 'View the Newly Released JPHSA, Children of Addicted Parents Program, Web cast'



## Video

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- State Office of Addictive Disorders offered an opportunity for regions to highlight their prevention efforts
- JPHSA submitted request to highlight its COA program
- JPHSA was selected due to
  - the creative ways the program is offered
  - diversity of community providers
  - impact on the community



# View Web-Cast Video

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# History of COA in Jefferson Parish

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- Substance Abuse Prevention Education (SAPE)
  - State Department of Education program
  - Provided training by COA program developers
- Training from Safe and Drug Free Schools
  - Provided training for school site facilitators
- COA groups implemented district wide in public schools



## Current Efforts

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- State Training from OAD/DHH early 2000's
- OAD offered funding to Districts to implement program
- JPHSA submitted proposal and was selected for funding
  - Recovery Focused Support Groups
  - Addressed potential barriers
  - Community based



## Current Efforts

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- Began our community implementation efforts in 2004
- Identified providers
  - Shelters for substance using parents and their children
  - Faith-based programs for adult substance users
  - Community-based programs for adult substance users



# Children's Program Kit

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Supportive Education for Children of  
Addicted Parents



# Addiction in the Family

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- Affects Everyone
- Family members develop unhealthy ways of communicating with each other and coping with addiction.
- Rules in Addicted Families
  - Don't Talk
  - Don't Trust
  - Don't Feel



# Children of Addicted Parents

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## Why Special Emphasis?

- 1 in 4 children is affected by alcohol abuse or alcoholism in the family; many are also hurt by parental drug use.
- Developmental impact is both social and emotional.

## Early Intervention =

- Prevention of Mental Health Problems: COA's are at increased risk for depression and anxiety disorders.
- Prevention of Substance Abuse Problems: COA's have increased environmental and genetic risks.
- Relapse Prevention: Reduction of stress in the family



# People Outside the Family Can Make a Difference

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When treatment programs provide educational support groups for school-age children:

- Treatment outcomes improve.
- Family recovery is enhanced.
- Children's sense of stigma and shame is reduced.
- Family stress is reduced.

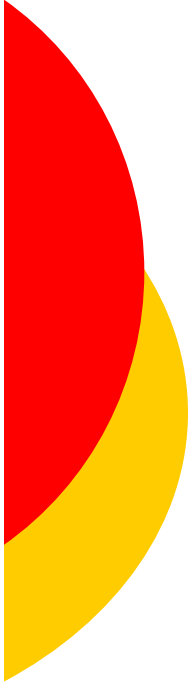


# *End Broken Promises, Mend Broken Hearts Video*

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## This video provides

- A rationale for addressing the needs of children with addicted parents as well as information about educational support groups and appropriate and effective settings for them.
- Messages from children and parents who have benefited from support groups.
- Messages from prevention, treatment, and school professionals who have provided educational support groups for children of parents in treatment.



# View Broken Promises DVD

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# Critical Information for Children of Parents in Treatment

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The purpose of Children's educational support programs is to provide education about addiction and to give children a framework for what they are experiencing as well as

- Information about addiction as a family disease.
- Information about the parent's treatment program.
- Information on community-based support, such as Alateen and school-based student assistance programs (SAPs).
- Clarification about and validation of their experiences.
- Resources for them to learn, talk, get their questions answered, and play.
- Information to learn that recovery is a process.
- Information on the resilience they have developed as a result of their experiences.
- Reassurance that the child needs and deserves support and help.



# Messages that Group Offers for Parents and Children

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## For Parents:

- Give your children the gift you never got.
- Children can recover too.
- Helping your children will help you.

## For Children:

- You're not alone; there are lots of kids living in families like yours.
- It's not your fault.
- You deserve help, and there is help for you.
- Addiction is a disease.
- It's okay to share your feelings with safe people.



# Group Work Is the Preferred Strategy

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## Groups:

- Validate perceptions and interpretations.
- Absolve children of blame and help them gain perspective.
- Help separate parent from behavior.
- Increase the likelihood of breaking denial.
- Provide safety and protection.
- Build trust in social situations.
- Provide opportunities for group validation.
- Allow Kids to try out new approaches to old problems.
- Teach them skills for self-care.
- Offer children hope and help to cope.
- Children learn they're not alone and experience healthy social interactions.



# Differences Between Educational Support and Therapy Groups

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## Educational Support Groups

- Focus on life skills/coping skills
- Education
- Support/safety net
- Educational goals and objectives are achieved through curriculum-based content and activities.
- Building protective factors
- Conducted by trained facilitators who are caring; knowledgeable about child development and specific issues; and have “health” to give.
- “LOVEE” driven: Listen, Observe, Validate, Educate, Empower
- Time limited: 6-12 weeks

## Therapy Groups

- Solve a personal problem
- Resolution
- May be supportive, but also contain confrontation and probing
- Individualized treatment plans, use of therapeutic activities; however, the process is always more important than the content
- Probing; addressing impact of risk factors; may focus later on protective factors
- Conducted by trained therapists
- Driven by psychological theory and diagnosis
- Length of treatment determined by treatment process and patient’s progress, or insurance coverage



# COA Lessons Plans

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## Lesson Titles

Unit 1 – Addiction

Unit 2 – Feelings

Unit 3 – Problem Solving

Unit 4 – Treatment and Recovery

Unit 5 – Safe People

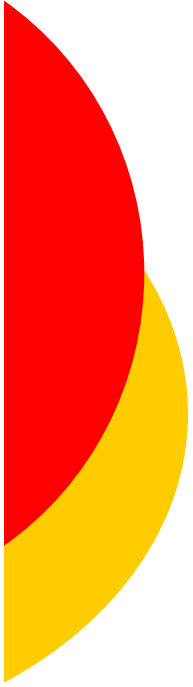
Unit 6 – Coping



# Addiction

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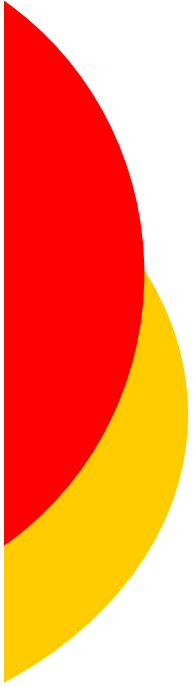
- Goals are for children to understand
  - Alcoholism and addiction are diseases
  - Addiction is not their fault
  - They are not alone; many children live in families with addiction
- Seven C's



# Feelings

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- Goals are for children to
  - Identify and express comfortable and uncomfortable feelings
  - Understand how feelings affect them and how they can handle feelings in safe ways
  - Identify who are the safe people with whom they can share feelings and get support
- Lesson Plan demonstration



# Problem Solving

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- Goals are for children to
  - Find new ways to solve problems
  - Understand that all their choices have consequences
  - Realize there are safe people and places to help them
  - Learn how to resist peer pressure
  - Identify strategies to avoid negative peer pressure



# Treatment and Recovery

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- Goals are to for children to
  - Understand that people with addiction need help to recover
  - Realize they can't fix their parent's problems, but can work on their own self-care
  - Realize that treatment and aftercare helps addicted people to get better



# Safe People

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- Goals are to help children to
  - Understand the importance of always staying safe
  - Understand the characteristics that make people “safe people”
  - Realize it’s okay to ask safe people for help



# Coping

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- Goals are to help children to
  - Find safe ways to communicate with family members
  - Practice self-care strategies
  - Realize there are safe places to go for help
  - Identify techniques to deal with peer pressure
  - Understand the importance of high self-esteem
  - Identify areas needing improvement
  - Name at least 1-5 positive self-traits



# Developing a Lesson Plan

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- Group Opening
- Curriculum Activity
- Group Closing



# Group Opening

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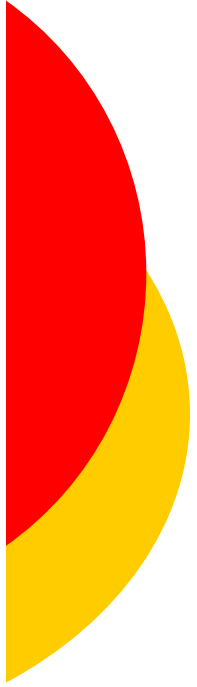
- Welcome
  - Optional Icebreaker
- Choose Group Opening/Hello Exercise
  - Demonstration of Hello exercise
- Review Group Rules
  - Rules and consequences
- Pre-test



# Curriculum Activity

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- Lesson Curriculum
  - Demonstration of Feelings Curriculum
  - Pepper video
  - Optional Group Activity



[View Pepper video](#)

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# Group Closing

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- Review of lesson
- Post-test
- Choose Group Closing/Goodbye Exercise
  - Demonstration of a closing exercise
- Remind about next session
  - Optional to give Parent Letter to take home



# Our Successes

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- In FY 2004-2005
  - Served X number of children
  - # providers
  - Types of settings
- In FY 2005-2006
  - Served X number of children
  - # providers
  - Types of settings



# Identifying Program Barriers

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- Marketing the program
  - the most difficult element of implementing the program is getting families to allow their children to participate
  - getting past the myth that the child does not know of the family member's substance use issue
  - getting past the resistance to involving their child



# Identifying Program Barriers

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- Lack of transportation
- Need for childcare
  - Particularly for those children too young for the program (0-4 years)



# Identifying Program Barriers

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- Limited number of available providers
  - Decreased numbers of Post-Katrina providers of substance abuse services for adults
  - Providers do not identify an opportunity to serve groups of adult client's children
  - Agencies' policy requiring fees that exceed our budget



# Addressing Barriers

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- Marketing the program
  - Identified shelters that serve substance using adults and their children
  - Worked with adult providers to address the myth that the child doesn't know about the substance use
  - OAD website video (for view later in this presentation)



# Addressing Barriers

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- Transportation
  - Funding is allocated for bus tokens and taxis
- Child Care
  - Activities are provided in a childcare setting for those children who are not the appropriate age for the program
  - Activities are provided in a childcare setting for those children who have finished the program



# Addressing Barriers

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- **Limited number of available providers**
  - Have offered program in school setting, shelters, faith-based, public, and not for profit organizations
  - Will begin to offer program in conjunction with services offered to adolescent substance users (addressing sibling issues)
  - Will begin to offer program in conjunction with services offered to substance using mothers whose children are in the Child Welfare system



## Lessons Learned

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- Participants repeating the series
- Reluctance to identify participant as "done"
- Pre- and post-test validity



Q & A

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Surprise Gift