



JUVENILE DRUG TREATMENT COURT GUIDELINES

ENGAGING FAMILIES, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY

DISCLAIMER

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The question

- What do you know or wonder about the families you encounter in your work?



MODULE OBJECTIVES

- Discuss the importance of and strategies for engaging families
- Explain the research related to family engagement and outcomes in JDTC programs
- Discuss the importance of and strategies for involving schools and the community
- Consider related policy changes

CORRESPONDING GUIDELINES: FAMILIES

Guideline

1.5

JDTCs should be deliberate about engaging parents or guardians throughout the court process, which includes addressing the specific barriers to their full engagement.

Guideline

1.6

JDTCs should provide court-certified or licensed onsite interpreters for parents or guardians with limited English proficiency and for those with a hearing deficiency. In addition, all documents should be translated into the native language of non-English-speaking youth and parents or guardians.

Guideline

3.1

JDTCs should work collaboratively with parents and guardians throughout the court process to encourage active participation in (a) regular court hearings, (b) supervision and discipline of their children in the home and community, and (c) treatment programs.

CORRESPONDING GUIDELINES: SCHOOLS

Guideline

1.3

The JDTC team should include participants from local school systems, with the goal of overcoming the educational barriers JDTC participants face.

CORRESPONDING GUIDELINES: COMMUNITY

Guideline

1.1

The JDTC team should be composed of stakeholders committed to the court's philosophy and practice, and to ongoing program and system improvement. The team should include collaborative relationships with community partners.



RESEARCH FINDINGS: FAMILIES & JDTC

A common predictor of failure in the JDTC program is lack of parental support.

When parents/guardians do not support the court(s), there is a greater likelihood that youth in the JDTC will not succeed.

Research shows that youth's behavior and demeanor are directly linked to their parents' willingness to participate.



RESEARCH FINDINGS: FAMILIES & JDTC

Research shows that if a family member attended the JDTC, there was a lower probability that the youth would be late or absent from treatment, late to school, or receive a sanction for non-compliance.

Programs that offer incentives to parents report stronger engagement of youth and families.

Offering incentives can facilitate parent collaboration in behavioral management, as they maintain their parental control.



FAMILIES ENGAGEMENT IN THE COURT ROOM

Parental involvement is correlated with higher graduation rates in the JDTC program

Stronger outcomes occur when parents attend court hearings regularly and participate in the process.

Innovative approaches need to support parents

Provide materials in varied forms

Parent/Family Engagement



What we do with parent or family in partnership to motivate and empower them to recognize their own needs, strengths and resources and the family taking an active role in changing things for the better.

Self Check

- See the parents as experts in their own lives
- See the parent as the client/participant/problem verses and individual with strengths
- Accept the idea that maybe the parent can make as good or better decisions than we can when it comes to their child
- Tasking ourselves as professionals - wherever we are in our system to be strength-based

The 3 C's of Parent Engagement

- Compassion
- Creating Safe Spaces
- Communication

Compassion



“Compassion is the keen awareness of the interdependence of all things.”

Thomas Merton

How do we Compassionately Engage Family?

- We demonstrate genuine caring and a respectful attitude
- We are real with them not phony
- Empathy
- Build Trust
- Get to know the person
 - Culture, routines, preferences, taboos, facets of their life, what is important to them, fears, heartbreaks, strengths

How do we Compassionately Engage Family?

- Actively listening – not about you
 - Eye contact when culturally appropriate
 - Open body posture
- Helping them to change things for the better
 - Transportation
 - Support groups
 - Education about parenting, trauma, substance use and other topics relevant to their situation

How do we Compassionately Engage Family?

- Educate and support the parents choices
- Answer questions and address their concerns
- We humble ourselves and serve them



Create Safe Spaces



Creating Safe Spaces

- Respect Difference – recognize that a single member of a group might feel unsafe and isolated.
- Listen – give people the opportunity to speak their truth. Listen to all voices.
- Refrain from judgment.
- Ground rules should be clearly set forth.
- Questions are answered promptly and appropriately.
- Respect the opinions of others and use I statements when stating your own opinions and feelings.

Creating Safe Spaces

Parents need to feel that they are active participants in partnership with you.



Effective Communication

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwjAAgGi-90>

Compassionate Communication

- Paying Attention to Detail
- Attentive Listening
- Explanatory Communication & Forbearance
- Validating/Honoring the Parent
- Communicate Understanding
- Offer to Help
- Talk "to" not "at"

The power of words



The Power of Words

- Judgment (that is the way these people are, it's the reason they are in this situation,)
- Labeling (poor parenting skills, disrespectful, poor judgment)
- Blame (it's their fault or they are the problem)
- Diagnosis (he is angry, passive aggressive, co-dependent)
- Evaluation (They don't care, they are lying, doesn't respect me or the court)

Communication Exercise

Write down one thing family members do that you don't like or one thing that makes your job harder.

BE FAMILY CENTERED



System level

Program level

Individual level

- **Provide support/education for the family.**
- **Ensure families involved in decision making processes at the individual, program, and system levels. This holds youth accountable and keeps the public safe**
- **Strengthen families with varied treatment and pro-social options**



GUIDELINE 1.5: PARENT ENGAGEMENT IN JDTC

To help youth succeed in program and achieve lasting behavior change:

- JDTC should have at least one parent or guardian present for court.**
- JDTC team should communicate respect, value and fairness to the youth and family.**
- The parents or guardians are included in all intake procedures and are part of initial treatment planning, and on-going case planning.**
- When a parent/guardian is not able to be engaged, then the program should seek to engage another adult relative, mentor, recovery coach, other caring adult.**

GUIDELINE 1.6: MAKING PROGRAM ACCESSIBLE TO ALL FAMILIES

The cultural and linguistic needs of families should be respected and addressed.

Materials should be written in a simple, yet informative manner.

Professional interpreters should be made available

UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- Fear being viewed as bad parents
- Feel their input is not valued in the decision making process
- Financial pressures and barriers
- Parental history with justice and/or child welfare system(s)
- Time pressures and barriers (especially for working parents)
- Transportation pressures and barriers
- Disengaged from the youth (i.e., youth has burned his or her bridges with parents)
- Need to focus on other children
- Family dysfunction
- Parental substance use or mental health disorder
- Other barriers?

IMPLEMENTATION TIPS

- Locate the single point of contact early in the JDTC process (intake or initial treatment session). Secure commitment and orient parent(s).
- Consider creating a family peer mentor or “parent partner” program.
- If feasible, develop a family support group.
- On quarterly basis, and utilizing data, address barriers to success for families.
- Conduct “mapping exercise” to determine if service and treatment needs are being properly addressed.
- Handbook for families
- Judges play active role from the bench – targeting engagement



GUIDELINE 1.3

SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT ON JDTC TEAM

- School is an important protective factor. Poor academic performance is a risk factor that is linked to recidivism.
- Youth who do not attend school may have higher numbers of delinquency referrals than those who do attend.
- Recovery schools have been found to be effective in supporting recovery and enhancing academic performance.
- Finding education programs that support the JDTC youth important, as schools can be a barrier to success if they don't support and care for youth struggling with substance abuse issues.

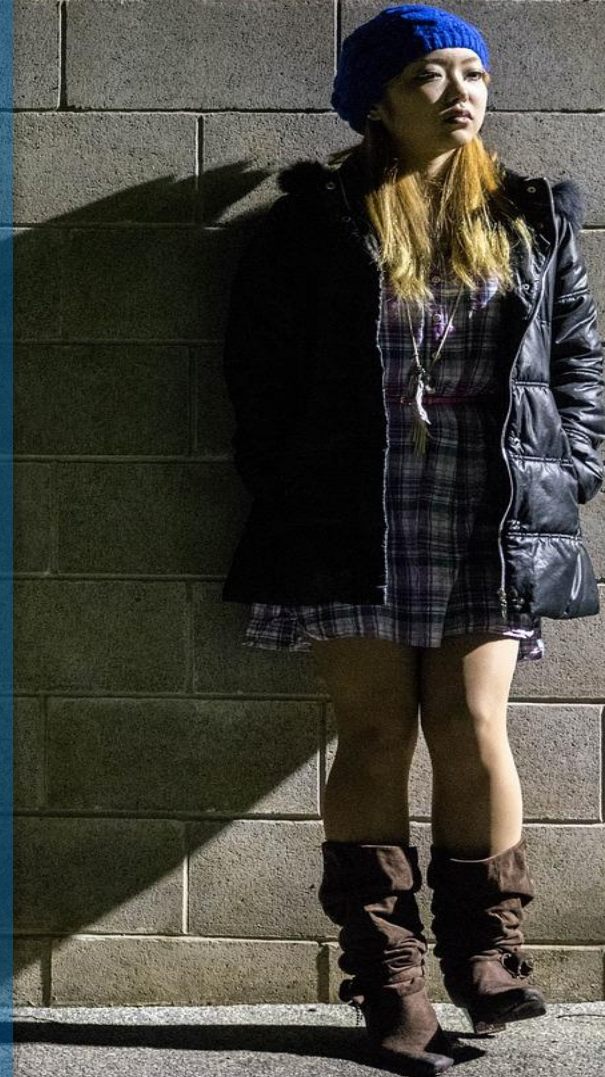
School Engagement

If you do not have schools engaged, what is the first step that you would take to engage them?

Those who do have schools engaged, how did you do it and how is it working?

TIPS FOR SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

- In case planning with youth, make educational goals a priority
- Offer flexible strategies for communicating with school personnel – via email, skype, text in order to share updates
- Explore the full range of educational opportunities
- Consider holding some JDTC court sessions at the school or community center
- Ensure that school representative present for staffing/court if possible.
- Involve the school social worker and the IEP process



GUIDELINE 1.1

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Courts that establish strong referral sources and community partnerships create additional safety nets.
- Participants need more prosocial activities and opportunities in order to be successful.
- A vast array of approaches are necessary to reduce or prevent involvement in problem behaviors.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Two major components:

1. Program collaborating with community partners to meet needs of youth and families.
 - Professional service providers
 - Faith-based and other non-traditional organizations
2. Youth engaging with the community for prosocial activities
 - Recovery communities
 - Sober support peer groups

Source: (Green et al, (2015): SIROW, University of Arizona)



Community Engagement

Think of 5 community partners that might be able to help you in your JDTC efforts?

TIPS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Conduct and regularly update a community resource map
- Educate and leverage all members of the team for community outreach, however the process of CE should be managed by one specific staff member to reduce duplication, confusion and maximize outreach.
- Make “specific asks” when it comes to enrichment opportunities to open the door to further involvement
- Define the terms and expectations of the collaboration at the outset
- Identify those partners where there is a mutually beneficial relationship.

Source: (Green et al, (2015): SIROW, University of Arizona)



7 Principles for Family, School and Community Engagement

- Be Prepared
- Be Respectful
- Be Specific
- Be Strategic
- Be Flexible
- Be Creative
- Be Collaborative

SUMMARY AND QUESTIONS

These three areas are often challenging and overwhelming for JDTC programs, however, the research shows that addressing each can result in stronger outcomes for youth.

Engagement in a variety of services and supports for both youth and family members is critical to success for JDTC programs.

Varied techniques should and can be used to engage families, schools and community partners.

Teams should review current policies and make necessary changes in order to strengthen family connections, school participation and deepen community engagement.



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