

In Our Children and Families

A Provider Perspective

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The effects of substance abuse have a critical impact on the child welfare system.

- The impact of how many children and adolescents are entering the system
- What happens to children and adolescents who have been directly affected by parents who are substance abusers?



The Impact on the Child Welfare System

- The number of children in foster care in the United States rose from 2012 thru 2014
 - 397,774 in 2012
 - 415,129 in 2014*
 - according to the federal [Administration for Children and Families](#),
 - Thus reversing a seven-year downward trend.
 - It has been reported that the rise in use of foster care is directly related to the Opioid Epidemic.
 - Due to this epidemic just emerging as a need of concentration, awareness, and resources. There is no immediate statistics to support that statement all research is indicating that the antidotal information is fact.
 - (excerpted from a Wall Street Journal article written by Jon Kamp and Arian Campo-Flores written on January 12, 2016)
- According to the Foster Family-based Treatment Association (FFTA)
 - National percentage of children removed from families, due to opioid usage, is
 - 31.8%
 - New Jersey's percentage of children removed from families, due to opioid usage is
 - 38%

Impact *continued*

Important to note while the percentages seem low

- Substance Abuse has a higher direct correlation with abuse and neglect.
- The belief is that this statistic is under-reported



- Out of the children and adolescents that Children's Aid and Family Services provides treatment for in their Out of Home Care department
 - Over 80% have had at least one family member formally reported to be struggling with substance abuse.

The Child Welfare System has been rooted in maintaining the welfare and safety of the child

- Programs and providers are trauma informed programs.
- Research shows that the most successful outcomes with children who have been significantly traumatized:
 - Creating an environment where they children can begin to feel
 - Safe,
 - Lovable,
 - Capable
- By creating this environment they can begin to heal from through there trauma

Children who are placed into the system

Treated with milieu of approaches

- Therapy
 - Behavior modification
 - Structured recreational activities
 - Psychopharmacology (when indicated)
 - Medical interventions
 - Educational interventions
- Delivered from a team based approach,
 - Multi-disciplinary teams that discuss their interventions and the plans to move forward
 - Children begin to heal from their trauma.
 - Able to re-integrate back into the community and family
 - According to the National Traumatic Stress Network: It has also been reported that the neurobiology of a traumatized brain develops differently
 - The goal is to help the brain recover
 - Heal from the trauma
 - Develop and creat new neuro pathways

How the Substance Abuse afflicted Child doesn't necessarily fit into that mold



- Our assumption has always been that there is an opportunity for the brain to heal from the trauma...
- What we are currently experiencing:
 - A child has been in-utero drug exposed,
 - the neuro biological effects are far more significant
 - Children not responding to the traditional models of intervention

- While the behaviors present similarly:
 - Aggression
 - Not relating cause and effect
 - Extreme Impulsivity
- We are discovering that our cadre of treatment is very different.
 - A traumatized child responds to:
 - behavior management,
 - cognitive therapy,
 - psychopharmacology
 - A child who has neurological effects due to substance use does not usually respond to these interventions
 - The differences in what is observed is:
 - The intensity of the aggressive behaviors
 - Inability to be redirected
 - Inability to understand cause and effect
 - Inability to accept limits, both physical and verbal
 - Inability to even recognize their extreme impulsivity

- Providers are now faced with the task of recreating ourselves:
 - From Children's Aid and Family Services perspective:
 - Interventions that have been successful
 - Sensory oriented.
 - Mindfulness work
 - Psychopharmacology
 - Integration of trauma informed work and neurobiological approach
- Children's Aid and Family Services has been able to recognize these issues
 - Most importantly the agency provides a multitude of services.
 - The benefit has been as an agency we have successfully been able to braid our services across the board and be able to treat the whole child
 - Traditional silo's no longer exist
 - We have increased the interdisciplinary approach.

Conclusion

- It is through forums such as this one that we begin the process of braiding all of the state systems in order to conquer an epidemic that cuts across all of the systems silos.
 - Adults
 - Children
 - Medical
 - Educational
 - Courts
 - Etc.
- Lets continue to use the three prong approach to Prevention and Intervention
 - The Agent
 - The Host
 - The Environment







