What Teachers Need to Know

Caregiver Addiction: Curriculum Development for Elementary School Teachers
Funded by NSATTC, SAMSAH, CSAT
Teacher Training

Develop teacher’s knowledge about substance abuse and dependence

Provide models for integrating drug prevention materials into the curriculum and for adapting them to local circumstances.
Why Caregiver Addiction?

The effects of caregiver “addiction” on school age children link substance abuse/dependence directly to issues that concern classroom teachers.
Widespread Effects

“... Approximately 1 in 4 children in the US is exposed to alcohol abuse or dependence in the family at some point before the age of 18.”

Children of Alcoholics Foundation
At Risk Educationally

- Academic failure
- Absenteeism or tardiness
- Learning disabilities
- Depression, psychosomatic and physical illness
- Aggressive conduct or acting out

National Association for Children of Alcoholics
At Risk for Substance Abuse/Dependence

"... children of substance abusers are at much higher risk of becoming chemically dependent than are other students."

National Association for Children of Alcoholics
Why Elementary Schools?

Of the three “bump ups” in drug, alcohol, and tobacco use among school age children, the earliest occurs between fifth and sixth grade.

Elementary school teachers are responsible for meeting health and physical education curricular standards in New Jersey.
Teacher Training

Elementary school teachers typically lack training in drug abuse prevention and in how to develop or integrate such materials into the curriculum.
Tools

- Models for Understanding the at risk child
- Protective Strategies
- Adaptation and Evaluation
Understanding Kids at Risk

Deficits and Resilience Models
Models

**Deficit Model**
- negative responses
- capacity for decline
- dis-empowerment

**Resilience Model**
- positive responses
- capacity for recovery
- empowerment
## Deficit Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Adaptations</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lost child</td>
<td>depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scapegoat</td>
<td>dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hero</td>
<td>workaholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mascot</td>
<td>delinquency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resilience Model

Resilient Children have the inner resources to overcome adversity

Expectations
- fulfilling relationships
- problem solvers
- humor
- self esteem
- verbal skills
- goal directed
Protective Strategies

Classroom Management, Prosocial Lesson Plans, & Evaluation
Classroom Management

Standard classroom management techniques are effective in creating safe havens.

- **Teacher:** Notification, clear expectations, appropriate responses, and consistent follow-up.

- **Student:** Clear limits and accountability including rewards and consequences.
Prosocial Lesson Plans

- What does it mean to be friends?
- Judith Vigna, I Wish Daddy Didn’t Drink So Much
- Draw, tell, or write how to be a friend to Lisa.
Evaluation

Curricular Standards, Student Learning & Teacher Portfolios
Curricular Standards

From drug prevention:
- the physical and behavior effects of drugs and alcohol; drug abuse and dependence, their impact on personal and family health, and resources for getting help; and finally how drugs and alcohol contribute to illness
Health and Life Skills

- dangerous situations, protective strategies, and resources for help
- decision-making and refusal skills
Student Learning

- Writing
- Telling
- Acting Out
- Drawing
Teacher Portfolios

- Teacher’s Reflections
- Samples of Student Work
  - Successes
  - Challenges
- Notes on Adaptations
  - culture, race, and ethnicity
- Postings to Teacher Lists
Caregiver Addiction

• Teacher Training
• Resilient Child
• Protective Strategies
• Prosocial Lesson Plans
• Evaluation