Implementing System Change

A Practice-Research Partnership on Trauma & Addiction
Western New York Trauma & Addiction Project

- **Mini-Grant** from the New York State Practice Research Collaborative to Principal Investigator Nancy J. Smyth, Ph.D., at the University at Buffalo

- **Background**: Psychological trauma is a risk factor for addiction and often a consequence of addiction. In addition, failure to address trauma-related problems can leave many clients vulnerable to relapse.
Planning the Grant

- Planning Group (PG) from the WNY Practice Research Network
- Initially, an assessment study was the goal (with treatment implications to follow)
- PG decided we needed to make treatment resources available first, then implement assessment study (so as not to increase staff frustration and confusion)
Project Goals

- To increase providers’ access to resources that will assist them in better meeting the needs of clients with trauma histories
- Whenever possible, resources will be derived from evidence-based practice, or secondarily, best-practices
- Implement project utilizing a provider-researcher partnership model
Project Planning Group

Planning Group (PG) Composition

- Multiple treatment providers (6 agencies, entire range of treatment options)
- Erie County dual recovery coordinator
- Researchers & faculty in the WNY Practice Research Network

Roles

- Principal Investigator takes responsibility for project oversight & budget
- PG makes all key project decisions
- Research assistant (doctoral student) hired to assist on project tasks
Key Activities

- Develop library of assessment & treatment materials related to trauma & addiction
- Plan an assessment study
- Plan a regional training to “kick-off” the assessment study & publicize the resource library
Resource Library

- Planning group reviewed & selected material
  - Videotapes
  - Treatment Manuals

- Two library sites:
  - Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse
  - Mental Health Association
Planning Assessment Study

- Goal: To identify trauma screening instruments that could be incorporated into clinics intake process
- Review & select several assessment instruments
- Conduct focus groups of staff to provide feedback on the selected instruments
- Plan design of pilot study
Unplanned Impact

- Viewing videos & assessment instruments in the planning group have served an educational functional for the whole group
- Provider participants have linked with county dual recovery coordinator to obtain training for all staff in trauma treatment paradigm (*Risking Connection Curriculum*)
Expected Impact / Next Steps

- Provide training on trauma & addiction for clinical supervisors
- Publicize resource libraries
- Implement planned assessment study in addiction treatment & prevention settings, thereby integrating screening tools into clinic intake procedures