

Grantee Profile

Tulare County

Children of Promise

The Children of Promise project is designed with the intent of creating a safe and drug-free learning environment for participants in 6th through 12th grades that will support academic achievement. This program will provide services specifically targeted at the youth of substance-abusing parents who may not be receiving services from the "system" using the Reconnecting Youth Curriculum, a highly recognized model program. The main emphasis of this program will be to improve the lives of the youth from this population, as well as providing an opportunity for the parents to become more involved with their children's healthy development. High risk youth requiring additional in-depth intervention will be offered culturally appropriate mentoring for an additional year. Additional services, such as linkages to job placement services and higher educational resources will be made available for the homeless and transitional youth. The overall goal of this project is to break the cycle of intergenerational substance abuse in our families by increasing those skills that foster resiliency, and provide opportunities for COSA youth to bond with caring adults with clear standards and healthy beliefs.

PROGRAM COMPONENT 1. *To prevent or reduce involvement with alcohol, tobacco and/or other drugs.*

Population(s) Served

- Children with substance abusing parents/caregivers, in 6th through 12th grades
- 12 youth at seven sites = 84 students in the first year, for an approximate total of 400 youth over 5 years

PROGRAM COMPONENT 2. *Decrease low commitment to school.*

Population(s) Served

- Participants in school

PROGRAM COMPONENT 3. *Decrease feelings of anxiety and depression.*

Population(s) Served

- Children with substance abusing parents/caregivers, in 6th through 12th grades

PROGRAM COMPONENT 4. *To increase protective factor, bonding with family, peers and school teachers.*

Population(s) Served

- Children with substance abusing parents/caregivers, in 6th through 12th grades

PROGRAM COMPONENT 5. *To increase opportunities for bonding with a caring adult who reinforces healthy beliefs and clear standards regarding academic achievement, AOD abstinence and gang involvement.*

Population(s) Served

- Children with substance abusing parents/caregivers, in 6th through 12th grades

Program Settings

- Community-based, e.g. treatment providers
- Community-based, CBO program serving homeless youth
- School-based, during school

Science-Based Criteria

Reconnecting Youth – SAMHSA Model Program

Program Strategies

- Implementation of the RY Curriculum at non-traditional sites
- Skills training for self-esteem enhancement, decision-making skills, interpersonal communication skills
- Small group environment (12:1 student-teacher ratio) and students are involved in heterogeneous peer groups with similar risk factors
- Ongoing monitoring of student goals, moods, drug use, school-attendance & achievement
- Parent reinforcement
- Establish school network support system for students
- Ongoing monitoring of student goals for school attendance & academic achievement

Risk Characteristics of Target Population

- Family history of substance abuse
- Parental addiction is self-perpetuating creating an intergenerational cycle of substance abuse
- Favorable parental attitudes and involvement in substance abusing behaviors
- Favorable attitudes towards substance abuse by youth
- Early initiation of substance and violence by youth
- Low commitment to school

Planning and Collaboration

Tulare County Division of Alcohol and Drug programs will partner with the Tulare County Office of Education, Child Welfare Services, Drug Court, Treatment providers, Youth Vision, a CBO serving homeless and/or emancipated youth for identification and service to the target population. Additionally, formalized collaboration with probation and two other CBOs has begun. The Children of Promise project will form the Caregiver Council, consisting of parents, guardians and/or caregivers to provide input and feedback.

Evaluation

The division of Alcohol and Drug programs (DAPD) in the Mental Health Branch of the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency, will oversee, implement and coordinate the grant evaluation. The evaluation will use a "participant evaluation model" with participants evaluating their own personal outcomes in addition to program outcomes. Participants, key staff members and partners will have their own evaluation piece and will work as part of the data collection team. The 'outside' evaluator will use all data points to generate a comprehensive report. Findings will be shared during bi-monthly meetings and with partners in quarterly progress reports.

Sample Performance Indicators

- Profiles of experience tool to measure moods, as well as family factors and social support
- Interviews with youth and parents to determine increased support and better family communication
- Review of school records for data regarding school drop outs and high school completion
- Review of school records for data regarding numbers of disciplinary referrals
- Interviews with students to ascertain changes in moods, feelings and personal control
- Interviews with the RY 'teacher' and parents to ascertain increases in participants' pro-social skills

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