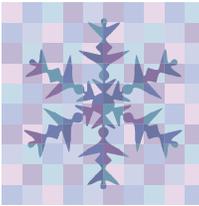

Parenting for Prevention

Student Assistance Services Corp., 660 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, New York, 10591, January, 2014

Intervention



Student Assistance Services is implementing a new service for parents beginning in 2014. During the summer Student Assistance

Counselors were trained to conduct a Planned Intervention for families, thanks to funding from the Joseph Marinello Hope Fund. Interventions for loved ones under 21 will be provided free of charge or based on ability to pay.

A Planned Intervention is an organized loving, supportive and empathetic way to help a family member interrupt the progression of their teen's substance abuse and get help.

The premise of a Planned Intervention is that a person does not have to "hit bottom" and suffer severe consequences before getting help. The Planned Intervention lets the teen know in a controlled setting with a specially trained professional, how concerned their family and friends are about their drug and alcohol use and asks them to go into treatment.

If you would like to know more about interventions call 914-332-1300 between 8AM and 5PM, Monday through Friday. There is also a list of licensed adolescent substance abuse treatment agencies in this newsletter.

Editor: Patricia Murphy Warble, LMSW, CPP

Help For Parents

Concerned about their teen's substance abuse

The holidays are a wonderful time of year for most families but they can also be a time when parents notice that their teen may be drinking or using other drugs. A new initiative is being introduced by Student Assistance Services to help parents address these concerns in a positive and effective manner. This initiative is called the Planned Intervention Program. The Program will provide **free consultation** to parents on how to respond to their teen's substance use. If it is determined that the teen needs treatment but is resistant, the family will be able to initiate an Intervention which is a thoughtful and specific course of action to help someone to face up to the fact that they have a substance abuse problem.

When parents are confronted with their teen or another family member using alcohol or other drugs, they usually do not know what to do or where to turn. Most parents want to address the situation in a caring and responsible manner but are often afraid that their actions may cause more harm than good. Sometimes that results in parents acting reactively rather than proactively to a worrisome and potentially lethal situation.

One of the first steps that parents can take when they realize that their child is using alcohol or other drugs is to evaluate in a realistic and honest way, how much and how often their child is using the substance. This information will help them decide what to do next as there is a difference between experimentation, regular, and problem use. Once a parent has made this determination, then parents and other family members can take steps to try to have a positive impact on the situation.

When parents discover that their child is using alcohol or other drugs, they can become concerned and worried and become very emotional, irrational and even lose control when confronting their child. This can make the teen defensive and may alienate the child even further. The teen may even rationalize that they have a "crazy, out-of-control parent" as a way to justify future use.

As a result of requests from many parents in Westchester County about how to respond to a teen using alcohol and other drugs, Ellen Morehouse, LCSW, CASAC, CPP, executive director of Student Assistance Services, makes the following recommendations.

Strategies for Parents

ADDRESSING EXPERIMENTATION

Use teachable moments and other opportunities to discuss reasons why teens shouldn't use alcohol or other drugs (AOD) from a perspective of concern for their health and safety. Having the conversation about alcohol and other drugs, is not a one time event, rather it is an ongoing conversation and should be held frequently. Parents should be aware that there are times, events, and celebrations when teens are more likely to drink or use other drugs. Be sure to state your expectations concerning the use of alcohol and other drugs and also state the consequences to their use. Parents often feel that their teens do not pay attention to them but research confirms that teens respond to their parents concerns and suggestions.

First time use:

1. Shortly after the teen wakes up or when there is no AOD in their system, state the behavior observed and ask what happened.
2. Brainstorm alternatives instead of AOD use.
3. Remind the teen of your view.
4. Provide a brief consequence.

Second Time Use

1. Shortly after teen wakes up or when there is no AOD in system, state behavior and ask what happened.
2. Remind teen of alternatives discussed previously.
3. Explore why the alternatives didn't work.
4. Remind the teen of your view and concerns.
5. Provide greater brief consequence

Third Time Use

1. Shortly after the teen wakes up or when there is no AOD in system, state the behavior and ask what happened.
2. Remind the teen of alternatives discussed previously.
3. Explore why alternatives didn't work.
4. Remind teen of your view.
5. Remind teen of two previous consequences.
6. State "We have a problem because I have not been able to communicate effectively my view on AOD use because you are still using despite consequences. Therefore we need to get some advice."

ADDRESSING PROBLEM USE

1. Talk to the teen shortly after he/she wakes up but not when he/she needs to be someplace else.
2. Discuss specific objective negative incidents/behaviors that have occurred as a result of his/her AOD use.
3. Share concern that substance use is causing problems and your belief that things would be better if he/she used less or didn't use at all.
4. Recognize his/her strengths and acknowledge that it's difficult for some people to decrease or stop use.
5. State "Because I love you and am concerned about your health and safety I've made an appointment for **us** to speak to someone to get their advice."

A Planned Intervention

If your teen continues to use alcohol and other drugs, experiences negative consequences such as school, health, peer, family or legal problems, and the strategies described above do not result in your teen making positive changes in his/her behavior, there is a next step. Many substance abuse professionals recommend a technique known as a Planned Intervention. A Planned Intervention is a carefully planned process involving

family, friends, and others who care about the person struggling with substance use. During a Planned Intervention, these individuals come together with the assistance of a specially trained professional to discuss their concerns, confront the person about the consequences of their use, and ask him or her to accept treatment.

The Intervention technique was started by Vernon E. Johnson, one of the founders of the Johnson Institute which is now part of Hazelton in Minnesota. Johnson believed that people who drank too much or used drugs did not have to “hit rock bottom” and experience terrible consequences before they stopped drinking or using drugs.

Instead, Johnson designed an initiative named an Intervention, during which family, friends, or others would “intervene” and get the substance abuser to recognize that he/she had a problem and agree to treatment before experiencing more serious consequences. Johnson supported early intervention because it interrupted the progression of the problem before addiction completely destroyed the person's life.

How Does An Intervention Work?

Many people erroneously believe that all interventions are as highly emotionally charged as the Interventions on A&E network's show “Intervention” or that their adolescent has had to suffer as many serious consequences as the people on the show. In reality, Interventions can and should occur before the situation becomes so serious.

The following is an edited description adapted from the Mayo Clinic on how a Planned Intervention works.

Planning. A family member or friend proposes a Planned Intervention and forms a planning group. A qualified professional interventionist is consulted when planning an Intervention to prepare the family and determine the appropriateness of using this strategy.

Gathering information. The group members discuss the extent of their concerns about the adolescent's situation with each other and the interventionist and explore treatment options.

Forming the Intervention team. The planning group forms a team to participate in the Planned Intervention. Team members set a date and location and work together to present a consistent, rehearsed message and a plan for treatment. The team will not let the adolescent know what they are doing until the day of the Intervention.

Deciding on specific consequences. If the adolescent doesn't accept treatment, each person on the team decides in advance of the Planned Intervention, what action he or she will take. Examples include taking away the car or reducing financial support.

Writing down what to say. Each member of the Planned Intervention team details specific incidents where the substance use has resulted in problems, related to school, social interactions, relationships, emotional, legal or financial issues.

The Planned Intervention meeting. Without revealing the reason, the adolescent is asked to the Intervention site. The interventionist introduces the situation, and members of the team take turns expressing their specific concerns and feelings. The loved one is presented with a treatment option and asked to accept that option on the spot. Each team member states the specific changes they will make if the substance abusing person doesn't accept the plan.

Follow-up. Involving family members or others is critical in helping the substance abuser stay in treatment and avoid relapsing. It is helpful for family members to participate in counseling with the adolescent, to seek their own support, and learn what to do if relapse occurs.

If you are interested in more information about how to respond to a teen's substance abuse or about a Planned Intervention, please contact Student Assistance Services at 914-332-1300, Monday through Friday between 8AM and 5PM

**Licensed Outpatient
Substance Abuse Treatment
Programs for
Adolescents in Westchester**

Innovative Health Systems,
(914) 683-8050
7 Holland Avenue,
White Plains, New York, 10603
Ross Fishman, Director

**Lexington Center for Recovery
Mt Kisco Clinic,** (914) 666-6740
24 Smith Avenue,
Mount Kisco, New York, 10549
Rebecca Melendez, Director

Lexington Center for Recovery,
(914) 235-6633
420 North Avenue,
New Rochelle, New York, 10801
Judy Curero, Director

The Maxwell Institute
914-337-6033
92 Yonkers Ave
Tuckahoe, New York, 10708
Roseanne Martinez, Coordinator

**Peekskill Pathways/Hudson
River Healthcare,**
(914) 734-8740
1037 Main Street,

Peekskill, New York, 10566
Lorna Johnson, Director

**Phelps Memorial Hospital
(ATS),** (914) 944-5220
22 Rockledge Avenue,
Ossining, New York, 10562

**Phelps Memorial Hospital
(Threshold),** (914) 631-3133
155 White Plains Road,
Tarrytown, New York, 10591

Renaissance Project,
(914) 423-4466 or (914) 423-
4678
10 Palisade Avenue,
Yonkers, New York 10701
Nicole Intervallo, Director

Sancia Health Care,
(914) 421-0400
20 Church St, White Plains,
New York, 10601
Pennye Nash, Director

**St. John's Riverside Hospital
(Archway),** (914) 668-1450 or
(914) 668-1451
20 East First Street,
Mount Vernon, New York, 10550
Elaine Bryant, Director

**St. John's Riverside Hospital
(Greenburgh),** (914) 683-5311
30 Manhattan Avenue,
Greenburgh, New York, 10607
Dan Sullivan, Director

**St. John's Riverside Hospital
(New Focus),** (914) 964-8000
2 Park Avenue,
Yonkers,
New York, 10703
John Slotwinski, Director

**St. Vincent's/St. Joseph's Excel
Program**
275 North Street,
Harrison,
New York, 10529
Shirley Quinnell-Friedlander,
Director, (914) 925-5404
Russell Francome, Coordinator,
(914) 925-5420

