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Supporting Positive Outcomes



Integrated Support for Complex Needs

When it comes to the issues of substance use, men and women often face different challenges. In recent times, there has been a growing awareness of these differences, and as a result, new methods to help women and girls are being researched and put into practice. These methods aim to reduce the negative impacts of substance use while considering each person's unique background and needs.

Particularly for women and girls, these strategies are tailored to their specific experiences. This could mean looking at how and why they started using substances, what treatment options are available to them, the other mental health issues they might be dealing with, and the kind of support they have at home. The idea is to offer care that recognizes where they are in life and what they're aiming to achieve, showing understanding and flexibility.

In a [study](#) from rural Canada, researchers

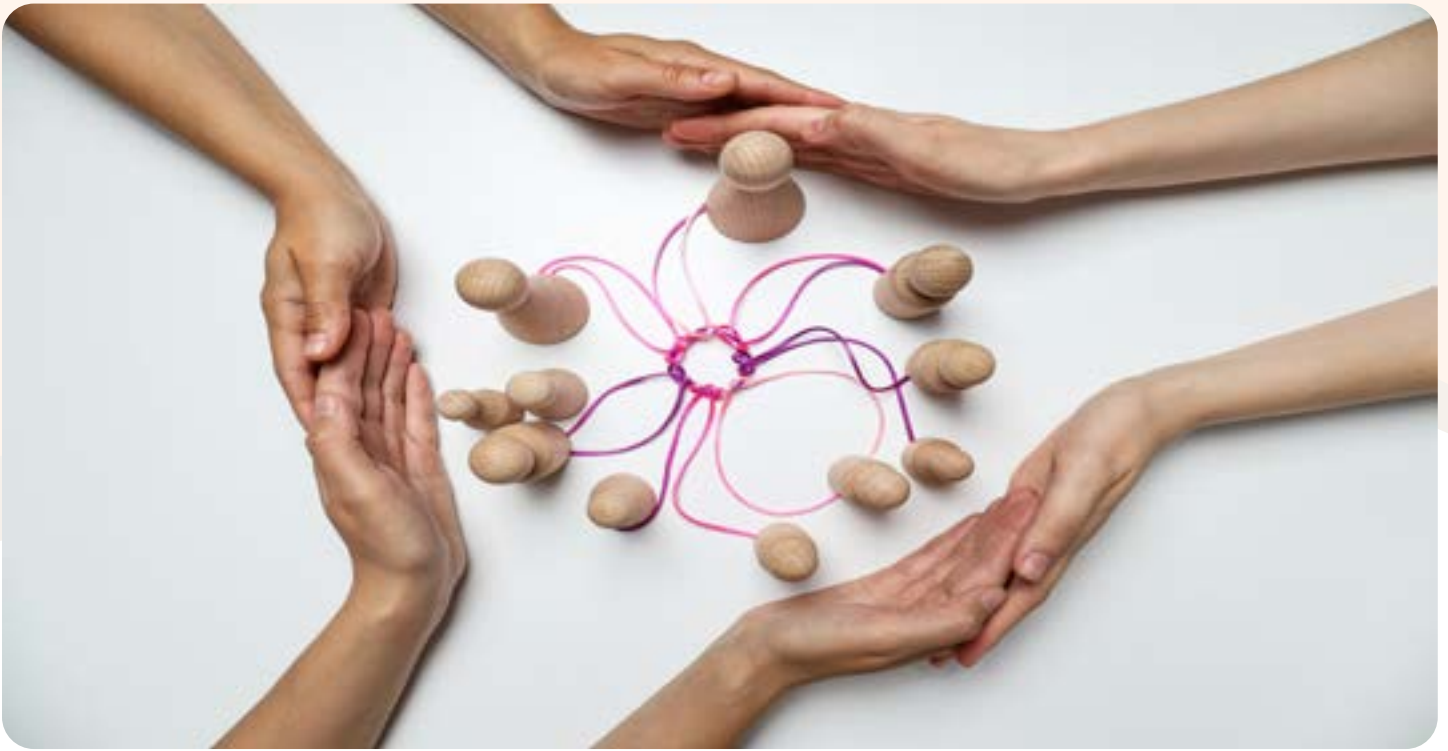


looked at a program designed for pregnant women and gender-diverse individuals dealing with substance use and other challenges. They examined data from 393 people who sought help from the 2nd Floor Women's Recovery Centre. The findings were encouraging. Most people finished the program, especially if they had a stable place to live when they started. After finishing the program, many reported feeling better overall and had good access to health care and other community support. A year later, they continued to show improvements in their personal and social lives, with many working or volunteering, living in stable conditions, less involved with substances or legal issues, and actively taking care of their children.

This research is important because it adds to what we know about how to help women and girls who face substance use challenges. It helps us understand what can make treatment successful in the long run. The findings from this study can guide future research and influence the ways in which these programs are designed and implemented. The ultimate goal is to prevent pregnancies impacted by substance use and support the health and wellbeing of parents, children, and communities at large.

"Strategies tailored to specific life experiences."





Flexible, Respectful Care in the Prevention of FASD

In Canada, there's a growing network of all-in-one service hubs helping pregnant or parenting women who are facing challenges with substance use and other complex issues. These centers are a one-stop shop providing everything from housing and social support to healthcare and substance use treatment. Although they've shown great results, there's not much research on how these centers work and what

the women using their services really think about them.

The [Co-Creating Evidence project](#) spent three years looking into eight of these hubs. They talked to 125 women who use the services and the people who run them to learn more about their experiences. The findings show that these centers are doing a lot of good. They're designed to make it easy for women to get the help they need, all in one place. Whether they're run by health authorities or local groups, the focus is on understanding and tackling the root causes

of health issues, as well as offering vital prenatal care and mental health services. They're also great at working with different organizations and avoiding the need for children to be taken into care by providing support for family issues.

The big takeaway is that these hubs are setting a strong example of how to provide flexible and respectful care that really fits with what women in the community need, during and after pregnancy.



Supporting Positive Outcomes for Individuals with FASD

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) represents a lifelong, intricate disability triggered by prenatal alcohol exposure, manifesting in physical, cognitive, behavioral, and learning challenges. This condition underscores the necessity for an in-depth grasp of its implications and strategies for supporting affected individuals effectively.

FASD, a permanent disability, impacts learning, memory, attention, social skills, and emotional regulation, necessitating continuous support. It's imperative to recognize the unique nature of FASD in each individual, as effects vary widely, ranging from significant cognitive impairments to more nuanced difficulties. Emphasizing individual strengths and

challenges is vital for tailored support. Protective measures play a crucial role in mitigating negative outcomes, highlighting the importance of a stable, nurturing environment, early diagnosis, and specialized support services.

Schools play a pivotal role; staff must be well-informed about FASD, adapting teaching methods and support strategies to meet students' unique needs. Creating an inclusive educational setting involves understanding FASD's neurological basis, fostering collaboration among educators, caregivers, and service providers, and adopting a non-judgmental approach to behavior.

Effective intervention necessitates deliberate, reflective actions and the adaptation of strategies to suit individual responses. This approach demands

flexibility in addressing the complex needs of those with FASD. Understanding behaviors as manifestations of brain function challenges, rather than personal failings, allows for more effective support and leverages individuals' strengths.

A comprehensive understanding of FASD, including its permanent nature, individual variability, the importance of protective factors, the need for informed educational environments, inclusive practices, and a nuanced approach to behavior, is essential for fostering positive outcomes.

" This approach demands flexibility in addressing the complex needs of those with FASD."





Exploring Brain Science

Brain Awareness Week, celebrated globally from March 11 to 17, highlights the significance of brain research. Initiated in 1996 by the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, the event draws together educational, healthcare, and governmental organizations to boost public knowledge and support for neuroscience. Its goals include educating about brain functionality, emphasizing the necessity of research, and showcasing advancements in tackling disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. The campaign seeks to make the complexities of the brain

more understandable to the public and underscore the importance of scientific discoveries in this field.

The week is packed with activities such as public lectures, laboratory tours, and workshops aimed at engaging diverse audiences. These efforts not only educate but also bridge the gap between researchers and the public, enhancing awareness of how crucial brain health and research are to society. Brain Awareness Week thus plays a key role in promoting scientific advancement and public health, highlighting the ongoing need for exploration in neuroscience.



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