

Restorative Justice and Underage Drinking:

RETHINKING

smarter choices through accountability DRINKING *a restorative underage alcohol program*

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Presentation Agenda

- Introductions, agency description
- Program History: Identifying the problem in Polk County, Iowa
- Local background: data, community resources
- Early steps in the program development
- Discovering restorative justice
- Outline of the Rethinking Drinking Program
 - RJ Basics & RD Model
- Outline of the 5-hour class
- What we learned along the way
- Questions and Answers

Backgrounds:

- Monica:
 - Travel
 - Service
 - Peace Corps Ecuador
 - EFR
 - Wash U, FRC, CCHC, OISS, ABC
 - EFR
 - Community Services: 5 programs: substance abuse, RJ, case management & interpreting, bilingual counseling
 - IBC & LUNA
- EFR
 - 43 year history, NCA, Prevention & EAP
 - Currently: 90+ employees, financially stable
 - 4 business units
 - WPS/EAP
 - SAS
 - Community Services
 - My Plan after 50
 - Focus on cultural competence, improving diversity & inclusivity

The History... 2005

- Polk County Attorney's Office- current consequences minimal & repetitive
- Ankeny Police Chief- experience with RJ & community collaboration
- Employee & Family Resources- NCADD, 43-year history as substance abuse resource, evaluation and prevention
- Teaching Peace- Longmont, CO

The Data...

- Similar to communities throughout the country
- 2002 Iowa Youth Survey data: Polk County
 - 40% of 11th graders reported using alcohol in the past 30 days
 - 31% of 11th graders reported binge drinking in the past 30 days
 - 15% of 8th graders reported drinking in the past 30 days

Existing resources

- Multiple treatment providers
- 3-5 choices for traditional Alcohol/Drug Education
- 2 independent evaluation service providers
- Substance Abuse Prevention: schools, coalitions, employers, community at-large,

The early steps...

- Preparing for success with stakeholders
 - Prosecutor/s
 - Police Chief/Sheriff buy-in and support
 - Juvenile Court officials
 - Law enforcement officers
 - Community members: schools, neighborhoods, churches, other service organizations

The key to success with stakeholders...

- Make it personal
- Get their buy-in in defining the problem
- Show how the program benefits them
- Meet, meet, meet

Defining the problem...

- Widespread impact of underage drinking on the entire community
- Public health issues vs. Criminal behavior
- Social norms allow underage drinking to continue
- Risks and dangers are often unknown to youth and parents

Discovering Restorative Justice...

- Does not replace traditional criminal justice system
- Focus is on :
 - Accountability
 - Identifying Harms and Impacts
 - Identifying Repair

More RJ...

- Values and respects the victim, the community, and the offender
- Focus on the behavior, decision-making and choices
- 5 R's: Respect, Responsibility, Repair, Relationship, Reintegration

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRINCIPLES

Crime is an offense against human relationships.

- Victims and the community are central to justice processes.
 - The first priority of justice processes is to assist victims.
- The second priority is to restore the community to the degree possible.
- The offender has personal responsibility to victims and to the community for crimes committed.
- Stakeholders share responsibilities for restorative justice through partnerships for action.
- The offender will develop improved competency and understanding as a result of the restorative justice experience.

--- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CORRECTIONS

Retributive vs. Restorative Justice

Retributive Justice

- Offense is thought to be violation of law.
- The criminal justice system sets controls.
- Offense is considered an individual act.
- Approach is based upon debate and opposition.
- Goal is to give punishment.
- Offender is punished and often does not take responsibility for harmful actions.

Restorative Justice

- Offense is thought to be harmful another person and the community.
- The community sets controls.
- Offense is regarded as harm done to many.
- Approach is based on dialogue and negotiation.
- Goal is to restore all parties to harmony.
- Offender accepts responsibility for harm done and takes action to repair the harm.

ReThinking Drinking model

- 5 hour class; 2- 2 ½ hour sessions
- Youth and parents must attend
- Age groups: 17 & under, 18-20
- Homework assignments
- Establish contract
- Contract completion interview
- 6 month follow-up

The class...

- Accountability
 - Youth break-out session
 - Tell the story
 - Decision-making
 - Taking responsibility

The Parents...

- Accountability
 - Tell the story
 - Reactions
 - Beliefs and attitudes about alcohol use
 - Beliefs and attitudes about underage alcohol use
 - Expectations of their children, accountability

Identifying Harm

- Harms
- Impacts
- Consequences
- Data and statistics
- Affected relationships
 - Self
 - Family
 - Community

Identifying Repairs...

- What needs to happen to make things right with:
 - Self
 - Family
 - Community
- Reintegration into the community
- Time to move on

Contracts

- 3-5 items
- Meaningful
- Measurable
- Fitting to the offense
- Strength-based
- Written and signed by youth, parents and facilitator/s

Lessons learned...

- Very clear guidelines are essential
- Funding: use existing resources, grants and participant fees
- Maintaining communication and relationships with stakeholders is very important
- Keep it real and keep it simple- it is all based on the relationship
- All youth need structure and guidance from supportive adults
- Expect the unexpected

Current data...

- 2,740 youth referrals to program
- 1,775 successful completions, 300 in process (~70%)
- 5% recidivism
- 1,336 juveniles (17 & under) and 1,404 18-20 year olds
- 1,199 female/ 1,519 male
- Survey questions on perceived risks/harms of alcohol use
- Survey questions on alcohol use
- CAPT Service to Science Academy- outcomes evaluation
- Two additional communities using RD model

Win-Win-Win

- Youth & Parents: education, communication, clean record
- Law enforcement: more meaningful option
- Courts: less congestion, more priority cases
- Community: youth finding ways to give back, involvement for faith-based groups, schools, etc.

Questions and Answers

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Interested in investing in ReThinking Drinking for your community?

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