

Successful Clinical Interventions for Pregnant and Postpartum Women (PPW)

Heather Tingelhoff
Program Director, Family Works
Omaha, Nebraska



Portrait of a Family Works Client

Meet Zabrina then...

- 27 year old pregnant single mother of four
- Homeless, living in emergency shelters
- Oldest son placed in foster care
- Family history of addiction
- Current meth and alcohol addictions
- Severe depression, suicidal thoughts
- Gambling issues when using
- Major trauma from past sexual abuse
- Grief issues from previous state interventions (loss of child and sister's children)
- Unable to trust anyone



Family Works Interventions

1. Sanctuary Model / Trauma-Informed Care
2. Modified Therapeutic Community
3. Matrix Model
4. Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
5. Nurturing Parenting
6. Wraparound Planning
7. Safe Start Assessments
8. Family Involvement
9. Kids Coping Club
10. 24/7 Staff as Team



1. Sanctuary Model and Trauma-Informed Care



- Sandra Bloom Ph.D. – Moving from “What’s wrong with you?” to “What’s happened to you?”
- Addresses issues of sexual abuse and domestic violence, disrupted attachments, several losses common with SA
- Engages women in decision making process
- ✓ **Seeking Safety Group:** helps women process issues of trauma and measure severity of trauma symptoms
- ✓ **EMDR:** Eye Movement and Desensitization and Reprocessing with trained therapist

2. Modified Therapeutic Community

- Group-based approach to treatment that includes group psychotherapy as well as practical activities
- Modified to be trauma-informed and utilize collaborative problem solving instead of confrontation
- Develops trust among women
- Provides peer support and non-using support system



✓ **Example:** Encourage first time pregnant moms to babysit peers' newborns to gain parenting skills

3. MATRIX Model

- Evidence-based treatment approach for stimulant abuse and dependence; works with a variety of substances
- The therapist functions as teacher and coach, fostering a positive, encouraging relationship with the client
- Clients learn to manage behaviors

✓ **Group and individual treatment:**

Relapse-prevention groups, education groups, social-support groups, individual counseling, process groups

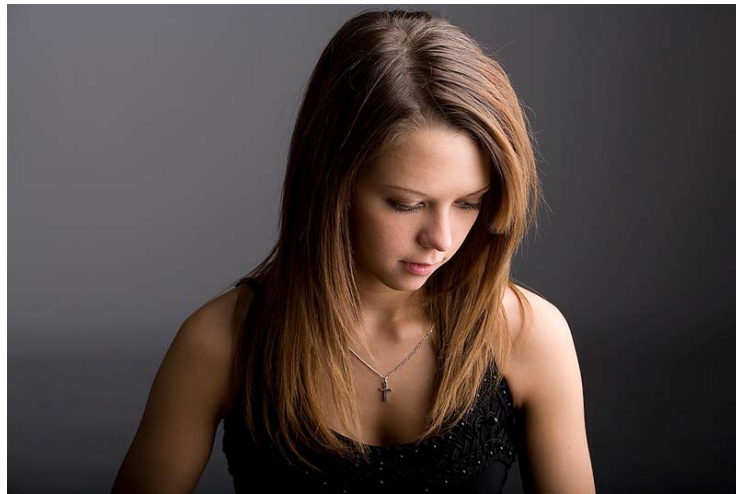
✓ **Outcome:** 60% decrease in substance use at baseline to 6 months*

* Data comes from SAMHSA PPW cross-site evaluation



4. Dialectical Behavioral Therapy

- Psychological method developed to treat patients experiencing difficulties with emotional stability through teaching of specific coping skills and strategies
- Improves emotional, behavioral, and cognitive regulation
- ✓ **Need:** 2/3 of clients experience depression or hopelessness and expressed extreme difficulty in coping with the problem*



5. Nurturing Parenting

- Steven J. Bavolek, Ph.D. – The family is a system and involvement of all family members is essential to change the system; curriculum for parents and children
- Specialized interventions to meet needs of diverse age groups and varied cultural backgrounds
- Empathy is single most desirable quality in parenting



✓ **Need:** AAPI pre test shows that the primary areas in need of improvement are parenting expectations, empathy, family roles and knowledge of appropriate discipline

6. Wraparound Planning

- A way to improve the lives of clients who have complex needs through team planning; wraparound plan is family centered and needs-driven
- Staff Work with a variety of community partners to help with educational and housing goals, health care needs

✓ **Outcome:** 100% of graduated clients have had adequate housing, progress toward employment and relationship with primary care provider



7. Safe Start

- Assessment that recommends specific intervention to improve parent-child bonding
- Helps child attachment to support child development and child safety

✓ **Example:** Mother who was over stimulating newborn twins was taught to use less stimuli when engaging and bonding with her children



8. Family Involvement



- Core element of PPW programs is to engage all family in treatment to improve permanency outcomes
- Helps clients find support from immediate family and their children's fathers
- Includes family-only groups and family-client groups and couple therapy
- ✓ **Need:** 56% of clients indicated feeling very to slightly dissatisfied with support from their family at beginning of program*
- ✓ **Outcome:** 2/3 of our children's fathers make some effort to be involved in child's life and 2/3 of current clients have family involved in treatment (parents, partners, etc.)*

9. Kids Coping Club

- A weekly therapeutic group for middle-school aged children
- Help children identify, understand, manage and express their feelings appropriately
- Improves children's behaviors during mothers' treatment



✓ **Example:** reduction in one child's tantrums as a method of manipulation of his mother

10. 24/7 Staff as Team

- Though not a formal intervention, the unity and teamwork of the 24/7 line staff make a huge impact
- Staff are trained in all the treatment modalities and turn every interaction with clients into a learning opportunity
- All staff empower clients to make healthy decisions to support 24/7, not just during therapy
- Staff support each other through secondary trauma
- ✓ **Method:** Two weeks of training and team-building
- ✓ **Example:** Staff routinely compliment clients on behaviors and attitudes; now clients do so to each other

Portrait of a Family Works Graduate

Meet Zabrina now...

- 5 months sober
- Family intact, a caring and supportive mother
- Gained trust of others and is able to trust
- Understands the need for support systems and recovery plan
- Leader among peers and other graduates
- Improved family relationships
- Worked through feelings of grief and denial
- Still suffers from depression, but manages with medication





Family Works Challenges

- Implementation and coordination between local and state resources (Medicaid Waiver, voucher programs)
- Adapting/improving program to engage clients at high risk for leaving
- Engaging all family members in treatment
- Transitional housing limitations
- Maintaining support system during after care component
- Transportation within the community
- Maintaining team unity with new staff

Family Works Successes

- Decreased drug usage
- Increase in healthy pregnancy (8 drug-free babies born)
- Improved family functioning
- Increased mental and physical health
- Decreased involvement in crime, violence and abuse
- Integration of community resources and coordination of a system of care
- Reunification of families and less dependence upon state assistance

