

Background

The Oklahoma Partnership Initiative (OPI) is to increase the well-being of, and to improve the permanency outcomes for, children affected by methamphetamine and other substances of abuse, by addressing the growing problem of children who are at high risk for substance abuse and other problem behaviors due to their parents' substance abuse.

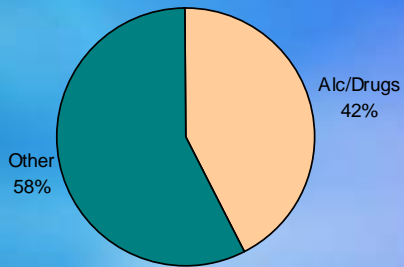
OKLAHOMA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

The goal of OPI is to intervene effectively and early to prevent and reduce the risks for children associated with parental methamphetamine and/or other substance abuse.

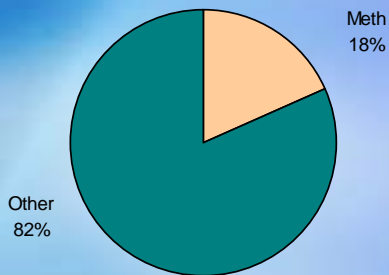
Objectives

1. Universal alcohol and drug screening for parents in the child welfare system;
2. Expansion of services to newborns with prenatal substance exposure through enhanced identification and intervention;
3. Early intervention and preventive services for children and adolescents of substance abusing parents through evidence-based programs;
4. Improvements in cross-system information sharing mechanisms to ensure consistent data collection across substance abuse and child welfare systems.

Percent of Children in DHS Custody in 2007 Removed for Alcohol/Drugs



Percent of Consumers in ODMHSAS-Funded Treatment for Methamphetamine in 2007



The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program for high-risk families. SFP is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly reduce problem behaviors, delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance.



The University of Oklahoma
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
Center on Child Abuse and Neglect
Dedicated to Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect

The **New Directions Program** is available to help children between the ages of 3 and 12, who are in foster care in Oklahoma County due, in part, to parental substance use.

The **New Directions Program** research study is designed to:

- ✓ Improve children's coping skills
- ✓ Reduce child behavior problems
- ✓ Reduce children's trauma symptoms
- ✓ Improve children's mood & self-esteem
- ✓ Reduce foster parenting stress
- ✓ Increase the stability of children's foster placement, and reduce the likelihood of movement to therapeutic foster care
- ✓ Reduce the number of emergency contacts to child-welfare workers.

Services available at no cost include:

- ✓ A 12-week group program to help children and foster parents more effectively cope with the negative impact of parental substance abuse
- ✓ Developmental screenings
- ✓ Assessment of current psychosocial functioning
- ✓ Education and advocacy for foster parents
- ✓ Babysitting services will be available during group hours

All services provided through the **New Directions program** are free of charge. All participants will receive a gift card to compensate for time spent completing program assessments.

For more information or to make a referral, please contact Jimmy Widdifield, Jr., at (405) 271-8858.

Progress

- Monthly Steering Committee meetings;
- Development of Data Sharing Workgroup;
- Created recruitment flyers: OU Child Study Center and Specialized Outpatient Services

Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services



New Directions Program
for Children in Foster Care

Medicine
CENTER ON CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT



Challenges

- Key project staff turnovers have consistently plagued the OPI project;
- Recruitment;
- Establishing protocol for referral process;
- Program implementation