



# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse and Related Mental Health Problems

OPDI, OAPC & OFCMHAP Joint Conference & AGM

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# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health Problems

## **Rideauwood Began School Programs in 1986.**

- In 49 English Catholic & Public Schools 2-4 days weekly; each school – 52 weeks a year;
- Grades 7-12 – all Catholic Schools + 2 Sr. Elementary;
- All Public Board High Schools + 2 Sr. Elementary;
- 1,400 Students and 550 Parents/year;
- Critical Mass: 14 hours weekly per school X 52 weeks;

## **Maison Fraternité began in 1993.**

- Now in 17 French Language Catholic & Public Schools;

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health Problems

## Overview

- School trained to understand, recognize, refer, support;
- Multi Disciplinary Team (Rideauwood/Maison Fraternité Counsellor, Vice Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Social Worker, Special Education);
- School refers to Counsellor;
- Counsellor coaches school on referral, M.I., etc.;
- Counsellor does Screening, Engagement, Assessment;
- Counsellor provides individual counselling; flexible length - 1, 2, maybe 3 times weekly;
- Groups provided – “Moderation” or “Recovery”.

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Client Profile

- ✓ 60% Grade 9 & 10; 55% Male
- ✓ Students are in difficulty, substance abuse known;
- ✓ Cannabis use 20 days out of 30;
- ✓ Binge drinking 8 days of 30;
- ✓ 1 in 5 students are failing;
- ✓ 48% “High Risk for Dropout”, of which 87% completed the school year;
- ✓ Many have identified related Mental Health Problems;
  - Depression, Anxiety, Trauma, Eating Disorder, Anger.

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Tips On Partnering With Schools

*Target Substance Abuse “and related Mental Health”  
(not the reverse)*

- 75% of School Boards and School Staff are “Family Members”;
- Trauma, distress, grief, anger, fear, avoidance in everyone.
- Don’t lecture, hector, shame, blame or guilt School/Board as clients (they have distress);
- Start with a school who requests service.
- Evaluate, let schools sing your praise.

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Parents

- ▶ About 30% have Substance Use Disorders;
- ▶ Other Mental Health Problems also;
- ▶ Parents are served in schools ( $\pm$  500);
- ▶ Provided counselling, education, address their distress;
- ▶ Why? THEY ARE CLIENTS TOO. Service is accessible.

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Parents

- ▶ Referred to Agency Based Programs such as:
  - Group Counselling (6 groups);
  - Individual/Couples Counselling.
  - Occasional Family Treatment:
    - 2 evenings of “Family Spiral”
    - 6 Week P.E.A.K.
    - 6 Year long groups – weekly, bi-weekly, monthly
    - Quick, friendly, referral to Agency Addictions, Family, Trauma Services.

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Assessment Tool – Basis 32

- ▶ The MOH approved assessment tool, the Basis 32, was used to assess changes in the well-being of students, between the beginning and end of the academic year.
- ▶ The Basis 32 is a five point scale from 0-4 where:
  - 0 = No difficulty, 1 = A little difficulty, 2 = Moderate difficulty, 3 = Quite a bit of difficulty, and 4 = Extreme difficulty.
- ▶ Overall there were small improvement in the Basis 32 across all domains. However, the improvements were most pronounced in those clients with the more severe problems.



# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Outcomes

▶The largest improvements in well-being were observed in those clients which exhibited signs of moderate to extreme difficulty in various aspects of their life on the Basis 32.

Basis 32	n	Baseline	Reassessment	Change
Relation to self/Others	34	2.67	1.87	0.8
Daily Living/Role Functioning	34	2.66	1.87	0.79
Depression/Anxiety	34	2.58	1.75	0.84
Impulsive/Addictive	34	2.26	1.41	0.85
Psychosis	34	1.25	0.74	0.51
Overall Average	34	2.32	1.55	0.77

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Outcomes

- ▶ A typical client uses both alcohol and cannabis – using cannabis 19 days a month and using alcohol 8 days a month;
- ▶ At the end of the school year, clients reduced in both the amounts and frequency of their use.

Changes in Drug Use	N	Baseline	Reassessment	Average Reduction	% Reduction
Average Cannabis Use Per Month (in Grams)	164	43.67	22.01	21.66	↓ 50%
Average Alcohol Use Per Month (in Standard Drinks)	142	54.67	35.32	19.35	↓ 35%

# School Based Treatment of Substance Abuse & Related Mental Health

## Outcomes

- ▶ 10% of clients are also using “other” drugs, most commonly cocaine, hallucinogens, and/or ecstasy
- ▶ The greatest reductions in use were found with these drugs. More than 70% of clients completely ceased using, and more than 85% showed marked reductions.

Became Abstinent	
Cannabis	18%
Alcohol	19%
Cocaine	71%
Hallucinogens	80%
Ecstasy	73%

Reduced Use	
Cannabis	38%
Alcohol	21%
Cocaine	14%
Hallucinogens	13%
Ecstasy	13%