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Integration of Parenting Skills Education and Intervention in Addiction Treatment

Abstract

OBJECTIVES: Children of parents with substance use disorders are at risk for various adverse outcomes, and maladaptive parenting behaviors seem to be an important mediator of this risk. Although numerous research studies have highlighted the promise of parenting interventions in modifying parenting behavior, very little is known about the integration of parenting skills education and interventions into addiction treatment programs.

METHODS: In this study, a convenience sample of 125 addiction treatment programs in the United States was drawn. A key staff member was interviewed to gather basic information about the extent and nature of parenting skills education and interventions offered at their program. In addition,

respondents were asked to rate the importance of parenting skills relative to other addiction treatment priorities.

RESULTS: Descriptive analyses revealed that 43% reported some form of parenting classes, but few used a structured curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS: Given the known beneficial influence of effective parenting practices on reducing adverse childhood outcomes, it is surprising that relatively few substance abuse treatment programs have adopted structured parenting skills interventions as part of their standard service offerings. More research is warranted on the extent to which parenting skills interventions are integrated into the continuum of services available to parents with a substance use disorder.