



Team Discussion Guide

1. **Treatment Access and Retention:** Early identification, assessment and timely access to treatment are critical for positive outcomes. Treatment retention and completion are the strongest predictors of reunification for families involved with child welfare systems due to parental substance use disorders. Research indicates the most positive treatment outcomes occur when clients begin treatment admissions within seven days of identification; however, treatment admission within 24 -72 hours is ideal.¹
- How quickly do parents with an identified substance use disorder enter treatment in our community? Do child welfare parents have priority access?
 - What strategies are used to engage and retain parents in treatment? What strategies are used for parents who drop out or miss appointments?
 - What actions can we take with our partners to improve how we engage and retain parents in treatment?

Action Steps:

2. **Family Recovery:** An effective cross-system response should provide the scope of services needed to address the effects of parental substance use on family relationships. Developmental and behavioral screenings, quality and frequent visitation, parent-child relationship-based interventions, evidenced-based parenting programs, trauma-informed care, peer recovery and community supports are all needed interventions.
- What family-recovery components are included in our current scope of services?
 - Are there components that are missing or need improvement?
 - How can we work with our cross-system partners to improve strategies and services for successful family recovery?

Action Steps:

3. **Peer Support:** Research shows that parents who receive intensive case management and peer recovery support stay in treatment twice as long and complete treatment at much higher rates than those not receiving this service.
- Is peer support readily available in our community?
 - What can we do to learn more about this effective approach?
 - How can we work with our cross-system partners to develop or expand the availability of this support for families?

Action Steps:

“Timely access to treatment and time in treatment matters. We need to work with urgency.”

“Parental substance use affects the whole family. Effective cross-system approaches need to address family relationships.”

“Recovery support specialists can help improve outcomes for families.”

¹[NIDA Principles of Effective Treatment.](#)