



Substance Abuse Program Overview

This curriculum is based on cognitive-behavioral (CBT), motivational enhancement (MET), risk factors management, relapse prevention, and social learning treatment concepts. This means that participants are guided to identify “thinking” issues (including criminal thinking) underlying their past behavior. Following this, they are guided to a new understanding of these issues, their feelings, and the ways in which their own thoughts have set them up for more problems. After this cognitive work, participants are taught new ways of stopping old harmful behaviors and using new coping skills. Successful management of individual-specific risk factors is a critical part of relapse prevention.

The program has a logical progression

It first addresses defensiveness, then cognitive issues. When the client is ready to learn new approaches, it then addresses the behavioral component (primarily new coping skills), leading to development of resilience, risk factors management (self-efficacy), relapse prevention planning, and life/lifestyle planning. Finally, the program addresses client-specific risk factors encountered in community reintegration and in preventing relapse and/or a return to criminal involvement. An important option at this point is vocational/employment preparation, supported by key workbooks and lessons.

The program is primarily workbook-based

Workbooks provide structure and support and they clearly identify the progress of participants. When work is not completed, this is also evident. Materials are written at a grade 4-6 reading level, so most participants have no difficulty in understanding or completing the work. Frequent checklists, charts, and tables make the work nonthreatening and reduce resistance, and make it more likely that participants will identify issues and problems.

The program supports group and individual counseling

Many assignments can be given as homework, so participants will complete reading and written assignments before coming to the group activity. There is no need to spend the limited time available for group in reading or writing activities. Leaders can use the critical activities identified for each assignment to go immediately to the important issues and engage participants in discussion. To make it easier for program staff, behavioral objectives are identified for all activities in each workbook (in the lesson plan provided).

The most critical goal of the program is “self-efficacy”

Counselors in these programs can use the materials provided (including activity cards) to help identify the highest risk factors for each client. Then, participants can be guided to learn, practice and master the coping skills they need to deal with their highest risk factors successfully.

A New Freedom Substance Abuse Program Works

A New Freedom provides over 300 substance abuse curriculum workbooks, program activity materials, and similar resources to over 1,000 correctional facilities and programs nationwide. Our programs are especially affordable, as we provide you the rights to make unlimited copies for use on site.

To date, New Freedom has had significant results in two of their substance abuse correctional programs-- a decrease in recidivism from approximately 67% to 11% and 15% respectively.

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