

# Oklahoma Systems of Care

*Serving the needs of children, youth, and families with a serious emotional disturbance, a program from the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.*

## May is National Drug Court Month

### Why Family Drug Court (FDC)?

Far too often in Oklahoma, substance abuse and addiction leads to negative outcomes for not only the substance using individuals, but entire families including children. Family drug courts help in certain cases. These specialty courts are designed to address the needs of families when substance abuse and addiction, involving one or more parents, have resulted in a child being placed into state custody and there has been a court filing for deprived actions against the parents. Family Drug Court is a viable alternative to extended foster care placement or termination of parental rights for DHS involved parents. These courts provide improved access to treatment, strong court supervision, supportive group dynamics and weekly visitation with children. This promotes better outcomes than traditional family reunification services for substance-abusing parents.

States first created FDCs in 1995, and more than 300 FDCs are in operation today. These programs address substance abuse and parenting within the child welfare system, with a focus on abuse and neglect cases in the family dependency court. The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) set forth goals of improving the safety and permanency for children. Family Drug Courts are one method of meeting these goals.

According to research from the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), between 60% and 80% of substantiated child abuse and neglect cases involve substance abuse. In addition, unless comprehensive and intensive drug treatment is provided to addicted parents, more than 60% of them fail to comply with substance abuse treatment conditions and more than 80% fail to complete treatment.

**FACT:** Parents in FDC are twice as likely to go to treatment and complete services than those without the benefit of FDC programs.

**FACT:** Children of FDC participants spend significantly less time in out-of-home placements such as foster care. The decreased days spent in foster care translate into tremendous cost savings.

**FACT:** Family reunification rates are 50% higher for FDC participants. The sooner parents enter substance abuse treatment, the less time their children spend in foster care and the more likely they are to be reunited with their parents.

*Source: Research Update on Family Drug Court, NADCP, May, 2012, Douglas B. Marlowe, J.D., Ph.D. and Shannon M. Carey, Ph.D.*

*To promote healthy communities and provide the highest quality care to enhance the well-being of all Oklahomans.*

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and Substance Abuse Services

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## MAY IS NATIONAL DRUG COURT MONTH

For over ten years, the National Association of Drug Court Professionals has coordinated National Drug Court Month. Each May, Adult, Juvenile and Family Drug Courts, DWI Courts, and Veterans Treatment Courts celebrate their success and unparalleled contribution to society by holding special events. National Drug Court Month shines a light on the collective impact of these programs and sends a powerful message that they are an essential part of the community (NADCP.org, 2014). We are pleased to take this opportunity to celebrate the work of family drug court teams, the countless lives saved and the families impacted through the support of these programs.

## OKLAHOMA'S FAMILY DRUG COURT PROGRAMS

Through collaboration among the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS), county court systems, treatment providers and the Department of Human Services (DHS), families receive holistic support to heal family systems with the goal of reunifying families. ODMHSAS currently provides funding to family drug court programs in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Okmulgee Counties. In addition, others including Cleveland and Canadian Counties have secured local resources to implement family drug court programs.

### Enhancing Oklahoma Family Drug Court Services through Federal Grant Programs

In 2010, the Tulsa County Family Drug Court (TCFDC) was awarded the Children Affected by Methamphetamine (CAM) grant by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). From the inception of the CAM grant through February 2014, the TCFDC has served 269 kids, 200 adults and 127 families. A grant-funded analysis indicated that, on average, the CAM kids are spending 227 fewer days in out-of-home care than their non-FDC counterparts.

As part of the CAM grant, the TCFDC treatment provider implemented evidenced-based family programming including Celebrating Families and Strengthening Families.



*Celebrating Families* is an evidence-based curriculum that addresses the needs of children and parents in families that have serious problems with alcohol and other drugs. The curriculum engages every member of the family, age birth through adult, to foster the development of healthy and addiction-free individuals. <http://www.celebratingfamilies.net/>

*Strengthening Families* is an evidence-based prevention program for parents and children. SFP consists of parenting skills, children's life skills, and family skills training courses taught together in group sessions.

<http://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/>

The Oklahoma County Family Drug Court (OKFDC) received a grant in 2011 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to begin a family drug court. The OKFDC has been taking cases since spring 2012. In 2013, the OKFDC received additional grant funding to implement the Celebrating Families and Strengthening Families programs that have produced successful outcomes within the Tulsa County FDC.

The verdict is in.... Family drug courts save lives and restore families!

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