



## CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The purpose of this call is to identify **child welfare or related agencies** that may be interested in partnering with the [R3 project](#), a federal effort to replicate and evaluate interventions that use *recovery coaches* for families involved in the child welfare system due to parental substance use disorder (SUD). **Expressions of Interest submitted by Friday, February 5, 2021** may lead to individualized exploratory conversations with the R3 project team aimed at information sharing, gauging interest in the R3 project and candidate interventions, and identifying potential state and local partners for a future evaluation.

### WHAT IS R3?

Parental SUD is among the most common reasons families become involved in the child welfare system. Child welfare jurisdictions are increasingly turning to interventions that use recovery coaches in their efforts to improve access to and engagement in treatment and recovery support services, with the goal of improving parental recovery and child welfare outcomes. Yet, there is limited evidence on the effectiveness of these interventions.

R3 is a long-term initiative of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) authorized under the *SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act*.<sup>1</sup> Its goals are to replicate promising family recovery and reunification interventions that use recovery coaches, and conduct an impact and implementation evaluation to build evidence that meets the standards of the [Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse](#). ACF contracted with Abt Associates for the first phase of the R3 project, to lay the groundwork for the rigorous federal evaluation.

### I KNOW AN AGENCY THAT MIGHT BE INTERESTED. WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

→ R3 identified three interventions as potential candidates for replication and evaluation, using an independent and systematic scan and readiness-assessment process informed by experts in child welfare, SUD recovery, and related fields. **This call seeks to explore jurisdictions' potential interest in adopting either of the following two interventions:**

- **Family Recovery and Reunification Program** (FRRP; developed by Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities)
- **Parent Mentor Program** (PMP; developed by Morrison Child and Family Services)

R3 identified a third candidate, Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START), through the same methods. Jurisdictions currently implementing START are being considered for possible inclusion in R3 under a separate process. R3 may not include all three interventions.

**Additional information about FRRP and PMP is attached. Please refer all questions about the interventions to [R3Families@abtassoc.com](mailto:R3Families@abtassoc.com).**

→ R3 is not a program funding opportunity. It is an opportunity to take part in the first stages of a new evidence-building initiative helping parents, children, and communities affected by SUD and child maltreatment—areas of urgent need due to the opioid epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Jurisdictions ultimately selected to participate in the R3 evaluation will benefit from:

- **Technical assistance** from the intervention developer and the evaluation team.
- **Supplemental funds** to offset costs of participating in the evaluation and/or establishing the intervention.
- **Opportunity** to build evidence eligible for review by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse.
- **National visibility** and the potential to help inform nationwide policies and practices.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Section 8082 of the [2018 Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment \(SUPPORT\) for Patients and Communities Act](#).

## HOW DO I EXPRESS INTEREST?

Send an email to [R3Families@abtassoc.com](mailto:R3Families@abtassoc.com). Provide the following in the email:

1. Organization or Agency Name and links to an organization website
2. Point of Contact Name, Title, Email Address, Phone Number
3. Relevant information about the jurisdiction. For example: (1) the jurisdiction's current approach to providing recovery and reunification supports to families involved in the child welfare system due to SUD; (2) interest in and capacity for establishing such an approach in your state or local child welfare jurisdiction; (3) why R3 may be of interest to the jurisdiction.

Please submit responses by **February 5, 2021**. The R3 project team will review responses and may contact you for further information. We look forward to hearing from you!

**WE WELCOME QUESTIONS! CONTACT US AT [R3Families@abtassoc.com](mailto:R3Families@abtassoc.com).**



# Family Recovery and Reunification Program

## Overview

**Developer:** Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC; Chicago, IL)

**Summary:** The Family Recovery and Reunification Program (FRRP) is a recovery coaching program designed for families in the child welfare system due to parental substance use disorder (SUD). In operation in Illinois since 2000, FRRP provides parents with specialized case management focused on increasing access to and engagement in SUD treatment.<sup>1</sup> In one research study of families with children in out-of-home placement, FRRP increased rates of parents' treatment completion and family reunification and decreased the wait time for treatment services and the time to family reunification.

## Population of Focus

- Parents whose children are at risk for or are currently in out-of-home child welfare placement due to parental SUD.
- Children may be of any age.
- Parents must not be incarcerated at the time of referral or have severe mental health issues.

## Primary Objectives

- Increase parents' access to and engagement in SUD treatment.
- Improve parents' treatment outcomes to support and reduce time to family reunification.
- Decrease child maltreatment.

## Program Content and Methods

FRRP provides intensive case management, cross-system case coordination, and assertive community outreach. It includes:

- Clinical assessments, family needs assessments, SUD treatment planning, and removing barriers to treatment;
- Assistance in accessing benefits and resources related to housing, domestic violence, and mental health as needed;
- Coordination and reporting on treatment plans, service receipt, and progress and with all involved agencies (child welfare, the courts, treatment providers);
- Drug testing to confirm treatment compliance;
- On-call services to address emergencies; and
- Community outreach to reengage parents who may have disengaged.

## Program Structure and Timeline

- Parents with signs of SUD are referred to FRRP by the child welfare system for assessment and SUD diagnosis. If the parent is diagnosed as having a SUD, they are assigned a recovery coach within 24 hours. FRRP provides services for the duration of the child welfare case and as needed after case closing, for an average of 2.5 years.
- FRRP recovery coaches work in teams that include outreach workers and clinical supervisors. FRRP team members collaborate to serve parents and coordinate with child welfare and other agencies, advocate for clients, and educate system actors about recovery. Team members receive on-going training on SUD, mental health, and mandated reporting.
- Recovery coaches have a caseload of 25 parents each. They make contact with parents at least two times per month, and they participate in all court hearings and family conferences.

## Staffing Requirements

Recovery coaches are not required to have lived experience with SUD or the child welfare system. However, they must have:

- Substance use disorder-related certification (e.g., Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor or Assessment and Referral Specialist); and
- At least two years of professional experience in child welfare, substance use, or related field.
- A bachelor's degree is preferred.

<sup>1</sup> FRRP began as the Illinois Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) Waiver Demonstration; also known as the Illinois Recovery Coach Program.

# Parent Mentor Program

## Overview

**Developer:** Morrison Child and Family Services (Portland, OR)

**Summary:** The Parent Mentor Program (PMP) is a peer recovery coaching program designed for families involved in the child welfare system due to parental substance misuse. In operation in Oregon since 2005, it offers recovery coaching for parents by peers with lived experience in both substance use disorder (SUD) and the child welfare system. Services focus on empowering, supporting, and motivating parents to sustain their own recovery and access critical resources. Initial research suggests that parents responded positively to PMP's self-directed change model, developed recovery skills, and engaged in treatment and recovery activities. Findings about PMP's effect on child welfare outcomes were inconclusive, warranting additional evaluation.

## Population of Focus

- Parents who have been identified as having signs of SUD and are involved with child welfare services (in-home or out-of-home).
- Children may be of any age.

## Primary Objectives

- Motivate, facilitate, and support engagement in SUD recovery and related services in a parent-centered way.
- Prevent foster care placement, expedite reunification and timely permanency.
- Prevent repeat maltreatment.

## Program Content and Methods

PMP provides parent-driven, strengths-based recovery coaching from parent mentors who have lived experience with SUD and the child welfare system. PMP includes:

- Peer support and recovery planning using Motivational Interviewing to inspire self-directed change;
- Services to build goal-setting, recovery, and self-advocacy skills;
- Ongoing outreach and support for the recovery process that includes home visits, transportation, accompanying parents to court hearings and recovery support groups, and modeling a sober lifestyle;
- Assistance in navigating the child welfare system and SUD treatment;
- Help identifying and accessing community resources and support networks;
- Advocacy for parents that includes educating system actors about recovery;
- Collaboration with treatment providers to help parents access SUD treatment as quickly as possible; and
- Coordination with the court and child welfare systems.

## Program Structure and Timeline

- Child welfare investigators/caseworkers refer parents with signs of SUD to the PMP. The parent is paired with a parent mentor within 5 days (at most) to serve as their peer recovery coach. PMP services continue for as long as the parent wishes to engage in the program, typically for the duration of the child welfare case, for an average of 7-8 months.
- Parent mentors have a caseload of 10-14 parents each. Parents and parent mentors have four to ten hours of contact each month based on the progress of the child welfare case.
- Parent mentors receive extensive and ongoing training and supervision that enables them to become state-certified recovery mentors/coaches, and build skills in Motivational Interviewing, mentoring, strength-based communication, ethics, leadership and advocacy.

## Staffing Requirements

- Parent mentors are required to have lived experience with SUD and the child welfare system. They must have maintained SUD recovery for at least two years and have personal experience with a child welfare case or TANF case (closed for at least one year).
- A recovery mentor/coach certification from the state (where offered) is encouraged.