

Arizona's 2008 Adolescent Substance Abuse Conference

Confronting Social Barriers in Adolescence

Conference Session Information

JFCS A-CRA PRESENTATION

The JFCS A-CRA presentation will focus on the development and integration of the A-CRA program within a large Behavioral Health agency that previously had focused primarily on addressing mental health and behavioral issues.

JFCS was interested in developing a program for young people with substance abuse issues that could also address mental health and behavioral issues. The approach needed to be flexible, research based, effective with diverse populations and proven to be effective in other community based substance abuse/mental health programs.

JFCS was interested in A-CRA because it is an individual behavioral treatment approach designed to help adolescents and their parents reshape their environment and learn new skills. A-CRA consists of approximately 14 sessions, which focus on rearranging environmental contingencies so that abstaining from substance abuse is more rewarding than using it.

Adolescents are taught skills which include, how to find new reinforcers/ enhance existing ones for staying substance free, how to use existing community resources which support positive change, and how to develop a positive support system within the family.

JFCS was impressed with the fact that it is skill based and focuses on integrating within the community. The A-CRA model is consistent with the Arizona Principles that emphasize natural supports and use of community resources.

The presentation will focus on how A-CRA staff were selected, trained and supported in their efforts to become A-CRA certified. It will also discuss the challenges and barriers that the implementation team needed to address and recommendations on how to successfully implement the program based on JFCS' experience.