Drug Courts: A Bridge to Recovery

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Drug Courts: A Bridge to Recovery

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Learning Objectives

• Explain the model that offers a structured approach for interacting with young people involved with the juvenile justice system. Discuss how this model works with programs designed to curb criminal recidivism and reduce drug use.

• Discuss the history and prevalence of Drug Courts.

• Explain the effectiveness of Drug Courts with success stories from the graduates of the Dudley, Massachusetts Drug Court.

• Discuss some common challenges that drug courts face that affect the successful outcomes for those with substance use disorder.
Your Webinar Host

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Drug Courts: A Bridge to Recovery
January 29, 2019

Judge Timothy M. Bibaud, JD
timothy.bibaud@jud.state.ma.us
Drug Courts 101

• How long have drug courts existed?
• Are there models or best practices that are adhered to for the structure and implementation of drug courts?
• Are all drug courts managed and implemented the same way?
• Who are the team members that a judge works with to provide help?
• Are drug courts just for youth offenders and do they address addiction from alcohol as well?
• What are some advantages (economic and others) of a Drug Court over incarceration?
Drug Courts Reduce Crime

• Nationwide, 75% of Drug Court graduates remain arrest free at least 2 years after leaving the program.

• Rigorous studies examining long-term outcomes of individual drug courts have found that reductions in crime last at least 3 years and can endure for over 14 years.

• The most rigorous and conservative scientific “meta-analyses” have all concluded that Drug Courts significantly reduce crime as much as 45% more than other sentencing options.

Source: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drug-courts
Drug Courts Save Money

- Nationwide, for every $1.00 invested in Drug Court, taxpayers save as much as $3.36 in avoided criminal justice costs alone.
- When considering other cost offsets such as savings from reduced victimization and healthcare service utilization, studies have shown benefits range up to $27 for every $1 invested.
- Drug courts produce cost savings ranging from $3,000 to $13,000 per client. These cost savings reflect reduced prison costs, reduced revolving-door arrests and trials, and reduced victimization.

Source: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drug-courts
Drug Courts Ensure Compliance

• Unless substance abusing/addicted offenders are regularly supervised by a judge and held accountable, 70% drop out of treatment prematurely.
• Drug courts provide more comprehensive and closer supervision than other community-based supervision programs.
• Drug courts are six times more likely to keep offenders in treatment long enough for them to get better.

Source: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drug-courts
Blazing the Trail

• What was it like to be the first drug court in Worcester County in 2014?

• What is your background and how was that background helpful for this position?

• What is a typical day like in your drug court?
What is Needed for Drug Courts to be Successful?

- Community partnerships?
- What skills and talents are needed for exceptional intervention team?
Effectiveness of Drug Courts?

• What determines “success”?  

• What does the Data show?
Problems with Drug Courts?

• Inconsistent when providing evidence-based treatment

• “Treatment gets trumped by legal?”
Stories from the Front Lines

- Shenendoah
- Kayla
Questions for Our Presenters?

Type your questions into the Chat Box
Additional Information

- National Association for Drug Court Professionals
  https://www.nadcp.org/

- The National Judicial College
  https://www.judges.org/

- Adult Drug Court Manual – A Guide to Starting and Operating Adult Drug Courts in Massachusetts

- Adult Drug Court Standards, Best Practices, and Promising Practices

- Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice
  https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/197866.pdf

- Drug Court Facts
  https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/.../drug-courts-smart-approach-to-criminal-justice
Thank you Judge Bibaud, Shenendoah and Kayla for sharing your expertise & experiences with us!

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