

Right Way Recovery

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Abstract

Teen drug use is a serious issue in today's adolescents. Drug use can have serious consequences on teens and those consequences can follow them into adulthood. Most adults who have a substance abuse disorder started using illegal substances during their teen years. Right Way Recovery, RWR, is a program that will be proposed at Ooltewah High School. This program will combat teen drug use. The program is geared for teens in grades 9th through 12th grade who are dealing with issues of substance abuse. Right Way Recovery will offer assistance to youth who would like assistance in combating their substance youth by providing them with an evidence-based curriculum to educate teens about the dangers of substance use. The program will also provide mentorship for the teens who are in the program. The goal of the program is to reduce the amount of teen substance abuse within Ooltewah High School. The outcome of the program will be tested by monitoring teen drug use by administering drug screens throughout the program. The ultimate goal of the program is for teens to become and remain abstinent from all illegal substances.

Background of the Problem

Drug use is on the rise in the United States. In 2013, 9.4 percent of Americans had used drugs within the past month. In 2003, 8.3 Americans were using drugs. Most adults who use drugs experimented with drugs in their teenage years (Nationwide Trends, 2015). Many teens who enter juvenile detention centers meet the criteria for a substance use disorder. Approximately 1 out of 5 youths enter juvenile detention centers with drug issues (Volk, 2014). The most popular substances used by teens include alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. Nearly half

of all 9-12th grade students have reported experimenting with Marijuana (Teen Substance Use, 2019).

The number of teens who die from overdosing is increasing. In 2015, 4,235 died from a drug overdose (Opioids and adolescents, 2019). Most teen overdoses in 2015 were related to heroin and fentanyl. This led to 775 teen deaths in 2015 (Teen Drug Use, 2018). In 2017, 6% of teens in grades ranging from 6th to 9th grade admitted to using marijuana at least once (Tennessee Adolescents, 2019). In the same year, 5% of teens admitted to using cocaine. 4% admitted to misusing pain relievers. At most high schools, the main focus is on academics. However, if a youth has a substance use disorder, focusing on academics may prove to be rather difficult. Teens who use drugs make significantly lower grades, are absent from school often, and have a much higher chance of dropping out of school than students who do not use drugs (How Does Drug Use, 2019). It is important to put the proper support in place for youths suffering from substance use so that they do not continue to have drug issues as adults.

The population for RWR will be youth who attend Ooltewah High School in Hamilton County. Ooltewah High School is a public high school in Ooltewah, Tennessee. All of the grades at Ooltewah High School will be included in this program, which includes 9th-12th grades, with an age range of 13-18 years old. This program will be aimed for those students who are currently at risk of being expelled due to substance use. RWR will help assist students in recovery as well as mentoring the youths as to community support that they can utilize after graduating from Ooltewah High School. If this pilot program works, there is hope that this program can be utilized in other schools.

The target population is adolescents who live and go to school in Hamilton County who suffer with a substance use disorder. Research points out that many students who are of high school age are experimenting with illegal substances. Experimentation of illegal substances could lead to a substance use disorder and follow them into adulthood. RWR is designed for students who are at risk of or are currently struggling with a substance use disorder. The program will be equipped to serve students who speak English and Spanish. Students from the ages of 13-18 are welcome and encouraged to participate in the program. There is no cost to the recovery program.

Washington Alternative School is a school in Hamilton County, Tennessee that accepts students who have been expelled from the school that they have previously attended. Many of the students who attend Washington are students who have been expelled from their previous school due to substance use. Dr. Rodney Knox is the principal at Washington Alternative School. Dr. Knox stated that the Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services (CADAS) comes into the school during the day to work with the students at Washington. Some students are ordered to attend a CADAS program by the juvenile court. This school is part of the Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE).

There is a program called Nu-Start in Hamilton County. This program provides youths and families who are struggling with opioid addiction. This program was put into place in order to try and combat the opioid crisis that our country is facing. This program offers family counseling, in-home services, transportation to appointments, as well as free naloxone. In Hamilton County, there is a program that is geared towards educating families about teen substance abuse and the importance of medication safety as well as educating parents about

naloxone. This program is under the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. There are a variety of locations that offer this education. Parents may call the Hamilton County Police Department, the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department, Bradley County Sheriff's Department, or the Red Bank Police Department for information as to when these classes take place.

There are hotlines that teens can call if they are in a situation in which they have overdosed or if they want help with their addiction. There is a crisis hotline as well as a suicide prevention hotline.

There are many places in the community in which teens can go if they would like help with a substance abuse disorder. CADAS, Comprehensive Community Services, Cherokee Health, Frontier Health, and Helen Ross McNabb are all community health organizations that are geared in helping people of all ages to combat addiction.

The specific need is an early derailment of addiction in our youth population. There is evidence that suggests that with early intervention, teens are less likely to continue to use substances as adults (Salem, Arshad, Finklestein, Buttha, 2016). There is also evidence that supports the idea that teens are more likely to use if one or both parents use drugs (Hoffmann & Cerbonne, 2002). When juveniles commit drug offenses, they are usually placed in a juvenile detention center. Juvenile detention centers do not offer much support for youths in terms of recovery. Early intervention is important for adolescents in recovering from a substance use disorder. A combined treatment method that involves treatment, substance education, as well as a support team for youths dealing with substance use is needed.

Uniqueness of the Program

The program that is being proposed is geared for teenagers between the ages of 12-18 that are struggling with substance abuse. With this type of program, the students will be able to receive substance abuse counseling as well receive mentorship from volunteers who are alumni of the school. The mentors will help the students with life skills tasks, such as budgeting, applying for college, writing a resume, applying for jobs, etc. The ultimate goal of the program is to help teens get to and maintain a point of complete abstinence from all illegal substances with smaller goals, such as learning life skills and gaining self-confidence.

The location where the proposed program will be implemented, if approved, is in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Specifically, the program would be implemented at Ooltewah High School.

There is a program in Hamilton County that is very similar to the one being proposed. It is a school in Hamilton County, which aims to help students who have been suspended or expelled from other schools in the area still be able to receive an education while simultaneously assisting them with their substance abuse addiction with support from CADAS (Center for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Services). That school is Washington Alternative School. What separates the RWR program from the Washington Alternative School is that RWR will be operating in a regular school in which students have not been expelled. In addition, at RWR, the staff are working with students who voluntarily sign up for the program. The students at Washington do not have a choice in the matter.

The unique aspect about this program is that it is not geared towards punishing teens who use it, but places a high priority on the strengths of the teens and mentorships/relationships. The recovery coaches will be people who have dealt with substance use in the past, are in recovery,

and have a passion to help break the cycle of drug use from adolescence to adulthood. The program is also unique because it takes place inside of a public high school. Currently, the Washington Alternative High School in Hamilton County is the only school who offers substance abuse support services. In addition, the program will include alumni from the school who will provide mentorship as well as teach life skills to the students.

Literature Review and Evidence-Based Practices

It is no surprise that substance abuse is a global issue affecting millions of people around the world. It is not only a significant issue with the adult population, but with youth, as well. Research has been done that delves into how teenagers get started with using illegal substances, what kind of illegal substances youth are drawn to, risks involved with adolescents using drugs, as well as ways to combat this issue.

According to an article based out of Australia the alcohol and Drug Foundation in Australia, there are a variety of reasons as to why teenagers turn to drugs. Longing to fit in with their peers, boredom, as well as trying to escape from some sort of pain, whether it be emotional or physical, are all reasons why adolescents experiment with illegal substances (“Drugs and Teenagers, 2018). It is worth noting that this article mentions that there is no evidence that using Cannabis is a gateway drug to more dangerous substances (“Drugs and Teenagers”, 2017). The Drug Enforcement Administration explains that teenagers who perceive little risks associated with the use of drugs are more likely to experiment with drugs (“Why Do Teens Use Drugs”, 2018). According to an article in the National Institute of Drug Abuse, it is natural for youth to seek new experiences and take risks, and that is part of the root cause as to why teenagers try using illegal substances (“Principles of Adolescent Substance Use”, 2014). Another complicating

factor could be the presence of abuse, especially sexual abuse, which has been linked to psychoactive substance use (Tremblay, Blanchette-Martin, Brunelle, and Tessier, 2014). Currently, vaping is on the rise in the United States and is rather popular with high school students. According to an article on the website Center for Addictions, (Richter, 2018), vaping is “the act of inhaling and exhaling aerosol”. Some use vaping devices for inhaling THC, which is the chemical found in marijuana that causes the “high” people often refer to after using illegal substances. The National Institute of Drug Abuse reports that 17.9% of 8th graders, 32.3 % of 10th graders, and 37.3 % of 12 graders have admittedly vaped (“Monitoring The Future”, 2018). It is reported that while opioid use is rising in the United States, the misuse of opioids in 12th graders has dropped. Among 12th graders, it is reported that 5.8% use marijuana daily. The article also reported that the amount of 8th graders who experimented with alcohol was 23.5% in 2018. Compared to 55.8% in 1994 (“Monitoring The Future”, 2018). The Department of Health and Human Services states that marijuana is the main drug of choice among adolescents (“Drug Use in Adolescents”, 2019). According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services and Administration, the main drug issue facing both teens and adults alike, is not cocaine, methamphetamines, or heroin, but it is prescription drugs. In 2014, 5,700 youth reported to using prescription drugs for which they did not have a prescription to use (SAMSHA, 2019). However, research shows that more so than not, teen’s first experiment with tobacco and alcohol before moving to illicit drugs (Cross, 2016). The Center for Disease Control and Prevention says that youth who use illegal substances face significant risks that could follow them into their adult life. This could affect growth and development, alter brain chemistry, and may be linked to other behaviors, such as reckless driving and unprotected sex, and, as an adult, can lead high blood

pressure, sleep disorders, and heart disease (“CDC”, 2019.) The Mayo Clinic reports that there can be even more risks, including increasing potential of developing a mental health disorder or complicating a disorder that was there before taking substances, which then can lead to a dependency on the drug(s) into adulthood, as well as lead to changes in school performance (“Tween and Teen Health, 2019).

There has been research done as to how to combat the issue of adolescent drug use. In one study, the researcher wanted to test the success of a 12-step recovery program for youths dealing with substance abuse. The participants were between the ages of 14-21 years old, met the criteria in the DSM-IV-TR for having a dependence on drugs or alcohol, used drugs or alcohol within 90 days of the study, and spoke fluent English. 59 people were enrolled in the study. The group was broken up into two groups. One group that consisted of 30 people went through a Motivational Enhancement Therapy/Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (MET/CBT). The other group was part of the Twelve Step Facilitation Therapy (TSF). The results were not statistically significant, but the study did show that incorporating the TSF might be beneficial to use alongside other existing practices (Kelly et al., 2017). According to Finch, et al., (2017) there is evidence that students who were diagnosed with a substance use disorder and attended a recovery high school were four times more likely to discontinue using illegal substances. Recovery schools are beneficial in helping teens recover from substance use disorders because school is where teenagers spend the majority of their time. Because of this, that may be the most logical and beneficial place to help those teens who are struggling with substance abuse (Yule & Kelly, 2018). There is also research that suggests that using technology to help teens

recover from substance use may be beneficial, such as sending encouraging and/or spiritual texts to recovering teens throughout the day (Gonzales, Hernandez, Murphy, Ang, 2016).

Research clearly points to the fact that teenagers can turn to a variety of drugs and other illegal substances for different reasons such as peer pressure, trauma, boredom, and wanting to numb or escape pain, whether that be emotional or physical. However, researchers show that there are new ways to help combat this issue, such as reaching teens through technology, as well as high schools offering programming to help these vulnerable youth who struggle with substance use disorder.

More and more adolescents are developing a substance use disorder. Research has been done regarding this issue and the dangerous consequences that using illegal substances can lead to. There are a number of programs that target this issue whose main goal is to support and educate teens who have a substance use disorder.

School recovery programs are gaining momentum nationally. There is a school in Chattanooga, TN that has a program under the umbrella of Hamilton County Department of Education that is focused on helping adolescents who have been expelled from other schools in the area get an education while also getting support from the Council for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Services (CADAS), that educates and rehabilitates people who may have a dependency regarding illegal substances. Washington Alternative Learning Center takes in youth who have been expelled at other schools for zero tolerance offences; drugs being a main source. According to Mr. Rodney Knox, who is the principal at the school, CADAS comes into the school every day and works with the students there on campus. Research suggests that students who attend a recovery high school are much more prone to discontinuing drug use than those who do not

attend a recovery high school (Finch, Tanner-Smith, Hennessey, and Moberg, 2018). There is also evidence that suggests that recovery high schools that incorporate parental involvement present a better chance of successful outcomes (Slade, et al., 2017).

Other strategies are being used to try to deter adolescents from using illegal and harmful substances. There have been many studies done as to how beneficial 12-step programs are for adults, but there has not been much research regarding how beneficial the program is for youth. The Society for the Study of Addiction (SSA) did an experiment to test the success of a 12-step recovery program for youths dealing with substance abuse. The participants were between the ages of 14-21 years old, met the criteria in the DSM-IV-TR for having a dependence on drugs or alcohol, used drugs or alcohol within 90 days of the study, and spoke fluent English. 59 people were enrolled in the study. The group was broken up into two groups. One group that consisted of 30 people went through a Motivational Enhancement Therapy/Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (MET/CBT). The other group was part of the Twelve Step Facilitation Therapy (TSF). The results were not statistically significant, but the study did show that incorporating the TSF might be beneficial to use alongside other existing practices (Kelly et al., 2017). It conveys the argument that because school is where teenagers spend the majority of their time, that may be the most logical and beneficial place to help those teens who are struggling with substance abuse. Gonzales, Hernandez, Murphy, and Ang (2016) conducted a pilot study that recruited 80 adolescents to participate in an aftercare program called Educating and Supporting Inquisitive Youth In Recovery (ESQYIR). Participants were separated into two groups. For one group the intervention consisted in mobile texting, while for the second group it was aftercare-as-usual, using an electronic random generator number method. The youths in the texting group received

texts during the late afternoon, which asked them questions such as how they were doing in recovery, self-esteem questions, and weekly stress, etc. After they responded, they were sent a text with feedback. The feedback was automated messages that dealt with positive praise, encouragement, coping advice, as well as spiritual messages. The aftercare-as-usual group did the traditional aftercare routine, consisting of 12-step meetings as well as the promotion to self-help. The results indicated that the youth in the texting group were significantly less likely to relapse over the time of their six and nine month follow-up (Gonzalez, Hernandez, Murphy & Ang, 2016).

Outdoor wilderness therapy camps are also an option that parents have as far as getting help for their children who partake of illegal substances. Russell and Hendee, with the Wilderness Research Center in Moscow, Idaho, state that there are currently 38 wilderness therapy programs in the United States. There are 3 phases; a cleansing phase, a personal and social responsibility phase, and transitional and after-care phases. They also stated that the male ratio was 70% males with a substance abuse issue Wilderness Therapy Programs help with a variety of issues, not just substance abuse (Russell and Hendee, 1999).

Other notable interventions include medications that help with combating cravings; these are becoming of growing interest (Winter, Tanner-Smith, Bresami, Meyers, 2014). Additionally, there are three evidence-based approaches that are popular are behavioral approaches, which is where the youth actively participates in their recovery journey, family-based approach, which includes the entire family unit to participate in the youth's recovery, and there are medication that help with cravings (Evidence Based Approaches, 2014). The relationship-based aspect is a

key part of recovery, and using motivational and therapeutic relationships may lead to successful outcomes (Joe, Night, Beacon, and Knight, 2015).

In conclusion, there are ways to combat the issue of substance abuse among adolescents. There are a variety of options to choose from, including recovery high schools, wilderness therapy programs, 12 step facilitation programs, and evidenced-based therapeutic techniques.

This information is beneficial because it helps the researchers to know if, in fact, there is a problem with substance use in teens, what substances teens are using, and what has been done before to try to combat the issue. Researchers will take this information and add on to research that has already been done. Researchers in this study will conduct a survey as well as conduct interviews in which teens from a high school will give the researchers feedback as to their opinions regarding effective and ineffective ways to combat the issue.

Problem Statement

It is known that substance abuse among teens is growing. While there have been efforts to combat the issue, we do not know the effects that a recovery support peer specialist put in a school to assist teens who struggle with substance use would have on teens. This is the researchers would like to get feedback from teens as well as staff at a local high school to explore their thoughts regarding peer recovery specialists as well as feedback as to what they have found to be effective and ineffective in terms of recovery efforts.

Needs Assessment Research Plan

Need for the Program

There are several resources that teens can utilize for when it comes to battling substance abuse. CADAS has an outpatient program as well as an inpatient program to help teens in their recovery.

There is a school in Hamilton County called Washington Alternative School. At this school, students are there because they have been expelled or suspended from another school for a variety of reasons, including issues with substance use or abuse. At this school, CADAS comes in once a day to educate about substance use.

Helen Ross McNabb is another community resource in which teens can go to for help with their substance use. Much like CADAS, Helen Ross McNabb provides residential treatment as well as morning and evening education and recovery classes to help teens who are battling substance use.

The gap in services is that if teens wanted to attend an Intensive Outpatient Program, they would not be able to go in the morning due to school. If they wanted to attend in the evening, they may not have transportation. If the students were taken out of their regular school and placed in an alternative school, this may cause trauma, which could lead to the increase of substance use, as well as get them farther behind in their education. If a teen is not ready to be in recovery, the odds are great that they will not succeed in recovery. With this proposed program, the students will participate voluntarily. The program will take place at a time of day when the students have some free time, so that class time missed will be minimal.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this needs assessment is to establish the impact of recovery coaches in recovery high schools and to see if there is a positive, negative, or neutral correlation. Recovery

coaches help mentor teens regarding making healthy choices and link them to resources that they may need to continue to sustain from substance-use after their transition out of the recovery high school.

Research Questions

What is the prevalence of substance abuse in high schools in Hamilton County? What interventions have been done to combat this issue?

Research Hypothesis

Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no relationship between recovery coaches and teens sustaining from substance-use.

Alternate hypothesis (H_1): Recovery coaches have an impact on helping teens sustain from substance-use.

Research Variables

The independent variable is the recovery coach. The dependent variable is the amount of teens that abstain from illegal substance

The controlled variables are the qualitative elements. This includes age, gender, whether or not the parents of the teen are in active addiction or have a history of substance abuse, single parent versus both parent homes, and grade level of teen.

The extraneous variables are the quantitative elements. This could include transportation, weather, and illness.

Methodology

The researchers will be using a mixed methods approach. The researchers will be using a survey (quantitative) to ask general questions, like age, grade, if they use illegal substances, how many substances they use, and how long they have used if they do use.

The researchers will conduct interviews with staff (qualitative) as well as a set number of students to ask them their thoughts regarding if substance abuse is an issue at their school, what has been done to combat the issue, what has helped, and what they think is needed to help combat the issue (if there is indeed a substance abuse issue).

The researchers will be using a survey (quantitative) to ask general questions, like age, grade, if they use illegal substances, how many substances they use, and how long they have used if they do use.

Population and Sampling

The researchers will be exploring drug use amongst teens, ranging from 13-18 years old. The teens who will be involved in the study will be teenagers attending Ooltewah High School. The researchers will use a systematic approach to generate random students to take part in the study. The researchers will obtain a roster of the school and will select 200 students. The researchers will choose every 10th student from the 9th grade class roster until there are 50 participants until there are 50 participants in the 9th grade. The researchers will choose every 10th student from the 10th grade class until there are 50 participants from the 10th grade. The researchers will continue the process for the 11th grade as well as 12th grade. By the end, there will be 200 random participants, with an equal number of students from 9th grade to 12th grade. Researchers will verify that each student is between the ages of 13-18 years old. The researchers will choose a systematic approach to eliminate the chance of error and to obtain more accurate results. The researchers are choosing an equal amount of students from each grade to lower the

chances of age making a difference in this study. The researchers do not want there to be more or less kids of a certain age group because that could skew results.

Because the researchers are using minors for this study, the researchers will need to obtain permission from the participant's parents before starting this study, as well as the staff at the school. In order to obtain permission for this study, the researchers first go to the school that will be the site for this study. That school would be Ooltewah High School. After the researchers explained the project to the administration, and after the administration agreed to this study, the researchers would then send a permission form home to the chosen participants (who will be chosen at random using a systematic approach.) The researchers would ask the teenagers to please bring back the form, signed by the parent(s), giving their permission for their child to participate in the study. The permission form would contain the details of every part of the experiment, as well as the potential benefits and harms of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis Plan

A representative for the proposed program will go to Ooltewah High School to the administration about obtaining releases and consent forms for the students and the parents/guardians of the students. After the releases are signed, the researchers will generate a list of names of the participating students. Those names will be kept on a password-protected computer. The researchers will then get each student out of class, one student at a time, and take them into a private room to complete the survey and interview. When the students arrive, the researcher will give the student the informed consent paper. That paper will be read to the students and they will be allowed to ask questions about the project. The researcher will explain to the students what their role is, inform them of how this will benefit the community, as well as inform the students of any risks that are involved in regards to their participation. The students will be informed that at any time, they may ask questions about the project. After a thorough

explanation of the project has been verbally given to the students, the researchers will then ask the students to sign the informed consent, which acknowledges that the students understand what is being asked of them. The researcher will then collect the consent forms from the students and place the forms in a lock box to protect confidentiality. Inside the lock box is also where the consent forms are that the parents and guardians have signed, giving the students permission to participate in the study. After this has been done, the researcher will hand the student the survey to complete. After the survey is completed, the student will hand the survey to the researcher and the researcher will place it in a folder that is labeled "Surveys" and place that folder in the lock box. The students will be instructed to not put their names on the survey, as to keep the results anonymous. (This is because they want to take every precaution to make sure that confidentiality is maintained. If the researchers come across a survey with a name on it, it will be shredded and not be analyzed.

The researchers will be using a mixed methods approach. There will be qualitative and quantitative data collected.

Participants will distribute a survey to the students at Ooltewah High School. The survey will consist of open-ended questions, which will yield qualitative data, as well as Likert-scale questions, which will provide quantitative data.

The researchers will analyze the qualitative data by categorizing and coding the information collected from the open-ended questions into themes. Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, especially frequencies.

For the research question that asks about the prevalence of substance abuse in high schools in Hamilton County, the researcher would like to find out if there is, in fact, an issue with teens using illegal substances.

For the research question that asks about the interventions that have been done to combat this issue, the researchers are hoping to find out what are some successful interventions that have helped with teen substance abuse and what are some unsuccessful interventions that should be avoided. In addition, it will be helpful to look for gaps as far as services and interventions used to combat teen substance use in the area.

Ethical Considerations

For ethical considerations, the first step would be to gain permission from the faculty and staff from the school where the surveys will be taken. Secondly, the permission from the parents will be gained simply due to the main population being surveyed are minors between the ages of twelve to eighteen years old. Before the interviews and surveys are done, there will be an informed consent form given out to let the children know which questions they will be asked. These questions may include their race, age, gender, grade, and also there will be questions about their academic life and progress. It is important to note that student information will be kept confidential. All students who participate in the research/needs assessment portion of the project will have their anonymity respected. There will be no identifying information on the surveys. Students will be instructed to not put their names on the survey. When students are finished with the survey, they will place the survey in a brown manila folder that will be placed in a centralized location. When storing the data, the data will be kept under lock and key in a locked

box. Only the researchers will have access to the data. Once the data is analyzed, the surveys will be shredded.

Program Goals and Objectives

The ultimate goal of Right Way Recovery is for teens enrolled in the program to get to a point of complete abstinence regarding substance use. The program will last 6 months. At the end of the 6 months, it is desired for teens participating to be abstinent from all substances. At the 3 month mark, it is desired that the students be 50% abstinent. The program encourages harm reduction at the beginning. The students will be measured by random drug tests administered by the recovery coaches.

Stakeholder Analysis

The main stakeholders for this program include the school board members, the staff at Ooltewah High School, the students, parents, and alumni and taxpayers.

The school board members are important players in the development of the new program that will be implemented at Ooltewah High School.

The school board members have the power to say “yes” or “no” as to whether this program can be implemented. The members of the school board set the budget for the school year, as well as approving contracts for teachers and outside vendors. If the school board does not think this program will succeed, they will not fund the program.

The support of the staff at Ooltewah High School, which is the school in which this program is intended to be implemented in, is very much needed for this program to work. The program came to be because some of the teachers saw that there was a problem with students using illegal substances. It will be important that the majority of the teachers and staff at the

school are supportive of this program so that when or if they are approached by a student who is inquiring about the recovery program, the staff will be able to give them information in regards to the recovery program or will encourage the student to get in touch with someone specifically apart of the recovery program within the school.

The students attending Ooltewah High School are the target population in which this program is trying to reach. It is important that the students be well informed about the new program so that if they are struggling with drug use and would like to receive treatment or perhaps just information about treatment options, they will know who to go to.

The parents of the students who attend Ooltewah High School will be important. The parents will need to be well informed as to how the program operates, if they will be informed or not if their child speaks with a recovery support coach, what methods are used in helping teens recover from a substance use disorder, and what the parents can do at home to help their children.

The alumni are also considered stakeholders. The alumni oftentimes desire to give back to their alma mater. In addition, the current students may look up to those who have graduated from the same school. The staff of Ooltewah High School could give their input as to how the program could be beneficial as well as possible barriers that the staff could face in getting the students to buy into the recovery program. If the staff asks some of the alumni who are more recent graduates, those alumni might have more insight on the issue and how to make this program successful.

The taxpayers are important because they provide funding. The taxpayers need to be well informed so that they know where their money is going. The taxpayers should also have a say in whether or not the program should be implemented because they contribute to the funding. Each member of the group is responsible to reach out to a certain stakeholder.

For the school board members, a staff member from the program will be reaching out to the school board member in the district that serves Ooltewah High School. The staff member will contact that school board member by email and set up a meeting to discuss in detail the program idea.

As for the staff at Ooltewah High School, a staff member from the program will also be responsible for making sure that the staff are well-informed. The staff member will speak with the principal of Ooltewah High School and schedule a time when he can get with the selected staff members who are going to help implement this project.

Another staff member will be responsible for accessing the parents. Once permission has been granted by the school board to implement this program, staff members will then meet with the principal of the school and inquire about when to have a parent information meeting. Once this has been arranged, staff members will inform the parents of the students attending Ooltewah High School about the new program geared towards teens combating substance use.

There will be a staff member responsible for informing the students about this new program. The staff member will contact the principal and set up a time to have an assembly. During the assembly, staff will inform the students of Ooltewah High School about the new

program. Staff will also allow time for the students to ask questions about the new recovery program.

Staff will be responsible for informing taxpayers about this new recovery program. The staff will design a flyer that will go out in the mail to inform the community about the program as well as upcoming community meetings in which the recovery program will be discussed.

A program representative will be meeting with the Alumni and informing them of the potential new program. This representative will need to get with the school administration and get email addresses of former students who have given their consent to be contacted for feedback for future programs. When the email addresses are obtained, a staff member will construct and send out an email with details about the new program. Program staff will elicit feedback from the alumni as to possible strengths and barriers that could arise within this program.

There will be a presentation presented to the Hamilton County Board of Education to show them why the proposed program is necessary, what is currently being done in other programs to combat this issue, and how the proposed program could reach teens who are not utilizing the other community programs. The Board of Education will be able to ask questions and make suggestions during this time. The board will also be given a handout with in-depth details regarding the proposed program. The board will be encouraged to reach out and call any of the staff members with any questions or concerns.

The staff will be invited to learn about the program in an in-service meeting. Staff will be educated about the importance of tackling the issue of substance abuse. The teachers and staff will learn what to do if a student approaches them and discloses that they would like help in substance abuse recovery.

There will be a parent meeting for all parents and guardians of teens who attend Ooltewah High School. This meeting is not mandatory. The local community will be invited to attend, as well. At this meeting, parents will be educated about the dangers of substance use in adolescents and the long term effects substance use can have on teens. The parents will be shown a presentation about the proposed program and what services the program offers. The parents will be able to sign a permission form for their child(ren) to participate in the program. Parents will also be able to ask questions about the program. Parents will be given a contact number as well as an email that they can utilize if they have questions after the meeting has adjourned.

The alumni will be emailed about the program and asked to attend the city hall meeting that will introduce the program to the public. Alumni will also be invited to sit down with the staff after the meeting and voice their opinions about the proposed program and give any suggestions that they might have to improve the proposed program. The alumni will also be given the chance to volunteer as a mentor or if they would like to make a financial contribution to the proposed program.

There are some on the Board of Education who do not want the proposed program because they believe that the program should not keep the students' drug screens confidential. The program will not reveal to the staff members of the school or anywhere else if a student tests positive for a substance or substances on a drug screen. However, if a student is found with drugs on the school campus, which would fall under the zero tolerance policy, and school officials would need to be notified. There are teachers in the school who also disagree with the program to keep the drug screens confidential. The staff will address the program by reiterating that addiction is a disease, and thus the information should be kept confidential – this will also help the participants express the desire to participate in the program, as well as could be used as a recruiting tool for others who may need a little more help in making a decision to

address their issue. The staff will also make clear that students will be learning coping skills to deal with their substance abuse and that learning coping skills will take time.

The stakeholder analysis influenced the project design by allowing the people who are proposing the project to look at the different supports that will be in place and to see what resources can potentially be acquired by the different stakeholders. For instance, the people who are proposing this program did not think about the alumni being able to contribute to the program before the stakeholder analysis was done and examined. Now that it has been completed, the alumni could contribute greatly by volunteering to mentor the students in the program and teach them life skills.

Also, the stakeholder analysis showed which stakeholders would be high on the list for contributing to the program's success. The Hamilton County School Board is an important stakeholder because if permission is not obtained from the board, the program will not be able to be implemented.

By examining the stakeholders and by placing a level of importance on each stakeholder, it allows for whomever is proposing the program to know where to concentrate and place the majority of their advocacy efforts.

SWOT Analysis

The proposed program has many strengths. The peer recovery coaches are highly trained and experienced in the field of substance use. Also, Right Way Recovery Focuses on strengths of each student and is very strengths driven. If RWR is approved, there is already a dedicated classroom that has been placed on hold for the program. The administration at Ooltewah High School has stated RWR may use their schools printer and copier, which will help reduce the

costs of the program. The program will be overlooked by the School Resource Officer, who is very much supportive of the proponents of this program.

Some of the weaknesses of RWR include transportation for the students and the number of mentors. The program will take place after school, so that students are not missing class to attend. However, a number of students ride the bus, so transportation might be an issue with some of the students who would like to enroll in the program. Regarding the mentorship aspect, it would be ideal if every student had a mentor, which would consist of an alumni. However, not many alumni have reported that they would be willing to take on this responsibility. This could mean that not every student has a mentor, or that the mentors may be taking on a number of students, which could be burdensome.

Right Way Recovery is open to all students attending Ooltewah High School, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, and economic background. If a student comes into the program and is on probation, which could potentially happen due to a teen having a substance use issue, they will still be welcome to participate in the program. The school is made handicap accessible. If a student would like to participate and has special needs or disability, Right Way Recovery will work with the needs of those students. Right Way Recovery will provide all of the materials needed for the program to the students. The program will not cost the students money, so economic status will not hinder a student from success in the RWR.

Some of the threats to the program would be specific attitudes from the community of Hamilton County about the children who are going through treatment in the program. Oftentimes, adolescents who engage in drug use or other types of dangerous activity, including those who are of African-American and Hispanic descent, are often looked down upon by society the same way

those who are released from prison are. Another threat to the program would be that there may trouble maintaining funding for the program and having people who are willing to be consistent donors. There could also be a lot of changes within the leadership as the program progresses each year.

The highly trained and skilled staff will be used to teach and encourage the youth about the recovery process of substance abuse. The strength-based mentality of the program will be helpful in building the youth's self-esteem as well as building rapport with the teens. Having a designated classroom for the program will re-iterate that that room is a safe space to talk about substance use and recovery, because sometimes teens can feel nervous to talk about those issues with adults for fear of punishment. Being able to use the supplies at Ooltewah High School, such as the printer and copier, will be helpful in cutting the costs of the program. The school resource officer will be beneficial to the program because the teens may be able to build rapport with the officer. Many teens think that all policemen/policewomen just want to punish people. However, the school resource officer can help teens see a different side to law enforcement.

For the students who have transportation issues, one possible solution is to explore the idea of some of the alumni who are serving as mentors being able to provide transportation. Perhaps a rotating schedule could be implemented. If the number of mentors are limited, perhaps make it to where the alumni aren't serving the entire year. Perhaps mentors are scheduled and put on a rotation, so that they don't feel overwhelmed. This could possibly entice more alumni to participate.

When advertising the program on fliers and emails, the graphics can include diverse populations, such as handicap teens, African American kids, Caucasian kids, etc.

By educating the community about teen substance use and the factors that can cause someone to start using illegal substances, it could take away the stigma about people who have addiction issues. Almost everyone knows someone who has an addiction issue. It can happen to wealthy people, poor people, straight people, gay people, moms, dads, people who have mental health issues, people who do not have mental health issues, and the list could go on and on. Taking away the stigma is key.

Evaluation Plan

The students will be encouraged to communicate and participate in the program by showing up on time, showing up with homework completed, contributing to the conversations in the sessions, participating in activities, and passing drug screens. The staff will document how each participant is doing each day. Attendance will be taken each meeting. Notes will be taken every session about progress. This documentation will be kept on file in a password-protected computer. By documenting about each teen, it will aid the staff to see if and how much progress has been made with each participant from the start of the program to the finish of it.

The type of measurement that will be used to collect data will be surveys to assess the progress of the patients early in the program, at the mid-term point, and at the very end of the program before they finish. UDS will be the most direct measure for intermediate outcomes to determine use of illegal substances. This will help measure if the 40 percent reduction rate in substance use is being met.

Proposed Program Resources

For the program itself, there will be two staff members. These two staff members will be required to attend the meeting held at the beginning of the school year.

The materials that will be needed for this program include a computer for keeping track of clients, guardians, creating educational materials to hand out creating the curriculum, emailing parents/guardians, keeping track of permission forms/releases, as well as any other additions and handouts that might be helpful. The program will need a printer to print out materials. The program will also need a curriculum. The program will need an area at the school in which the recovery staff can meet with the youth during a session or if a parent would like to meet with a peer recovery coach. This could be an empty classroom. A classroom would be the ideal location because it can hold a significant number of people. Each recovery coach would need to have a personal vehicle or a means of transportation to go to Ooltewah High School to meet with the youth in the recovery program. The program will not cover vehicle or mileage costs.

Proposed Sustainability Plan

The program will be funded by taxpayer's dollars. The budget will need to be approved by the county commissioners. RWR will start as a pilot program. If the program shows improvement in the area of teen substance use at Ooltewah High School, it is likely that the school board will continue to fund the program.

The school will continue to support the program as long as the school board continues to approve the program. The school will support the program by continuing to allow RWR to have a classroom, and to continue to use the school's supplies, such as their printer and copier.

Limitations

If all of the elements and resources that are needed for RWR to succeed, there would still be limitations. Students could be absent from school and not be able to attend every meeting. Perhaps they are on a sports team and in the middle of the program year, they choose to drop out in order to make practices for said sport. Or perhaps one or more of the teens has to change schools and cannot attend. These are all limitations that could be placed on the program.

The mentors, who are volunteering their time, may get a job to where they are unable to participate after a few weeks. This would cause limitations if there were more students than mentors.

Transportation can be tricky. If a student does not have a ride, that student cannot participate. These are all limitations that could potentially hurt the success rate of the program.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while teen substance use is an issue, there are ways in which to combat this serious issue. It is important that people continue to come with new and inventive ways to combat this issue because, as the research states, when teens use illegal substances, it could have long-lasting effects. Many adults who have substance abuse issues started using drugs as teenagers. If it is possible to help teens recover early on, perhaps there is a chance of breaking that cycle before getting to adulthood. Right Way Recovery is a unique proposed program that is geared towards helping teens become and remain abstinent from substance use. The approach that RWR would use would be a strengths based approach with an emphasis on mentorships/relationships.

