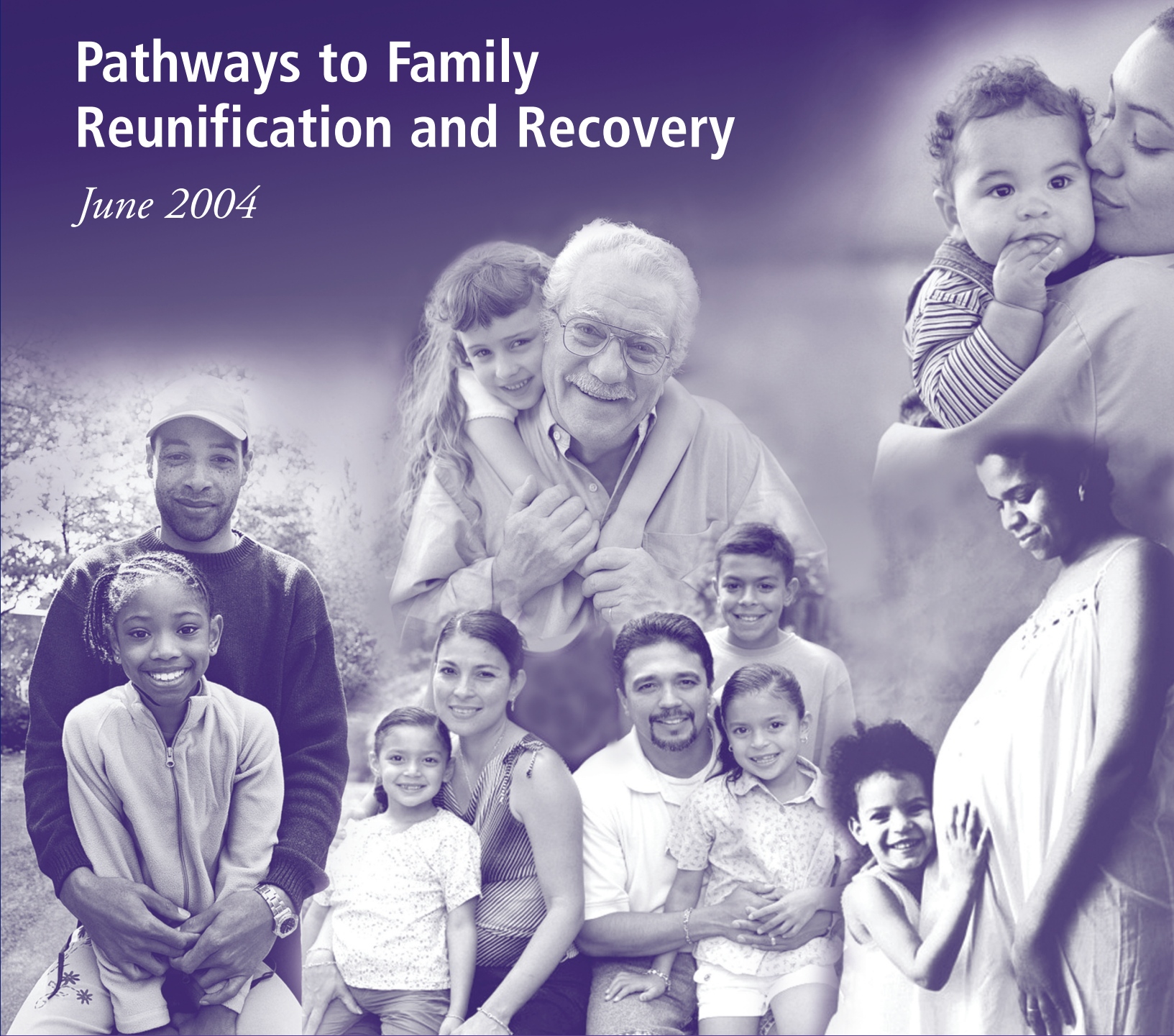


Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery

June 2004



An educational group curriculum for women in recovery

Hortensia Amaro, Ph.D. and Rita L. Nieves, RN, MPH, MSW



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Funded by The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, SAMHSA

Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery

An educational group curriculum for women in recovery

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The Institute on Urban Health Research (IUHR), under the direction of Dr. Hortensia Amaro, conducts research on health issues that disproportionately impact urban communities, particularly the urban poor, African-American and Hispanic communities. The Institute's research focuses on racial and ethnic health disparities and the cultural and community contextual factors that affect health status and health-care access. The IUHR provides Fellowships to create opportunities for student involvement in research and maintains a Faculty Scholars Program to equip scholars and researchers to assume leadership roles in urban health research.

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The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) formed the Boston Consortium of Services for Families in Recovery (BCFR), under the direction of Rita L. Nieves and Dr. Hortensia Amaro. The BCFR is a partnership of service programs and stakeholders that developed an integrated, culturally and linguistically appropriate model of services for women with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders and trauma histories. The population of women served by the BCFR was primarily poor urban Latina and African American women. The specific BCFR approach was to develop, link, and integrate trauma and mental health treatment services into the existing substance abuse programs operated by the Consortium. The service and system integration approaches were developed in two phases. Phase 1, which lasted two years focused on an assessment and planning process during which partnerships were solidified and intervention approaches were developed. Phase 2 involved the implementation of the interventions and evaluation of the program's effects. This curriculum was one of several implemented as part of this effort.

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We would like to also thank other members of the Women and Families Division for their contribution to this work and for participating in focus groups and providing ongoing feedback throughout the development process. Finally, our deepest thanks to the women in recovery who participated in focus and pilot groups and provided generous feedback to ensure this product provides relevant information and makes sense to the women we serve.

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Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery
Introduction

“Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery” is a 10-week educational curriculum that focuses on the impact of substance abuse on parenting, family reunification, and self-care. Throughout the ten weeks, women are offered the opportunity to learn how to reconnect with their children and families; and to examine feelings related to their recovery process. In addition to addressing parenting issues, the curriculum engages participants in learning about child protective services and advocating effectively on their own behalf to reach a positive reunification outcome. Women also learn how to manage emotions related to the challenges and opportunities that characterize the process of being reunited with their children. In addition, this curriculum provides participants the opportunity to explore the connections between past substance abuse and violence while simultaneously underscoring their strength and resiliency to continue in recovery.

The “*Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery*” curriculum is the product of research activities conducted by the *Boston Consortium of Services for Families in Recovery* (BCFR), a Boston Public Health Commission’s program funded by the Women, Co-occurring Disorders and Violence Study (WCDVS), sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The BCFR is a treatment collaborative that offers residential, methadone maintenance and outpatient substance abuse services to women. It was designed to implement service innovations to integrate trauma and mental health services in substance abuse treatment programs. The impetus driving the creation of this curriculum emerged from systematic assessments of gaps in the services provided to women by the BCFR. Family reunification was one of several gaps emerging from these assessments. The creation of the curriculum entailed three phases: (1) content development using input from consumers and staff representatives of four substance abuse treatment program sites: Entre Familia, Mom’s Project,

Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery

Women's Circle and Griffin House; (2) pilot testing with consumers; and (3) content revisions guided by findings from pilot tests of the group intervention.

The curriculum was developed under the guidance of the Project's Principal Investigator, Dr. Hortensia Amaro and the following BCFR members: Rita L. Nieves, R.N., M.P.H. (Director of the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, Boston Public Health Commission) Luz M. López, M.S.W., M.P.H. (Program Manager), Brenda Marshall (Clinical Coordinator), and Bethany Stuart, M.Ed. (Clinical Coordinator).

Session 1: Diverse Family Reunification Experiences



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome and Introduction to the Program Welcome Review of Ten-Week Curriculum Group Guidelines Participant Expectations Session 1 Objectives	35 minutes
Activity 1: Sharing of Individual Situations	40 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Collage Activity 2: Your Wish for the Future with Your Child (ren)	35 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 1 Overview

Session Goals: The goals of this session are to introduce the ten-week curriculum to the participants and have participants describe their past and present reunification situation with their child (ren). Each participant has a unique situation; and will be encouraged to share the different stages of emotions they have experienced within each phase of the reunification process.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Become familiar with the ten-week *Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery* curriculum.
- Validate one another's experiences and the stages one goes through regarding the process of family reunification.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategies used to facilitate this session are:

- Group Discussion
- Individual Exercises

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers
- Family Magazines for Collage Activity 2. Magazines need to be diverse in nature, to represent the diversity of the group.
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Colored construction paper

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Ten-week outline listing each one of the sessions
- Group Guidelines
- Questions for ten-week expectation discussion:
 - What are your expectations over the next ten weeks?
 - What do you hope to gain from the ten-week class?
 - What do you wish to happen for yourself and your child (ren) once you complete the program?
- Activity 1: Sharing of Individual Situations
 - How many children do you have?
 - What are their genders and names?
 - Describe briefly each child's personality.
 - What was your relationship with them when you were using?
 - Who is caring for your child (ren) now?
 - Who or what other agencies have been involved raising your child?

Participant Handouts:

- Binder: A session binder that can contain the activities and information that will be handed out during the ten-week session.

Participant Activities:

- Activity 1: Sharing of Individual Situations
- Collage Activity 2: Your Wish for the Future with Your Children

Note on Start Time: Assume that some participants will arrive 10 minutes late, particularly if they are dropping off children at daycare or need to depend on a taxi or bus for transportation. Try to begin the session with at least two-thirds of the group assembled before starting the session.

Welcome and Introduction to the Program (35 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to fill out a name card.
- **Introduce** yourself and explain why/how you became involved in this group.
- **Ask** participants to briefly introduce themselves by stating their name and the program they represent.

Review the ten-week curriculum using the prepared flipchart.

- Session 1: Diverse Family Reunification Experiences
- Session 2: Past Influences and Personal Strengths; That Was Then, This Is Now
- Session 3: Understanding The Family Reunification Process
- Session 4: My Custody Situation and Feelings Associated with It
- Session 5: Taking Care of Ourselves to Become a More Effective Parent
- Session 6: How to Effectively Navigate and Understand the Child Protective Services System
- Session 7: Transitioning from Their Home to My Home
- Session 8: Understanding Various Situations that May Arise When I Reunite With My Child (ren)
- Session 9: Improving My Parenting Skills
- Session 10: Summary of Sessions, Graduation and Celebration

We will meet once a week, for two hours, for the next ten weeks. We will discuss topics such as how to take care of yourself to become a better parent and how to better parent your child (ren). The overall goal of the program is to assist you in developing healthy, nurturing relationships with your child (ren) if you have experienced a period of separation from them.

Facilitate Discussion on Group Guidelines

Ask and record responses on flipchart.

Write additional guidelines if participants would like to add more. Examples:

- Be respectful of one another
- No side talking
- What is discussed here stays here.



Facilitate Ten-Week Expectation Discussion

Distribute Post-it notes.

Refer to prepared flipchart and ask participants to respond to each question on the Post-it note.

Ask for volunteers to read what they wrote and post it on the flipchart.

- What are your expectations over the next ten weeks?
- What do you hope to gain from the ten-week class?
- What do you wish to happen for yourself and your child (ren) once you complete the program?



Review Session 1 Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Become familiar with the ten-week *Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery* curriculum.
- Validate one another's experiences and the stages one goes through regarding the process of family reunification.



Transition

For the next 40 minutes or so, let's share with one another your individual stories about who has taken care of your child (ren) (both past and present) and describe some of the stages (both positive and difficult) that you have gone through in dealing with your situation. You can share as much or as little as you want. If you wish, you may opt to listen and not share anything.

This group is a safe place for us to discuss the connections between past family experiences, current family situations, and how being in recovery can help you become a more effective parent.



Sharing of Individual Situations (40 minutes)

Record on flipchart each participant's situation with her child (ren). To keep the discussion focused, you may want to capture the same information from each participant by asking the following questions (prepare flipchart before session):

- How many children do you have?
- What are their names?
- Describe briefly each child's personality.
- What was your relationship with them when you were using drugs?
- Who is caring for your child (ren) now?
- Who or what other agencies have been involved in raising your child (ren)?

Wrap-Up Activity:

Highlight on another flipchart the feelings and situations shared by the participants. Validate feelings that are associated with each stage of the reunification process. Examples of situations include:

- Involvement with Child Protective Services system (CPS) (keep the focus on this very limited so the discussion does not turn into a discussion about the CPS agency only)
- Lost custody -- case closed
- Foster care
- Child (ren) with a family member



10 Minute Break



**Collage Activity 2: What I Wish for the Future with My Children
(35 minutes)**

Introduce the activity. This activity is designed to symbolize the future relationship each participant wishes to have with her child (ren) when reuniting with them.

Distribute the construction paper, glue sticks and scissors.

Ask participants to thumb through magazines and cut out pictures that represent reuniting with their child (ren).

Glue pictures to construction paper.

Ask each participant to describe her picture when she is finished.

Glue picture to binder for a unique cover.



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Thank participants for attending.

Remind participants to bring their binders to the next class.

Session 2: Past Influences and Personal Strengths; That Was Then, This Is Now



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 1	15 minutes
Group Activity 1: How Substance Abuse Affects Your Parenting Abilities and How Being in Recovery Affects Your Parenting Abilities	30 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Group Activity 2: Identification of Five Personal Strengths	40 minutes
Group Activity 3: How Your Personal Strengths Can Assist You With Parenting	15 minutes
Create Group Affirmation Statement	10 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 2 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is for participants to rediscover the personal strengths participants have and to gain a new set of skills to assist them with parenting.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Describe how substance abuse has affected their abilities to parent.
- Describe how being in recovery has affected their abilities to parent.
- Identify five personal strengths they possess that can assist them with parenting.
- Create a group affirmation statement that related to parenting.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategies used to facilitate this session are:

- Lecture
- Group Discussion
- Group and Individual Exercises

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)
- Group Activity 1: A flipchart titled: How substance abuse affects your parenting abilities and how being in recovery affects your parenting abilities.
- Group Activity 2: A flipchart titled: Personal strengths that can assist you with parenting.
- Group Activity 3: What strengths and skills can assist you with parenting ?.

Participant Activities:

- Group Activity 1: How substance abuse affects your parenting abilities and how being in recovery affects your parenting abilities.
- Group Activity 2: Identification of five personal strengths that can assist you with parenting.
- Group Activity 3: What strengths and skills can assist you with parenting?

Welcome (15 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 1 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session for anyone who is new to the group and/or to refresh participants' memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session (see objectives above).



Group Activity 1: How Substance Abuse Affects Parenting and How Being in Recovery Affects Parenting (30 minutes)

Prepare a flipchart titled How Substance Abuse Affects Parenting and How Being in Recovery Affects Parenting.

Substance Abuse	Recovery
How affects parenting?	How affects parenting?
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

Facilitate a discussion around each one of the questions above.
Capture comments on flipchart.

Typical responses on how substance abuse affects parenting include:

- Not emotionally available.
- Lose custody of your children.
- Missing important dates of their children’s birthdays, medical appointments, school meetings, etc.

Typical responses to how recovery affects parenting:

- More available and present for the children
- Taking care of their needs



10 Minute Break

**Group Activity 2 (Paired): Identification of Five Personal Strengths
(40 minutes)**

Pair-up participants.

Tell participants that for the next 10 to 15 minutes, they are going to share with their partner five personal strengths they believe they have as an individual. Ask participants to jot down notes to help them remember their partner’s strengths and qualities.

Ask participants to share with the group their partner’s strengths.

Capture strengths on flipchart to help facilitate the next activity.

Typical strengths: Resourceful, loving, determined, smart, and organized.

<i>What are some of your strengths or skills?</i>
List 5 Personal Strengths
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.



Group Activity 3: H: *How Your Personal Strengths and Skills Can Assist You With Parenting* (15 minutes)

Refer to the strengths on the flipchart captured in Group Activity 2.

Ask participants to give examples that demonstrate how they can translate these good qualities into good parenting.

Example: Organized/Responsible: I am organized and manage my time effectively; I walk my children to the school bus and wait with them until they get on the bus. Everyday I return to pick them up on time.

Facilitate Discussion on Group Affirmation Statement (10 minutes)

<i>What are some of your strengths?</i>	<i>How these strengths can assist you with parenting?</i>
List 5 strengths	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with an affirmation.

Thank participants for attending.

Session 3: Understanding the Family Reunification Process



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 2	15 minutes
Small Group Activity 1: Exploring Family Reunification	20 minutes
Debrief of Small Group Activity 1	45 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Group Discussion Activity 2: Similarities of Family Reunification Situations Among Participants.	30 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 3 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is for participants to become more familiar with the process of family reunification.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Review of family reunification process
- Identify steps and challenges associated with the process.
- Create group synergy that is supportive and nurturing.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategies used to facilitate this session are:

- Group Discussion
- Group and Individual Exercises

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)
- Small Group Activity 1: Exploring Family Reunification. Prepare one flipchart with the following questions:
 - What is the goal of family reunification?
 - What are some of the steps that have to occur before a family can become reunited?
 - What steps can one take to achieve this goal?
 - What are the challenges one faces when reuniting with one's child (ren)?
 - What life experiences can one use to help in the process of reunification?
 - How can this group help you achieve your reunification goals?
- Group Discussion Activity 2: Prepare flipcharts with the following questions:
 - Are there any similarities between your family situation and your peers in this group?
 - What did you learn from the experiences of your peers that can help you in your reunification process?

Participant Activities:

- Small Group Activity 1: *Exploring Family Reunification*
- Group Discussion Activity

Note on Start Time: Assume that some participants will arrive 10 minutes late, particularly if they are dropping off children at daycare or need to depend on a taxi or bus for transportation. Try to begin the session with at least two-thirds of the group assembled before starting the session.

Welcome (15 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 2 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session for anyone who is new to the group and/or to refresh participants' memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Review of family reunification process
- Identify steps and challenges associated with the process.
- Create group synergy that is supportive and nurturing.



Small Group Activity 1: Exploring Family Reunification (20 minutes for activity and 45 minutes to debrief)

Post the prepared flipchart with the following questions:

1. What is the goal of family reunification?
2. What are some of the steps that have to occur before a family can become reunited?
3. What steps can one take to achieve this goal?
4. What are the challenges one faces when reuniting with their child (ren)?
5. What life experiences can one use to help in the process of reunification?
6. How can this group help you achieve your reunification goals?

Divide participants in small groups and assign one of the following categories below to each group:

- Children living in a foster placement.
- Children living in residential treatment programs.
- Children who were adopted, closed/open adoption scenarios.
- Children living with a relative: sister, grandmother, uncle, the other parent, etc. with or without Child Protective Services System involvement.
- Children who live with a relative, but their siblings have been legally adopted.
- Children who live with their mother, some siblings have been adopted and some are in Child Protective Services System custody.

Ask each group to discuss and answer the questions on the flipchart as it applies to the category they were assigned to.

Facilitate a discussion for 45 minutes to debrief the activity after 20 minutes of small-group work.



10 Minute Break



Group Discussion Activity 2 (30 minutes)

Post prepared flipchart with the following questions:

- Are there any similarities between your family situation and your peers in this group?
- What did you learn from the experiences of your peers that can help you in your reunification process?

The goal here is to create connections between participants who share the same situations with the hope that they will become a support network for one another during the reunification process.



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with the affirmation.

Thank participants for attending.

Session 4: My Custody Situation and Feelings Associated with It



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 3	15 minutes
Group Activity 1: Emotions/Feelings Associated with Child Custody Issues	50 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Role-Play 1 and 2	45 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 4 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is for participants to examine their emotions/feelings associated with the family reunification process.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Become more familiar with emotions/feelings such as anger, shame and guilt, and how they can potentially affect their relationship with their child (ren's) caretaker.
- Describe positive ways to handle negative emotions/feelings.
- Gain new communication skills to interact effectively their child (ren's) caretakers and agency representatives.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategies used to facilitate this session are:

- Group Discussion
- Group and Individual Exercises
- Role-Play

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers
- Post-it notes

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)
- Flipchart titled: *Common Emotions*

Participant Activities:

- Group Activity 1: *Emotions Associated with Child Custody Issues*
- Handout 1: *Ways to Handle Emotions*
- Handout 2: *Mom and Sister, Role-Play 1*
- Handout 3: *Mom and Child Protective Services Staff, Role-Play 2*

Note on Start Time: Assume that some participants will arrive 10 minutes late, particularly if they are dropping off children at daycare or need to depend on a taxi or bus for transportation. Try to begin the session with at least two-thirds of the group assembled before starting the session.

Welcome (15 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 3 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session for anyone that is new to the group and/or to refresh participants' memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Become more familiar with emotions/feelings such as anger, shame and guilt, and how they can potentially affect their relationship with their child (ren's) caretaker.
- Describe positive ways to handle negative emotions/feelings.
- Gain new communication skills to interact effectively their child (ren's) caretakers and agency representatives.



Group Activity 1: Emotions Associated with Child Custody Issues (50 minutes)

Distribute Post-it notes.

Ask participants to write three emotions that are most common to them when they think about the person who is the primary caretaker of their child (ren).

Ask participants to think about the positive and negative aspects of each emotion and how these emotions impact themselves and their children.

Conduct a group discussion to identify the three most common emotions among the group.

Write on a flipchart the three most common emotions shared by the participants.

Examples of emotions are: anger, fear, shame, guilt, excitement, nervousness, insecurity, helplessness, hope, anticipation.

Distribute Handout 1: *Ways to Handle Emotions/Feelings*.

Ask each participant to complete the handout, using the examples of emotions/feelings that were previously written in the flipchart.

Ask participants to list each emotion/feeling on the table in the handout.

Ask participants to write the positive and negative ways to respond to each emotion/feeling when thinking about the person or agency who is the primary caretaker of the participants' children in the Do's and the Don'ts section of the table.

Write examples on the handout related to their situation.

Facilitate a discussion to debrief the activity.



10 Minute Break

Handout 1
Ways to Respond to Emotions/Feelings

<i>Emotion/Feeling</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Examples</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

Role-Play Exercise
Role-Play 1 and 2
(45 minutes)

Distribute Handout 2: *Mom and Sister, Role-Play 1* and Handout 3: *Mom and Child Protective Services Staff, Role-Play 2*.

Each role-play will consist of two scenarios, a negative interaction and then a positive role-play interaction.

Ask for two or three volunteers for each role-play scenario. Ask the participants who are observing to use the handout to record negative/positive feelings they see and the do's and don'ts behaviors associated with them.

Tell participants that they can try as much as possible to make the scenario look real.

The positive interaction role-play should highlight a positive dialogue between the caretaker and the mom, so the needs of the mom are met without affecting the relationship with the caretaker.

Allow 15 minutes for each role-play, then debrief.

Handout 2 Mom and Sister Role-Play 1

Scenario:

Your sister has custody of your child. There is an important parent/teacher meeting regarding your child's progress in class next Wednesday.

You overheard your sister talking to your child about the meeting and want to attend. Your sister tells you that you should not go, that you need to focus on your recovery and she can take care of things with your child at school and at home.

You are extremely angry at your sister for shutting you out. You really want to attend the meeting and believe that it is important for your child to know that you are his mother and involved in his upbringing.

How would you respond?

Audience observations:

<i>Negative Emotion/Feeling</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

<i>Positive Emotion/Feeling</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

Handout 3
Mom and Child Protective Services Staff, Role-Play 2.

Scenario:

The Child Protective Services agency has full custody of your child. You are scheduled for a visit to see your child for four hours every Sunday.

On this particular Sunday, they call to say they will be 90 minutes late. When they actually arrive, you only have 1 hour left to spend with your child. To top it off, this is not the first time this has happened.

You are extremely angry at the Child Protective Services Agency staff for being late and taking precious time away from you to spend with your child.

How would you respond?

<i>Negative Emotion/Feeling</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

How would you respond?

<i>Positive Emotion/Feeling</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with the affirmation.

Thank participants for attending.

Session 5: Taking Care of Ourselves to Become a More Effective Parent



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 4	10 minutes
Group Discussion: What is Stress?	30 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Group Activity: The ABC's of Nurturing	30 minutes
Individual Quiet Activity: Bean-Bag Buddy	40 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 5 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is for participants to find new and resourceful ways to nurture themselves when going through a family reunification process.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Identify ways in which the family reunification process can be a source of stress.
- Identify new strategies in dealing with stress associated with the family reunification process.
- Identify new ways to lower stress levels and take care of ourselves to become a more effective parent.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategies used to facilitate this session are:

- Group Discussion
- Group and Individual Exercises

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers
- Items to make Bean-Bag Buddy (a stress-reliever pillow). You will need white sports socks, rice to fill sock, lavender potpourri, needle and thread to sew sock once it's filled. Decorative accessories such as: buttons, markers, fabric paint, glue, etc.
- Soothing stress reduction music and player.
- Notes on the role-play scenarios from Session 4.
- Handouts from suggested website.

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)
- The ABC's of Nurturing and Stress Reduction -- write the alphabet from top to bottom.

Example:

A

B

C

D

Etc.

Participant Activities:

Handout 1 (Not Included): *Facts About Stress and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.*

Group Activity: *The ABC's of Nurturing and Stress Reduction*

Group Activity: *My Bean-Bag Buddy*

Note on Start Time: Assume that some participants will arrive 10 minutes late, particularly if they are dropping off children at daycare or need to depend on a taxi or bus for transportation. Try to begin the session with at least two-thirds of the group assembled before starting the session.

Welcome (5 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 4 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session for anyone who is new to the group and/or to refresh participants' memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Identify ways in which the family reunification process can be a source of stress.
- Identify new strategies in dealing with stress associated with the family reunification process.
- Identify new ways to lower stress levels and take care of ourselves to become a more effective parent.

Group Discussion: Stress (30 minutes)

Using the role-play notes from Session 4, review the common negative emotions described by the participants and how they can lead to high levels of stress.

Describe how the positive emotions described by the participants in the role play can help participants avoid feeling high levels of stress.

Distribute Handouts: *Stress 101; Facts About Stress* and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction developed and copyrighted by Melissa C. Stoppler, MD., *Your Guide to Stress Management*. We suggest the use of these handouts to provide participants with information on what is stress?, What are the symptoms of excess stress? and information on mindfulness based stress reduction approaches. These handouts and other relevant information about the topic of stress and its management can be found at:

http://stress.about.com/cs/copingskills/a/stress101a_p.htm and
<http://stress.about.com/cs/relaxation/a/aa100901.htm>

Allow 10 minutes for participants to read the handouts.

Facilitate group discussion:

- What is stress?
- What strategies can you use to improve how you handle stress?
- What is Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction?



10 Minute Break

Group Activity--The ABC's of Nurturing (30 minutes)

Use flipchart titled The ABC's of Nurturing and Stress Reduction.

Go around the room with a basket that contains letters of the alphabet inside. Ask each person to pick a letter and tell you an example of something to reduce stress that begins with that letter. It could be something that is an example of nurturing or something they can do to reduce stress, using the letter of the alphabet. It can apply to themselves or their children. Example:

A = Assisting my child with a task and give them a sense of **accomplishment**.

B = Baking a big chocolate cake for my child for no reason.

Group Activity--My Bean-Bag Buddy (40 minutes)

Play stress reduction music.

Tell participants for the next 40 minutes, they will make a bean-bag.

Distribute materials to make bags.

Tell participants that chatting and talking is not allowed. All they may do is quietly ask for an item to make their bean-bag.

Instructions on How to Make the Bean-Bag Buddy:

- Each participant takes a sock and fills it with rice.
- Potpourri can be added if the participant wants the bean bag buddy to be scented.
- Participants decorate the sock with markers, fabric paint, ribbon, glitter.
- Once the sock is complete participants can sew it shut with ribbon, needle and thread.
- The bean bag buddy may be heated in a microwave and used to relieve stress (placing it on the neck, shoulders etc.)

The objective of this exercise is for participants to relax as much as possible while working on their project. Soft music can be played during this activity

Debrief activity after 30 minutes.

Ask participants to describe what their Bean-Bag Buddy represents.

Ask what this experience was like. How did it feel to be quiet? Were they able to relax?



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with the affirmation.

Thank participants for attending.

Session 6: How to Effectively Navigate and Understand the Child Protective Services System



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 5	10 minutes
Group Discussion: Understanding Your Rights: The Law Service Plan(s) Child Visitation Rights	55 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Group Discussion: Insight Around Guardianship and Adoption	25 minutes
Group Discussion: Putting it Together: Managing Your Plan(s)	20 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 6 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is for participants to understand how to interact with the Child Protective Services System; to use the system in a positive way so the system works for and not against them; and to learn how to become a better advocate and manager of their unique situation to reach a positive reunification outcome.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Understand their legal rights as a client:
 1. The law
 2. Service plan(s)
 3. Child visitation rights

- Describe adoption and guardianship.
- Understand the Child Protective Services System and How it Works.
- Learn how to advocate for their rights.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategy used to facilitate this session is:

- Group Discussion

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)

Participant Activities:

Handout 1: *Sample of Completed Service Plan*

Handout 2: *Sample of Blank Service Plan*

Note on Start Time: Assume that some participants will arrive 10 minutes late, particularly if they are dropping off children at daycare or need to depend on a taxi or bus for transportation. Try to begin the session with at least two-thirds of the group assembled before starting the session.

Welcome (10 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 5 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session for anyone who is new to the group and/or to refresh participant's memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Understand their legal rights as a client:
 - The law
 - Service plan(s)
 - Child visitation rights
- Describe adoption and guardianship.
- Understand the Child Protective Services System and How It Works.
- Learn how to advocate for their rights.



Group Discussion: Understanding Your Rights (55 minutes)

Distribute and Review Handout 1: Sample of Completed *Service Plan*. Describe the elements of each field on the service plan.

Distribute and Review Handout 2: Sample of Blank *Service Plan*. Describe the elements of each field on the service plan.

Review questions, concerns and comments participants may have with their individual plan.

Facilitate Group Discussion on Child Protective Services Agency Reunification Service Plan

- Who has a service plan?
- What is a problem statement?
- Do you understand your tasks?
- Do you understand your social worker's tasks?
- Do you understand your visitation rights and the responsibilities that are associated with it?
- Do you understand the Child Protective Services system visitation rights and the responsibilities that are associated with it?



10 Minute Break



Group Discussion: Insight Around Guardianship and Adoption (25 minutes)

Distribute legal definitions and resource materials.

Facilitate group discussion:

- What is the legal definition of guardianship?
- What is the legal definition of adoption?
- What is the length of time?
- Can these be changed or reversed, ever?



Group Discussion: Putting it Together: Managing Your Plan(s) (20 minutes)

Ask participants to think of the plans they have. Who is overseeing it?

Discuss the term *advocate and empowered*.

Ask participants if they believe they are empowered to advocate for themselves the path they need to take to lead to a positive reunification experience.

Describe that one way to advocate for themselves is to call a joint team meeting that would involve all the people and systems associated with their plan(s). The goal of this meeting is to discuss how to effectively provide comprehensive services to the entire family; to review the needs of the participant and the needs of the child (ren).

Ask participants to keep a journal and/or any papers to show dates of contact with their child (ren), the type of contact, meetings with Child Protective Services staff, court dates, medical appointments and any contact with the child (ren)'s current caretakers. The goal is to be prepared to show documentation of the participant's involvement with the child (ren) in the reunification process.



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Ask participants to state one new thing that was learned at this session.

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with the affirmation.

Thank participants for attending.

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
 Department of Social Services
 (Child Protective Services Agency)
 Sample of a Service Plan**

This plan is an agreement between the (name) family and the Child Protective Service Department for the period of 12/10/2001 to 6/10/2002. This plan has been renewed or extended to 12/11/2002. This plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and at least once every three months.

Problem Statement: Briefly state the specific reason(s) why services are being provided to this family.

This family became known to Child Protective Service Department on October 4, 2000 when a 51A report was filed at the Framingham office, reporting neglect by his mother of MB, D.O.B. 10/03/00. MB was born the previous day. His mother has admitted using cocaine towards the end of her pregnancy. Baby MB tested negative for cocaine at the time of birth. His mother has been at the Spectrum program on the Methadone treatment program prior going into pre-term labor. At the time of the report the mother did not have a place to go. The child’s father was also at the Spectrum program on the Methadone treatment program at the time of the baby’s birth. This report was re-filed with the Lawrence Area Office on October 10, 2000. A 51B investigation was conducted and a report was supported for neglect of MB by his parents.

In March 2001 the mother went to the Sigourney Street House, a 9-month recovery program in Worcester. On June 26, 2001, an incident report was filed to the Department in which the mother stole an EBT card from another resident and withdrew \$50, which she paid to a drug peddler for drugs. She was terminated from the Sigourney House. At this time the Department filed an Emergency Care and Protection Petition. At this time the Department has temporary custody of MB. On December 10, 2001, a Permanency Planning Conference was held, and MB’s goal was changed to adoption.

Goal: What is the goal for each family member.

Family Member	Goal	Start Date	End Date
Mother	Reunify Family	06/26/2001	
Father	Reunify Family	06/26/2001	

Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery

Name: Mother
Outcomes/Indicators

Outcome: Provide/Receive Basic Care

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will budget money for food, rent and utilities.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure that children have clean clothes that are age, size and weather appropriate.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure that children receive adequate nutrition.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure that home is reasonably clean and sanitary.	06/11/2002	
Will maintain predictable routines in order to structure family life.	06/11/2002	
Will provide a home that has adequate facilities for cooking, eating, sleeping and bathing.	06/11/2002	

Tasks	Start Date	End Date
Mother will secure permanent stable housing for herself and her baby.	06/11/2002	
Mother will secure a stable source of income, whether it be from DTA, or employment, and demonstrate an ability to budget her money.	06/11/2002	
Mother will participate in parenting classes.	06/11/2002	

Outcome: Strengthen Parenting Skills

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will regularly engage children in age-appropriate activities that will promote development.	06/11/2002	
Will respond to children’s social behaviors in a manner that encourages further development.	06/11/2002	

Outcome: Recovery from Alcohol/Drug Abuse/Misuse

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will acknowledge that he/she or partner abuses/misuses substances.	06/11/2002	
Will acknowledge that their abuse places their children at risk.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure that children are not exposed to individuals under the influence of drugs.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure a substance-free home environment for their children.	06/11/2002	
Will provide the department with a concrete relapse prevention plan.	06/11/2002	
Will provide verification to the Department of progress in treatment.	06/11/2002	
Will stop all substance abuse/misuse.	06/11/2002	

Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery

Name: Mother

Tasks	Start Date	End Date
Mother will get herself to a Detox program.	06/11/2002	
Following her stay at Detox, mother will go to a substance abuse recovery program, where she will remain until she completes the allotted time for the program.	06/11/2002	
Mother will provide the department with written documentation as to her progress in treatment. Her progress will be measured by, but is not limited to, the following: progress reports from substance abuse counselors, urine screen reports, N.A. (Narcotic's Anonymous) meeting verification, psychological/psychosocial evaluations/reports, substance abuse evaluations.	06/11/2002	
Mother will meet with SW at least once monthly.	06/11/2002	
Mother will participate in Narcotic Anonymous Meetings at least two times a week. Mother will provide the department with written documentation verifying her participation in such meetings.	06/11/2002	
Mother will provide random urine screens at her program as requested. If not in a program, will provide the Department with three urine screens a week.	06/11/2002	
Mother will participate in individual therapy and follow any recommendations made by her therapist and psychiatrist.	06/11/2002	
Mother will provide the Department with reports of any psychological evaluations, substance abuse evaluations, etc.	06/11/2002	

Outcome: Resolve Child's Need for Placement

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will arrive for visits on time.	06/11/2002	
Will attend family visits regularly.	06/11/2002	
Will bring age-appropriate snacks for visits.	06/11/2002	
Will participate in an assessment of the family's ability and resources needed to reunify.	06/11/2002	
Will perform basic child-care activities during visits (feeding, bathing, dressing, etc).	06/11/2002	
Will plan and engage child in child-appropriate activities during visits.	06/11/2002	
Will provide verification to the department of progress in treatment.	06/11/2002	

Name: Father

Outcome: Provide/Receive Basic Care

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will ensure that children have clean clothes that are age, size and weather appropriate.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure that children receive adequate nutrition.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure that home is reasonably clean and sanitary.	06/11/2002	
Will maintain predictable routines in order to structure family life.	06/11/2002	
Will provide a home that has adequate facilities for cooking, eating, sleeping and bathing.	06/11/2002	

Tasks	Start Date	End Date
Will secure stable employment and secure a source of income for a period of six months. Will demonstrate this via pay stubs, or letter from employer.	06/11/2002	
Will provide the department with verification as to his income.	06/11/2002	
Will seek permanent housing.	06/11/2002	
Will participate in parenting classes.	06/11/2002	
Will complete anger management group.	06/11/2002	

Outcome: Strengthen Parenting Skills

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will ensure that children attend all appointments and arrive on time.	06/11/2002	

Outcome: Safety/Protection of Child from Domestic Violence Indicators

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will participate in an evaluation and treatment program for batterers and follow all recommendations.	06/11/2002	

Tasks	Start Date	End Date
Will participate in a batterer's group and will stop all abuse.	06/11/2002	

Outcome: Recovery from Alcohol/Drug Abuse/Misuse

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will acknowledge that he/she or partner abuses/misuses substances.	06/11/2002	
Will acknowledge that their abuse places their children at risk.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure that children are not exposed to individuals under the influence of drugs.	06/11/2002	
Will ensure a substance-free home environment for their children.	06/11/2002	
Will provide the department with a concrete relapse prevention plan.	06/11/2002	
Will provide verification to the Department of progress in treatment.	06/11/2002	
Will maintain sobriety.	06/11/2002	

Name: Father

Tasks	Start Date	End Date
Will provide random urine screen tests as required by the Salvation Army. If not in a substance abuse recovery program, he will provide the Department with three urine screens weekly and will provide the department with written verification.	06/11/2002	
Will participate in N.A. meetings at least twice a week and will provide the department with written verification.	06/11/2002	
Will participate in individual therapy and follow any recommendations made by his therapist/psychiatrist.	06/11/2002	
Will provide the department with reports of any psychological evaluations or substance abuse evaluations performed during his stay at the Salvation Army.	06/11/2002	
Will provide the department with written documentation as to his progress in treatment. Progress will be measured by his cooperation in services which will be measured from progress reports from substance abuse counselors, urine screen reports, N.A. (Narcotic's Anonymous) meeting verification, psychological/psychosocial evaluations/reports, substance abuse evaluations.	06/11/2002	
Will meet with SW at least once monthly.	06/11/2002	

Outcome: Resolve Child's Need for Placement

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will arrive for visits on time.	06/11/2002	
Will attend family visits regularly.	06/11/2002	
Will bring age-appropriate snacks for visits.	06/11/2002	
Will participate in an assessment of the family's ability and resources needed to reunify.	06/11/2002	

Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery

Will perform basic child-care activities during visits (feeding, bathing, dressing, etc).	06/11/2002	
Will plan and engage child in child-appropriate activities during visits.	06/11/2002	
Will provide verification to the department of progress in treatment.	06/11/2002	

Tasks

Child Protective Services			
Responsible Person/Party	Start Date	End Date	Task
Social Worker	6/11/02		Social Worker will meet with mother and father at least once a month.
			SW will provide supervised visits on a monthly basis.
			SW will make necessary referrals.
			SW will maintain contact with collaterals.
			SW will monitor the family's progress towards the achievement of service plan goals.
			SW will monitor the provision of the services.
Foster Parent	6/11/02		Ensure that Michael receives regular and emergency medical and dental care.
			Maintain regular contact with social worker.
			Attend all foster care reviews and case conferences.
			Provide transportation to and from medical appointments.

Visitation Schedule

Child Name		Parent/Visitor		Supervised	
				Case Manager	
Location	Duration	Frequency	Start Date	End Date	
Area Office	1 hour	Monthly	6/26/2001		
Comments	Visits will be supervised and take place at the office. Parents are responsible for getting own transportation to and from the visit.				

Service Plan Changes/Updates

Start Date	Comment	Initiated Date
06/04/2002	Renewal Service Plan Updated	

Comments

Client **Date**

Client **Date**

Client **Date**

Social Worker **Date**

Social Worker **Date**

Service Plan Supplemental for Placement

1. Name of child being placed:
2. What is the reason for the child's placement?
3. If the child has been in placement before, indicate date(s) and type(s) of placement and attach a copy of the placement history.
4. Describe the efforts by Child Protective Services and the family to prevent placement.
5. If the placement is not with a relative or other resource selected by parents, why?
6. If the placement is not in a family or foster setting, why?
7. Is the location of the placement close enough to permit a regular plan of visitation between the child and the family? If not, explain.
8. Discuss the needs of the child that must be met in this placement setting; include physical, dental and emotional health and educational needs.

Additional comments.

Comments (Social worker and client comments may be recorded here.)

Signatures

Client Initials Date

Social Worker Initials Date

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Social Services
(Commonwealth of Massachusetts Child Protective Services Agency)**

Service Plan-Example #2

This plan is an agreement between the (name) family and the Department of Social Services (Commonwealth of Massachusetts Child Protective Services Agency) for the period of 1/10/2001 to 1/10/2002. This plan has been renewed or extended to 08/06/2003. This plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and at least once every three months.

Problem Statement: Briefly state the specific reason(s) why services are being provided to this family.

This family became known to (Commonwealth of Massachusetts Child Protective Services Agency) on when a 51A report was filed on behalf of two brothers for neglect by their mother. The report stated that the mother failed to obtain mental health services for her children. Since the department became involved, the family has had numerous Family Base Services placed in the home to stabilize the family.

Child 1 was hospitalized at the county hospital for displaying aggressive behavior and suicidal ideation. The County hospital recommended his placement in a foster home for safety reasons. The department was awarded CHINS custody, and the child was placed in Hillside Fresh Start, a 45-day assessment program. He remained in the program for a month and a half, when he was then placed in a regular foster home and then transitioned to a specialized foster home three months later. Two months later he was transitioned to another specialized foster home.

Another 51A and a 51B was supported on the mother for the physical abuse of child 2. It was reported that she came home drunk and physically assaulted child 2. A Care and Protection was fielded and the Department was temporarily awarded custody of the child. He was sent to the Orchard Home. Prior to that he was hospitalized due to his uncontrollable behavior.

The mother was arraigned in court for physically assaulting her son. She was given one-year probation and the condition of the probation was to complete a substance abuse program. She signed herself into a one-year residential substance abuse treatment program.

Goal: What is the goal for each family member?

Family Member	Goal	Start Date	End Date
Mother	Reunify Family		
Child 1 and 2	Reunify Family		

Name: Mother

Outcome: Recovery from Alcohol/Drug Abuse/Misuse

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will acknowledge that he/she or partner abuses/misuses substances.		
Will ensure a substance-free home environment for their children.		
Will stop all substance abuse/misuse.		
Will maintain sobriety.		
Will provide the department with a concrete relapse prevention plan.		
Will provide verification to the Department of progress in treatment.		
Will stop all substance abuse/misuse.		

Outcome: Assist Child from Past Harm Indicators

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will understand the impact of abuse/neglect on their children’s psycho/social development.		

Outcome: Resolve Child’s Need for Placement

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will participate in an assessment of the family’s ability and resources needed to reunify.		
Will provide verification to the department of progress in treatment.		

Tasks	Start Date	End Date
Will continue substance abuse treatment program and follow all treatment program rules.		
Will have positive interactions with her children during visits.		
Will terminate visits in a positive and supportive manner.		
Will maintain sobriety.		
Will meet with worker on a monthly basis.		

Name: Child 1 and Child 2

Outcome: Improve Parent/Child Relationship

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will communicate and discuss issues with their parent in a calm and respectful manner.		
Will express anger verbally and not with aggressive behavior.		

Outcome: Improve Adolescent Social and Adjustment/Functioning Indicators

Change Indicators	Start Date	End Date
Will accept reasonable consequences and restrictions when the rules are broken.		
Will attend regular medical appointments.		
Will attend school daily and complete homework assignments.		
Will complete educational tasks expected while at school.		
Will seek help when it is needed.		

Tasks	Start Date	End Date
Will follow all the rules while in placement.		
Will attend therapy on a regular basis.		
Will meet with SW on a monthly basis or as needed and cooperate with recommendations made.		
Will cooperate with taking meds as prescribed.		
Will cooperate with visitation plan as arranged with SW.		
Will attend school regularly and complete all educational tasks.		

Tasks

Child Protective Services Agency			
Responsible Person/Party	Start Date	End Date	Task
Social Worker			Social Worker will meet at least once a month.
			SW will make necessary referrals.
			SW will maintain contact with collaterals.
Foster Parent/Orchard Home and School			<p>Ensure that children's needs are met including shelter, food and clothing...</p> <p>Will make sure children attend school, medical, dental and therapy appointments.</p> <p>Attend foster care reviews and case conferences.</p> <p>Will maintain regular contact with parents and facilitate family visitation.</p> <p>Will inform the department of any concerns about the case.</p>

Visitation Schedule

Child Name		Parent/Visitor		Supervised	
				Case Manager	
Location	Duration	Frequency	Start Date	End Date	
Area Office	2 hours	Twice a month			
Comments	While on visits with her children, mother will have positive interactions with her children and will terminate visits with them in a positive and supportive manner.				

Service Plan Changes/Updates

Start Date	Comment	Initiated Date
	Renewal Service Plan Updated	

Comments

Client **Date**

Client **Date**

Client **Date**

Social Worker **Date**

Social Worker **Date**

Service Plan Supplemental for Placement

1. Name of child being placed:
2. What is the reason for the child’s placement?
3. If the child has been in placement before, indicate date(s) and type(s) of placement and attach a copy of the placement history.
4. Describe the efforts by Child Protective Services and the family to prevent placement.
5. If the placement is not with a relative or other resource selected by parents, why?
6. If the placement is not in a family or foster setting, why?
7. Is the location of the placement close enough to permit a regular plan of visitation between the child and the family? If not, explain.
8. Discuss the needs of the child that must be met in this placement setting; include physical, dental and emotional health and educational needs.

Additional Comments

Comments (Social worker and client comments may be recorded here.)

Signatures

Client Initials Date

Social Worker Initials Date

Session 7: Transitioning from Their Home to My Home



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 6	15 minutes
Group Discussion: Various Child Custody Situations	15 minutes
Role-Play Preparation	15 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Role-Play Presentations	45 minutes
Group Discussion: Reactions to Role-Plays	20 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 7 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is for participants to understand how to effectively transition one's child (ren) from the caretaker's home to the participant's home.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Understand different child custody situations.
- Prepare themselves and their child for a smooth transition.
- Understand how the transition impacts all before, during and after the transition.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategies used to facilitate this session are:

- Group Discussion
- Role-Play

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)

Participant Activities:

Role-Play 1: *Child Visitation Scenario*

Role-Play 2: *Grandma/Mom Power Struggle*

Role-Play 3: *Meeting with Foster-Care Providers*

Role-Play 4: *Separation-Anxiety Situations*

Welcome (15 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 6 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session for anyone who is new to the group and/or to refresh participant's memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Understand different child custody situations.
- Prepare themselves and their child for a smooth transition.
- Understand how the transition impacts all before, during and after the transition.

**Group Discussion: Various Child Custody Situations
(15 minutes)**

Explain different child custody situations:

- Children in foster placement.
- Children in open/close adoption.
- Children living with family members/friends.
- Women who may have children in several different situations.

Review questions, concerns, comments and fears participants may have with the situation.

**Role-Play Preparation
(15 minutes)**

Divide the participants into three or four small groups.

Distribute role-play scenarios 1, 2, 3, and 4, one to each group.

Ask participants to think of a role-play for the scenario they were given.

Tell participants to take the next 15 minutes to prepare the role-play (15 minutes).

Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery

(40 minutes)

Role-Play 1: Child visitation scenario:

Your child is ignoring you, the mother. S/he is crying and treats you like a stranger -- this could take place in a residential, jail, Child Protective Service Agency office, park setting, or anywhere. How do you handle this with your child?

Role-Play 2: Grandma/Mom Power Struggle

You are at your Mother's house, visiting your child. Your Mom has custody. Grandma is making all the decisions and undermines you in front of your child. How do you handle this with your mother?

Role-Play 3: Meeting with Foster-Care Providers

You are meeting with your child's foster-care provider for a review. You are angry because they are late and have been late consistently with you over the past few months. How do you conduct yourself in the review?

Role-Play 4: Separation Anxiety

You have been with your child the entire weekend. It's time to say good-bye. Your child keeps crying and don't want to leave, you are trying to give him comfort. How do you best end this and deal with the sadness of separating again from your children and family.



10 Minute Break

Group Discussion: Reactions to Role-Plays (20 minutes)

Discuss and debrief the role-plays by asking the following questions:

Can you relate to the scenarios?

Do you think you responded effectively to the role-play you were given?

How did it feel observing the role-plays?

Was this too difficult?

Was it helpful?

What positive things did you learn?

What is a transition? How do you think transitions affect children?

How do transitions affect grandparents, other providers and family members?

How do you deal with separations?



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Ask participants to state one thing new that they learned during this session.

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with the affirmation.

Thank participants for attending.

Session 8: Understanding Various Situations That May Arise When I Reunite With My Child (ren)



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 7	15 minutes
The Child Who Wets the Bed – Role-Play Group Discussion	30 minutes
The Child Who Is Acting Out – Role-Play Group Discussion Break	30 minutes 10 Minutes
Closing Activity: Illustrate How You Can Be A Nurturing Parent	35 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 8 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is for participants to understand situations that can present themselves when a child is reunited with her/his mother and moves from foster care or other type of placement to the participant’s home.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Understand different behaviors children may have during a transition.
- Determine how to effectively respond to the behaviors.
- Determine how to nurture children who are in a difficult transition.
- Become familiar with support systems available to families during a transition.

Learning Strategy: The learning strategy used to facilitate this session is:

- Group Discussion

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers
- Closing Activity materials: paper, markers, paint, anything to draw an illustration of how a participant can be a nurturing parent to her child (ren).

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)

Participant Activities:

Handout 1: *Bedwetting/Role-Play*

Handout 2: *Child Who Is Acting Out/Role-Play*

Note on Start Time: Assume that some participants will arrive 10 minutes late, particularly if they are dropping off children at daycare or need to depend on a taxi or bus for transportation. Try to begin the session with at least two-thirds of the group assembled.

Welcome (15 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 7 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session for anyone who is new to the group and/or to refresh participants' memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Understand different behaviors children may have during a transition.
- Determine how to effectively respond to the behaviors.
- Determine how to nurture children who are in a difficult transition.
- Become familiar with support systems available to families during a transition.



**Group Discussion: The Child Who Wets the Bed/Role-Play
(30 minutes)
Refer to Handout 1**

**Group Discussion: Child Who Is Acting Out/Role-Play
(30 minutes)
Refer to Handout 2**

10 Minute Break



Art Activity (35 minutes)

Have group members create a collage that shows how they nurture their child. Example: a picture of you and your child spending time together at the park. Note to Facilitator: Going to my child's basketball game, playing board games, coloring.



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Ask participants to state one new thing that they learned at this session.

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with the affirmation.

Thank participants for attending.

Handout 1: Child Who Wets the Bed Role-Play 1

Role Play 1: Your child is living with you in a residential treatment facility. Your child has been wetting the bed. It's been happening frequently. This was not happening before, when you lived outside the treatment facility. Your peers and staff are aware of the issue. How do you handle the situation?

Audience Observations:

<i>Negative Feelings</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

<i>Positive Feelings</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

Handout 2: Child Who Is Acting Out Role-Play 2

Role Play 2: You have a visit with your child at the Child Protective Services agency’s office. You are being monitored through a two-way mirror by your assigned social worker. Your child is acting out, hitting you and being destructive. He/she is throwing toys and running around. You try to play with him/her but your child will not sit still to play any of the games. How do you handle this?

Audience Observations:

<i>Negative Feelings</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

<i>Positive Feelings</i>	<i>Do's</i>	<i>Don'ts</i>	<i>Example</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			

Session 9: Improving My Parenting Skills



Session Agenda and Time Frames

Welcome Group Check-In Summary of Session 8	15 minutes
Group Discussion: Getting Reunited With Your Child (ren)	30 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Group Activity: Ways I Can Use To Show Empathy and Compassion To My Child (ren)	30 minutes
Group Discussion: Discussion on Keys to Successful Parenting	35 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 9 Overview

Session Goals: The goal for this session is to highlight for participants the importance of empathy and compassion in parenting.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Gain skills to nurture and provide emotional support to their children during the reunification process.
- Understand how to effectively parent when their children are in distress or having a difficult time.
- Understand the importance of being empathetic and compassionate with their child (ren).

Learning Strategy: The learning strategy used to facilitate this session is:

- Group Discussion

Training Materials: The training materials needed for this session are:

- Flipchart
- Markers
- Handouts from suggested website.

Pre-Prepared Flipcharts: Prepare the following flipcharts in advance of this session:

- Objectives
- Group Guidelines (from first session)

Participant Activities:

Distribute Handout: *Keys to Successful Parenting (Not Included)*

Note on Start Time: Assume that some participants will arrive 10 minutes late, particularly if they are dropping off children at daycare or need to depend on a taxi or bus for transportation. Try to begin the session with at least two-thirds of the group assembled before starting the session.

Welcome (15 minutes)

As participants enter the room:

- **Welcome** each participant.
- **Ask** participants to sign the attendance sheet.
- **Ask** participants to place their name card in front of them.
- **Ask** participants if they have any thoughts from Session 8 that they would like to share.
- **Provide** a short summary of the previous session to refresh participants' memories.



Review Objectives

Review objectives with participants. This flipchart should be prepared before the session.

Objectives: Upon completion of this session, participants will:

- Gain skills to nurture and provide emotional support to their children during the reunification process.
- Understand how to effectively parent when their children are in distress or having a difficult time.
- Understand the importance of being empathetic and compassionate with their child (ren) even when rejected by the child.



Group Discussion: Getting Reunited With Your Child (ren) (30 minutes)

Ask participants the following questions and conduct a group discussion. You may want to record participants responses on a flipchart to refer to later in the session.

- What's your greatest fear about getting reunited with your child (ren) again?
- Are you excited about getting reunited with your children?
- How do you think is going to feel to parent your children while in a treatment program?
- What adjustments do you think you will have to make?
- Do you have feelings of guilt or shame?
- Are there people supporting you through this reunification process? Who are they?



10 Minute Break

Group Activity: Ways I Can Use To Show Empathy and Compassion To My Child (ren) (30 minutes)

Use two pieces of flipchart paper.

Label one "Empathy" and the other "Compassion."

Create two columns under the terms on each flipchart. At the top of one column write "Do's" and at the top of the other write "Dont's".

Ask participants to name actions or things they could do to show empathy to their child (ren) and record responses on the flip chart. Ask participants to name actions or things they should not to in trying to show empathy to their child (ren).

Do the same with the word Compassion.

Discuss as a group the various responses and what they can learn from each other experiences

Group Activity: Keys to Successful Parenting Discussion (30 minutes)

Distribute Handout: *Keys to Successful Parenting* developed and copyrighted by the Family Resource. We suggest the use of this handout that provides information on methods that parents can use to effectively parent their children. This handout and other relevant parenting information can be found at: WWW.FamilyResource.com.

Read each “key” aloud and discuss.



Close the Session (5 minutes)

Ask participants to state one new thing that they learned at this session.

Review objectives to ensure that they were met.

Close with the affirmation.

Ask participants to choose one parenting skill that they learned about throughout the ten-week session and be prepared to present their thoughts at graduation.

Thank participants for attending.

Session 10: Summary of Sessions, Graduation and Celebration



Session Agenda and Time frames

Welcome	5 minutes
Activity 1: My Wish for My Family's Future Is.	55 minutes
Distribution of Certificates	15 minutes
Lunch, Good Wishes and Session Closure	45 minutes
Average time to complete this session	2 hours



Session 10 Overview

Session Goal: The goal for this session is for participants to articulate how they benefit from the information they received throughout the ten-week group.

Group Discussion My Wish for My Family's Future is. (55 minutes)

Group discussion questions:

Think about the way you were raised: What was your family unit environment like? What experiences did you have growing up that shaped your parenting style? What lessons did you learn about parenting?

What have you learned in the ten-week session that impacted you the most in regards to the reunification with your children? How do you plan to incorporate what you learned into your parenting practices?.

Distribution of Certificates (10 minutes)

Distribute certificates.

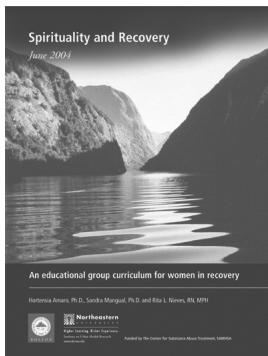
CELEBRATION!! Group Lunch and Good Wishes (60 minutes)

List of Educational Curricula for Women in Recovery

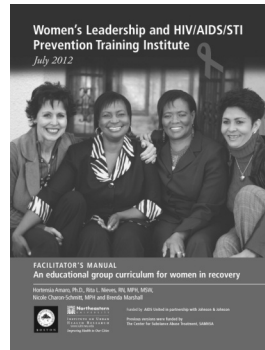
developed by the

Bureau of Addictions Services • *Boston Public Health Commission*

Institute on Urban Health Research • Northeastern University



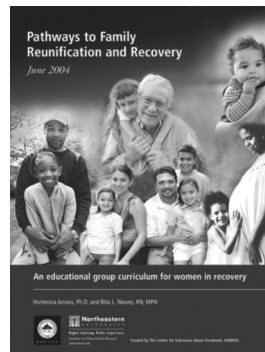
Spirituality and Recovery
A 6-session educational curriculum that teaches participants how to integrate spiritual resources in the context of their substance abuse treatment.
(Also available in Spanish)



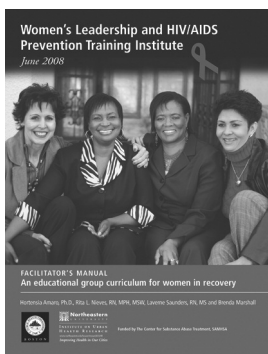
Women's Leadership and HIV/AIDS/STI Prevention Training Institute, 2012 Version
Women's Leadership and HIV Prevention Training Institute is a five-day empowerment-based leadership training program designed to reduce risky sexual behavior among women with co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders.



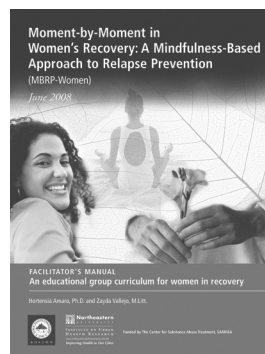
Women's Leadership Training Institute, 2004 version
A 3-session curriculum designed by women in recovery, for women in recovery. The Institute introduces essential leadership concepts to women so that they can use their own experiences and voices to improve services for themselves and their families.
(Also available in Spanish)



Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery
A 10-week educational curriculum that focuses on the impact of substance abuse on parenting, family reunification and self-care. The curriculum engages participants in learning about child protective services and advocating effectively on their own behalf to reach a positive reunification outcome.
(Also available in Spanish)

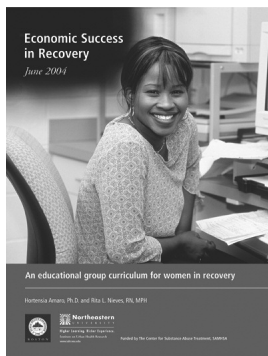


Women's Leadership and HIV/AIDS Prevention Training Institute, 2008 version
A 5-session educational curriculum that teaches women how to become leaders and learn to speak up on behalf of themselves and other women in recovery, and prevent transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

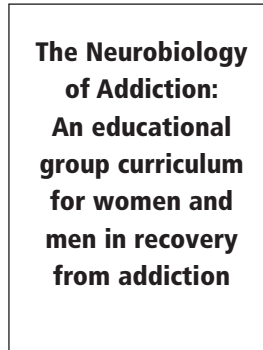


Moment-by-Moment in Women's Recovery: A Mindfulness-Based Approach to Relapse Prevention
A 9-session mindfulness based approach to relapse prevention. This group helps women to learn positive coping approaches to reduce stress and relapse using awareness about bodily sensations, emotions and thoughts.
(Also available in Spanish)

List of Educational Curricula for Women in Recovery, continued

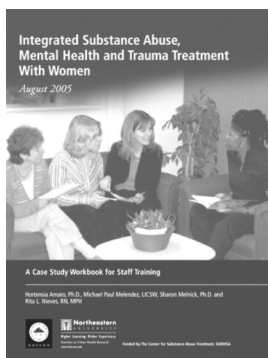


Economic Success in Recovery
An 8 session educational curriculum designed to assist women in (1) examining how money management is related to the recovery process, (2) developing effective money management skills and (3) identifying and planning educational, vocational, and job training opportunities and objectives.
(Also available in Spanish)



The Neurobiology of Addiction: An educational group curriculum for women and men in recovery from addiction

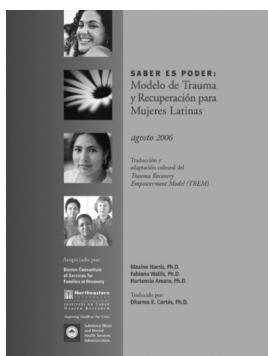
A 5-session interactive curriculum that helps clients gain an understanding of the neurobiology of addiction, such as how substance use impacts brain function, and the biological aspects of craving and relapse. The curriculum presents basic scientific information in ways that relate to client experiences with drug addiction and recovery.



Integrated Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Trauma Treatment With Women
A case study workbook for staff training.



Entre Líneas: Un diálogo cultural sobre aquello que no se ve a simple vista, ni se comenta en la cultura latina.
A 13-session educational curriculum designed to assist women in (1) celebrating their cultural identity in the context of their substance abuse treatment and (2) examining traditions, values and other elements of their culture and their impact in their recovery process.



Saber es Poder (Cultural adaptation and Spanish translation of The Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model)
A 26-week trauma recovery group for women that focuses on empowerment, trauma recovery, physical boundaries, intimacy and trust, compulsive behaviors, blame and forgiveness and personal healing. Participants gain skills that help them begin to heal their trauma in a healthy way.

ORDER FORM

Title	Price	Quantity	Subtotal
Spirituality and Recovery	\$20		
Espiritualidad y Recuperacion (Spanish version of Spirituality and Recovery)	\$20		
Women's Leadership Training Institute, 2004 version	\$20		
Instituto de Entrenamiento para mujeres lideres en recuperacion (Spanish version of Women's Leadership Training Institute)	\$20		
Women's Leadership and HIV/AIDS Prevention Training Institute, 2008 version	\$20		
Women's Leadership and HIV/AIDS/STI Prevention Training Institute, 2012 Version	\$20		
Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery	\$20		
Caminos hacia la reunificacion familiar y la recuperacion (Spanish version of Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery)	\$20		
Moment-by-Moment in Women's Recovery: A Mindfulness-Based Approach to Relapse Prevention	\$40		
Momento-a-Momento en la Recuperación – (Spanish version of Moment-by-Moment in Women's Recovery: A Mindfulness-Based Approach to Relapse Prevention)	\$40		
Economic Success in Recovery	\$20		
Exito con mi dinero y mi recuperacion – (Spanish version of Economic Success in Recovery)	\$20		
Integrated Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Trauma Treatment With Women	\$20		
Saber es Poder (Cultural adaptation and Spanish translation of The Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model)	\$40		
The Neurobiology of Addiction: An educational group curriculum for women and men in recovery from addiction	\$20		
Entre Líneas: Un diálogo cultural sobre aquello que no se ve a simple vista, ni se comenta en la cultura latina.	\$20		

Please make check payable to **Women and Families Division, Boston Public Health Commission**. Send order form to:

TOTAL \$ _____

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Educational curricula for women in recovery developed by the
Boston Consortium of Services for Families in Recovery:

- **Women's Leadership Training Institute**
- **Economic Success in Recovery**
- **Pathways to Family Reunification and Recovery**
- **Spirituality and Recovery**
(all these titles are available in English and Spanish)

Additional educational materials:

- **Interdisciplinary Resource Team: Strategy for Integrated Substance Abuse Treatment**
(in English)
- **Fact Sheet for Providers on: Women Affected by Trauma, Addiction and Mental Illness**
(in English)
- **Fact Sheet for Consumers on: Abuse, Alcohol/Drugs, and Emotional Problems in Women's Lives**
(available in English and Spanish)

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