


Securing Their Future:  
Treating Young Adults Aged  
18-25 with Substance Use  
Disorders

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Gabriella Guerra, Magellan Health Services  
Elaine Groppenbacher, Piurek & Associates

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Session Overview

- Young Adult Development
- Implications for Assessment and Treatment
- Transition to Independence = A Framework for Intervention
- Effective Substance Abuse Treatment Strategies

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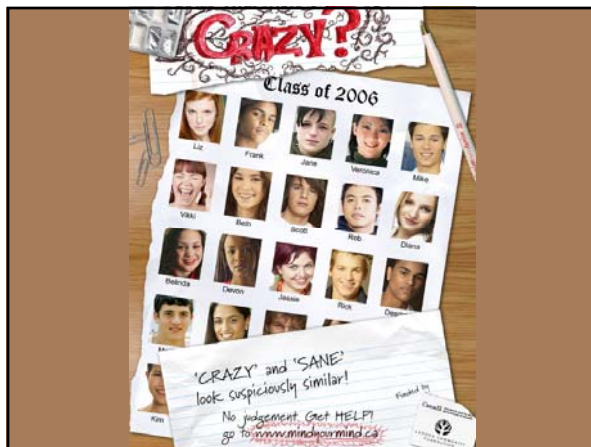
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Thinking of Two Young Adults

- 1) A young adult you have the utmost confidence, respect, and trust of—one who brings a smile to your face
- 2) A young adult for whom you “worry”, have little respect, confidence, or trust—one for whom you have great concerns

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Essential Factors to Consider

- Relationships
- Regulation
- Mastery

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Young Adult Development

Drawn from  
*Successful Young Adult Development, Executive Summary*  
Peter L. Benson and Peter C. Scales, Search Institute  
David J. Hawkins, Sabrina Oesterle, and Karl G. Hill  
Social Development Research Group, University of Washington, Dec 2004  
&  
MIT Young Adult Development Project  
Rae Simpson, PhD  
[www.hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/youngadult/index.html](http://www.hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/youngadult/index.html)

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Changes: Overview

- Dramatic change
- Three categories
  - Adolescence
  - Young adulthood
  - Later adulthood
- The “Mental Visor”
- An emerging field

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Adolescence

- Abstract thinking
- Right/wrong framework
- Instrumental relationships
- Intensity of emotion
- Sensation seeking

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Young Adulthood

- More complex thinking
- Appreciation for diverse views
- Mutuality in relationships
- Emotional regulation
- Risk-taking and decision-making
- Caveats

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Later Adulthood

- New levels of abstract analysis
- More complex problem-solving
- Enhanced leadership capacity
- Greater capacity for self-evaluation
- Internal basis for commitments

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Brain Changes in Young Adulthood

- Setting the stage: Adolescence
- Changes in young adulthood
  - Prefrontal cortex
  - Connections among regions
  - “Executive suite”
- 20s and beyond

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Individual Differences

- Age, education, gender
- Abuse, neglect, trauma
- Race, ethnicity, sexual identity
- Temperament
- Parenting style

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Individual Differences, continued

- Illness
- Disabilities
- Substance abuse
- Culture
- Getting stuck

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Ways to Help

Overview

- Blending support and challenge
- Tiers of Influence
  - Provide conditions for optimal functioning
  - Encourage steps toward developmental milestones
  - Encourage thinking of development as “life-long process”

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Ways to Help

Understanding Developmental Range

- “Hot” and “cold” cognition
- Sleep deprivation
- Surroundings
- Practice
- Support

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Ways to Help 

Providing Challenge

- Interactions with teachers and other adults
- Diversity of peers
- Interdisciplinary & integrative approach to education
- Out of classroom experiences
- Instruction in cognitive skills

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Ways to Help 

Providing Support

- Scaffolding
- Matching level of challenge with ability
- Balance of structure and flexibility
- Monitoring
- Safety Net
- Tincture of time

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Transition to Independence  
(TIP)

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A Framework for Intervention

Drawn from  
Transition to Independence Process (TIP) System: TIP Definition and Guidelines  
By Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark, PhD  
National Center on Youth Transition for Behavioral health  
TIP Web site = <http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu>      NCYT Website = <http://ncyt.fmhi.usf.edu>

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TIP Guidelines

- Engage through relationship development
- Use person-centered planning
- Focus on their future
- Tailor services and supports

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TIP Guidelines

- Build on strengths to help pursue goals
- Acknowledge and develop personal choice and social responsibility
- Ensure a safety net of support

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TIP Guidelines

- Enhance competencies that build greater self-sufficiency and confidence
- Maintain an outcome focus
- Involve young people in practice, program and community levels

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Other TIP Key Components

- Facilitate transition
- Promote independence
- Focus on interdependence
- Understand and build self-determination skills

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Strategies

Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA)

- Family Relations
- Skills Training
- Vocational
- Social Networks
- Incentives

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Strategies

Role of Family and Peers

- Contributing Factors
- Family Education
- Reinforcing Behaviors
- Peer Engagement

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Strategies 

Gender Specific

- Advantages
- Trauma and Abuse
- Self-identity

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Strategies 

Cultural Considerations

- Norms, values and health beliefs
- Level of acculturation
- Sexual Identity

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Strategies 

Personnel Training

- Stages of Cognitive and Emotional Development
- Developmental tasks
- Engagement
- Family
- Resources for Healthy Lifestyles

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Resources

- Transition to Independence Process System <http://tip.fmhi.isf.edu>
- Youth Voices <http://cyberisle.org>
- Mind Your Mind <http://mindyourmind.ca>
- National Center for Youth Transition <http://ncyt.fmhi.usf.edu>

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**CRAZY** just like you

Mental illness is not ugly, dirty, smelly, stupid, violent or psycho. It could happen to anyone. It does. It could happen to you.

reach out. get help. give help.  
[mindyourmind.ca](http://mindyourmind.ca)

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"My recovery, like many others, has been likened to climbing a flight of stairs, which we all have to do, one step at a time."

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**A World Without Stigma Would Be...**



*A world of peace and equality where positive energy and happiness would be in abundance.*

*A world where acceptance and helping comes naturally.*

*A world where everyone is included, where differences are not boundaries.*

*A world of unity and the importance of being unique.*

The artists (Adam Davidson, Claire Brascoupé, Alan Hay, Sébastien Lemire-Mulato, Angeliqua Pauzé) wrote the above poem as a companion piece to this mural.

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