



WWEN Connection

Wisconsin Women's Education Network

on Addiction, Recovery & Prevention



*Small change,
small wonders—
these are the
currency of my
endurance and
ultimately of my life*
—Barbara Kinsolver

Putting a Face to Recovery . . .

Water pipes in my house are busted, there is no heat, the temperature has fallen far below zero. Electricity has been off for months. I climb into bed fully clothed under five heavy blankets, praying that I don't freeze to death. I told myself I could not continue to live like this. I had to find a way out. Nothing in my young life had foretold me that this would have happened to me—sucking all of the life out of me. It is called addiction, and crack is my drug of choice. If I don't find a way to end my obsession, to stop using crack, I am going to die.

Hi, my name is Yasmin, and I am an addict. Being able to accept that declaration helped save my life. I knew I had to find a way to quit using drugs and make a decision that I wanted to become drug free and live.

I didn't think there was anything that stood out in my life to make me become an addict until I took a look back. I was born on the Southside of Chicago, the seventh child of nine. Eight children are my mother's and father's together. I have a sister fathered by a different man, a man who came into our home and literally destroyed it. It was difficult for me to understand then how this man was able to hurt me. As a young girl, the monster decided to come into my room time and time again while the rest of the family slept. I grew up not trusting anyone.

I was a pretty good student. It wasn't until the 11th grade when I began to cut class and experiment with various drugs that things changed. I became the unwed mother of a son, James. After his birth, my experimentation with drugs became a full-fledged addiction. I attempted to become drug free many times by enrolling into various drug rehabilitation facilities, each time without success, returning to the streets and to my drug of choice.

I prayed for help during that freezing cold winter night, giving up the chase for more money and more drugs. A phone call from my son James was that answer to my prayer. He was coming to Chicago with his wife and children and they were going to take me back to Madison. God had sent my son to deliver me from the dregs of my addiction and move me to a place where I could make a new beginning. After a week in Madison, I entered a residential treatment facility where I began my recovery journey.

During my six weeks at the treatment facility, I became educated about the effects that my crack and alcohol addiction had on my brain and my body. Having this knowledge helped me to reinforce not wanting to use drugs ever again. I started to attend 12-step meetings and met a woman there who I asked to become my sponsor. I have maintained my recovery through hard work and commitment.

That was 2.5 years ago. Since then, I have obtained my GED and completed an educational curriculum called The Odyssey Project giving me six UW-Madison credits. I'm gainfully employed and have started working on my Liberal Arts Transfer degree. I am also attending Minority Counselor's Training Institute (MCTI) to become a Substance Abuse Counselor. My goal is to complete a Bachelor's Program in Social Work (if not a Master's) and see if I can inspire women whose lives are similar to mine to find hope and heal themselves of their addictions.



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New Native American Center to Strengthen Substance Abuse Prevention Efforts

December 3, 2007

Announcement

From:

SAMHSA Press Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
1 Choke Cherry Road, Rockville, MD 20857

Tel: 240-276-2130

www.samhsa.gov

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) announced its financial and technical sponsorship of the Native American Center for Excellence, Prevention Technical Assistance Resource Center -- a first-of-its-kind national Native American-run project to promote effective substance abuse prevention programs in Native American communities throughout the United States. Once it is established, the center's data base will be accessible through SAMHSA's Web site.

"This program will further empower tribal communities and foster cooperation and scientific innovation among Native American substance abuse prevention and mental health service providers," said SAMHSA Administrator Terry Cline, Ph.D.

The Programs of Regional and National Significance contract supporting the center is funded at \$1 million for one year and provides two additional option years (contingent on the availability of funds).

The center will serve as the repository for the best available information on effective services and strategies for preventing substance abuse and related disorders in Native American populations. It will also identify innovative and promising programs and practices that prevent substance abuse disorders and related problems among Native Americans. The center will provide these programs with technical support and additional opportunities for demonstrating their efficacy.

The Native American Center for Excellence will also work with five tribal grantees currently implementing SAMHSA's strategic substance abuse prevention framework. These grantees include the Cook Inlet Tribe Council, Inc. of Anchorage, Alaska; The Native American Health Center, Inc. of Oakland Calif.; the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa of Peshawbetown, Mich.; the Cherokee Nation of Tallequah, Okla.; and the Great Lakes Intertribal Council, Inc. of Lac du Flambeau, Wisc.



<http://www.jointogether.org/news/yourturn/announcements/2007/new-native-american-center.html>



Wisconsin in the Spotlight Again: NASADAD creates the Women's Services Network

By Sue Gadacz, Women's AODA Treatment Coordinator

The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) announced the creation of the national Women's Services Network (WSN) in September that will guide policy and practice in the delivery of women-specific alcohol and other drug treatment. The Women's Services Network (WSN) is a component of NASADAD and the National Treatment Network (NTN). The WSN represents State Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Agency Women's Treatment Coordinators. The goal of this organization is dedicated to the development and promotion of evidence-based practice that addresses the unique alcohol and other drug prevention, treatment and recovery service needs of women and their families throughout their life span.

During the NASADAD annual meeting in June 2007 in Burlington, Vermont, all of the women's treatment coordinators representing the fifty states were there to develop the mission and elect officers to lead the WSN. Wisconsin's Women's Treatment Coordinator, Sue Gadacz, was elected President of the WSN. Other elected officers are:

- Cassandra Price, Vice President – Georgia
- Karen Mooney, Secretary – Colorado
- Sarah Harkless, Treasurer – Alabama

The initial goal of the Women's Services Network is to develop national treatment standards for the care of women and their children receiving treatment for Substance Use Disorders (SUD). These standards will be published by June 2008. The WSN also created subcommittees to address the SUD needs of women in the criminal justice system and revisit the National Outcome Measures (NOMs) for gender sensitivity and applicability for women and their children.

"I feel very fortunate and quite humbled to be elected by my peers across the country. This is such an opportunity for women's treatment that is long overdue," Gadacz said. Karen Mooney, stated that, "I wanted to have a role in shaping what the Women's Services Network was going to be; this is something I definitely wanted to be part of." Cassandra Price indicated, "This is a chance to define and have a vision of what women's treatment will look like. I definitely wanted to be part of the WSN." Sarah Harkless said, "It's exciting to be a voice for the women and children that we serve across the county; we can make a difference."

The officers are seen at a recent Leadership Development training sponsored by the Prairielands Addiction Technology Transfer Center. Look for further updates in the *WWEN Newsletter* on the progress of the WSN.



Seated from left to right:

Sarah Harkless, Karen Mooney,
Sue Gadacz, Cassandra Price

Focus on Treatment

National Conference on
 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD):
*A Time for Change—Evidence-Based Strategies
 for Today, Tomorrow and Beyond*



April 3-4, 2008

St. Mary's Hospital, Madison, WI

This two-day national conference will offer keynote addresses, breakout sessions, poster presentations, and exhibits sharing state-of-the-art information and strategies for providers, families, and communities affected by FASD. Space is limited.

For a complete brochure detailing speakers and pricing, please contact: Kristi Obmascher
 healthy.choices@fammed.wisc.edu
 1-800-752-3157

Keynote and Plenary Speakers

- Eugene Hoyme, MD
- Julie Kable, PhD
- Rizwan Shah, MD
- Louise Floyd, RN, DSN
- Norma Finkelstein, PhD
- Kathy Mitchell
- Jacqueline Bertrand, PhD
- Robin LaDue, PhD

Save the Dates



National Conference on
 Boys & Girls at Risk:
the emerging science of gender differences

July 21 & 22, 2008

The Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club
 Madison, WI

The goal of this cutting-edge conference will present the latest information on adolescent brain development and implications for education and treatment of adolescents with substance abuse and co-occurring disorders. It will also highlight the evidence for sex-based brain differences of male and female adolescents and will explore models for learning and treatment of adolescents that are gender specific.

For more information on the conference or exhibiting contact: Mary Unmuth
 E-mail—mjunmuth@wisc.edu
 Telephone—608-263-9732