Improving Recovery and Family Reunification Outcomes for Substance-Involved Parents in the Illinois Child Welfare System



Rodney C. Walker, MDiv, DMin; Alicia Osborne, MA, CRC, LCPC; Joe Jackson, MA, LPC

In 1999, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) sought and received a Title IV-E child welfare waiver by the federal government, allowing the use of federal funding in support of innovative approaches.

Central to this approach was the use of immediate and intensive case management - via Recovery Coaches for parents who had lost custody of their children due to parental substance use disorders.

The Recovery Coach Program, now the Family Recovery and Reunification Program, launched as a demonstration program with a goal to reunify families safely and more quickly, providing a drug-free home for their children, and improving the overall long-term prospects for the family.

Parents Meeting Diagnostic Criteria (abuse or dependence) 2001 to 2016

Program Goal

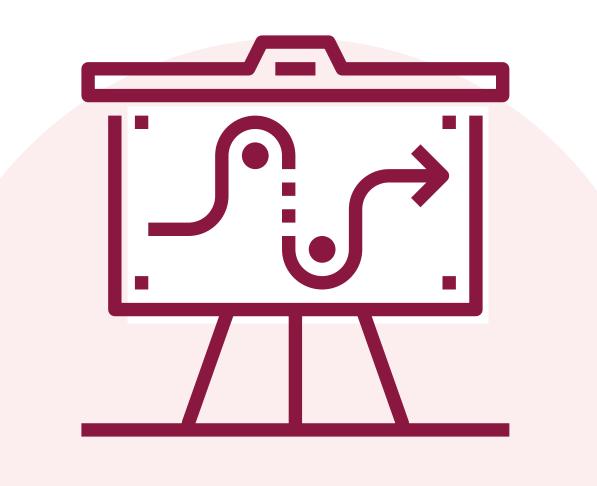
Improve family reunification and other long-term outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system by actively addressing birth parents' substance use disorders, using proactive engagement to support substance use recovery and concurrent permanency planning.

Recovery Coach Services

Couple intensive case management with relentless outreach to engage families in services and keep them engaged. Work closely with parents as they learn to live in recovery and re-learn how to parent.



Rapid and thorough assessments



Tailored recovery plans that match specific services to specific needs



Referrals to service providers + follow-up

Don't Give Up on Clients





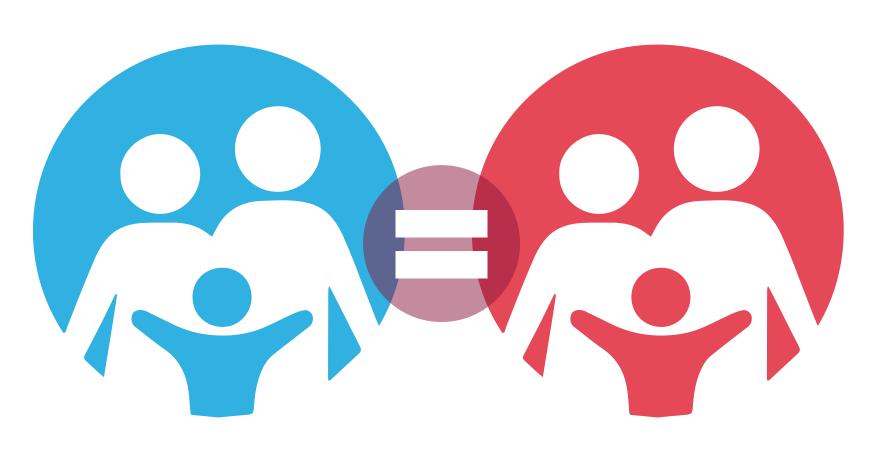
Intensive case management...

...significantly improved the likelihood of achieving reunification within 3 years.



...reduced the average time to reunification by approx. 5 months.

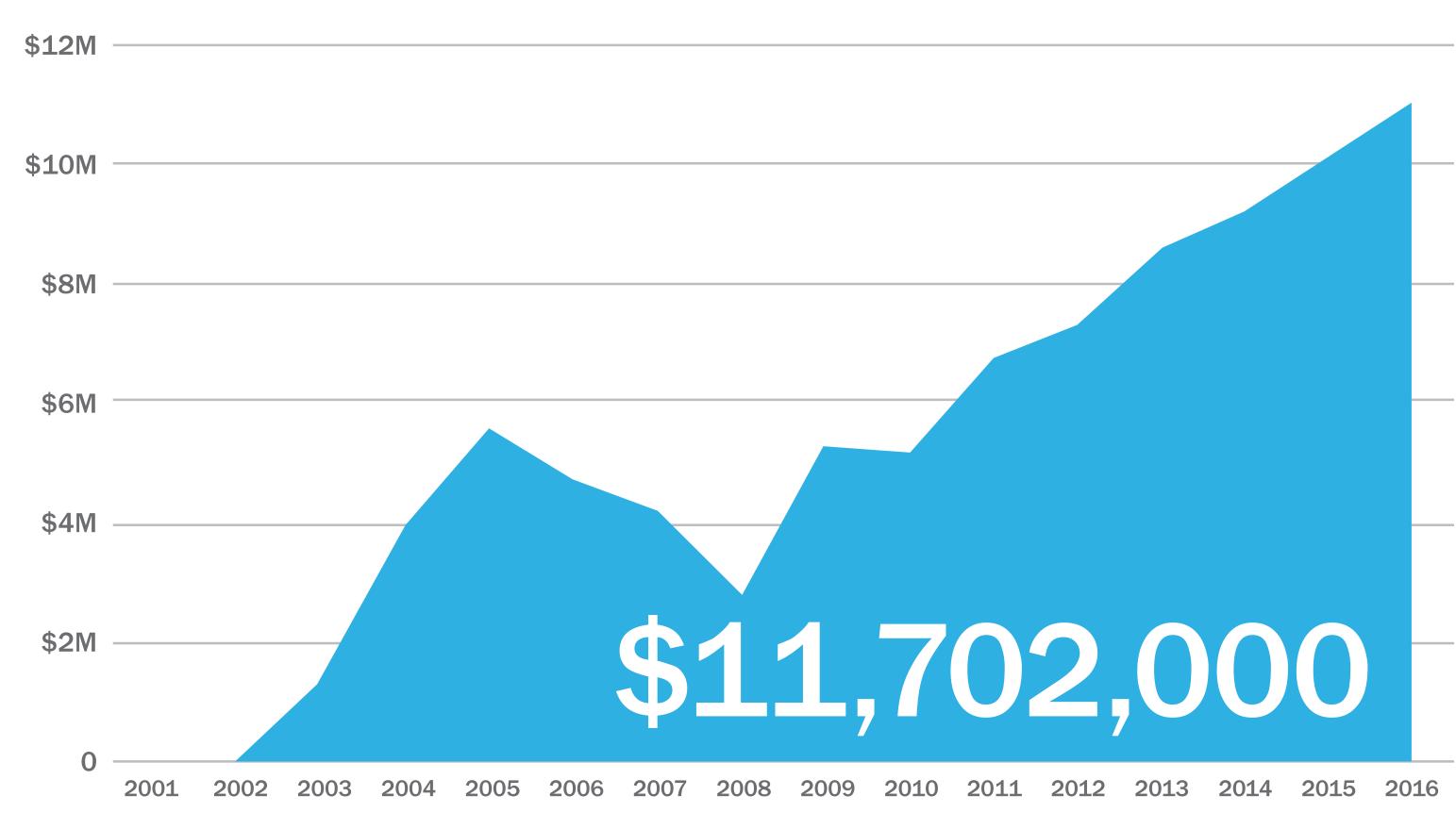




The program eliminated racial disparities in family reunification that persisted in the control group.



Improvements in reunification were limited to families that were both quickly assessed and connected with services via case management.



Cost savings are significant over time

Savings are realized through (1) higher rates and more timely reunification, (2) lower rates of re-entry, and (3) lower rates of subsequent maltreatment.

CITATIONS

J.A. Douglas-Siegel, J.P. Ryan. Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment 45 (2013) 381–387 J.P. Ryan, B.E. Perron, A. Moore, B.G. Victor, K. Park. Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment 77 (2017) 178-184 J.P. Ryan, B.G. Victor, A. Moore, O. Mowbray, B.E. Perron. Children and Youth Services Review 70 (2016) 357-363

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700 S. Clinton St. Chicago IL 60607 855-827-2444 • tasc.org