



# Supporting Women & Families –DMHAS Women's Services

## BHP Adult Quality, Access & Policy Committee

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Office of the Commissioner

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# Collaborations

- Framework rooted in working in partnership with other state agencies, treatment providers, and community organizations
- Key Partnerships
  - Persons in Recovery
  - Department of Children and Families
  - Department of Public Health
  - Department of Social Services
  - Office of Early Childhood
  - Office of Child Advocate
  - CT Judicial Branch
  - University of Connecticut
  - Connecticut Hospital Association
  - Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV)
  - Planned Parenthood
  - Connecticut Women's Consortium





# Evolution of Services

- DMHAS Women's Services has grown over the past 5 years to enhance the resources available to better reflect the needs of women and girls in CT
  - Diverse team guided by Masters level CT licensed clinical and public health staff
  - Services have evolved to meet current needs of women, birthing persons, and families
- Ongoing collaboration to determine gaps in the system and develop resources to mitigate barriers and challenges
- "No wrong door" to access services
  - REACH Navigators can help act as a resource to support individuals in learning about available services and connect to what is most appropriate for each individual and family
  - Real-time bed availability for all withdrawal management and residential services:  
[Connecticut Addiction Services \(ctaddictionservices.com\)](https://ctaddictionservices.com)



# Embrace the Principles

- Offering choice in a variety of community-based services focused on delivering gender-responsive and trauma-informed and responsive care
- Integration of those with lived experience
- Interagency collaboration
- Establishing and integrating evidence-based curriculum and practices
- In-depth training opportunities
- Focus on personal strengths
- Inclusive practices
- Destigmatization
- Harm and Risk Reduction

# Gender-Responsive and Trauma-Informed

- Framework that recognizes the unique experiences and needs of individuals, particularly women, in various service settings
- Understanding the impact of gender roles, behaviors, & expectations
- As providers, we must recognize the impact of trauma on those we serve and design safe and supportive environments with this at the core
- This requires ongoing attention, review, and response
- Environment, policies/procedures, staffing patterns, staff training, service array, treatment models, etc.
- Trauma & Gender Collaborative

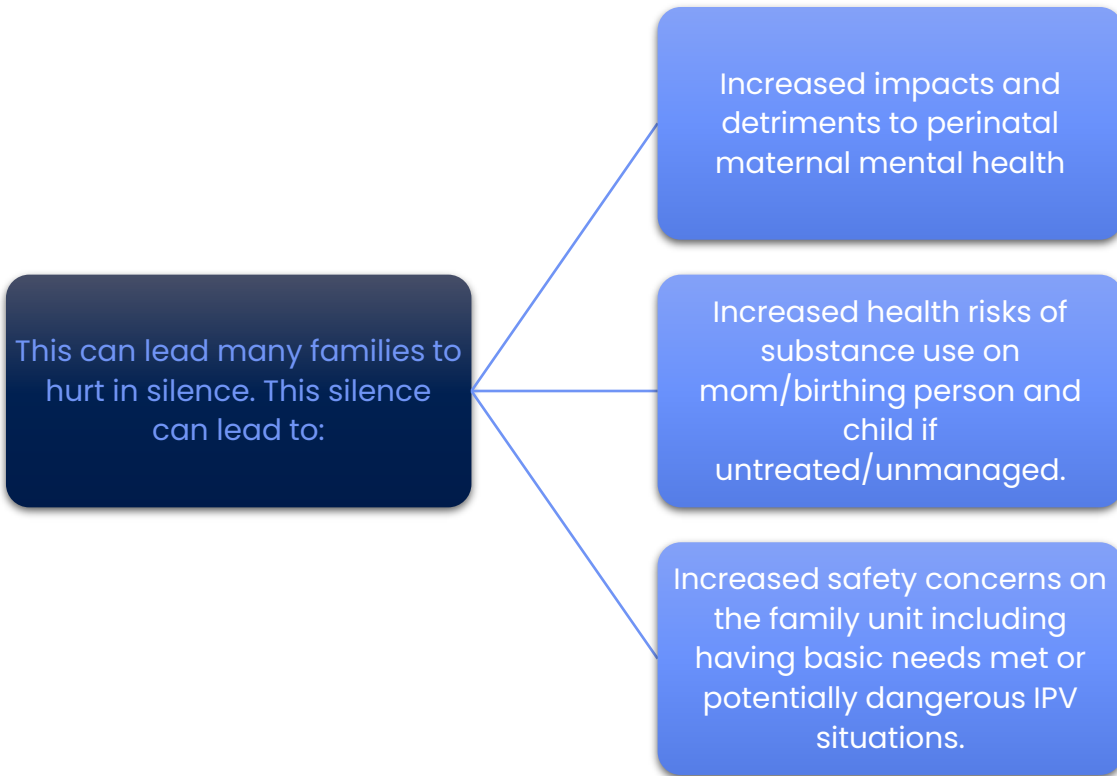
# Screening vs. Testing

- Universal screening, similarly to programs implemented to screen for IPV and Post-Partum Depression, is a gold standard and essential to identify individuals that may have additional healthcare needs (ACOG, ASAM, CDC, AAP, SAMHSA)
  - Should occur at first pregnancy appointment & ongoing based on concerns
  - Validated tools (4P's/5P's, T-ACE, CRAFFT, DAST-10)
  - Toolkits – ACCESS Mental Health and Substance Use for Moms
- Toxicology testing should not replace verbal screening or relational dialogue
  - Only tells part of the story from a singular point in time
  - Carries risk of false positives or negatives
  - Decision to test should be individualized and include consent



# Addiction Stigma: Pregnant and Birthing People

Understandably, the pregnant and parenting population often has hesitancy in disclosing substance use due to fears of judgement, child welfare involvement, or other legal consequences depending on their state of residence.





# DMHAS Women's Services Program Oversight

- Annual on-site reviews which includes:
  - Trauma & Gender Fidelity Review
  - Clinical Chart Review
  - Client Focus Group
  - Leadership Interview
  - Physical environment evaluation
  - Policy Review
- Ongoing on-site technical assistance on new initiatives and best practices
- Regular learning collaborative meetings
- Critical Incident Monitoring and Support



A vertical photograph on the left side of the slide shows yellow flowers, possibly mimulus, in sharp focus in the foreground, with many more out of focus in the background against a clear blue sky.

# Women's Services Program Continuum

- Pregnant & Parenting 3.5 Treatment Programs
- Women's Recovery Support Programs (WRSP)
- Women's Community Transition Support (WCTS)
- Parent's Recovering from Opioid & Other Use Disorder (PROUD) Clinical Sites
- REACH Programs
- Women's Specific SUD Treatment Programs (Residential & Outpatient)
- Parenting Support Parental Rights Initiative (PSPRI)

# PREGNANT AND PARENTING (3.5) LOC – SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT

- 48 beds statewide – Specialized LOC with the purpose of providing support to women during pregnancy, while parenting and/or during the reunification process
  - Reunification must be the established goal at time of admission
- 20 hours of treatment services per week – includes relapse prevention, parenting skills, co-occurring, trauma, anger management, & reproductive health education
- Individualized length of stay based on treatment plan and medical necessity
- Children can reside with mom in the program
- Real-time bed availability: [www.ctaddictionservices.com](http://www.ctaddictionservices.com)
- SEPI-CT Video: [PPW and WRSP \(https://youtu.be/n-A2Xb3frdc\)](https://youtu.be/n-A2Xb3frdc)
- Services provided at:
  - Liberation Programs- Families In Recovery Program (Norwalk)
  - CHR- New Life (Putnam)
  - APT- Amethyst House (New Haven)
  - InterCommunity – Coventry House (Hartford)
  - Wellmore –Women and Children’s Program (Waterbury)

## PPW 3.5 Client Feedback

“I am very grateful for this program. My counselor is very supportive, and I enjoy the groups and have benefited much from them. I am now mentally and emotionally prepared to have my baby and prioritize my recovery.”

“This program is giving me the opportunity to reunite with my son while still in treatment and reconnecting our family as a stronger, healthier, family unit.”

“Being here has truly changed my life. I can feel the growth in so many different ways, but most of all, I am happy. I found a sisterhood that I have never experienced before and for that I am truly grateful.”



# WOMEN'S RECOVERY SUPPORT PROGRAMS (WRSP)

- 21 beds statewide
  - 3 programs run by The Connection Inc. – Coley House located in Hamden, Hallie House located in Middletown, and Hogan House located in Hartford
- Designed for pregnant/parenting women and children who may reside in the program with their moms
- Coordination with community treatment and recovery supports
- Vocational assistance to help women gain and maintain employment
- Daily on-site groups focused on supporting recovery
- 24/7 staffing
- To learn more about WRSP or to make a referral, please contact: Denetra McBride, [dgmcbride@theconnectioninc.org](mailto:dgmcbride@theconnectioninc.org)



# WRSP Client Feedback

"The staff here are so persistent which is amazing because I forget a lot. They hold me accountable and make sure I'm on top of my recovery, parenting, and my mental health."

"I love that I am trusted to be out in the community and be more independent. It makes me feel more confident in my recovery."

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# Women's Community Transition Support (WCTS)

- A community-based independent living case management program available to pregnant and parenting women/birthing persons involved in the DMHAS substance use treatment continuum of care
- Case Management services will focus on independent living, linkages to treatment, budgeting and tenancy skills, parenting support, referrals to basic needs resources and transportation as needed
- Services are voluntary and include locating safe, affordable housing, and up to 12-month rent subsidy, where the client will incrementally increase their rent contribution as they work towards independent living
- For more information or to make a referral, please contact:

Aleksandra Slaski, [alslaski@theconnectioninc.org](mailto:alslaski@theconnectioninc.org)



# Parents Recovering From Opioid and Other Use Disorders (PROUD)

- DMHAS was initially awarded a 3-year SAMHSA PWW Grant (\$2.7 Million total) in 2020, a new grant award began in September 2023
- Furthers CT's work on the existing 5-year strategic plan to address infants born substance exposed
- Targets geographic areas in CT where data reveals disproportionate racial, social and economic disparities compared to other areas of CT
- 240 pregnant and postpartum individuals with SUD/OD, and their family members were served in the first 3-year grant period. Since 2020 a total of 500 PPW served.

# PROUD Site Service Delivery



- Community-based, family-centric SUD treatment and recovery program for pregnant and parenting individuals
- Individualized, holistic, wrap-around services based on harm reduction principles
- 3 multidisciplinary teams of a FT Therapist, FT Care Coordinator, and 1.5 FT Peer Recovery Specialist
- In-home, telehealth, and in-person services offered to reduce barriers and difficulties accessing care
- Targeted outreach and engagement to areas in the state significantly impacted by healthcare disparities and negative social determinants of health
- Family needs assessment conducted with eligible birthing individuals and their family members
- Creation of individualized recovery plans to address substance use and mental health treatment, connections to medical & community-based providers (including prenatal care), reproductive health needs assessment, basic needs, employment, housing and recovery support, development of CAPTA Family Care Plan

# PROUD Sites & Points of Contact



## Wheeler Clinic

- To get more information on PROUD, or to submit a referral to PROUD for a woman living in *New Britain, Bristol, Plainville, Berlin, Newington, Farmington, West Hartford, Cromwell, Middletown, Middlefield, Meriden, Waterbury, Cheshire, Southington, Wallingford, Wolcott, Hartford, East Hartford, Manchester, South Windsor, Wethersfield, Bloomfield, Enfield, East Windsor, Windsor Locks, Windsor, Ellington, Glastonbury, Hebron, Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield, Windham (Willimantic), Colchester, Tolland, Vernon/Rockville, Simsbury, Suffield, Somers*

Please contact: Kelly Bergeron, LMFT, [KBergeron@Wheelerclinic.org](mailto:KBergeron@Wheelerclinic.org) or 860-418-7119

## MCCA

- To get more information on PROUD, or to submit a referral to PROUD for a woman living in *New Haven, Hamden, North Haven, East Haven, West Haven, Orange, Milford, Stratford, Trumbull, Bridgeport, Shelton, Ansonia, Derby, and Woodbridge*

Please contact: Michell Tardette, LPC, [mtardette@mccaonline.com](mailto:mtardette@mccaonline.com) or 203-285-6475 ext. 2501

PROUD – Parents Recovering from Opioids Use Disorder  
(<https://portal.ct.gov/proud>)



# PROUD Client Impact

“Ever since being with the PROUD program I have seen growth in myself. The PROUD program is not only helping me with what I need to be on track, but it’s also helping me grow as a person and I’m learning a lot. I am truly grateful for the PROUD program.”

“I’m really thankful for this program and what it has offered me. They have continually supported me through this journey of recovery. I’m grateful to be a part of this program and have experienced all the wonderful staff. I’m grateful that I’m alive and able to experience another day.”

“The PROUD program couldn’t have come at a better time for me, knowing that I have an open case with DCF. With the PROUD program assisting with me whatever my needs are, I am grateful.”

# WOMEN'S REACH

- **REACH** (Recovery, Engagement, Access, Coaching & Healing)
  - Women's Navigators/ Family Navigators are women with lived experience who are living their own recovery and are willing to use their experiences to help others find their recovery path
  - Recovery Coaching & Short-Term Case Management
  - REACH embraces the notion that recovery looks different for everyone- WN are knowledgeable about diverse pathways to recovery, community resources, and women's health issues
  - Target Populations: pregnant/parenting women with substance use and/or co-occurring disorders AND expecting/parenting fathers, grandparents, LGBTQIA+ individuals or any natural support impacted by substances use and caring for a child
  - Based on real-time program census & on a case-by-case basis there may be limited capacity for non-pregnant and non-parenting women with SU and/or co-occurring disorders



# Women's REACH Program

- Statewide and regionally based with a focus on community outreach & engagement
  - **Region 1:** Liberation Programs
  - **Region 2:** The Connection, Inc.
  - **Region 3:** CHR
  - **Region 4:** Wheeler Clinic
  - **Region 5:** MCCA
- For more information or to make a referral, please visit:
  - [Womens REACH Program \(https://portal.ct.gov/dmhas/programs-and-services/women/womens-reach-program\)](https://portal.ct.gov/dmhas/programs-and-services/women/womens-reach-program)



# WOMEN'S SPECIFIC RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

- **Intensive Co-occurring Enhanced (3.7E) – CHR Milestone (Putnam)**
  - Treatment: 30 hours/week of individual/group therapy, medication management, case management, peer recovery support, and discharge planning
- **Intermediate Residential (3.5) – McCall Behavioral Health Network Hanson House (Torrington)**
  - Treatment: 20 hours/week of individual/group therapy, medication management, case management, peer recovery support, and discharge planning
- **Specialized Care (3.3) – MCCA Trinity Glen Women's Program (Kent)**
  - **Treatment:** 20 hours/week of individual/group therapy, medication management, case management, peer recovery support, and discharge planning
- **Transitional Living (3.1) – SCADD Gordon House Halfway House (New London)**
  - Treatment: 4 hours/week of group therapy, medication oversight, case management, peer recovery support, and discharge planning
  - Individuals can work and attend community-based SUD treatment services

# DMHAS WOMEN'S RECOVERY HOUSES

- Fully funded by DMHAS and not an ASAM level of care
- Provides a “safe space” for women in recovery awaiting treatment of a higher or lower level of care
- Community-based treatment services
- Pursue employment and education programs
- Length of stay is approximately 90 days
- 3 Women's Recovery Houses:
  - **Mercy Housing** – St. Elizabeth House Women's Program (Hartford)
  - **Regional Network of Programs** – Tina Klem Serenity House (Bridgeport)
  - **Cornell Scott Hill Health Center** – Women's Recovery House (New Haven)

# Women's-Specific Ambulatory Treatment Programs

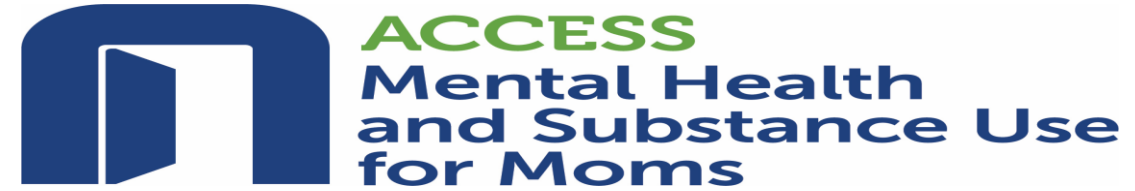
- Gender-specific and trauma-informed programming
- Same locations offer on-site childcare to reduce barriers to accessing treatment for parenting women
- Outpatient and Intensive Outpatient Programs
  - *CASA, Inc.* – Project Courage (Bridgeport)
  - *Family and Children's Agency* – Project Reward (Norwalk)
  - *Wheeler* – Lifeline Outpatient Programs (Plainville)
  - *MCCA* – Women and Children's Outpatient Program (Danbury)
  - *The Connection, Inc.* – The Center for Behavioral Health (Norwich)
  - *APT Foundation* – Access Center (New Haven) (Outpatient only)
  - *Wellmore Behavioral Health* – Women's Program (Waterbury)

# Parenting Support Parental Rights Initiative (PSPRI)

- This voluntary, confidential, and home-based program is designed to support parents living with mental health conditions in the Greater New Haven area. PSPRI aims to help parents achieve greater stability, strengthen their caregiving role, and preserve family unity.
- This program is not statewide. The service area includes: Ansonia, Bethany, Branford, Derby, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Seymour, Shelton, West Haven, and Woodbridge.
- For more information or to submit a referral, please contact Family Centered Services of CT:
  - (203)–624–2600, [PSPRI@familyct.org](mailto:PSPRI@familyct.org), [Parenting Support & Parental Rights Initiative | Family Centered Services of CT](https://www.familyct.org/parenting-support-parental-rights-initiative)



# Access Mental Health & Substance Use for Moms



- Funded by DMHAS and contracted by Carelon Behavioral Health (formerly Beacon Health Options)
- Offers **psychiatric expertise and consultation to medical providers** treating perinatal women presenting with mental health and/or substance use concerns. For obstetric, pediatric and adult primary care, and psychiatric providers treating women up to one-year post delivery.
- Monthly clinical conversations on diverse topics impacting the perinatal population- [Home - ACCESS Mental Health for Moms](#)

Monday through Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm  
833-978-MOMS (6667)



Yale School of Medicine

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 **carelon**  
Behavioral Health



# Addressing Provider Stigma

- Universal screening provides all individuals with an equal opportunity to receive helpful resources/supports or medical interventions
- Providing compassionate and quality care for those who disclose or are actively struggling with substance use makes a difference
- Participate in professional development opportunities in areas of stigma and implicit bias
- Become familiar with addiction and harm reduction resources in your local community and state so that you can support patients/clients
- Mitigates impact of stigma, builds provider trust, creates collaboration and improved health outcomes



# DMHAS Women's Services Training Opportunities

- Women's Services is committing to supporting routine, high quality, and pertinent professional development opportunities for the DMHAS system of care.
- Enduring training opportunities include:
  - [PROUD Trainings | Connecticut Hospital Association](#)
  - [Training - ACCESS Mental Health for Moms](#)
  - [DMHAS Educational Series brochure](#)





# Contact Information

Have a question about  
one of our programs or  
Initiatives?

[DMHAS Women's Services](#)

[Shelly.nolan@ct.gov](mailto:Shelly.nolan@ct.gov)



# DMHAS PPW System of Care – Provider Panel

- Dr. Maggie Young, LCSW
  - Chief Recovery Officer, Liberation Programs (PPW Treatment)
- Alison Friar, LMFT
  - Vice President of Family Services, The Connection (WRSP, REACH, WCTS Program)
- Brianna Cox
  - PROUD Care Coordinator, Wheeler Health (PROUD)