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Mental health, substance use, children and the holidays

The holidays are a perfect time for parents to address alarming behaviors they may have missed.

Most people look at the holidays as a happy season, a season where you can catch up with loved ones and friends you haven’t seen all year. However, this time of year can be the most stressful and dangerous for those with mental health and addiction issues.

Think about it. You may be worrying about buying gifts for everyone on your list, trying to decide what to wear to that holiday office party or having your in-laws stay at your house for a week. Children and young adults, who are suffering from drug abuse and other mental health problems, can use the holiday stress we all experience to intensify their own destructive behaviors. Coupled with free time away from school, the opportunities are endless for them to feed the beast. Drug abuse can seem like a logical escape from the drama for many teens.

Most treatment programs see an uptick in clients starting in November.

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Residential Treatment

Treatment for substance use disorders can take many different forms from intense outpatient treatment, to individual or even residential treatment.

Four Rivers Behavioral Health’s CenterPoint Recovery Center is a long-term, six-month residential treatment program for men. It is a peer-driven community that includes a transitional phase back into society.

The program of treatment at CenterPoint is divided into five distinct phases. Each phase is designed to further recovery goals. While, at the same time, offering clients more independence.

The complete program utilizes the 12-steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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This is because many teens and young adults end their fall semesters and are home for winter break. This vacation away from school allows those suffering from substance abuse and mental illness to escalate their destructive behavior by overindulging in holiday parties and by spending more time with old friends with bad habits.

Parents who may have missed some of the red flags of mental health problems and addiction are apt to pay more attention to their child simply because they are home more. They may notice their son or daughter, who has been away at college, has become withdrawn or aggressive. They may notice more overt signs, such as drinking more than usual at a family gathering. Be on the look out for isolation, as it could also be a sign something is wrong.

Parents should try to be engaged in their children’s lives year-round, but sometimes this is easier said than done. Being engaged does not necessarily mean knowing their email passwords or stalking their Facebook. It can be as simple as keeping an open channel of communication for your child to reach out to you for help with problems.

Addiction and mental health problems are problems that affect the entire family. Therefore, all members of the family should be part of the recovery process.

The holidays aren’t just a time for parents to notice new behaviors in their children. It is also a very challenging time for those who are in recovery. Many studies note that nearly half of recovering addicts will relapse during the holiday season. With an abundance of alcohol and friends around, triggers are everywhere.

Oftentimes, even the notion of the holidays can send someone into depression as it may force them to confront memories they haven’t necessarily dealt with during the rest of the year.

The holidays serve as a perfect opportunity for parents to spend more time with their children and address alarming behaviors that they may have missed during the year. For recovering addicts, it should be a time for families to band together and learn to celebrate in different and new ways that support sobriety and build love and trust.
Medically Assisted Treatment

Our COR-12 Program for substance use disorders combines medically assisted treatment with evidence-based therapeutic approaches to achieve the best rates of success. The program was designed by Hazelden/Betty Ford. Hazelden and the Betty Ford Center are considered to be the preeminent experts in addiction recovery.

Find out about all our treatment options on page 6
The Center for Specialized Addiction Services offers a variety of substance abuse programs for both adults and adolescents including specific outpatient care programs, residential treatment programs and individual or group therapy. Further, our team will complete a comprehensive assessment before treatment begins to determine the services that would be most beneficial. You can read more about our inpatient, residential programs on page three of this issue.

Our outpatient programs vary and are specific to the individual. For example, our Quick Response Team addresses emergencies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year through our Crisis Line at 800.592.3980. When there is a substance abuse crisis, individuals and their families are overwhelmed and often do not know what to do next. As part of that next step plan, clients can choose to meet directly with our Quick Response Team. The team includes a Clinical Practitioner and a Peer Support Specialist who can guide families through the decision making process and help review recovery options, even in an emergency room setting.

Opioid addiction has reached epidemic proportions in the United States and particularly in Kentucky. According to the Center for Disease Control more than 52,000 Americans die each year from drug overdoses with Kentucky ranked as having the third highest overdose rate in the U.S.

Our COR-12 Program is designed by Hazelden and the Betty Ford Center - the leading experts in the treatment of substance use disorders. COR is the acronym used for Comprehensive Opioid Response and the 12 signifies the importance of including a “Twelve Step” component with treatment.

The COR-12 Program is an integrated model of care that combines the use of medication as an option for treatment along with clinical practice and Twelve Step Facilitation. Other evidence-based treatment methods also are a part of the COR-12 Program such as Motivational Enhancement Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and other models.

The option to combine medication along with behavioral therapies has been proven an effective treatment for opioid use disorders. Medically Assisted Treatment, when coupled with relevant social, medical and psychological services, has the highest probability of being the most effective of all available treatments for opioid addiction.
Substance abuse disorders don’t just disappear after treatment, recovery is a lifelong commitment. We recognize this and our support doesn’t stop after treatment.

One of the many ways we continue to provide help to our substance abuse clients is through Turning Point, a Recovery Community Center. Turning Point was established to provide easily accessible services to those in recovery with a focus on those who are just learning to live a sober life and are new to recovery.

Our staff are constantly reaching out to the recovery community and area professionals through speaking engagements, community group meetings and learning events to ensure that those who need a steady hand in recovery know where to turn.

Turning Point is unique in that the program is designed around the concept of peer support. Staff at Turning Point have personal experience with substance abuse and can offer guidance and support from a “been there, done that” perspective.

In addition to these structured programs, Four Rivers Behavioral Health also offers individual and group counseling along with other evidence-based approaches for substance use disorders. Each treatment plan is specific to the individual.

Detailed information can be found on our website at www.4rbh.org or at our website specifically tailored to substance abuse at www.4rbhAddictionTreatment.org.
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along with Recovery Dynamics, which is a program of study focusing on the physical and mental aspects of addiction. While the phases of the program do not change, each client is assessed upon admission and is continually monitored throughout the treatment process and is only moved from one phase of the program to the next after reaching certain benchmarks. Treatment goals and progress are specific to each individual.

The William H. Fuller Center is a short-term, 28-day residential treatment program offering the best possible care for clients with substance abuse disorders and for clients with substance abuse disorders in conjunction with other mental health concerns. Our staff has years of experience providing successful addiction treatment services to clients throughout the region. We recognize the challenges faced by those suffering with a substance abuse disorder and realize it is a struggle to choose to live a sober life and remain drug and alcohol free.

At the Fuller Center, the approach to care is the review of each program participant’s history followed by tailoring a recovery plan for each individual to ensure their success. Our team of clinical experts work to provide a caring and nurturing environment where substance abuse can be addressed through our detoxification and recovery programs. It takes courage, guidance, structure and commitment to become sober. Most importantly – it takes help. We work with clients to determine what led to their substance abuse, deal with the ‘wreckage of the past’ and build the framework for a new sober life.

DID YOU KNOW?

If you have lost your Driver’s License because of a DUI, our Center for Specialized Addiction Services may be able to help you get your license back.

Multiple treatment programs are available with many sessions held in the evening hours. Classes and therapy sessions are available at our main office in downtown Paducah, KY, The William H. Fuller Center in Mayfield, KY, and our Lakes Center office in Murray, KY. Group classes are offered in addition to individual counseling sessions. You can find out more on our website at www.4rbh.org.
Meet Thelma Hunter.

Thelma has worked at Four Rivers Behavioral Health for more than 20 years and has been the director of CenterPoint Recovery for nearly 10 years.

When CenterPoint was established in 2010, Thelma knew she wanted to be part of the long-term treatment center. With over 120 men residing at CenterPoint at any given time, more than one person has asked the soft-spoken Thelma if that’s really where she wants to be. With a resounding “yes” you know she’s found her home.

Thelma brings not only her skills as a certified drug and alcohol counselor, but she also brings a refinement that makes CenterPoint feel like home for residents.

Many of CenterPoint’s clients have never had a home or the most recent home they have known has been jail. Without fail, soon after their first day, every client says something along the lines of “this is the nicest place I have ever lived.”

Hearing that in a recovery center is unheard of and high praise indeed. That praise is because of Thelma and the love and care she puts into her job and gives to her “guys” at CenterPoint.

You can read more about CenterPoint on page three of this issue.