



ECPAC

The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IMPACTED BY SUBSTANCE USE

VISION ::

All children and their families are valued, healthy, and thriving



MISSION ::

Build a community where each child and their family can reach their full potential

THE PROBLEM ECPAC IS WORKING TO IMPROVE:

The rate of substance overdose-related Emergency Department (ED) visits has continued to steadily increase since 2016. According to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Drug Overdose Dashboard, 18.7% (or 1,003) of Adams County ED visits due to overdose involving drugs were for children 14 years of age and younger.

Furthermore, while caregiver substance use does not mean that child abuse and neglect is occurring in the home, it can elevate the risk.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:

Children of caregivers with problematic substance use are at higher risk for developing mental health conditions and substance use disorders, as well as experiencing child abuse and neglect.

Prevention strategies should be approached from a lens of supporting both caregivers and children in order for families to access services.

Additionally, stigma of Substance Use Disorder generates shame and hopelessness, creates isolation, and impacts early diagnosis and treatment.

THE STRATEGIES ECPAC IS EMPLOYING:

With the rate of child abuse and neglect being higher in Adams County than in Colorado, ECPAC has dedicated efforts towards prevention. With caregiver substance use elevating the risk, strategies ECPAC is employing specific to this include:

- Facilitated a short term subcommittee of partners and family members with lived experience to develop strategies towards both prevention and support.
- Facilitating (with a parent in substance use recovery) Circle of Parents in Recovery support groups which have a significant focus on healthy social connections and connecting to concrete supports in times of need.
- Creating and distributing messages about sober caregiving and seeking support.
- Distributing safe storage bags for families to lock up any substances - including prescription medication.
- Hosting trainings for all community partners to better understand the brain and disease of addiction, ways of reducing stigma, administering naloxone, and effective strategies for having conversations with caregivers about substance use.

THE IMPACT: (As of February 2022):

- More than 100 sessions of Circle of Parents in Recovery provided to 14 caregivers
- Close to 800 safe storage bags provided to children's caregivers with messages about keeping kids safe, sober caregiving, and seeking help.
- Over 150 partners received or have registered for one of our training opportunities

COMMITTED PARTNERS:

The Substance Use Subcommittee included: Adams County Human Services Department, Community Reach Center, North Suburban Medical Center, Tri-County Health Department, and 4 family partners.

We thank Illuminate Colorado for funding support to implement strategies.



TO GET INVOLVED OR LEARN MORE:

Contact Stephanie Henderson - Director of Child & Family Health & Wellbeing at stephanie@ecpac.org or 303-650-2382.