



Haymarket Center

COMPREHENSIVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS
FOUNDED IN 1975 BY MSGR. IGNATIUS McDERMOTT AND DR. JAMES WEST

Testimony

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Haymarket Center: Overview

Haymarket Center is the largest and most comprehensive provider of treatment for substance use and mental health disorders in Chicago. Founded in 1975, Haymarket Center has grown to serve over 12,000 individuals annually in over thirty specialized treatment programs and on-site supportive services.

Haymarket Center serves individuals suffering from addiction, especially those presenting with histories of unemployment, homelessness, criminal justice involvement, trauma, and mental illness.

Haymarket Center's recovery support infrastructure helps clients sustain recovery, minimize relapse, and improve overall quality of life, through its on-site provision of services that go far beyond the scope of most treatment programs -- for example with family medicine and psychiatry, child care, and job training.

Problems with employment are common among individuals with substance use disorders, yet comprehensive vocational services are not generally available to them, and vocational interventions are often not matched to their specific needs. Substance use and other barriers have been identified as an important problem to address among the hard to employ TANF recipients and other entitlement programs. A diverse set of factors have been identified as potential barriers to employability. These include situational factors such as transportation, human resource factors like low literacy or low job skills, and personal problems such as domestic violence or substance use disorders. Studies indicate that the presence of these barriers, and especially the co-occurrence of multiple barriers, is associated with lower likelihood of employment. Over the past two decades, there have been numerous programs attempting to add additional requirements on a vulnerable population without understanding that all barriers to employment must be addressed and in place for individuals to be successful. In general, low income individuals and users of public benefits do not have substance use disorders at a higher rate than the general public, it just when they do, it is very clear that they have fewer resources to address them.

Fatherhood Program and Job Assistance

In 2011, Haymarket received a "Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood" grant from the Administration for Children and Families/Office of Family Assistance to serve low-income fathers in Chicago, who were both entering treatment for substance use disorders and estranged from their children because of drug use. The project enrolled 1,322 fathers.

Most of the fathers resided in low-income communities on the south and west sides of Chicago. These neighborhoods have the highest murder rates and drug arrest rates in the nation. All of the fathers served through the program had complex problems in addition to their substance use disorders. Other barriers included: involvement in the criminal justice system, unemployment, lack of housing, little or no work history, low educational levels, multiple children from different mothers, and co-occurring mental illness and other chronic diseases.

Among the participants:

- 61 percent were African American, 8 percent Hispanic, and 27 percent white;
- 46 percent of the sample had a GED or high school diploma;
- 64 percent were never married;
- 74 percent had a family history of substance use;
- 48 percent lived below the federal poverty level;
- 55 percent were currently involved with the criminal justice system;
- 64 percent report being victimized as children and young adults;
- 39 percent reported severe victimization involving weapons;
- 76 percent reported an extensive history of running away and periods of homelessness;
- 48 percent reported first use of alcohol and drugs under the age of 15;
- 95 percent had physical health problems;
- 29 percent reported a history of depression and suicidal ideations;
- 73 percent reported a history of profound trauma; and
- 82 percent met the clinical criteria for a mental health disorder.

This representative sample demonstrates that wraparound services are required in order to achieve a stable employment history. Over the course of the past two decades, there have been two specific times when the government attempted to place work requirements on this vulnerable population; both times failing because they did not address the barriers to sustained employment first.

The Program

Once their addiction was stabilized, fathers were able to focus and meet the demands of sustained work. Fathers began job readiness training by meeting with a vocational counselor, who administered a vocational assessment, health questionnaire, and criminal background check. The vocational counselor then worked with the client to develop an individual employment plan (IEP) informed by the assessments. The IEP included an inventory of their readiness to work, work experience, education, certifications and other trainings. The IEP also contained a job search action plan, which included detailed steps the fathers needed to take to secure employment. The IEP included enrollment in a 10 session job readiness training curriculum that was offered four days a week for a total of four weeks at Haymarket.

The curriculum was designed specifically for individuals in early recovery from substance use disorders and with criminal justice backgrounds. It taught fathers how to explain gaps in their work history during an interview, advised them of their HIPAA privacy rights as it relates to discussing their substance use disorders with employers, and taught them how to fill out job applications and to answer questions related to criminal backgrounds. The curriculum also helped fathers develop a resume. Because many fathers did not have access to a computer and had little experience in developing a resume, vocational counselors provided them with

templates where they could write their previous work experience, education, job skills and other information. The vocational counselor, job developer, and vocational case manager then typed the father's resume based on their written responses on the template.

The fathers reviewed their resumes with a vocational counselor or job developer who made edits to meet their employment objectives. For some clients, the process took two to three hours.

A key component of the curriculum was a week of mock interviews. Fathers were expected to dress in business attire during class while they were being trained to participate in interviews. Haymarket's Family Enrichment Center operates a clothing closet with suits, ties, dress shirts, shoes and other accessories donated from local clothing stores and Haymarket staff. This has been an enormous help to fathers who lack income and don't have access to interview clothing.

Because of their long histories of substance use, criminal backgrounds and inability to support their families, many of the fathers enrolled in job readiness training lacked confidence and self-esteem. To help them succeed in interviews, vocational counselors provide ongoing counseling and mentoring to build their self-confidence and help address self-esteem issues.

Clients who completed job readiness training typically went on to enroll in a 10-session computer training program. The purpose of the computer training curriculum is to help fathers develop the skills they need to search for jobs online, begin to develop cover letters and edit their resumes using standard word processing programs, and receive correspondence from employers via email. Haymarket operates a computer lab on-site dedicated to improving computer literacy skills in individuals in recovery from substance use and mental health disorders.

Fathers who completed the job readiness training and computer training classes next enrolled in our Job Club, which was facilitated by the job developer. The class met weekly and attendance was required to obtain subsidized employment through our Recovery Works program and to learn about new opportunities for unsubsidized employment.

Once fathers were employed, they could schedule individual counseling and mentoring for help in developing a personal budget, opening up a savings account, obtaining direct deposit, and guidance on how to view their bank statements on-line. Because money is a trigger for fathers in early recovery from substance use disorders, fathers also attended a relapse prevention counseling session offered by a certified alcohol and drug counselor.

Job Placement

During the four year grant program, 111 clients were placed in full time employment, 25 in part time employment, and 111 in subsidized employment. The number of clients placed in unsubsidized employment reflects the difficulty in placing the fathers in employment due to long histories of unemployment, extensive criminal backgrounds and the fact that over 55 percent were also involved in the criminal justice system (i.e., either on parole or probation), and the reluctance of employers to hire these individuals.

This testimony has solely focused on the workforce components of Haymarket's Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood program, but the program had other components as well. While the fathers received care, a separate team worked with the families they left behind to address their needs and prepare a stable environment for all members of the family once the father returned. The table on the following page summarizes all of the programs outcomes that involved the mothers and children who were involved in the program.

Summary of Outcomes

The table below provides results of Haymarket's Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood program for 1,322 participants during the period September 29, 2011 to September 28, 2015.

Improvement in Healthy Relationships	
Improvement in Abuse Prevention Skills	99%
Hopeful about Life Improving in Future	98%
Improvement in Conflict Resolution Skills	88%
Improvement in Communication Skills	87%
Improvement in Relationship with Spouse/Partner	77%
Improved Attitudes Towards Marriage or Commitment	75%
Improvement in Budgeting/Financial Skills	59%
Improvement in Responsible Parenting	
Hopeful about Life Improving in Future	99%
Improvement in Parenting Knowledge and Skills	90%
Improvement in Commitment to Fatherhood	89%
Improvement in Relationship with Children	87%
Improvement in Amount of Contact with Children	72%
Improvement in Knowledge of Child Support Enforcement	78%
Improvement in Economic Stability	
Obtained Full Time Unsubsidized Employment	111
Obtained Part Time Unsubsidized Employment	25
Obtained New Qualifications	10
Obtained Subsidized Employment	111
Showed Commitment to Family Financial Responsibility	99

Website:
www.hcenter.org