Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA)

TARGET AUDIENCE
This program is for individuals who are 12 to 24 years old and have substance use and/or abuse disorders.

SUMMARY
Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA), a community-based program, is designed to promote abstinence from substance use and assist in the recovery from substance use disorders by strengthening family, social, and educational or vocational supports.

EVIDENCE
In a randomized trial comparing A-CRA with two other treatment programs for adolescents with cannabis disorders, A-CRA was found to lead to an increased number of days abstinent from cannabis and an increased number of individuals in recovery. Similarly, in a randomized controlled trial of homeless youth with a substance use disorder, adolescents who participated in the program demonstrated greater decreases in drug use, depression, and internalizing behavior and greater increases in social stability than adolescents in the control group.

COMPONENTS
A-CRA intends to promote youth abstinence, encourage positive social experiences, foster healthy peer and family relationships, enhance life satisfaction, create a home environment that promotes and sustains recovery, and teach parents/caregivers how to support their child's recovery and abstinence. Three types of sessions can be implemented with the A-CRA program:

- Individual adolescent;
- Individual parent/caregiver; and
- Combined adolescent and parent/caregiver.

Therapists select from 17 A-CRA procedures that address multiple areas of functioning based on the participant's needs and level of happiness. For example, role-playing or behavioral rehearsal is an important component of A-CRA and is utilized during sessions to practice refusal, problem-solving, anger management, and communication skills. Homework activities are assigned at the end of every session and provide additional practice of skills addressed during sessions. Homework activities are agreed upon by the therapist and participant and are reviewed at the beginning of every session.

PREVIOUS USE
Since the early 2000s, A-CRA has been delivered by over 270 organizations in the United States and internationally.
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TRAINING
This program is implemented by clinicians who have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a clinical field. An initial, mandatory, 2.5-day workshop is offered to clinical staff and supervisors. Certification is also required via online courses and coaching calls. For more information on training and costs, please contact Brandi Barnes by phone 1-309-451-7791 or email bbarnes@chestnut.org or contact Mark Godley by phone 1-309-451-7800 or email mgodley@chestnut.org

CONSIDERATIONS
Considerations for implementing this program include recruiting therapists who have a suitable background and ensuring they receive training; securing other staff who are committed to the certification process; locating available office space, a computer with internet access, and a digital recorder; and acquiring funds for program implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION
If you are interested in implementing A-CRA, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

TIME
Weekly 50- to 90-minute sessions are delivered over 3 months. Session time varies depending on the needs of the adolescent or caregiver(s).

COST
Implementation costs include personnel salaries, materials and supplies, contracted services, buildings and facilities, equipment, and miscellaneous items. French et al. (2002) assessed costs and found that cost per completed treatment episode was $1,237 at one site and $1,608 at another site.

EVALUATION PLAN
To move the A-CRA program to the Effective category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence at least one external evaluation must be conducted that demonstrates sustained, positive outcomes. This study must be conducted independently of the program developer.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

CONTACT
Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program. Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact the Lighthouse Institute by mail Chestnut Health Systems, 448 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761, phone 1-309-451-7700, fax 1-309-451-7761, email ebtxquestions@chestnut.org, or visit http://ebtx.chestnut.org/ContactUs

SOURCE
http://ebtx.chestnut.org/Treatments-and-Research/Treatments/A-CRA

www.militaryfamilies.psu.edu