



Women's Services Network

The Women's Services Network (WSN) is an organization of State Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Agency Representatives dedicated to the development and promotion of evidence-based practice that addresses the unique alcohol and other drug prevention, treatment, and recovery service needs of women and their families throughout their lifespan.

WSN Overview

As a component of the National Association of State Alcohol/Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) and the National Treatment Network (NTN), the Women's Services Network (WSN) functions as a specialty network under the auspices of the NTN, and in collaboration with the National Prevention Network (NPN). The WSN focuses on women's treatment and prevention issues while remaining dedicated to the NTN's overall goal of effective, socially responsive treatment delivery for all populations.

The WSN is comprised of the women's service coordinators from across the country that have been appointed by their State Director to guide the development and the delivery of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services in their respective states.

The primary role of the WSN is to partner with the NTN/NPN to ensure that the unique treatment and prevention needs and concerns of women and their families are addressed. The WSN works to expand and improve the publicly-funded treatment and prevention systems and services, and to facilitate collaboration with other public and privately funded service agencies that serve women and their families. The NTN and WSN also work with the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) and other stakeholders to support and promote shared interests including expansion of effective and efficient treatment for substance use disorders that is comprehensive as well as culturally and gender appropriate.

Women with Substance Use Disorders (SUDs)

- Women get drunk faster, become addicted to alcohol more quickly and develop alcohol-related diseases such as hypertension and liver, brain and heart damage more rapidly than men. (Women Under the Influence; National Center on Addiction and Substance Use at Columbia (CASA) 2006)
- In 2009, the rate of substance dependence or abuse for females aged 12 or older was 6.1 percent. Among youths aged 12 to 17, the rate of substance dependence or abuse among females in 2009 was 7.4 percent. (National Survey Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2009)
- Females had higher rates than males for nonmedical use of psychotherapeutic drugs (3.5 percent for females vs. 2.8 percent for males) and nonmedical use of pain relievers (2.9 vs. 2.4 percent). (NSDUH, 2009)
- Physical and sexual trauma followed by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is more common in women than in men who seek substance use treatment (National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA) 2009)
- Addicted women are more likely to experience the following co-occurring disorders: depression, dissociation, post-traumatic stress disorder, other anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and personality disorders. (Covington, 2008)
- Among pregnant women aged 15 to 44 years, 4.5 percent used illicit drugs in the past month based on data averaged for 2008 and 2009. (NSDUH, 2009)
- Approximately 222,000 children are exposed to illicit substances in utero and over 1 million to illicit drugs *and* alcohol each year. (National Abandoned Infant Association (AIA), 2008)
- Over 8.3 million children under 18 years of age (11.9 %) live with at least one parent who is dependent on or abused alcohol or an illicit drug during the past year. (NSDUH, 2009)

WSN Executive Leadership

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For information on the Women's Services Network, contact Shalini Wickramatilake, NASADAD Staff Liaison, at the email listed above.

WSN Subcommittees

❖ **Criminal Justice**

Chair: Barbara Brooks (IL, Barbara.Brooks@illinois.gov) and Kelly Charbonneau (AZ, Kelly.Charbonneau@azdhs.gov)

Dedicated to the improvement of clinical and social support practice in multiple systems and disciplines to achieve better service outcomes for women in community corrections and incarcerated women and their families and communities.

❖ **Outcomes Data**

Co-Chairs: Jennifer Foley (OR, jennifer.m.foley@state.or.us) and Lisa Ramirez (TX, Lisa.Ramirez@dshs.state.tx.us)

Dedicated to increased access to data and gaining knowledge of the use of data in making decisions that will impact women and their families.

❖ **Pregnant and Parenting Women**

Co-Chairs: Shawna Pena (WY, shawna.pena@wyo.gov) and Shirlonda Hambrick-Taylor (GA, slhambrick-taylor@dhr.state.ga.us)

Dedicated to the education of policymakers and legislators regarding substance use during pregnancy; its social and economic impact on women, children, families, and societies; and the need to promote prevention and treatment services that are comprehensive, readily accessible, and cost-effective.

❖ **Recovery Oriented Systems of Care for Women**

Co-Chairs: Jackie Doodley (OH, jdoodley@ada.ohio.gov), Bernestine Jeffers (WI, Bernestine.Jeffers@dhs.wisconsin.gov)

Dedicated to the integration of gender responsive prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery services for women and their families across the lifespan within a changing health care environment.

Links for More Information

- NASADAD: <http://www.nasadad.org>
- CSAT: www.samhsa.gov/about/csat.aspx
- Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP): www.samhsa.gov/prevention
- Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS): www.samhsa.gov/about/cmhs.aspx
- Children and Family Futures: www.cffutures.org
- National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare: <http://ncsacw.samhsa.gov>
- National Institute of Corrections: www.nicic.org
- National Trauma Consortium (NTC): www.nationaltraumaconsortium.org/