



Message from our CEO

September is Recovery Month, and this year's theme is "Join the Voices for Recovery: Celebrating Connections." This is to remind people in recovery and those who support them, that we all have victories to celebrate and things we may wish we had done differently. This is true of everyone and, as in most cases, we cannot do it alone. All of us, from our co-workers, neighbors, friends, and family members, throughout our lives have experienced peaks and valleys, both big and small. But, with strength, support, and hope from the people we love, we are resilient. It is a privilege to work at ACTS and help people make a difference in their lives. ACTS staff help transform the people we serve, and for that I am forever grateful to them. Below in this newsletter, we share tips on how to support someone in recovery. Throughout the last six months, ACTS has been open and serving our community as an essential resource. We are here to help anyone impacted by substance use through all of ACTS programs and services.



Asha Terminello
ACTS CEO

September is Recovery Month – Tips on How to Support Someone in Recovery.

It's a dramatic scene frequently repeated on television and movies — someone gets fed up with their friend or family member's addiction, drives them to a drug treatment center, and says they'll be back in a few months. Getting your loved one to a treatment center is only the beginning, though. For treatment to succeed in the long term, here are seven tips on how to support someone in recovery from addiction.



1. **Don't Judge:** Many people in recovery feel judged by their family and friends. Accept them for who they are and refrain from negativity and criticism.
2. **Be Patient:** Recovery is a long and complicated process. People often have setbacks. It's important for them to know that you will still support them when things get tough.
3. **Reinforce that Recovery is Possible:** Like other chronic diseases, people can manage addictions successfully.
4. **Actively Listen:** Take notice of your loved one's victories and struggles. Offer encouragement as needed for a healthy lifestyle.
5. **Encourage Healthy Habits:** Cooking, exercising and playing games are all positive, substance-free activities you can do with a person in recovery.
6. **Suggest a Support Group:** Support groups allow people in recovery to interact with and receive encouragement from others who struggle with addiction.
7. **Take Care of Yourself:** Join a support group for friends and families of people with addictions to feel less alone.

Meet Allyson Speed

With school back in session, life at ACTS Youth Residential Treatment Program in Thonotosassa has gotten busier, said Allyson Speed, program supervisor. Youth ages 13 – 17 with substance use issues live at the program for 4 – 6 months, but some stay longer depending on their progress. Substance use by the youths vary, but all have used marijuana, Allyson said. In her role at the program, Allyson says she spends a lot of time with the clients. “My goal is to make sure the program runs smoothly, and that I am available to both employees and clients if they need me,” said Allyson. “Every morning, the youth wake up and clean and do their chores, as well as read the Just for Today meditation. Now that school is back in session, they go to the portables on our property for school. In the afternoon, they have groups, as well as some free time before lights out.” Allyson has worked at ACTS for a little over 6 years and worked her way up to her current position. “I enjoy seeing the clients complete the program and be successful,” she says. “That’s what keeps me here is seeing the youth reach their potential.” To find out how to make a referral to the program, [click here](#).



Warning Signs in Youth for Substance Use

With kids officially back in school, it’s important to pay attention for potential substance use issues. Many youth may show behaviors in adolescence that are indicative of substance abuse, but can also be considered normal behaviors while growing up. It is important to take notice if there are several signs happening at the same time, if they occur suddenly, and if the behaviors are extreme. The following behaviors in a youth might indicate drug or alcohol abuse:

- Mood changes (temper flare-ups, irritability, defensiveness)
- Academic problems (poor attendance, low grades, disciplinary action)
- Changing friends and a reluctance to have parents/family get to know the new friends
- A “nothing matters” attitude (lack of involvement in former interests, general low energy)
- Finding substances (drug or alcohol) in youth’s room or personal effects
- Physical or mental changes (memory lapses, poor concentration, lack of coordination, slurred speech, etc.)

Warning signs indicate that there may be a problem that should be looked into—not that there is definitely a problem. Call ACTS if you have questions or need help – 813.246.4899.

For More Information

ACTS, Agency for Community Treatment Services, Inc., is a non-profit serving the Tampa Bay area since 1978. As a comprehensive, community-based behavioral health organization, ACTS mission is to apply the best of contemporary physical and behavioral health interventions and social support services available to assist individuals and families to engage and succeed in recovery. Call us today to find out how we can help you - 813.246.4899 or visit us online at www.actsfl.org.

