



Available online at www.sciencedirect.com



**ADDICTIVE
BEHAVIORS**

Addictive Behaviors 32 (2007) 1237–1251

Treatment outcome for street-living, homeless youth

Natasha Slesnick^{a,*}, Jillian L. Prestopnik, Robert J. Meyers, Michael Glassman

^a *Human Development and Family Science The Ohio State University 135 Campbell Hall;
1787 Neil Ave Columbus, OH 43210, United States*

Abstract

Comprehensive intervention for homeless, street living youth that addresses substance use, social stability, physical and mental health issues has received very little attention. In this study, street living youth aged 14–22 were recruited from a drop-in center and randomly assigned to the Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) or treatment as usual (TAU) through a drop-in center. Findings showed that youth assigned to CRA, compared to TAU, reported significantly reduced substance use (37% vs. 17% reduction), depression (40% vs. 23%) and increased social stability (58% vs. 13%). Youth in both conditions improved in many other behavioral domains including substance use, internalizing and externalizing problems, and emotion and task oriented coping. This study indicates that homeless youth can be engaged into treatment and respond favorably to intervention efforts. However, more treatment development research is needed to address the barriers associated with serving these youth.

© 2006 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Homelessness; Adolescents; Substance abuse; Treatment; Community reinforcement approach (CRA)
