

## **The Big Seven – Key Ingredients for an Effective Family Dependency Treatment Court**

### **Abstract:**

With over 300 FDCs now in operation across the nation, FDC outcomes have shown significantly higher rates of parents' participation in substance use disorder treatment, longer stays in treatment, higher rates of family reunification, less time for children in foster care, and decreased incidence of repeat maltreatment and return to out-of-home care compared to non-family drug court participants (Marlowe & Carey, 2012). FDCs are able to achieve these outcomes through several common practices or ingredients. This workshop will explore the Big Seven – system of identifying families; timely access to assessment and treatment services; enhanced case management and recovery support; improved family services and focus on parent-child relationships; increased judicial oversight, contingency management, and collaborative approach and efficient information sharing. This presentation will explore the barriers and challenges that FDC teams have encountered in implementing these ingredients as well as the innovative solutions that were formulated to ensure effective practice. This workshop will be the “nuts and bolts” that hold effective FDCs together. Technical assistance and training resources through the National FDC Training and Technical Assistance Program will also be provided to support implementation.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Gain an overview of the FDC model and national outcomes, and the key common practice ingredients to ensure effective practice
2. Learn the challenges, barriers, and solutions that have supported effective implementation of each of the Big Seven
3. Find out how to access training and technical assistance resources to equip you and your team – “You can do it, we can help!”

### **Faculty Bio**

#### **Presentation: Dependency Drug Courts - A National Strategy**

##### **ALEXIS BALKEY, BA, RAS**

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Ms. Balkey currently serves as the Program Manager for the National FDC Training and Technical Assistance Program at Children and Family Futures, Inc. (CFF). She assists with project management and reporting tasks to compile and synthesize information on the lessons, results and policy and practice innovations of the FDC TTA Program. Additionally, she provides training and technical assistance to FDCs across the nation responding to over 900 requests in less than five years. Ms. Balkey is a Change Leader for the Statewide System reform initiative aimed at spreading the reach of Family Drug Courts to all families within the child welfare system impacted by substance abuse disorders. Previous to her employment with CFF, Ms. Balkey was the Program Manager for Riverside County Family Preservation Court, located in Indio, CA where she successfully managed a Family Drug Court with multiple funding streams including the SAMHSA Children Affected by Methamphetamine (CAM) Federal grant. Ms. Balkey is an instructor for the William R. Mead Academy located in San Diego, CA with a teaching emphasis on case management, criminal justice, ethics, gender studies, cultural competency and co-occurring disorders.

Ms. Balkey is a certified addictive disorder counselor by the Breining Institute, College for the Advanced Study of Addictive Disorders with robust knowledge of alcohol and other drug treatment programs. Ms. Balkey

received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from Temple University and is currently attending California State University, San Bernardino to obtain a Masters of Public Administration.