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Relationship between Trauma and Risky Behavior in Substance-Abusing Parents Involved in a Family Dependency Treatment Court

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Abstract

This exploratory study examined participants in a Family Dependency Treatment Court (FDTC), designed for substance-abusing parents whose children were removed from the home. Twenty-five participants were interviewed one year after FDTC enrollment to assess retrospectively the relationship between trauma history and risky behaviors. Treatment compliance rates were found to be high, and most participants had

negative urinalysis results. Qualitative analyses revealed that approximately half of the participants attributed decreases in risky behaviors to the FDTC program. This study

increases understanding of the effect of substance abuse and trauma on high-risk behaviors and might help to improve services for substance-abusing parents involved in the child welfare system. Finally, the future success of reducing child abuse and neglect and parental substance use could hinge on the partnership between judicial and substance abuse treatment through FDTCS. Findings from this exploratory pilot study should be replicated with more representative and larger samples.

Keywords: [child welfare](#), [risky behavior](#), [substance abuse](#), [trauma](#)

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