

Working Together for Healthier Families: Recovery Specialist Voluntary Program (RSVP)

Gov. M. Jodi Rell ~ "This is an example of using existing resources in a more effective way. At no added cost to taxpayers we can get the best return on our investment and provide much-needed help to parents, children and families."
~ (New Britain Herald)

DMHAS, with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Judicial System, joined to intervene with families in crisis. Our goal is to help them heal, stay together and live a better life. Together we developed **RSVP** to give parents, facing permanent separation from their children, a chance to bring them back home. **RSVP** offers hope for recovery and is implemented by reallocating monies from existing programs with less impact.



Together we embrace the ideas of safety, permanency, treatment and recovery. Our ultimate goal is to achieve life supporting results for a family that will last a lifetime.

What is RSVP?

RSVP facilitates a parent's path to recovery and the ability to reunite with their children after losing custody due to substance abuse. Parents will work with a recovery specialist to: 1) Assist in engagement of SA treatment, 2) Conduct random drug screens to validate the recovery process, and 3) Provide a support structure and "recovery coaching."

Why RSVP?

Parents facing DCF intervention don't always participate in SA treatment as soon as they could. Participating with recovery specialists allows for early treatment help and recovery supports for parents beginning the recovery process and expediting family reunification.

Where is RSVP?

The program was initiated in New Britain in April 2009 and will begin in Bridgeport & Willimantic the 2nd quarter of 2009, with intent of expansion statewide.

Expected Outcomes

By maximizing use of tax payer dollars and improving collaboration of state agencies, family safety, permanency, treatment and recovery, will be realized. This process utilizes the best practices and resources the State offers to help unify families. The following outcomes are expected:

- ✘ Integrated care for families by utilizing the Substance Abuse Managed Service System model
- ✘ A coordinated network of support services to facilitate family reunification
- ✘ Better access to case management, support and recovery services
- ✘ Assessment of ongoing recovery process and demonstrated movement to a supportive lifestyle
- ✘ Families retain child custody and avoid future problems in child welfare system
- ✘ Responsiveness of the system to meet client's needs for sustained recovery evaluated
- ✘ Lower costs associated with out of home placements and court proceedings
- ✘ Data analysis to improve program cost, outcome quality and speed of family reunification

