

# Breaking the Legacy of Drug Abuse with Foster Care Adolescents in Forsyth County

2016-17 NC Albert Schweitzer Fellows  
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## PROJECT GOALS

The Fellows aimed to improve the wellness of foster care adolescents who come from substance abusing homes through group sessions centered around educational activities and emotional support.



## SERVICES PROVIDED

- Twice weekly, 90 minute group sessions focused on four main principles:
  1. Celebrating goodness
  2. Identifying and expressing emotions
  3. Self-care
  4. Alcohol and drug education

## RESULTS

- 7 of 9 adolescents completed the LEGACY group program.
- Three outcomes were assessed: mental health status, self care, and avoidance of risky behaviors.

### Mental health

- Goal: Show improvement in anxiety, depression, suicidality, or self-concept inventories.
- All 7 adolescents showed improvement in one or more areas:
  - 5 reported decreased anxiety
  - 3 reported decreased depression
  - 6 reported decreased suicidality
  - 4 reported increased self-concept

### Self Care

- Goal: Each participant utilize self care techniques such as coloring, SBRR (stop, breathe, reflect, respond), physical activity, or healthy food preparation 3 or more times a week for 30 minutes at a time for 16 weeks.
- 4 of 7 adolescents utilized self-care techniques 3x a week or more for one month or more of the program.

### Risky behavior

- 3 of the 9 adolescents who participated in the program completely abstained from alcohol and drug use during the program.
- An additional 1 adolescent stopped using substances during the program.
- An additional 1 adolescent decreased substance use between the beginning and the end of the program.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- The community site has agreed to continue Project LEGACY in collaboration with another Wake Forest School of Medicine (WFSOM) MD/PhD candidate and the newly established WFSOM Addiction Medicine Interest Group, and to expand it to all foster adolescents who have experienced trauma.
- The community site is also incorporating aspects of Project LEGACY into its annual Summer Enrichment Program, including mindfulness exercises, physical activity, and healthy cooking and eating.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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