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MCH Innovations Database Practice Summary & Implementation Guidance

Renewal House: Shared Guidance for Pregnant and Post Partum Women's Recovery Services

Renewal House is a comprehensive family residential program focusing on treatment, healing, and housing for women and their children affected by substance use disorders.

Cutting-Edge

Emerging

Promising

Best



Location

Tennessee



Topic Area

Mental Health & Substance Use; Perinatal Substance Use



Setting

Community



Population Focus

Children; Infant; Women & Maternal



Date Added

Spring 2026

Contact Information

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Section 1: Practice Summary

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

Renewal House, located in Nashville, Tennessee, was founded in 1996 to provide substance use disorder (SUD) treatment to pregnant and parenting women with young children coming to the attention of the legal system. At that time, women would often lose custody of their children due to court ordered treatment or incarceration. As a result, children faced the uncertainties of the foster care system; and mothers, desperate to reunite with their families, often exited treatment prematurely.

The mission of Renewal House is to treat, promote healing, and provide housing for women and children affected by substance use disorders. Renewal House offers a comprehensive approach to treatment and works diligently to help women eliminate challenges to advance their social, emotional, mental, spiritual, financial, and physical health.

Renewal House provides long term substance use disorder treatment for pregnant and parenting women while supporting their children at the same time. We serve mothers who are parenting 1-2 children ages 0-10 and/or are pregnant. Our goal is to ensure women enter a life of recovery and maintain this recovery by integrating into a supportive community where they can use the skills learned in treatment to manage the stress of daily life and thrive as productive citizens and mothers.

CORE COMPONENTS & PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

The goal of Renewal House to help women enter a life of recovery without substances, support their children, and become productive community citizens. We have successfully accomplished this for 30 years.

Core Components & Practice Activities		
Core Component	Activities	Operational Details
Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)	Licensed program providing group therapy and educational sessions aimed at the root causes of a woman's addiction; Services include case management, specialized treatment for pregnant and postpartum women, transportation, and access to a range of therapeutic groups	All work is supported by staff and community based partners. All staff is trained in providing specific services to meet the needs of each individual client. Services are offered daily.



Family Residential Treatment	Women's and Children—specific, trauma-informed services including vocational support services, peer recovery support, mental health support, case management, parenting and life skills building	Services are provided daily.
Recovery Housing	Permanent and transitional housing in a safe, substance-free environment and below market rate rent.	37 units of affordable housing are available to women and their children in recovery.
Childcare	Childcare for parenting women to utilize while mothers are attending Renewal House services	Parents are responsible for coordinating their child's entry into the childcare center.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Renewal House offers a service that is unmatched in the community. We meet the needs of a key underserved population, work to advocate for policies that impact moms and create positive outcomes for them. Renewal House contributes positively to the community and is an excellent return on investment. Renewal House saves taxpayer dollars by decreasing the number of children in foster care, decreasing the number of women incarcerated, decreasing the cost of healthcare services via frequent use of the emergency room and increasing the number of women able to contribute to the workforce.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Renewal House is the only long-term comprehensive family treatment program for pregnant and parenting women in Middle Tennessee. Since its inception in 1996, more than 10,000 women and children have gone through the Renewal House program. Over 500 women and children are served annually, and 90 women take part in the IOP each year. Renewal House supports women as they enter recovery, supports them in improving parenting skills, navigating legal challenges, finding employment, and obtaining housing. As women move into stable housing, are able to meet other basic family needs and avoid legal entanglements, they become contributing community members and restore the structure of their families keeping their family unit intact. For children, the early intervention and prevention services lessen their probability of developing a substance use disorder and other adolescent behavioral health problems.

Individual success looks different for every client, but some of the ways Renewal House defines success are as follows:



- Clients have negative drug screens.
- Clients report a decrease in mental health symptoms on post assessments.
- Clients show an increase in parenting skills on post assessment.
- Clients increase or maintain child custody.



Section 2: Implementation Guidance

COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS

Practice Collaborators and Partners			
Partner/ Collaborator	How are they involved in decision-making throughout practice processes?	How are you partnering with this group?	Does this stakeholder have lived experience/come from a community impacted by the practice?
Nurses for Newborns	These nurses in particular work with pregnant and post- partum women and children	They come to our facility and provide medical education and nursing services to our clients and babies.	Yes, they come from communities impacted by this practice.
Interfaith Dental and private community dentists.	They provide low cost and free dental services to underserved and uninsured populations. They have an excellent reputation and understand the unique needs of our clients.	They provide excellent dental care, dental extractions and understand how to work with our client population to meet their specific needs.	Unsure, but they are accustomed to working with our clients.
Coaches	Provide a variety of services through partnerships with external organizations.	Coaches provide financial literacy and training to our clients and residents through onsite classes.	Some coaches have lived experience.
St Mary Villa Child	Renewal House provides the facility/grounds for the	Provide onsite childcare to the children of both	They have years of experience providing affordable high-quality



Development Center	external partner to operate childcare services.	our residential and out-patient clients, which eliminates a key barrier for our client population.	childcare for our client population.
Food banks	These are partnerships with external food banks and they do not have a decision-making role in organizational operations.	They provide food drop offs for some of our residents in our affordable housing initiative.	They work with underserved populations.
Transportation Services	Transportation providers do not have a role in other organizational activities.	Transportation to external appointments is provided by the state Medicaid carrier. Secondary service is available through a car service.	Unsure.
Community volunteers	They are not involved in decision making but work to provide any unmet need we might have.	They coordinate and fund various events including: spring fling, holiday sponsorship, tickets to events, spa nights, campus cleanup, etc.	Varying lived experience; Volunteers also come from our community-based partners.

REPLICATION

This practice has not yet been replicated.

INTERNAL CAPACITY

The creation of Renewal House came out of a collaborative task force made up of judges, lawyers, doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, healthcare professionals, community agency representatives, and community volunteers who shared the goal of supporting families affected by SUD. Renewal House funding has come from both private and governmental sources. Building and maintaining strong relationships and fundraising have been important



strategies and have helped secure donations that are essential to support Renewal House operations. Renewal House has a strong leadership team led by a CEO who partners with the COO, CFO and Director of Programs.

Since 2022, Renewal House added a three story, 30,000 square foot, 34-unit apartment complex to its campus. The new facility allowed Renewal House to double its treatment and recovery housing capacities. With double the housing capacity, the need for affordable, high-quality childcare rose. Due to the Nashville daycare desert, Renewal House took responsibility to ensure another challenge was eliminated for clients. Renewal House raised over \$4,000,000 and built an onsite childcare center which is operated by a local community provider.

PRACTICE TIMELINE

It took approximately two years to develop, implement and create a sustainability plan for the Renewal House model. Each practice timeline is likely to be different. If you would like a consultation for your organization that may be provided by Renewal House staff for a fee. Please contact Pamela Sessions at psessions@renewalhouse.org for more information.

PRACTICE COST

Practice costs vary according to the model established by your organization. If you would like a consultation for your organization that may be provided by Renewal House staff for a fee. Please contact Pamela Sessions at psessions@renewalhouse.org for more information.

LESSONS LEARNED

Having adequate resources in place is necessary to operate this type of program.

It takes time to implement this program. It could take several years of planning and execution.

A cross-sector group of people with various connections is necessary to get the program implemented.

You should invest in finding the right space in a good location to do this work. It's great to find a space in which the program can physically grow and expand.

NEXT STEPS

Renewal House has plans to continue to expand its campus to meet the needs of mothers it serves. The next goal is to add additional recovery housing and a social enterprise! The social enterprise would allow mothers an opportunity to work as they enter the career phase of the treatment program and creating a thriving business would put money back into Renewal House. Renewal House is also seeking to expand its outpatient services and increase retention of women in the program for longer periods of time.



OUR CAMPUS

Images of our latest additions to the campus. Childcare center in the forefront
Residential center in the background.

