

Woodland Hills and CADT

- the whole is greater than the sum of its parts

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Contributing authors

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She has been integral in developing the partnership between Woodland Hills and CADT.

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A unique partnership begun two years ago to address adolescent substance abuse is proving to be an innovative solution that increases the likelihood of success with the young people it serves. The Woodland Hills Adolescent Substance Abuse Program brings together the strength and talents of Woodland Hills and the Center for Alcohol and Drug Treatment, and the young adults in need of the agencies' programs.

Prior to April of 2002, students received quality treatment from either Woodland Hills or the Center for Alcohol and Drug Treatment (CADT). Independently the organizations provided services to youth and families, and their services rarely overlapped. As each strived to meet the needs of the community, the potential for a partnership – and its impact – became clear. Alcohol and other drug abuse has played an increasingly significant role in the lives and problems of the youth served at Woodland Hills. The partnership delivers extensive treatment specifically directed at issues involving drugs and alcohol that youth struggle with today.

The treatment modalities and missions of CADT and Woodland Hills are highly compatible and the agencies provide services that are virtually seamless. Work is done in tandem to formulate appropriate and individual treatment plans for the youth. This level of communication allows for individual treatment goals that augment one another without duplicating services. CADT provides licensed out-patient substance abuse assessments and treatment to students in four of the five programs operated by Woodland Hills. Students in the Chisholm House (90-/120-day), Intensive Day Treatment, Community Transition and Residential Treatment Center programs

can participate in the chemical dependency education component as well as in ongoing chemical dependency treatment.

Since the program was established, more than 150 youth have benefited from formal, individualized treatment, and hundreds have participated in the informal education classes. As the collaboration continues, more students will benefit from the high-quality, youth-directed, community-minded services provided by CADT and Woodland Hills.

Residential students typically enter formal substance abuse treatment after demonstrating a higher level of accountability for their actions. This timing is critical as they often are more likely to take responsibility for their life changes and are prepared to benefit from both programs. Students experience peer-based assistance as they process their problems with drugs and alcohol. This approach has proven effective with the adolescent population.

Students support the partnership and appreciate its results.

Sakeena, an IDT student, put it like this: "I think CADT and Woodland Hills combined is a good idea because you're working on two things at once."

Kent shares that perspective. "I think they go hand in hand because Woodland Hills prepares you by working on honesty, responsibility and social skills, which you need to get some help in CD treatment."

"I think it gives young adults a better opportunity to get help in all the areas of our problems before we go back into the real world," said Blake.

While Adam liked the program overall, he appreciated the individualized treatment plans best. "I thought it was real helpful that, with individualized treatment plans, it helped identify a lot more of the real reasons of why I was using. When I would find something out about myself in CADT, then the group would follow up with me when I got back (to the group)."

Students recognize that there is another partner in the relationship: each of them. "[Woodland Hills] helps a lot, but it will only help you if you let it help you," explained Cory. "A lot of people come in here with the tough guy front and trying to test limits. But once they get past that, they get a lot of help. And CADT opens our eyes to a lot of things, like how drugs affected us and our families. I feel Woodland Hills is a helpful place."