

Center for Addiction and Pregnancy

Helping turn lives around for mothers and their babies

Terrie Alexander's journey to the Center for Addiction and Pregnancy (CAP) began 15 years ago with a poster. Just returning from a failed rehab experience and about to meet with her probation officer, she saw a poster that said, "Are you pregnant and addicted?" Influenced by the illustration depicting how a mother's addiction affects her child, Alexander called the phone number right away.

More than a decade later, Alexander is now the poster child for CAP. After years of training and education, she became one of the program's mental health associates. As a former addicted pregnant woman, she was able to relate to CAP's clients and help them get through the nightmare of addiction.

CAP is one of only a few programs in the nation that combines drug treatment with comprehensive prenatal services while teaching women broader skills toward a healthier lifestyle. For nearly 20 years, the program's goal has been to reduce drug and alcohol abuse and complications during pregnancy; improve birth outcomes; provide family planning; and assess children's health.

At any given time, 80 women are enrolled in the program. Like Alexander, all arrive pregnant and addicted. The first few days in the program are intensive with sessions on drug education, relapse prevention, addiction and domestic violence, parenting and group therapy.

Some babies are born addicted and in need of treatment and monitoring for developmental



delays. Some need medication for withdrawal and most are followed for years at the program's pediatric clinic. If needed, women in the program also have access to Johns Hopkins Bayview's neonatal intensive care unit.

Alexander admits that the program wasn't easy. In fact, she dropped out twice. By her third admission, she was eight and a half months pregnant, tired and scared. Because

of CAP, her son was born healthy and drug free. It was then, Alexander says, that she "realized I not only had to be responsible for my recovery, but also for my baby, who spent most of his unborn life exposed to drugs and survived."

Alexander no longer works at CAP, but is still helping addicted women at the Institutes for Behavior Resources.

—Meghan Rossbach

If you or a loved one need help, the Center for Addiction and Pregnancy provides:

- Group treatment that focuses on women's issues, such as sexual abuse, domestic violence and parenting
- Pediatric care, including parenting education, newborn testing, well- and sick-child care, immunizations and 24-hour coverage
- Individualized case management and help with housing, infant supplies, and collaboration with drug court, parole and probation
- Obstetrical care by health care providers who specialize in addiction and pregnancy
- Access to intensive outpatient treatment within 24 hours of admission
- Community outreach and in-home interventions by a certified therapist
- Family education, couples counseling, relapse prevention, and psychiatric and medical consultation

For more information about the Center for Addiction and Pregnancy, call 410-550-3066.

Accepts most private insurance, medical assistance and non-insured patients.