



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Council on Recovery Receives Major Grant to Expand CHOICES™ High-Risk Behavior Prevention Program into 20 Houston-Area Schools

HOUSTON, Texas (April, 18, 2017) – The Council on Recovery, Houston's oldest organization for the prevention and treatment of addiction, has received a \$1.15 Million grant from the Hildebrand Foundation to expand its CHOICES™ high-risk behavior prevention program to 20 schools in the greater Houston area over the next 24 months. The grant will also fund a research program in collaboration with The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) to study and refine CHOICES™ methodology, and develop research-based criteria for national replication.

The Director of The Council's Behavioral Health Institute, Crystal Collier, Ph.D., LPC-S, has been the principal architect of the CHOICES™ program over the past eight years. "We are excited and privileged," Collier said, "not only to expand the CHOICES™ program to more schools, but also to work with CASA to insure the highest quality and most effective prevention methods. With this effort, we hope to help change the culture of high-risk behaviors in our city and help other communities do the same."

CHOICES™ addresses fifteen different high-risk behaviors most frequently encountered by youth. Over the past several years, The Council has seen remarkably positive changes in youth decision-making as a result of this program.

"We believe that the CHOICES™ program is an effective tool to educate teenagers and their families to make better choices with respect to high risk behaviors. The Hildebrand Foundation is proud to support The Council by expanding the CHOICES™ program beyond 20 schools in diverse areas over the next several years," said Mindy Hildebrand, trustee for the Hildebrand Foundation.

Samuel Ball, Ph.D., President & CEO of The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse and Professor of Psychiatry at Yale Medical School elaborates, "To be a partner in this initiative is very exciting. The important work of the CHOICES™ program aligns well with our Center's focus on preventing substance use and intervening to reduce the risks and harms of addiction. Our Center emphasizes the importance of research and policy to evaluate, inform, and improve practices and is very honored to collaborate with The Council in Houston."

The Council on Recovery's President & CEO, Mel Taylor, said, "Helping change the culture of high-risk behavior among youth is one of five key pillars of service The Council is addressing over the next five years. The early use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs, along with the many difficult choices youth face, are issues we address head-on every day. CHOICES™ is one of the most important programs we can provide for Houston."

"We are so grateful to the Hildebrand's for their support and are eager to launch this expanded effort," Taylor said. "This program is going to literally save lives and continue to help families in our community recover. This significant effort by Dr. Collier and her team holds incredible promise for our families' future."

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About The Council on Recovery: Founded in 1946, The Council on Recovery is Houston's oldest and largest non-profit organization providing the full spectrum of prevention, education, intervention, treatment, and recovery services for individuals of all ages. The Council on Recovery is committed to helping Houston overcome the addiction epidemic through a focus on family healing and long-term support that is equally accessible to all in need. Directly touching over 50,000 lives each year through prevention programs for children and youth, in-school and clinical counseling for teens, outpatient substance abuse treatment for adults, and more, our mission is to provide the highest quality of care at affordable rates for individuals and their families. Affiliated with the United Way of Greater Houston, The Council receives funding from private contributions and grants, special events, and program fees. For more information, visit www.councilonrecovery.org.