



Fletcher Group Partner Success Story

SMART IN OHIO

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OF ALL PLACES!

The faith-based, privately funded Beneath The Shade women's recovery center just outside Dover, Ohio isn't the most likely setting for secular, science-driven recovery. "In the beginning we were just a bunch of church ladies praying together, with no idea how to get started," says Board Member Traci Hooper. Three years later, in an area particularly hard hit by the opioid epidemic, SMART Recovery's evidence-based Successful Life Skills training program has helped Tuscarawas County see its first decline in overdoses and overdose deaths.



ASTOUNDING SUCCESS

"The benefits have been huge," says Traci. "Everyone's maintaining long-term sobriety with zero lapses. That's almost unheard of." Traci has worked with many women for years with little or no improvement. "But after a SMART meeting, they'll say, 'A light just came on. I've finally figured it out and can move forward.'" In addition, it works on any behavior, from substance use and alcohol to eating and mental disorders. "It's so uplifting to see what happens when people finally have the tools they need. I have nothing but good things to say about SMART Recovery."

COLLABORATOR, NOT COMPETITOR

SMART Recovery is based on science rather than religion, but that didn't bother anyone at Traci's faith-based operation. "We do plenty of religious training. We've got that covered. But residents were still having a hard time getting to the root of their addiction.

"That's where SMART Recovery's Successful Life Skills Curriculum really made a difference. The self-confidence of our residents has skyrocketed. For the first time, they feel like they can get to the root of things and take control of their own recovery. It's had a massive impact."

APPLICABLE ANYWHERE

"Most people think they have what they need.," says Traci. "You hear them say, 'We already have a 12-Step Program. What's the problem?' But then you look at the relapse rates and you think: If we really had what we need, why would we have so many emergency room visits and funerals?" Traci says the SMART program is an effective complement to any recovery home or program. "In terms of challenges and goals, we're all in this together. So if something works and doesn't hurt anything, why not use it?"





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GETTING TO THE ROOT

"Sometimes our people just need somewhere to go to get through a difficult moment," says Traci. "But what we noticed with the SMART program was immediate enthusiasm and amazingly positive change." According to her, it helps people find the root cause of their addiction—the missing piece without which recovery can't proceed—then helps develop the coping skills to resist triggers. "It's so popular," says Traci, "that residents decided on their own to continue the meetings and have extended them to the library and county jail."



JUST IN TIME

"Our rehabs were overflowing, there was a long waitlist, and when people left rehab, there was nowhere to go. So it was just this continuous revolving door," says Traci.

"It was so bad our county jails and rehabs set up drug courts because there were so many people going through the court system—all drug-related. Now, finally, we're starting to see a decline, but only because we've really stepped up and brought in outreach and other programs like SMART's."

INSTANT IMPACT

"There are many paths to recovery," says Traci. "But one thing is universal: you need to dig deep and do the work to uncover both the reason behind your addiction and what your triggers are. Then you can develop a plan for handling them. You have to because the triggers are everywhere and can't be eliminated or avoided. Without those skills you're going to be in trouble sooner or later. And that's what the SMART program gives you: the life skills to deal with your triggers and achieve lasting success.."

HOW IT BEGAN

"We were trying to put together a curriculum when we learned through the Fletcher Group what SMART offered," says Traci. "We immediately wanted to get involved and basically threw away what we were working on. That's because SMART made it so easy to teach what we need and hit our goals instead of failing over and over again. There's really nothing like it."

According to Fletcher Group Program Administrator Michelle Day (shown below), "Beneath the Shade's success makes them a perfect model for others,"

