

## Who Can Participate in the Program?

This program will serve Fayette County residing children or adolescents who have C.O.A. issues. The individual can be 17 years old or younger, and must be able to understand the reasons for their treatment.



## Important Facts

- Addiction affects the entire family.
- Living with a non-recovering alcoholic in the family can contribute to stress for all members of the family.
- These families usually experience higher levels of conflict within the family.
- Many children of alcoholics experience other family members as distant and non-communicative.
- Children of alcoholics may be hampered by their inability to grow in developmentally healthy ways.
- \*Almost one in five adult Americans (18%) lived with an alcoholic while growing up.
- \*\*Roughly one in eight American adult drinkers is alcoholic or experiences problems due to the use of alcohol.
- Children of alcoholics are more likely than non-C.O.A.'s to marry into families in which alcoholism is prevalent.
- C.O.A.'s are more at risk for disruptive behavioral problems and are more likely than non-C.O.A.'s to be sensation seeking, aggressive, and impulsive.
- C.O.A.'s appear to have lower self-esteem than non-C.O.A.'s in childhood, adolescence and young adulthood.
- Anxiety, depression, and externalizing behavior disorders are more common among C.O.A.'s than among children of non-alcoholics.
- If healthy family rituals or traditions, such as vacations, mealtimes or holidays, are highly valued and maintained, if the active alcoholic is confronted with his or her problem, if there are consistent significant others in the life of the child or children, and if there is moderate to high religious observance, children can be protected from many of the consequences of parental alcoholism.

### Citations:

\*American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, November 2002

\*\* National Association for Children of Alcoholics, May 2005

# Journey of Discoveries



## A Children of Alcoholics Treatment Program

Fayette County Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc.

100 New Salem Road—Suite 106  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
Phone: 724-438-3576  
[www.fcdaa.org](http://www.fcdaa.org)

**ADDICTION AFFECTS THE ENTIRE FAMILY...**  
*We're Here To Help!*

## Defining a Child of an Alcoholic or Addict:

A child of an alcoholic or addict (*C.O.A.*) is a child or adolescent of a chemically dependent parent, guardian, or other family member (*i.e. if an alcoholic uncle lived in the home with the child*). The chemically dependent parent, guardian, or other family member may or may not be in recovery. The program focuses on developing recovery tools, increasing coping and life skills, improving communication skills, and preserving family relationships.

*We can help your child or teenager live a happier and healthier life.*

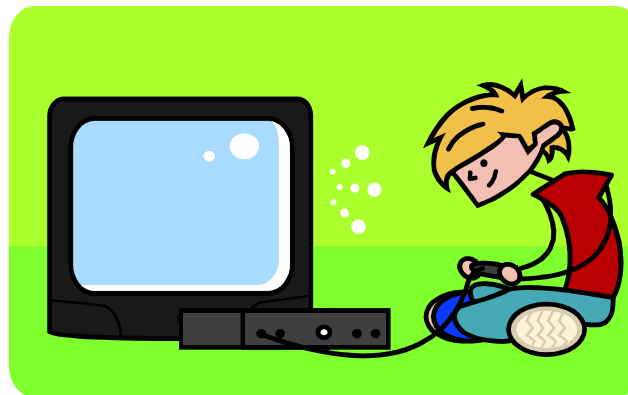


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## The Importance of Recovery Tools:

Some examples of recovery tools taught to children of the alcoholic/addict are:

- Increasing resiliency and self worth.
- Learning the “3 C’s” (*one didn’t Cause the addiction, can’t Control the addiction, and can’t Change the addiction.*)
- Decreasing the shame, guilt, fear, anger, and control issues that often come along with loving an addicted family member.



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## Issues Covered During the COA Sessions:

Some of the issues that may be worked on in therapy are:

- The health of the alcoholic/addict.
- Separating the person from the addiction.
- The survival of the family.
- Their family’s addiction and its effects on their friendships, dating, and “reputation.”
- How to live with an alcohol or drug abuser.
- How to develop better survival skills for coping and getting help.
- Worrying about the health of the alcoholic parent/family member.
- Being upset and angry by the unpredictable and inconsistent behavior of the alcoholic and lack of support by the non-alcoholic parent.
- Worrying about fights and arguments between the parents.
- Being upset and scared by the violence or possibility of violence in the family.
- Whether addiction is hereditary.
- Assessing the risk of a child/teenager’s own substance abuse.

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