

## ABSTRACT

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT AS A LIFESTYLE CHANGE: IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKING WITH MOTHERS IN THE REAL WORLD

This exploratory study attempts to identify some of the challenges mothers face during and after residential substance abuse treatment. Interviews were conducted with women in treatment preparing to transition back into community and staff members of the facility who work with these women. Qualitative data collected were analyzed using the Constant Comparative Method. Major themes that emerged include (a) experience in treatment, (b) children in treatment, (c) challenges to community living, (d) advice to professionals, and (e) women's emotional needs/social support. Implications for substance abuse treatment and social work practice are discussed.

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