

choose to belong

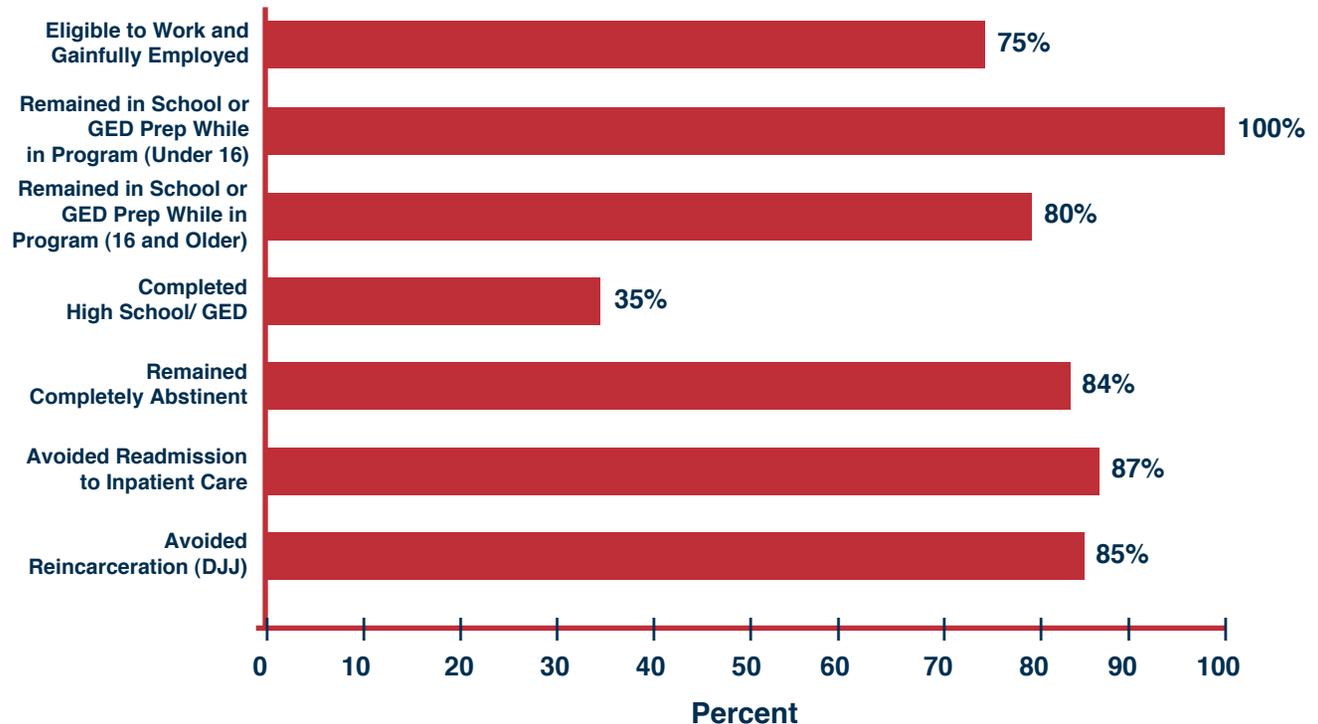
The Bridge strives to ensure that every adolescent who has experienced difficulties related to alcohol and/or other drug use receives an equal opportunity to achieve successful functioning in the community through a comprehensive support network.

a better way to belong

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Bridge is a comprehensive, individualized, family-centered service primarily designed for adolescents who are preparing to leave an alcohol and other drug inpatient program; a juvenile justice facility; or other residential setting. Because the move from an institutional setting represents a difficult time for both the adolescent and the family, The Bridge offers a gradual “step-down” transition into the community by providing a comprehensive array of specialized services, including family-based counseling, intensive case management and continuing care, as well as general attention to primary healthcare needs. In addition, in an attempt to meet the needs of a broader community of adolescents, the program also accepts referrals of young people at risk for incarceration from local juvenile justice offices, schools and other community organizations. Following an intensive assessment to determine individual strengths and needs, a comprehensive plan is tailored to meet the needs of the adolescent and family.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR BRIDGE GRADUATES (FISCAL YEAR 2004)



Recognizing that the family is the primary support system for an adolescent, the program provides outpatient family-member, family-unit and multi-family counseling, as well as home-based support services and other opportunities to enhance healthy life skills. The program’s flexible “wrap-around” approach to services (e.g., health care, tutoring, family and individual counseling) is designed to stop the “twin revolving doors” of inpatient treatment and juvenile incarceration that often trap today’s adolescents. Its philosophy allows program goals to be modified and adapted to fit the needs of all adolescents and families to increase their likelihood of adapting and functioning successfully in the community.

The success of The Bridge has led to the establishment of new services for adolescents in South Carolina. Specifically, the state now offers juvenile drug courts and residential treatment programs for adolescents who are involved with the juvenile justice system and who have problems with alcohol and/or other drugs.

PROGRAM GOALS

The ultimate goal of The Bridge is to improve treatment outcomes for adolescents who are experiencing diagnosable alcohol and other drug problems and who are preparing to leave — or are in danger of entering — a structured, residential treatment setting.

The program offers an array of services designed to increase their chances of becoming healthy, productive adults by:

- reducing their recurrent use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs;
- reducing juvenile offenses, including truancy and delinquency;
- reducing school dropouts;
- reducing high-risk sexual activity associated with teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS;
- reducing violent behavior; and
- improving life skills.

In addition, the program helps parents and other significant family supports to become more functional resources for the adolescents. Specifically, the program teaches family members and others how to create a recovery environment that reinforces positive adolescent behavior patterns by offering services designed to:

- strengthen parenting skills and improve family functioning;
- develop a social support network for parents and others; and
- provide alcohol and other drug abuse treatment and/or economic and vocational assistance necessary to address family problems.

a better
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PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Bridge is affiliated with the Office of the Governor and is funded by the South Carolina General Assembly and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant of the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The program is administered by the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) through subcontracts with four county alcohol and drug abuse authorities. Direct services are provided in four locations through the Ernest E. Kennedy Center (serving Charleston and Berkeley counties); the Dawn Center (serving Orangeburg, Bamberg and Calhoun counties); LRADAC, The Behavioral Health Center of The Midlands; and the Spartanburg Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission. The Bridge is designed to serve as a model for replication in other areas of the state.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Since the program's inception in 1994, The Bridge has been recognized as follows:

- "Innovative Provider of Substance Abuse Services to Juvenile Justice Youth" by the *American Probation and Parole Association*, 1996
- "Promising Approach to Serving Juvenile Offenders in Drug Treatment" by the *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice*, 1997
- "Best Practice" for serving youth involved in the juvenile justice system by the *National Mental Health Association*, 2000
- "Promising Strategy to Reduce Substance Abuse" by the *Office of Justice Programs of the U.S. Department of Justice*, 2000
- Inclusion in *Treating Teens: A Guide to Adolescent Drug Programs* by *Drug Strategies*, 2003



successful
transitions
for
adolescents

Nationally Recognized Adolescent Program

South Carolina
DAODAS

the bridge

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