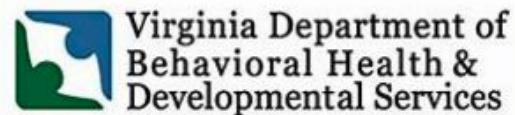




# THE ADOLESCENT COMMUNITY REINFORCEMENT APPROACH:

An evidence-based practice for treating SUD among young people



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# Overview

What is the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA)?

A-CRA Procedures & Case Study

Virginia A-CRA Pilot Program Outcomes

A-CRA Training, Certification, and Sustainability

Q & A

The A-CRA “acknowledges the powerful role of environmental contingencies in encouraging or discouraging drug use, and thus attempts to rearrange these contingencies such that sober behavior is more rewarding than using behavior.”

# What is the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA)?

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Development of the  
Community Reinforcement  
Approach (CRA)

Outpatient

Adolescents

Operant techniques

Family training

Variety of substances

Post-residential

A-CRA

Gender & racial differences

Juvenile justice

School

Co-occurring disorders

Therapeutic  
rapport



Promote  
prosocial  
behaviors



Healthy  
relationships



Reduce use



Recovery  
support

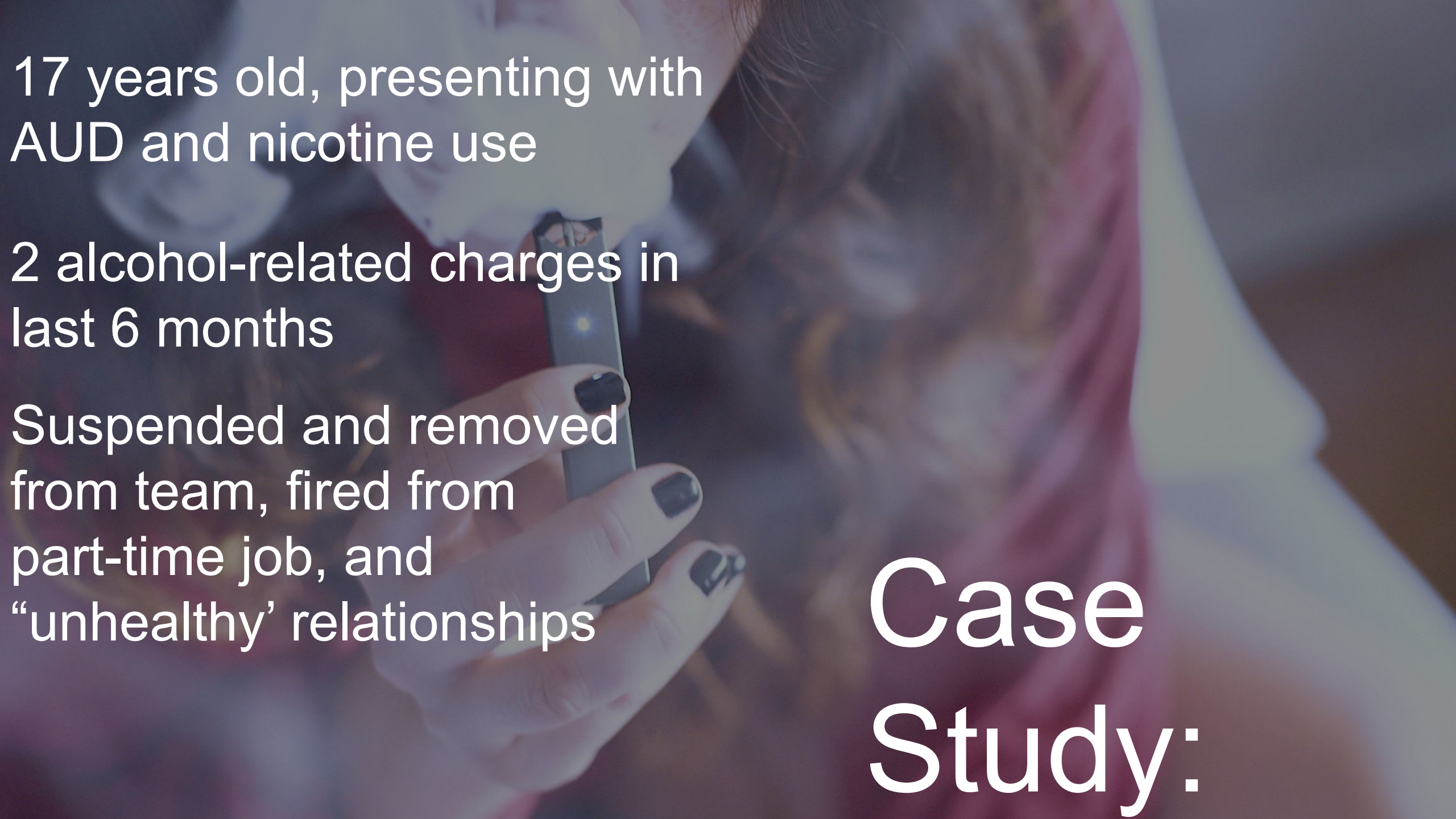


# Goals of A-CRA



# A-CRA Procedures

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A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a safety razor, with the razor head positioned near their face. The person has dark hair and is wearing a red garment. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a white surface. The overall lighting is soft and natural.

17 years old, presenting with  
AUD and nicotine use

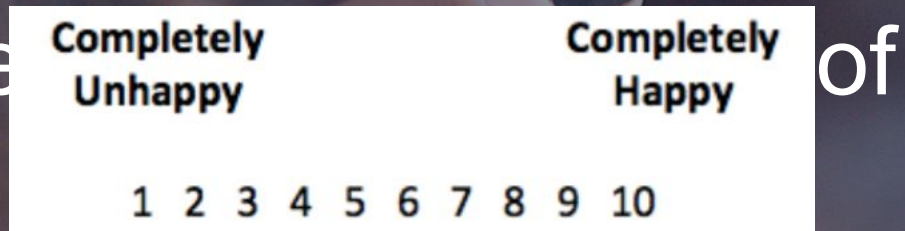
2 alcohol-related charges in  
last 6 months

Suspended and removed  
from team, fired from  
part-time job, and  
“unhealthy” relationships

Case  
Study:

# Sessions 1-3

- Build rapport & agency assessments
- Happiness Scale
- Treatment Course



Treatment Plan and Goals of Counseling		
Relationship with friends	a) Ask Mom to have Morgan over one day this week b) Facetime with Morgan 2x	a) Ask today by 6pm b) Friday after school (around 3pm) and Sunday around 1pm

# Case Study:



## Sessions 4-10

Other activities including (but not limited to:

- Functional analyses of SA and prosocial behaviors
- Problem solving skills
- Communication skills
- Job seeking skills
- Drink and drug refusal skills
- Happiness scale & goals
- *Caregiver only session(s)*

Case  
Study:

## Sessions 11-14

Other activities including (but not limited to:

- ☐ Relationship skills – family sessions
- ☐ Happiness scale & goals
- ☐ Relapse prevention

Case  
Study:

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# Virginia Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach: Pilot Program Outcomes



Data from Oct 1 2017 - October 26

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2021

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# Intake 6-mo follow-up

Alcohol  
31.9%

25.0%

Opiates  
2.7%

0.0%

Cocaine/crack  
4.1%

Hallucinogens  
1.4%

Marijuana  
2.7%  
43.7%

Meth or other amphetamines  
0.0%  
2.7%

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23.9%

0.0%

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# Intake 6-mo follow-up

Did not use any alcohol or illegal drugs

35.6%

Experienced no new health, behavioral, or social consequence related to substance use

85.9%

Currently employed or enrolled in school

57.5%  
76.0%

94.4%  
Felt socially connected

Stable housing

82.7%  
70.7%

91.7%

98.6%

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76.0%

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# Intake 6-mo follow-up

Depression

41.8%

Trouble concentrating, understanding, or remembering

52.2%

Anxiety

38.8%

37.3%

55.1%

Trouble controlling violent behavior

Hallucinations

42.0%

19.1%

3.0%

10.3%

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1.5%

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# A-CRA Implications



Response of target population

Promotion and maintenance of healthy behaviors

Strength- and individual-based

Self-sustaining model

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Five teal pencils are arranged in a row, pointing upwards. The pencil in the center is the tallest, while the others are of varying heights, creating a sense of growth or progression. The pencils have a smooth, teal-colored body and a sharp, light-colored lead tip.

# A-CRA Training, Certification, and Sustainability

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# Training



Brief, online  
pre-training course



5, 4hr virtual training  
sessions



12.5 contact hrs  
through NAADAC

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# Certification



Demonstrate  
competency via  
digital session  
recordings



Participate in 2  
coaching calls per  
month



Complete  
process within 12  
months of training

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# Sustainability



Certified supervisors can locally  
train, certify, and supervise  
A-CRA/CRA clinicians *for free*

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# Questions?



# Contact us

Kathleen Owens – State Trainer

[owenskaty@gmail.com](mailto:owenskaty@gmail.com)

*If you are interested in getting trained in the model,  
please email Katy with “ACRA training” as the subject*

Andrew Peddy – Clinician and Supervisor

[Andrew.peddy@mountrogers.org](mailto:Andrew.peddy@mountrogers.org)