

# ACCESS TO MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT for Adolescents and Adults in the Juvenile and Family Justice System



## The Problem

Family and juvenile justice system professionals have inadequate knowledge and training on **medication-assisted treatment (MAT)** as an effective, evidenced-based treatment for opioid use disorders (OUD); when they limit or prohibit adults or adolescents with OUD from accessing MAT, this adversely affects the ability of such individuals to achieve successful outcomes in the juvenile or family law related cases in which they are involved.

## Medication-Assisted Treatment

### What is medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder?

Using the **FDA-approved** medicines of methadone, buprenorphine (Suboxone, Subutex), and naltrexone (Vivitrol), to treat opioid use disorder.



These medications **block the effects of other narcotics and reduce the risk of withdrawal.**



When **combined with evidence-based behavioral health services**, these prescribed medicines are effective in saving lives.



Because each medicine works differently and each patient has a unique history and circumstances, treatment providers must be able to **work with patients on an individual basis to decide the best treatment.**

### Positive Outcomes of Medication-Assisted Treatment for Adults and Adolescents with OUD



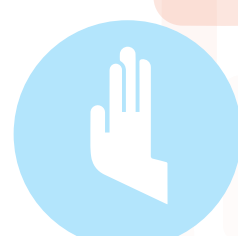
**Reduced** use of illicit opioids.



**Increased** retention in OUD behavioral health treatment services.



**Decreased** mortality from opioid use disorder.



**Increased** abstinence from illicit opioid use.



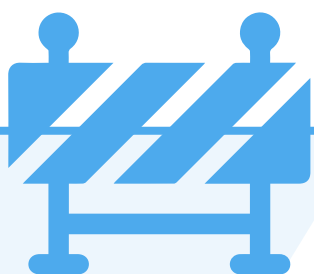
**Increased** length of time between relapses.



**Improved** outcomes for babies with neonatal abstinence syndrome.



**Increased** parental retention of the custody of their children



### Barriers to Medication-Assisted Treatment



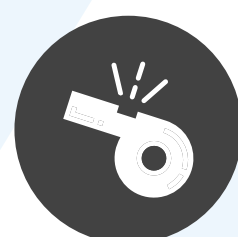
**Prohibiting** access to MAT by court orders or government agency regulations.



**Restricting** visitation of children in foster care by parents being treated with MAT.



**Prohibiting** drug court participants who use MAT from graduating from specialty courts.



**Imposing** sanctions on those using legally prescribed and monitored medication-assisted treatment.

### The Solution

The **National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ)** supports:



**Judicial leadership** on the court system being a referral source for medication-assisted treatment in combination with behavioral health services as evidence-based treatment for opioid use disorders.



**Training and technical assistance** to juvenile and family justice professionals on the use of FDA-approved medications to treat addiction to opioids.



**Funding** for additional research.



**Collaboration** with allied organizations and federal partners.



**Recognition** that ordering individuals to refrain from, decrease or stop using medication-assisted treatment as prescribed is discrimination and is a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.



**Training and technical assistance** to juvenile and family justice professionals on comprehensive services and evidence-based treatments, including MAT, for addressing opioid use disorders