

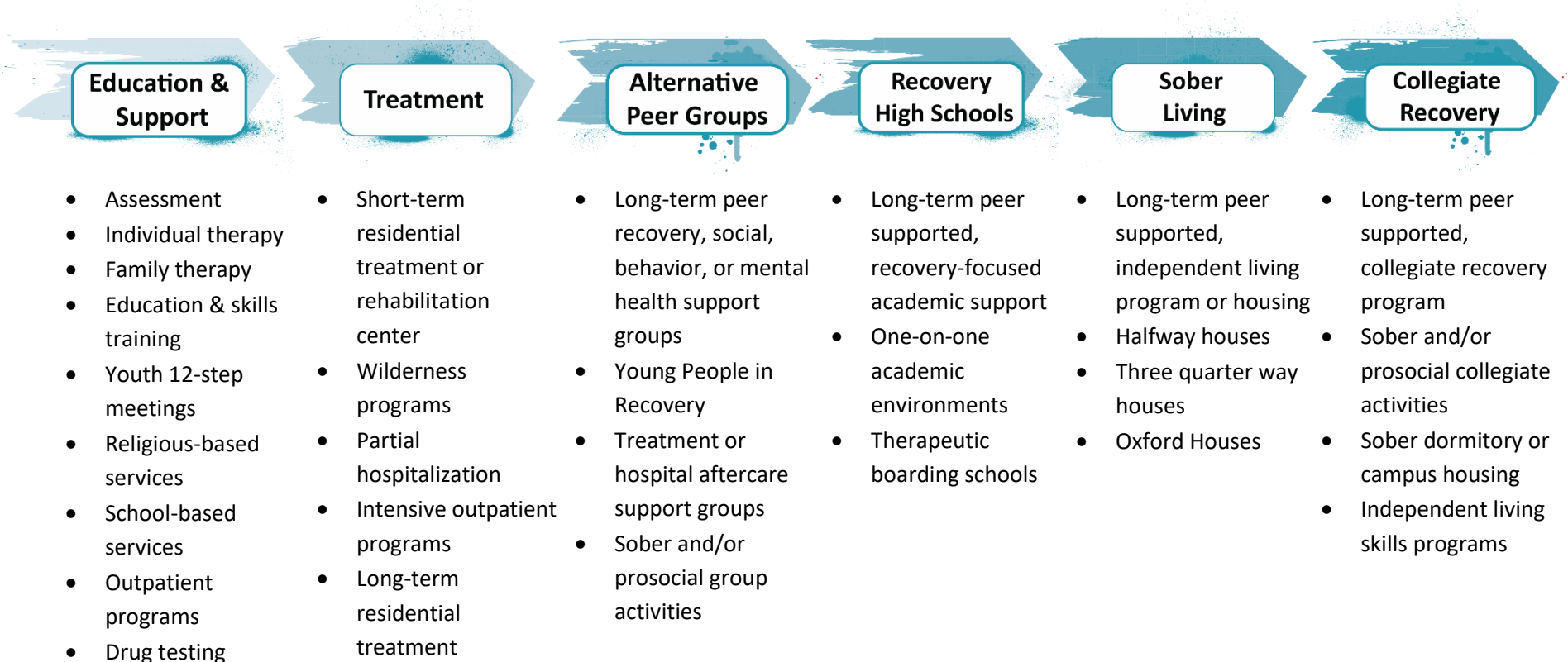


YOUTH RECOVERY CONTINUUM OF CARE

Substance use or mental health problems that begin during adolescence or emerging adulthood typically become chronic conditions that pervade adulthood. Thus, long-term recovery support is vital. The optimal recovery time from first treatment exposure is about 18 months, which corresponds to the time it takes for the brain to heal, for the frontal lobe to turn back on, and for any effects of arrested development to 'unarrest'. The Youth Recovery Continuum of Care, illustrated below, serves as a guide for parents or clinicians caring for a recovering youth. It is critically important to engage youth in a long long-term, developmentally tailored treatment plan that effectively addresses youth risk and protective factors including:

(a) Age (b) Level of Executive Functioning (c) Family Dynamics (d) Peer Network Characteristics (e) Academic Needs (f) Co-occurring Diagnoses

Depending upon the level of use and the individual needs listed above, treatment should start with the **least restrictive environment** and include developmentally appropriate strategies for youth and their family and community system. The categories and types of care are listed below.



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