

BRIEF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) involves school age children ages 3-5, 6-11 or 12-16 and their families in 14 family training sessions using family systems and cognitive behavioral approaches to increase resilience and reduce risk factors. The program consists of three life skills courses – parenting skills, youth's social/life skills, and family life skills. Families attend 14 weekly sessions, beginning with a meal, followed by separate parents and youth groups, and ending with a family group. Personal disclosure is not required and stress is laid on new skills offering more options rather than criticizing old skills or past behavior.

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

Parent Outcomes:

- Increased parenting efficacy, parenting skills, and marital communication.
 - Decreased stress, depression, and alcohol and drug use.
 - Youth Outcomes
 - Decreased tobacco, alcohol or drug use.
 - Decreased depression, conduct disorders, and aggression.
 - Increased cooperation, number of pro-social friends, social competencies, and school grades.
- Family Level Outcomes:
- Improved parenting knowledge and skills
 - Improved family relationships
 - Improved children's social skills and behavior

AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

Age Range: Families with children ages 3-5, 6-11 or 12-16

Grade: Grades pre-K– 10

Gender: Both Male and Female

PROGRAM DETAILS

Type of Program: Prevention

Audience Size: Minimum of 6 Families / Maximum of 12 Families

of Lessons: 14 (one per week)

Length of Sessions: 3 hours, including meal

Duration of Implementation: 14 weeks

Training: Strongly recommended

HOW IT WORKS

The SPF curriculum is a 14-session behavioral skills training program of 2 hours each. Parents meet separately with two group leaders for an hour to learn to increase desired behaviors in children by increasing attention and rewards for positive behaviors. They also



learn about clear communication, effective discipline, substance use, problem solving, and limit setting. Children meet separately with two facilitators for an hour to learn how to understand feelings, control their anger, resist peer pressure, comply with parental rules, solve problems, and communicate effectively. Children also develop their social skills and learn about the consequences of substance abuse. During the second hour of the session, families engage in structured family activities, conduct family meetings, learn communication skills and plan family activities. Families leave each week with specific home practice assignments that insure that knowledge of new skills is translated into practice. New skills are built in easy steps with an emphasis on coaching and encouragement by group leaders.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

To replicate with fidelity:

- Implementation of all 14 Parent, Child and Family Skills training sessions using SPF manuals and meeting once per week.
- Committed and experienced staff, including a part-time site coordinator and four group leaders (working five hours per week) who receive 2 days of SFP



training prior to implementation. Warm, empathetic, genuine, and creative leaders are most effective.)

- At least two large training rooms equipped with flip charts and extra space for tables for meals and childcare.
- Family meals, transportation, and childcare should be provided (reduces barriers to attendance).

MATERIALS AND TRAINING

Required Materials

Parent, Youth, Family Group Leader Manuals - \$450

NOTE: All course materials are provided in a master set on CD from which agencies copy all course materials needed to implement SFP. Each set of 3 group leader manuals typically costs about \$30 to copy from CD. Parent and child handouts will be copied for each new class of families at a typical cost of \$5-10 total.

Training (Strongly Recommended)

Two-Day Training - \$3,250 for 35 participants

PROGRAM CONTACT

For program content information and materials, contact:

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Website: <http://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org>

Program Information Worksheet

SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Program & Practices (NREPP) Review Documents