

STRENGTHENING Families PROGRAM for parents and youth 10-14

An evidence-based parent, youth, and family skills-building curriculum that:

- Prevents teen substance abuse and other behavior problems
- Strengthens parent/youth communication skills
- Increases academic success in youth
- Prevents violence and aggressive behavior at home and at school

The World Health Organization named Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 the #1 prevention program out of 6,000 programs analyzed for long-term effects on substance use and misuse.

“Disappointing results from school-based programmes have encouraged interest in family interventions. The one with the best track record is the U.S. Strengthening Families Program: 10-14, an approach now being tried in Britain.” David Foxcroft, Oxford Brookes University (Cochrane Collaboration Systematic Review, 2002). Foxcroft, Ireland, Lister-Sharp, Lowe and Breen

Evidence-Based Program

- Part of a random/control study
- Listed as a model or promising program with:
 - Department of Education
 - Blueprints for Violence Prevention
 - NREPP
 - SAMHSA
 - CSAP
 - NIDA
 - OJJDP

Benefit-Cost Analysis – For every dollar spent on SFP 10-14, \$9.60 comes back to the community as benefits in the form of less jail time, less time off work, and less time in treatment.

Source: Spoth, Gyll, & Day (2002). *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 63, 210-228.

Program Features

- Developed for parents and youth ages 10-14
- Designed for a group of 7-10 families
- Consists of seven two-hour sessions with graduation
- Led by three certified facilitators with separate sessions for youth and parents and then families together
- Builds communication and allows parents and youth to practice skills with learning games and family projects
- Provides four optional booster sessions that may be held 3 – 12 months later
- Implemented in all 50 states and more than 18 countries



Youth say:

- “I learned to deal with peer pressure.”
- “I realized my parents have stress too.”
- “My parents love me.”



Parents say:

- “I learned to listen to my child and their feelings.”
- “I can set rules and consequences and still show love.”
- “This is the first time since my son was born that my husband and I have been on the same page.”
- “Since there was a court order for my son to do this, we both felt it was a waste of time – we were wrong!”

Facilitators say:

- “I firmly believe in this program. I hope the parents find the tools, skills, and strategies helpful.”
- “All families can learn from this program. Families all have needs and challenges.”
- “Our family did the program and the peer pressure steps helped them choose a great group of friends.”

Youth Risk and Protective Factors Addressed

Risk Factors:

- Aggressive or withdrawn behavior
- Negative peer influence
- Poor school performance
- Lack of pro-social goals
- Poor relationship with parents

Protective Factors:

- Positive future orientation
- Peer pressure resistance skills
- Pro-social peer relationships
- Positive management of emotions
- Empathy with parents



SFP 10-14 Delays Initiation of Substance Use by Over 2 Years

Average age at given prevalence levels	Prevalence Rate	Age	
		Control	SFP 10-14
Lifetime Alcohol Use w/o Parent Permission	40%	14.4	17.0*
Lifetime Drunkenness	35%	15.3	17.5*
Lifetime Cigarette Use	30%	15.7	17.9*
Lifetime Marijuana Use	10%	15.5	17.8

*p < .05 for test of group difference in time from baseline to point at which initiation levels reach the stated levels—approximately half of 12th grade levels—in control group.

Source: Spoth, Redmond, Shin, & Azevedo (2004). Brief family intervention effects on adolescent substance initiation: School-level curvilinear growth curve analyses six years following baseline. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 72, 535-542.

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