

Edition 08 – 3

Winter 2009

Research Précis

Best Practices: Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities

Creating a better tomorrow...

Title: Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14

Overview:

The *Strengthening Families Program (SFP)* is a video-based intervention program designed to reduce substance abuse and behavioral problems during adolescence.

Target: Parents and youth ages 10-14

Extent/Duration of Program: The program consists of seven two-hour sessions for both parents and youth, each delivered by three facilitators, and each designed to accommodate eight to 13 families. Four booster sessions are completed six months to one year after base program.

Program Costs:

- Each leader's manual is \$175. Each set of nine videos is \$298. Additional supplies cost about \$15 per family.
- Program requires two days of facilitator training. Follow-up consultation and technical assistance are provided at no charge.

For further information, or to order:

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Web site:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/>

Principles/Approaches/Components: The *Strengthening Families Program* is based on the premise that improving the ability of family systems to support effective child-rearing in early adolescence will reduce delinquent behavior in later adolescence. In sessions for youth, parents, and families, narrated videos are used to portray scenarios involving youth and parents, and all participants are engaged in role-playing, discussion, games, and family projects. The program components focus on improving parenting skills (e.g., monitoring, expressing affection, setting limits), building life skills in youth (e.g., resisting peer pressure, managing emotions, setting goals), and strengthening family bonds.

Evidence-based Effectiveness: In a longitudinal study spanning five years and involving 11 schools and over 400 control or treatment groups from grade 6 through grade 10, evaluation results indicated a substantial reduction in drug, alcohol, and tobacco use. Though to a lesser degree, treatment groups also showed a reduction in general conduct problems.

Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) connections:

A.ii - Activities that promote a sense of individual responsibility.

A.iv - Activities that teach students to recognize social and peer pressure to use drugs illegally and the skills for resisting illegal drug use.

B - Activities that involve families, community sectors, and a variety of drug and violence prevention providers in setting clear expectations against violence and illegal use of drugs and

appropriate consequences for violence and illegal use of drugs.

E.xi - Programs that encourage students to seek advice from, and to confide in, a trusted adult regarding concerns about violence and illegal drug use.

National Standards connections:

Grades 5 through 10

Health Education Standard 1 – Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

Health Education Standard 4 – Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Health Education Standard 5 – Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

Health Education Standard 6 – Students will Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

Health Education Standard 7 – Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

National Health Education Standards, Second Edition: Achieving Excellence. American Cancer Society, 2007.

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard B: Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard C: Students will understand safety and survival skills.

ASCA National Standards for Students. American School Counselor Association, 2004.

Recognition and additional reports:

The following organizations/institutions have recognized the *Strengthening Families Program (SFP)*. The organizations are in alphabetical order and the status of the recognition is in parentheses.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (Model Program)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) (Exemplary Program)

SAMHSA (Model Program)

U.S. Department of Education (Exemplary Program)

GENERAL NOTES: The intent of the above synthesis and correlations is to assist teachers and school administrators dedicated to using best practices to reduce violence and substance abuse among students. To our knowledge, the information was current upon publication. However, details pertaining to status of program recognition, research and findings, costs, and contact information are subject to change.

Correlations to the Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) federally approved activities and to national education standards have been limited in depth (“standard” level only) and breadth (number of standards and subjects) due to the encompassing nature of many programs that typically qualify as model or exemplary. The correlations listed should not be viewed as exhaustive.

For information on other effective programs for promoting safe and drug-free schools and communities, visit www.designedinstruction.com/learningleads/effective-sdfs-programs.html

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