Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14

Program Summary
The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is an evidence-based program that consists of seven interactive and video-based sessions. The program is taught to 8 to 13 participating families over seven weeks, with sessions usually offered in the evenings. It is recommended that sessions start with a family meal with all participating families and facilitators.

After the meal, during the first hour of each session, caregivers/parents and youth meet separately. The caregivers and youth sessions contain parallel content. For example, while caregivers are learning to set limits, define expectations, reward desired behavior, and enforce rules, the youth are learning about the importance of following rules and natural consequences. For caregivers, the program focuses on topics such as setting appropriate limits, using consequences, protecting against substance abuse, and showing love. The parent sessions are video-based, which standardizes the program and allows participants to visually conceptualize effective parent-child interactions. The youth sessions include topics such as identifying positive goals for the future, appreciating parents, managing stress, following rules, and resisting peer pressure. Youth sessions include discussions, group skills practice, role-playing, and game-like activities.

During the second hour, the youth and caregivers participate together as families to practice the new skills they have learned, play games, and do family projects. Together, they explore their family’s strengths, practice handling peer pressure, create a shared understanding of their family’s values, learn problem solving skills, review community resources, and build family communication.

The SFP 10-14 program is designed to:

- Enhance parenting skills, increase parental empathy, and promote effective parenting styles
- Build decision-making and life skills in youth, including stress management, conflict resolution, peer pressure resistance, and empathy skills
- Strengthen family bonds, promote positive communication, and enhance the ability to jointly solve problems

The seven-week program ends with a slideshow review of the concepts taught and a celebration. Caregivers and youth also write letters to each other that are mailed by the SFP 10-14 Coordinator one month later to remind them of the program content and their newly realized hopes and dreams for their family.

A supplemental curriculum with four optional booster sessions can be held three to twelve months after the basic sessions.

Target Population
- The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is a universal program designed for delivery to the general population. It is culturally sensitive to multiethnic families who live in urban or rural areas. It is appropriate for caregivers of all educational levels.
• **SFP 10-14** is a parent, youth, and family skill building program that is intended to target youth ages 10 to 14 and their primary caregiver(s). Caregivers need not be the biological parent(s). Often youth attend with step-parents, grandparents, foster parents, or other relatives or individuals that have guardianship.

• The program is generally offered to youth in grades 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>. However, students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade are developmentally most receptive to the curriculum concepts. SFP 10-14 is intended to ease the challenges faced by families as youth transition into adolescence and to also prepare youth as they move from elementary school to a middle school or high school environment. During this time, they may encounter new stressors, such as new peer influences, a more challenging school curriculum, added responsibilities, exposure to increased media messages and social pressures, and increased opportunities for independent decision-making. During this time of growth and transition, it is important to strengthen family bonds, to help families learn skills to handle the new challenges, and to guide youth as they become responsible young adults.

• **SFP 10-14** is strength-based and is intended to build on the existing skills of any family. The program has been used with a variety of audiences across the United States and in other countries, including court-referred youth, families in low-income housing projects, churches, Native American groups, Asian families (Hmong), Hispanic (including non-English speaking parents), families with older teens, and families with mental health problems. The program was not designed to target at-risk or highly dysfunctional families only and it is generally more effective when groups consist of a variety of families with a mix of skill levels and family functioning.

**Program Website:** [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp)

**Program Contact:** Cathy Hockaday, Ph.D., **SFP 10-14** Extension Program Coordinator 515-294-7601 or [hockaday@iastate.edu](mailto:hockaday@iastate.edu)

### Background on the Developer & History of the Program

Virginia Molgaard, Ph.D. developed the curriculum for the Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10 - 14 (SFP 10-14) under the direction of Richard Spoth, Ph.D. and with the support of Iowa State University Extension to Families. She is the first or primary author, but credits Karol Kumpfer, Ph.D. and Elizabeth Fleming with contributing to the writing of the curriculum. Prior to partial retirement, Virginia Molgaard, Ph.D., served as the Director of Prevention Program Development and Implementation at the Institute for Social and Behavior Research at Iowa State University and also as a State Family Life Specialist for the Cooperative Extension Service at Iowa State University, where she oversaw parent education. She is currently an Emeritus Associate Professor. At this time, Cathy Hockaday, Ph.D. is the **SFP 10-14** contact at Iowa State University.

To view more information about Virginia Molgaard’s professional experience and recognitions view: [http://www.isbr.iastate.edu/staff/Personals/vmolgaar/](http://www.isbr.iastate.edu/staff/Personals/vmolgaar/)

### History of the Program’s Development

The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is the result of a major revision of the Strengthening Families Program (SFP), which was originally developed in 1983 by Kumpfer, DeMarsh, and Child as part of a research project funded by the National Institute on Drug
Abuse (NIDA). The original SFP was developed as a 12 to 14 week program for methadone maintenance and substance-abusing outpatient parents and their children ages 6 to 12 years.

SFP 10-14 grew out of Project Family, a research endeavor of the Social and Behavioral Research Center for Rural Health (now the Institute for Social and Behavioral Research) at Iowa State University. Under the direction of Richard Spoth, Ph.D and supported by Iowa State University Extension to Families, Virginia Molgaard, Ph.D. revised the earlier version of the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) with assistance from Karol Kumpfer, Ph.D. The Iowa Strengthening Families Program: For Families with Pre- and Early Teens (ISFP) resulted. This program was delivered in fewer weeks, targeted older adolescents, and was intended for an audience that has a lower degree of risk than the original SFP offered by Karol Kumpfer, Ph.D. and associates at the University of Utah. The risk and protective factors addressed and the teaching methods and the topics reflected major changes to the original SFP’s content.

ISFP was tested in 1993 through Project Family with 446 Midwestern families who lived in economically stressed areas. So, in published research articles, SPF 10-14 is often referred to as the Iowa Strengthening Families Program (ISFP). ISFP was later revised in 1997 to make it more appropriate for ethnically diverse families and renamed the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14). Extensive research has garnered the program recognition as a Blueprints Promising Program by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. Only SFP 10-14, not SFP, holds this honor and distinction.

Developmental Timeline

- Original SFP developed by Karol Kumpfer in 1986 and tested with diverse audiences at the University of Utah between 1986 and 1998
- Major revision of SFP for pre- and young adolescents in 1993 by Virginia Molgaard, Ph.D. (Originally called the Iowa Strengthening Families Program - ISFP)
- Scientific evaluation of ISFP in rural community settings through Project Family at Iowa State University between 1993 and 2008
- In 1997, focus groups were held and ISFP was revised for diverse families, resulting in the program name being changed to the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14)
- Scientific evaluation of SFP 10-14 with Life Skills Training, Capable Families and Youth Project occurred between 1997 and 2007
- Scientific evaluation of SFP 10-14 with African American families as part of the Harambee Project between 1997 and 2002
- A cooperative research project began between Iowa State University and the Pennsylvania State University in 2002 exploring the implementation of SFP 10-14 and life-skills enhancing training with-in community support infrastructures. The project is known as Promoting School-Community-University Partnerships for Capable Youth and Families and Positive Youth Development (PROSPER).
- Ongoing training and program proliferation began in 1997 and currently continues across the United States of America, including Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands
- International Adaptations began in 2002: Sweden, U.K., Central America, Spain, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Norway, Serbia, Albania ,Panama, and Poland
Adaptations to the parent component focused on mindful parenting practices are being researched at the Pennsylvania State University. The efficacy of the mindfulness-enhanced SFP 10-14 is currently being tested in an NIH/NIDA funded randomized controlled trial being conducted with 600 families of young teens.

National and Global Recognitions

The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) has been validated through research and as a result has been recognized by the following:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) Model Program
  To view the SAMHSA model program fact sheet, click here.
  To access the listing on SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) click here: http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/Search.aspx

- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Research-Based Drug Abuse Prevention Universal Program

- Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) Blueprints for Violence Prevention Promising Program
  http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/promisingprograms/BPP18.html

- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency (OJJD) Exemplary Program
  http://www2.dsgonline.com/mpg/

- National 4H Headquarters & Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service Program of Distinction
  http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/pod.htm

- Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Model Program
  To access the listing on SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) click here: http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/search.aspx

- U.S. Department of Education Exemplary Program
  http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01/panel.html

- 2004 Communities That Care Prevention Strategies Guide

Global Recognition

In 2002, the Cochrane Collaboration Systematic Review, which was sponsored by the World Health Organization, reviewed 6000 reports of studies of psychosocial or educational interventions intended to prevent alcohol use or misuse by young people. Of the 6,000 reports, just 56 were acceptably rigorous and relevant to be included in the review and just three reported alcohol use or misuse reductions that endured over a follow-up period of at least three years. The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) was recognized by Professor David Foxcroft and colleagues as the most promising “effective intervention over the longer-term for the primary prevention of alcohol misuse.” This considerable accolade was published in a Cochrane review, the scrupulously scientific series created by the international Cochrane collaboration and later in the journal, Addition.


**Logic Model**

A logic model is a way to visually represent the underlying rationale for the proven behavioral changes of an evidence-based program. A logic model explains how and why a proven prevention program will work.

A logic model shows how specific program components or activities influence risk and protective factors and the skills, knowledge, attitudes, intentions, and behaviors of the program participants, both immediately following the program (short-term or proximal outcomes) and in later years (long-term or distal outcomes). The logic model for a program is based on an established theory of how specific risk and protective factors are related to youth development. Typically, a program’s components are designed to increase certain protective factors and decrease certain risk factors that have been shown through research to be predictor’s of youths’ future development.

In most programs, you can expect to see changes in specific risk and protective factors and in participant’s skills, knowledge, attitudes and intentions prior to changes in their actual behaviors. Knowing this helps one to have realistic expectations about when and what changes can be expected in the youth or families that are participating in a program and helps guide evaluation of the program’s impact.

**SFP 10-14 Logic Model**

Research has demonstrated that parents/caregivers participating in the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) were better able to show affection and support and set appropriate limits for their youth. These parenting skills, in addition to coping and life skills taught to the participating youth, help protect the youth from becoming involved in substance abuse and other problem behaviors. To further depict how SFP 10-14 promotes positive behavioral outcomes, the EPISCenter has created a logic model outlining the program modalities, the risk and protective factors, and proximal and distal outcomes that the SFP 10-14 has demonstrated an impact upon. To access the SFP 10-14 logic model, [click here](#).

**Theoretical Background of SFP 10-14**

Several etiological and intervention models, such as a biophysical vulnerability model, a resiliency model, and a family process model linking family economic stress and adolescent adjustment, influenced the development of the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14).

For more information, it is recommended that you read: Competency Training--The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14, Virginia K. Molgaard, Richard L. Satholic, and Cleve Redmond, Juvenile Justice Bulletin, August 2000. To access Competency Training--The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14, [click here](#).

**Targeted Risk and Protective Factors**

The parent component of the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) focuses on topics such as setting appropriate limits, using consequences, protecting against substance abuse, using effective communication, showing love, and accessing community resources. The youth sessions includes topics such as identifying positive goals for the future, appreciating parents, managing stress, following rules, and resisting peer pressure. The family component reinforces the topics taught in the separate parent and youth sessions and also addresses understanding family values, communicating
expectations for pro-social behavior, identifying family member’s strengths, practicing joint problem solving, holding family meetings, and building family communication. By teaching these skills and building upon the strengths the families already possess, the following community-level risk and protective factors, as assessed through the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) are targeted:

**PAYS Protective Factors Targeted for an Increase**

- Family Attachment
- Family Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement
- Family Rewards for Prosocial Involvement

**Additional Protective Factors Targeted for an Increase**

- Child and family management practices, including monitoring and supervision, age-appropriate parental expectations, and consistent discipline
- Effective and empathetic parent-child communication
- Promotion of healthy beliefs and clear standards
- Family bonding and supportive family involvement
- Goal setting and positive future orientation
- Positive parent-child affect
- Emotional management
- Pro-social family values
- Peer pressure refusal skills
- Family stability
- Social competencies and problem-solving skills
- Youth self-efficacy
- Youth’s perception of social support from adults and peers

**PAYS Risk Factors Targeted for a Decrease**

- Child and family management practices, including harsh, inappropriate, or inconsistent discipline, physical punishment, indulgence, poor parental monitoring and supervision, demanding/rejecting behavior, and poor communication of rules
- Favorable attitudes toward problem behaviors and substance use
- Friends who engage in problem behaviors – Negative peer influences
- Family conflict
- Early initiation of problem behaviors - early onset of ATOD use, early onset of aggression and violence
- Early and persistent antisocial behavior - alienation/delinquent beliefs/general delinquency involvement/drug dealing
• Poor school performance – academic failure beginning in late elementary school and lack of commitment to school
• Family history of the problem behavior/Parent criminality
• Rebelliousness - youth aggressive or withdrawn behavior

Additional Risk Factors Targeted for a Decrease
• Poor social and stress management skills
• Poor refusal skills

For a listing of risk and protective factors addressed by each of the seven weekly sessions, click here.

Demonstrated Outcomes

SFP 10-14 Research: ORIGINAL Randomized, Controlled Trial of ISFP
The evidence for the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is based on the earlier version of the curriculum known as the Iowa Strengthening Families Program (ISFP). In 1996 and 1997, the authors of ISFP decided to make the curriculum more culturally diverse by adding more informal interactions, game-like-learning activities, and more diverse actors and narrators into the video portrayals. The curriculum then became known as SFP 10-14.

Prior to the curriculum changes, in 1993, the Iowa Strengthening Families Program (ISFP) was originally evaluated in a randomized, controlled trial (the most rigorous evaluation design) with families of sixth graders through Project Family at the Institute for Social and Behavioral Research at Iowa State University. This large-scale, longitudinal design involved random assignment of 446 families from 33 Iowa Public Schools (22 school districts).

Outcome evaluations entailed the use of multi-informant, multi-method measurement procedures (in-home videotaping, in-home interviews) at pretest, posttest, and follow-up data collection points completed approximately one half, one and one half, two and one half, four, and six years after pretest (followed parents and youth from 6th to 12th grade). A total of 161 families participated in 21 ISFP intervention groups at 11 different schools, with group sizes ranging from 3 to 15 families. Participation rates were high among pretested families. Ninety-four percent of attending pretested families were represented by a family member in five or more sessions. Analysis of the data demonstrated positive results for both parents and youth as outlined below.

Recent Study on the Impact of ISFP and SFP 10-14 on Methamphetamine Use

Two studies of more than 1,300 students from rural Iowa public schools were conducted by researchers from Partnerships in Prevention Science at Iowa State University, working with Iowa State University Extension. Spoth, Clair, Shin and Redmond authored a paper, which was published in 2006 in the Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine highlighting reductions in the initiation and use of methamphetamine for SFP 10-14 youth participants. In the first study, 33 rural Iowa public schools were assigned to the Iowa Strengthening Families Program, Preparing for the Drug Free Years, or a control condition. In the second study, 36 similar schools were assigned to SFP 10-14 plus Life Skills Training, Life Skills Training alone, and the control group. Up to 6 years after the students began ISFP or SFP 10-14, methamphetamine use was assessed. Participants had lower levels of use within the past year than the control group.
ISFP Research Outcomes

Parent/Caregiver Outcomes:
Research demonstrates that immediately following the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14), parents who attend are significantly more likely to:

- Set and clearly communicate expectations and consequences for substance use
- Manage anger & strong emotions in parent-child relationships
- Involve child in family activities & decision making
- Improve communication with their child
- Improve child management practices, such as monitoring, appropriate and consistent discipline, and follow through with consequences
- Improve parent-child affective quality

Youth Outcomes:
Immediately following the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14), youth who attend SFP 10-14 demonstrate:

- Lower levels of substance-related risk, including substance use initiation, favorable attitudes toward alcohol, and poor peer pressure resistance skills

Research demonstrates that youth who attended the program in the past are significantly less likely to have...

- Ever used alcohol as measured both one year and two years after program completion
- Initiated use of alcohol, cigarettes or marijuana two and four years after program completion
- Reported aggressive and destructive behavior four years after program completion
- Reported past year methamphetamine use six years after program completion
- Reported past year narcotic (prescription drug) misuse six years after program completion
- Reported lifetime narcotic (prescription drug) misuse at 21 years of age
- Reported growth in internalizing symptoms
- Reported poly-substance use from 6th to 10th grade
- Reported drunkenness or illicit drug use at 21 years of age

Research demonstrates that youth who attended the program in the past are significantly more likely to have...

- Delayed onset of problematic behaviors
- Increased resistance to peer pressure
- Improved school engagement two years after program completion
- Improved academic success six years after program completion - Youth attending the program had significantly fewer conduct problems in school than youth in the control group.
The differences between program and control youth actually increased over time, indicating that skills learned and strong parent-child relationships continue to have greater and greater influence.

The EPISCenter has created a fact sheet and logic model outlining the proximal and distal outcomes that SFP 10-14 has demonstrated an impact upon. The EPISCenter SFP 10-14 fact sheet can be accessed by clicking here. The SFP 10-14 logic model can be accessed by clicking here.

**Published Research**
Information and research articles demonstrating the impact of the *Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14)* can be accessed at:

- Iowa State University [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/research.php](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/research.php)
- Partnerships in Prevention Science Institute [http://www.ppsi.iastate.edu/record.htm](http://www.ppsi.iastate.edu/record.htm)

The EPISCenter has compiled a list of select articles highlighting research on SFP 10-14. The list of research articles can be accessed by clicking here.

**Return On Investment/Cost-benefit Information**

**An Explanation of Return on Investment Calculations**
A cost-effective prevention program is doubly appealing from a societal standpoint, as such a program can successfully prevent or reduce delinquency and problem behaviors in youth and it results in a future reduction in the financial burden of interventions to taxpayers. For example, a program that diverts a youth from a criminal path will spare society the justice system expenses associated with processing offenses, such as police, court, and prison costs. In such a case, the necessary resources for the prevention program are worth the investment as they prevent other future expenses. In addition, cost-effective prevention programs have now been shown to also provide a return-on-investment or fiscal benefits above and beyond the program costs for taxpayers.

In 2004, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy conducted cost-benefit analyses for a variety of prevention programs by calculating the economic benefits derived from specific prevention programs and subtracting the costs incurred to implement the programs. The scientifically rigorous review and analysis provided credible evidence that well implemented prevention efforts can result in a significant return on investment.

To conduct cost-benefit analyses, monetary values are assigned to observed changes that are attributed to prevention programs in the following key outcomes:

- Crime (such as costs to process an arrest, prosecutor costs, victim costs, detention and supervision costs, prison operation expenses)
- Education (graduation rates, test scores, post-high school education, special education rates, grade repetition)
• Employment rates and earning potential
• Substance use (abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs)
• Public assistance (including welfare receipt or social services such as foster care)
• Teen birth rates
• Child abuse and neglect
• Health and mental health service needs

To view a chart of the economic benefits of prevention programs and for more information on return on investment research, please see the Return on Investment section of the general section of the implementation manual.


The potential economic benefits of a successful prevention or intervention program can be readily demonstrated to policymakers and the public in general. Programs that both reduce problems identified by local communities while also reducing costs to society are especially important as state and local governments become more accountable for both costs and outcomes. Given typical budget constraints, policymakers seek to fund crime prevention programs that will at least “pay for themselves” while delivering necessary services to their community. It is important for prevention programs to communicate the return-on-investment figures derived by economic experts and their locally assessed impacts.

**SFP 10-14 Return on Investment Calculations**

In the Washington State Institute for Public Policy report, *Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth*, it was determined that for every dollar spent on the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) there was a return of at least $7.82 and a cost benefit of at least $5,805 for each participating youth. The table below summarizes the cost benefit derived for SFP 10-14 by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>COSTS</th>
<th>BENEFITS PER DOLLAR OF COST</th>
<th>BENEFITS MINUS COSTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$6,656</td>
<td>$851</td>
<td>$7.82</td>
<td>$5805</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analyses by researchers from the Partnerships in Prevention Science Institute have found economic returns of up to $9.60 for every dollar spent implementing the SFP 10-14.

In Pennsylvania, the Penn State Prevention Research Center released a 2008 report demonstrating a statewide return on investment for 15 sites implementing SFP 10-14 in Pennsylvania of $13,082,000, which reflected a savings in future crime and substance use costs and an estimated average economic benefit of $872,133 per community. For every dollar invested, there is a return on investment of $7.82.


### Delivery, Administrator, and Support Staff

#### Facilitators

The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is intended to be delivered by three trained and certified facilitators. One facilitator leads the parent session and two lead the youth session. All three lead the family session. During the youth, parent, and family session, facilitators teach and direct discussion from the curriculum materials provided and when appropriate, follow the video-based instruction. During family sessions, group facilitators engage in less teaching and instruction and they assume more of a role of coach and guide as families engage in family projects and games. Each facilitator should be dedicated to three or four families and works with the same families each week. Facilitators should be enthusiastic and have strong presentation, organization, and facilitation skills. They should also be committed to delivering the curriculum as intended by the developer. Experience working with parents or youth is beneficial. Backgrounds in social services, education, psychology, and counseling are highly encouraged.

Facilitator qualifications and expectations are included in the developer’s SFP 10-14 curriculum manual on page three. Sample hiring resources can be accessed by clicking [here](http://example.com).

#### Additional Staff Members

- **Program coordinator/participant recruiter**
  
  A program coordinator can be key to implementation quality. Coordinators can assume responsibilities such as scheduling and coordinating training, arranging program location details, scheduling programs, hiring and supervising facilitators and other staff, overseeing survey administration, fidelity observations, and data analysis, preparing outcomes report for local stakeholders and funders, handling transportation and childcare arrangements, purchasing and preparing supplies and incentives, arranging the family meal, organizing the graduation celebrations, recruiting families to participate, making reminder calls to the families, and debriefing with facilitators to ensure fidelity.

- **On-site arranger**
  
  Some programs choose to hire a support person to be on-site for each of the seven sessions. The arranger assists with the meal, helps with set-up and clean-up, administers the surveys, takes pictures, and acts as a floater assisting facilitators as needed. They can also be involved in recruitment and making reminder calls to promote retention.

- **Fidelity observers**
  
  The EPISCenter recommends that fidelity observers be certified as facilitators. Fidelity observers are expected to watch a minimum of two parent, two youth, and two family sessions per 7-week program and to use the fidelity observation forms to assess the facilitator model adherence and delivery effectiveness. Assessment feedback should be shared with the facilitators to maintain and enhance program delivery and fidelity.
• **Childcare providers**  
  It is recommended that childcare be offered for younger siblings.

It is highly recommended that facilitators and all staff have current child abuse clearances.

**Training**  
Learn more about the training process at [www.episcenter.psu.edu/ebp/strengthening/training](http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/ebp/strengthening/training).

**Curriculum and Supplies**

**Purchasing the Curriculum**  
Iowa State University Extension assisted with the development and now handles material distribution of the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14). For start-up and delivery to one group of 10 families, the developer recommends purchasing 3 basic teaching manuals, a set of 9 videos or DVDs, and a set of 30 posters. In 2010, the estimated cost for these materials was $873 plus shipping and handling. It is recommended that the curriculum be purchased prior to and available for the initial training. Curriculum materials can be viewed online at: [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/order.php](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/order.php)

Handouts created by Iowa State University that summarize the concepts taught in the parent sessions can be accessed by clicking here: [SFP 10-14 Parent Session Summary Sheets](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/order.php).

The curriculum is also available in Spanish.

In 2000, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) collaborated with Virginia Molgaard, Ph.D. to create a Spanish version of SFP 10-14. Familias Fuertes Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10-14 is a derivative of SFP 10-14. This version of the curriculum uses a set of videotapes that features Latino actors speaking Spanish. The leader's manual is also in Spanish.

A program adaptation for non-English speaking and other ethnic groups is also available.

A supplemental teaching manual, SF 0002(S), is available for use with special groups of parents/caregivers for whom the SFP 10-14 DVDs/videotapes may not be appropriate. These groups include 1) ethnic groups who may not relate to the African-American, Hispanic, or white actors in the videotapes or 2) groups with parents who are not able to understand or read English. The supplemental manual contains the same content as the basic manual. However, instead of seeing role plays portrayed on video, parents or facilitators enact scripted role plays which are included in both English and Spanish.

A booster curriculum is also available.

A supplemental curriculum with four optional booster sessions can be held three to twelve months after the basic sessions. The youth booster sessions focus on making good friends, handling conflict and reinforcing skills learned in the first seven sessions. The parent booster sessions focus on handling parents' own stress, communicating when partners don't agree, and reinforcing earlier skills.

Questions related to purchasing SFP 10-14 curriculum can be directed to the Extension Distribution Center by phone at 515-294-5247 or by email at pubdist@iastate.edu.

**Supplies**  
In addition to the curriculum, consider purchasing or securing the following:
• Love and limit magnets (available through Iowa State University Extension)
• The list of supplies outlined in the manual, which includes items such as scissors, glue, poster paper, sticky notes, buckets, hats, etc… The supplies listed in the SFP 10-14 manual can be viewed by clicking here. A list of supplies by session for preparing facilitator kits can be accessed by clicking here.
• Plastic containers, file boxes, rolling carts, or boxes to organize the facilitation supplies and handouts
• Paper and card stock for the handouts to be printed on
• Flip chart stands, paper, and markers
• Supplies for the graduation celebration, such as photo frames, certificate paper, balloons, cake, etc…
• Incentives, such as gift cards, games, or gifts related to each weekly theme
• Laptop, LCD projector, and a screen for the graduation slideshow
• TVs – One TV is needed for parent sessions 1-6. The same TV can be used for family sessions 3 and 6. An additional TV is needed for youth sessions 5 and 6.
• Video or DVD players – One VCR or DVD player is needed for parent sessions 1-6. The same unit can be used for family sessions 3 and 6. An additional unit is needed for youth sessions 5 and 6.
• Digital camera(s) to take photos for the graduation slideshow and to take family photos that can be given as a graduation gift
• Childcare supplies, such as toys, books, disinfecting wipes, and snacks
• Refreshments or a family meal are encouraged for each session
• Promotional video or brochures (available through Iowa State University Extension)
• A copier or printing services
• Phone
• Computer

**Implementation Supports**

**Location**
The program can be delivered at any community location that can accommodate a meal, separate parent and youth groups, large group family activities, and childcare. A school, house of faith, or community center is an appropriate location. At least two rooms (one for the youth and one for parent session) are required for each session, with family sessions taking place in the larger of the two rooms. Additional rooms for childcare and the family meal may be needed.

**Printing Services**
For each session, the curriculum has a masters and samples section. These are the handouts that are to be printed for participants. A decision should be made as to whether the copies will be made in-house
or by a printing service. Printing, sorting, and counting for each of the three program components can be time intensive.

**Family Meal**
Offering food can be a powerful incentive for attendance and it also allows time for further family bonding and facilitator modeling. It is recommended that a meal be offered prior to the start of each session. If funds are not available, consider soliciting donations from grocery stores or restaurants in exchange for recognition on promotional materials. You can also seek volunteers from churches or civic groups that may be willing to prepare meals. Providing snacks only is another option.

**Participant Incentives**
If funds allow, incentives may promote program attendance and completion. Examples of incentives include store coupons, gift cards or gifts related to the themes of the curriculum.

**Use incentives as part of the recruitment effort to encourage registration.**

- For example, conduct classroom visits and offer an incentive drawing for those that return an information card with-in a week. Incentives should appeal to the youth, such as an IPOD shuffle. Prizes can also be awarded to the classroom with the most information cards returned, either for the teacher (such as a restaurant gift card) or the class (such as a pizza party).
- Incentives can be marketed on recruitment fliers. For example, in August, offer the chance to be entered into a ‘back-to-school’ shopping gift card drawing to all that register.

**Use incentives to promote program retention.**

- Incentives, such as weekly gifts, can be offered to each family. For example, provide families with a game when they learn about family meetings (session 3) or a puzzle when they learn about joint problem solving (session 5). Be creative!
- Drawings can be offered each week with one prize for each family or separate prizes for one caregiver and one youth each week. Caregivers appreciate gas, grocery, restaurant, and store gift cards. Youth enjoy games, sports equipment, and arts and craft supplies. Be certain to select different participants each week and to provide a prize to all participants.
- Incentives can also be effective if offered only intermittently, such as a gift card to a store, restaurant, or activity for attendance at the first three sessions and last three sessions.
- Incentives can be given only at the end of the program as long as participants know that they can earn a reward and it is sizeable enough to motivate them to complete the program, such as amusement park tickets.

**Childcare**
For families with younger children, offering childcare may make a difference in availability and their willingness to participate in the program. Hire experienced childcare providers with child abuse clearances. If funds are limited, consider enlisting the support of a church, youth group, 4-H club, vocational school, or child development center.

**Transportation**
Transportation may be necessary for families without cars or who do not have access to public transportation. Consider contracting with a taxi or van service, renting or borrowing a van from a family-serving agency, providing money for taxi or bus services, or encouraging families to carpool.
Marketing Services
One of the most important aspects of the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is recruiting families (see recruitment section below). It can be helpful to create materials that appeal to potential participants. Securing the assistance of a marketing firm, a graphic design student, or volunteers skilled in creating promotional materials, such as brochures, banners, a motivational DVD, and fliers, may be valuable.

Costs
Estimated costs should be inclusive of training, staffing, curriculum, supplies, program marketing, and recruitment, and if desired, incentives, transportation, childcare, and food. Iowa State University outlines some costs at: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/budget.html

Costs are also outlined on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices website: “Start-up costs for the basic program (seven sessions) include $6,000 for staff training (including travel) and $1,109 for the leader guide, videos, posters, master copies of all handouts, and games. The initial implementation cost per family is $373-$398, based on estimated costs for expendable family materials ($18), child care ($35), transportation ($20), and facilitators ($125), assuming the sessions are not taught by agency staff. Other costs per family included in this estimate are for snacks ($25) or meals ($50) and monetary incentives ($150). The costs are based on 10 families per 7-week session. An additional option is hiring a program coordinator, which costs approximately $400 per family. The program coordinator estimate is based on 10 7-week sessions implemented over a 1-year period.”

View the website at: http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/search.aspx

Sites funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) should plan in advance to fulfill the fidelity and reporting requirements of their grant and to budget for these expenses accordingly:

- Pennsylvania funded sites are expected to host the developer for a quality assurance or fidelity certification visit in the third quarter of the second year of funding. In past years, the quality assurance visit and review process has cost $750 plus travel expenses (estimated at approximately $1000-$1200). To confirm current costs, contact Cathy Hockaday and seek an estimate for travel and time expenses.
- Pennsylvania funded sites are also expected to produce an outcomes report in the third quarter of the second year of funding. The EPISCenter provides PCCD-funded sites with tools to summarize and report data to the PCCD. However, if more extensive analysis is desired locally, a site may wish to consider identifying an evaluator and incorporating those costs.

Timeline for Implementation
There is no timeline for implementation recommended by the program developer. However, training that is delivered or approved by Iowa State University Extension is required prior to program delivery. Contact should be made early to ensure training availability and avoid delays in program start-up.

Please see the section on benchmarks for start-up and implementation for steps when beginning implementation.
Benchmarks for Start-up and Implementation

Below are the most imperative steps when starting implementation. Please see the general section of this manual for a more detailed implementation checklist.

1. Order the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) manuals. A minimum of four is recommended for a single program. This count includes one for each facilitator and the program coordinator.

2. Hire a program coordinator.

3. Schedule training through Iowa State University Extension.

4. Advertise for, interview, and/or select individuals to participate in the facilitator training. It is highly recommended that the program coordinator and multiple facilitators be trained in anticipation of any future staff turnover.

5. Confirm program details, such as the dates and location(s).

6. If desired, hire a program recruiter. Plan a recruitment strategy and begin creating and disseminating marketing materials.

7. Purchase and organize the program supplies.

8. Develop an evaluation plan.

9. Hire staff, such as facilitators, a local arranger, childcare providers, and fidelity observers.

10. Arrange for the meals, childcare, incentives, and transportation.

11. Once the program begins, administer the survey tools and conduct fidelity observations. Analyze the data and report outcomes to local stakeholders and funders.

Recruitment

Recruiting families to participate in the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) can be time intensive and ample staff time and sufficient funding for program marketing should be allotted to developing and enacting an effective recruitment strategy. Personal connections are the most effective recruitment mechanism and some communities have found it helpful to hire a gate-keeper or community member who knows local families to help in one-on-one outreach. Identifying a target audience, such as a single school district in a county, will funnel resources and efforts for more impact. For example, it is often helpful to actively target one or two specific grades, and try to get saturation within those grades, rather than passively recruiting across many grades. This focuses recruitment efforts, increases the likelihood that families will hear the recruitment message, and increases the population-based impact of the program. Below are suggested general recruitment strategies and strategies that are specific to recruiting with-in schools, recruiting during the ‘back-to-school’ months of August and September can be very effective.

SFP 10-14 Recruitment Strategies

Appeals to each community are unique, but some examples of recruitment strategies include:

- Newspaper advertisements
- Street banners
- Billboards
• Print and post yard signs
• Utilize social networking sites, such as a Facebook page
• Invite 4-6 parents from the target group for a short informational meeting. Show a five-minute promotional video and lead a sample activity to generate interest in program. Ask these parents to serve as program shepherds and to each invite 1-2 families to the program.
• Partner with existing youth program providers, such as Girl/Boy Scouts, 4-H, summer camps, sporting organizations, the YMCA, and church youth groups to promote or host programs
• Press releases
• Distribute church bulletin announcements to local churches
• Announcements in community education guides
• Post fliers/posters in community locations (like the library and grocery stores)
• Solicit businesses to distribute fliers (grocery store bags, pizza boxes, etc…)
• Deliver presentations to key stakeholders at community meetings garnering high levels of publicity, such as county commissioner meetings and school board meetings
• Deliver presentations to and provide informational materials to potential referral sources, such as at meetings of youth serving agencies, Children and Youth Services staff meetings, juvenile probation staff meetings, school PTO meetings, and rotary meetings
• Send emails to county agencies
• Send emails to SFP 10-14 alumni
• Send informational/referral materials to local therapy services
• Provide presentations and share outcomes with local collaborative boards
• Deliver radio advertisements and live interviews – Include SFP 10-14 alumni if possible
• Post announcements on online community calendars
• Submit radio public service announcements
• Post cable TV announcements
• Mail a letter or postcard to families
• Make phone calls to all target families
• Access alumni networking vehicles, such as a website or list-serve
• Offer incentives to SFP 10-14 alumni for recruitment – Mail postcards or fliers to alumni encouraging referrals – Ask families to list two contacts at the end of the 7th session
• Use alumni pictures and quotes in publicity materials
• Participate/display at fairs and community events
• Seek involvement in sporting events, such as sponsoring a half-time basketball shooting contest
• Offer recruitment incentives and prize drawings
• Use/create SFP 10-14 video/DVD
• Distribute brochures at community locations

**SFP 10-14 Back-to-School Recruitment Strategies:**

• Recruit and train teachers in the targeted grades as SFP 10-14 facilitators
• Distribute a flier in the school’s back-to-school packets
• Deliver classroom presentations: offer incentives and/or prize drawings – ask past alumni to enthusiastically share their experience - use visuals (such as photos of activities, a sample family shield, a sample incentive) – handout fliers and response cards
• Provide information to teachers in the target grades and promote a competition among classes by offering an incentive for the most registrations, such as a gift card for the teacher or a classroom pizza party
• Submit an announcement to be read on the school morning announcements
• Hang banners or posters (use pictures of alumni)
• Submit an article to the school newsletter(s)
• Provide presentations to potential referral sources, such as guidance counselors, administrators, and intervention staff
• Present to and encourage the involvement of the PTO/PTA
• Participate in school activities, such as back-to-school nights, orientations, and parent-teacher conferences: set-up a display, have handouts available, and provide presentations and have past alumni and facilitators share their experience
• Request an announcement on the school alert phone call system
• Mail a letter to the target families – consider having the school district support the letter and have the principal(s) sign it
• Make phone calls to all target families
• Publish an announcement on the school website or list-serve
• Engage alumni in recruitment efforts: mail postcards/fliers and/or send email announcements to alumni encouraging referrals - offer incentives
• Seek involvement in sporting events, such as sponsoring a half-time basketball shooting contest
• Submit a listing to community/school education guides
• Educate teachers in the target grades about SFP 10-14 and engage them in recruitment efforts
• Provide sling bags, pens/pencils, or water bottles printed with the program details and/or stuffed with a program brochure
• Engage student groups or clubs in recruitment

The EPISCeter has created marketing templates that can be accessed by downloading the following appendices. To access each, click on the following links:

• [Sample Recruitment Flier](#)
Recruitment tips developed by Iowa State University Extension can be accessed by clicking here.

**Description of Outcome Assessment Process**

The EPISCenter will offer guidance in the use of outcome measurement tools. PCCD-funded Pennsylvania sites are encouraged to administer a pre and post survey created by the EPISCenter to all caregiver and youth participants that is based on the developer’s survey, but also includes additional questions and the opportunity for each participant to rate the facilitators. If participants start after the first session, the retrospective version of the survey can be administered.

When administering the survey tools, it is important to consider the following:

- Code all administered surveys. Use the family identifier form created by the EPISCenter as the attendance sheets. The program coordinator should complete it with each family listed as a unit and then, provide copies to the youth and parent facilitators. As attendance is taken, administer the survey that is coded for each individual. In session seven, administer the surveys so that the code matches the one on the pretest that was given to each participant during session one.

- Administer the surveys with the parents and youth separated at the start of the first session. It is recommended that the participants move to the separate parent and youth sessions about 15 minutes early so that the survey can be administered.

- Explain to participants the purpose of the survey and help them to understand the value of demonstrating the impact of the program and being able use the data to secure funding. Share that their participation is voluntary, but that they are encouraged to try and answer each question honestly. Also explain that their responses are confidential.

- Facilitators should read the survey to the group and offer assistance with comprehension. Doing so proactively addresses barriers to completion, such as low literacy or comprehension difficulties.

- In session seven, administer the survey after the slideshow and the review of the topics learned. Although, parents/caregivers and youth will be in the same room, it is important to separate them so that each participant feels comfortable honestly disclosing answers. Have the parents/caregivers site on a different side of the room from the youth.
• Analyze the data after each program and use it to: 1) monitor quality and continually strengthen the program, and 2) prepare reports for local stakeholders. Sharing the program’s impact leads to increased staff investment, and community awareness that promotes recruitment, referrals, and sustainability.

Sites funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) are required to analyze their survey data and report on process and outcome measures quarterly. A summary report is also required. The EPISCenter provides PCCD-funded sites with tools to summarize and report data to the PCCD. However, if more extensive analysis is desired locally, sites may wish to consider identifying an evaluator.

The performance measures that PCCD sites are required to report on can be accessed by clicking here.

The tools developed by the EPISCenter for outcome measurement can be downloaded by clicking the following:

- EPISCenter Pre-test
- EPISCenter Post-test
- EPISCenter Retrospective Survey
- EPISCenter Attendance and Family Identifier Form
- Survey and Fidelity Observation Form Analysis Tool

The Iowa State University Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) survey can be accessed at: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/evaluation.html

The template for the summary outcome report required by PCCD can be accessed by clicking here. Guidelines for completing the outcome report specific to SFP 10-14 can be accessed by clicking here.

**Fidelity Recommendations**

Sites are encouraged to monitor program implementation quality and fidelity. Fidelity observations are to be conducted by a trained observer of 2 parent, 2 youth, and 2 family sessions during each 7-week program. For each session, the EPISCenter has modified the developer’s fidelity observation forms and they can be downloaded by clicking here. A tool for analyzing the fidelity observation forms can be accessed by clicking here.

It is recommended that the fidelity observation forms be reviewed by facilitators prior to a program, so that a full understanding of the content delivery expectations and the delivery style aspects that impact model adherence and participant involvement are considered. The fidelity observations are conducted to assess model adherence. They are not intended as a performance assessment and should be viewed as a helpful tool that can be used by the facilitation team to make their delivery as strong as possible. Ultimately, the facilitation team should become vested in the quality and fidelity of the program and recognize that model adherence can lead to greater impacts on participant outcomes.

Once the fidelity observations are completed, feedback should be given to the facilitators and the program coordinator should debrief with the facilitation team to brainstorm ways to enhance delivery. Below are some basic delivery aspects that should be considered. A commitment to fidelity ensures that
the program is being delivered as the developer intended and as the research on the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) has demonstrated can have an impact:

- The program is intended to be delivered in 2 hours, plus meal time. The youth and parent sessions are each 1 hour in length and they run concurrently. The family session is one hour. It is important that the full dosage is administered and that the time allotted is not shortened.

- It is important not to corrupt the core of the program by skipping or modifying activities. The developer has outlined the core elements of the curriculum. A document explaining the core elements of the curriculum can be viewed by clicking here.

- It is important, especially in the parent session, to avoid stopping the video during instruction. Direct participants who require additional discussion time to approach the facilitator after the program.

- Much of the learning in SFP 10-14 is done so through carefully crafted discussion questions. Be careful to ask each of the questions indicated in the curriculum.

- In the youth sessions, behavior management issues can lead to distractions and difficulty in keeping the session running on time, develop a behavior management system and incentives for positive behavior before the program and enact it as needed.

- It is recommended that the fidelity observation forms be reviewed, so that a full understanding of the content delivery expectations and the delivery style aspects that impact model adherence and participant involvement are considered.

- The curriculum should be followed as structured and it is strongly encouraged that facilitators avoid interjecting their own opinions or experiences.

- When participants are engaged in individual or family activities or projects, facilitators should be offering support and assisting with processing concepts, but should avoid distracting the participants with unrelated dialogue.

**Additional Implementation**

**Planning:**
Program planning and family recruitment should begin at least two months prior to each seven-week program.

**Scheduling:**
- Although the program is most frequently delivered in the evenings, some report that it is easier to recruit for weekend sessions (Sundays). Assess your target population and select a day and time in which caregivers and youth can attend together.

- Certain times of the year pose more challenges for recruitment. Offering programs in October/November and January through March tends to lead to increased registration numbers as the winter holidays and spring sporting activities are avoided.

**Time Management Tips:**
Early in implementation, as facilitators are becoming more experienced with the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) curriculum, it is common for time management to be a challenge. Below are some suggestions for effectively delivering the sessions in the time allotted.
• Have facilitators prepare an agenda the week before the session, which details which facilitator will lead which activity and indicate the start time for each activity. Using the agenda while delivering a session and having the times indicated will allow them to have a better sense of how quickly to proceed. The facilitator agenda tool can be downloaded by clicking here.

• Encourage the facilitators to use a stop watch or egg timer for each activity. This helps the facilitators and the youth to be aware of time restrictions.

• If a third person is available, have them assist with informing the facilitators when they need to pick up the pace or conclude an activity. They can also help with behavior management and setting up and cleaning up activities, both of which can cause time delays.

• Have all supplies and handouts set out and ready before the session begins. Hang posters and flip chart pages. Also, set up activity supplies and necessary room arrangements, such as hanging the fishing line between chairs.

• Have the facilitators prepare flip charts in advance (draw pictures, write questions, etc).

• For the activities that require writing, such as the note to the parents, write the template out in advance for the youth. If they only have to fill in the blanks, it will take them less time to complete the activity.

• Encourage facilitators to work as a team and to anticipate the next activity. In the last few minutes of an activity, one should lead the activity and the other should be setting up and preparing for the next. So, as soon as one activity ends, the next one can begin.

• Often, one of the reasons that sessions run too long is because the facilitators are not adhering to the curriculum and try to extend the discussions. Interaction is key, but interjecting more dialogue or personal stories or perspectives can potentially alter the impact of the program. Encourage facilitators to limit discussions to the curriculum’s outlined focus.

• For the treasure maps, have pictures already cut and sorted into different category boxes at different stations. Do not provide youth with magazines and ask that they cut their own pictures. This takes too long. Also after a few minutes, encourage youth to draw pictures if they cannot find the photo they want to limit their searching time.

• For the peer pressure steps, it is important that every youth gets to practice. However, not every youth has to practice each time. You can pick pairs to do a demonstration as long as all the youth are watching and everyone gets a turn.

• If facilitators find themselves falling behind in a session, have them reduce the time allotted for an active game by a few minutes.

Securing Funding
Sustainability efforts should begin early in program implementation. Think broadly about community partners that may be able to contribute towards aspects of program costs. For example, local churches may be able to contribute space or meals. The county-needs based budget or school PTOs may be able to provide funding for facilitator payments or the program coordinator’s salary. Local toy stores, restaurants, or businesses may be able to contribute supplies or incentives in exchange for recognition on marketing and recruitment materials. At the start of implementation, spend time developing a long-term plan for sustainability and as implementation progresses build key relationships and provide data reports to local stakeholders demonstrating the program’s impact.
**Involving the Local Collaborative Board**

Local collaborative boards can play an important role in program development and sustainability. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) requires funded sites to report outcomes on a quarterly basis to a collaborative board. They define a collaborative board as a board of diverse community partners who work together to organize, plan, and implement prevention strategies. Examples of collaborative boards include but are not limited to: Integrated Children’s Service Plans (ICSP); Communities That Care (CTC) Delinquency Prevention Policy Boards; Balanced and Restorative Justice Teams; State Health Improvement Coalitions; State Incentive Grant Planning Boards; Criminal Justice Advisory Boards; and Weed and Seed Assistance for Impact Delegation (AID) Teams or other collaborative boards, including those established to focus on implementing healthy community objectives.

It has been demonstrated that those prevention programs planned and implemented through a collaborative board structure are more likely to be implemented with fidelity and more likely to be sustained after funding. At start-up, present the research behind the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) and share your local goals for the program. Provide board members a fact sheet and the logic model. Help them to understand ways in which they can contribute to the program’s local success, such as by providing space for program delivery or supply storage, donating incentives, providing family meals, marketing the program in their agency newsletter or on their website, or referring families. Also, try to identify potential program champions or community gatekeepers that can help to build relationships that may lead to program support or increased recruitment of families. Throughout implementation, provide frequent verbal reports on the program’s impact and at least annually provide a written summary of program outcomes. Identify board members to become engaged in generating outcome reports and securing sustainability funds.

**Addressing Common Barriers to Implementation**

Below are some common barriers encountered when implementing the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14). Planning for these in advance can cause implementation delays or disruptions to be avoided.

- For most sites, the greatest challenge is recruiting families to participate. Program success is often dependent on multiple direct contacts with potential families. Failure to adequately prepare for and carry out active family recruitment will almost certainly result in program failure. So, careful consideration should be given to planning for recruitment and a site’s budget should reflect ample funding for staff time and marketing expenses. Key relationships should also be forged, such as with school district administrators. To assist sites, the EPISCenter has a collection of resources related to recruitment and marketing and has established a Google Group where sites can download the tools. Contact the EPISCenter for more information.

- Selecting facilitators with strong communication skills is important. It is common for facilitators to struggle in the beginning with time management and behavior management. Hiring staff that has experience in working with children and families is helpful, particularly individuals that have education or human service backgrounds.

- Data collection and survey administration can pose challenges. With low literacy populations, be prepared to have facilitators read the survey questions and assist participants as needed. Surveys should be administered to the parents/caregivers and youth in separate rooms. Surveys should be coded with family identifiers. Systems to collect
registration and demographic information are helpful. The EPISCENTER has developed tools to summarize survey data, but identifying an evaluator to aid in reporting and communicating outcomes may prove helpful. Sites are also required to conduct fidelity observations and it is important to have trained staff conduct the observations and debrief with facilitators to strengthen curriculum delivery and model adherence.

- *SFP 10-14* demands a large facility and storage area. In addition, preparing supplies and incentives can be time intensive.

**Citations**

Iowa State University Extension Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 website: [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/)


**Appendices**

A – Matrix Overview of Evidence-based Recognition Criteria

B – Chart of PCCD Selected Evidence-based Programs and Contacts

C – Chart of National Recognitions

D – Risk Factor Matrix

E – Social Development Strategy

F – Chart of Developer Certification Contacts

G – Sustainability Resources

H – Fundraising and Sponsorship Resources Development 101

I – Fundraising and Sponsorship Resources Development; 501 C(3)
SFP 10-14 Specific Appendices

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) Model Program
- Fact Sheet
- SFP 10-14 Logic Model
- Risk and Protective Factors Addressed by the Seven Weekly SFP 10-14 Sessions
- SFP 10-14 Fact Sheet
- SFP 10-14 Logic Model
- SFP 10-14 Research Article List
  - Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth
  - The Economic Return on PCCD’s Investment in Research-based Programs: A Cost Benefit Assessment of Delinquency Prevention in Pennsylvania
- Iowa SFP 10-14 Manual Facilitator Skills
- Iowa SFP 10-14 Manual Leader Responsibilities
- Sample SFP 10-14 Interview Questions
- Sample SFP 10-14 Training and Facilitator Expectation Sheet
- Sample SFP 10-14 Training Registration Form
- Parent Session Summary Sheets
- SFP 10-14 Manual Supply List
- Facilitation Kit Supply List
- Sample Recruitment Flier I
- Sample Recruitment Flier II
- Sample Church Bulletin
- Sample Back-to-School Flier
- Sample School Recruitment Letter
- Sample Classroom Visit Script
- Sample Recruitment Phone Call Script
- Sample Newsletter/Newspaper Article
- Sample Newspaper Advertisement I
- Sample Newspaper Advertisement II
- Recruitment Tips Developed by Iowa State University Extension
• PCCD Performance Measures
• EPISCenter Pre-test
• EPISCenter Post-test
• EPISCenter Retrospective Survey
• EPISCenter Attendance and Family Identifier Form
• Survey and Fidelity Observation Form Analysis Tool
• PCCD Outcome Report Template
• PCCD Outcome Report SFP 10-14 Guidelines
• Fidelity Observation Forms
• Analysis Tool for the Fidelity Observation Forms
• Core Elements of the SFP 10-14 Curriculum
• SFP 10-14 Facilitator Agenda Tool