Families Facing the Future

TARGET AUDIENCE
This program is for parents receiving methadone treatment and their children who are 5 to 14 years old.

SUMMARY
Families Facing the Future, formerly Focus on Families, is a community-based substance abuse reduction and parent training program that is designed to decrease parental drug use and lessen risk factors for their children's possible drug use by developing and increasing protective factors within participants.

EVIDENCE
Randomized controlled trial results indicated that the program reduced the frequency of heroin use and the odds of using cocaine, which provides support for the program's ability to help reduce parental drug use. Results were less clear for reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors. At 8-months post-program, positive treatment effects were found for parents' drug relapse and refusal skills, the number of household rules that existed, and the frequency of domestic conflict. These were sleeper effects, which indicates that the impact of the program may not be noticeable until some time has elapsed. Other outcomes were non-significant, and no significant effects were found for child outcomes. A 13-year follow-up found some evidence that the intervention may help to reduce the risk of developing a substance use disorder among male children. This finding, however, should be interpreted with caution.

COMPONENTS
This program combines parent skills training with home-based case management. The parent skills training occurs in groups of six to eight families and focuses on the affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of the skills taught. This training consists of skills modeling and practice, group discussion and peer support, and homework designed to transfer the skills into the home. The content is as follows:

- Family goal setting;
- Relapse prevention;
- Family communication skills;
- Family management skills;
- Developing family expectations about drugs and alcohol;
- Teaching children refusal and problem-solving skills; and
- Helping children succeed in school.

The home-based case management component is designed to provide coaching, reinforcement, and support to parents and children to help parents maintain the skills learned in the parent training component. This component strives to accomplish the following tasks.

- Help families identify and work toward their goals;
- Provide families with skills and services to help promote family stability;
- Focus on reducing relapse factors for parents and risk factors for children;
- Motivate parents to continue with the parent skills training component; and
- Reinforce and help generalize the skills learned in the parent training component.

PREVIOUS USE
This program has been used in Seattle, Washington, and is currently available through Therapeutic Health Services in Seattle.

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TRAINING

Professionals interested in implementing this program must have at least a master's degree in social work and training in chemical dependency and parenting. A 3-day, on-site training is available. For additional information on training and associated costs, please contact Kevin Haggerty using details in the Contact section.

CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations for implementing the Families Facing the Future program include recruiting and retaining families; hiring facilitators, who have the specific credentials mentioned in the Training section; finding meeting space and a location to hold the family retreat; providing child care during parent-only sessions; and acquiring a DVD player and TV for the video component of sessions.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

IMPLEMENTATION

If you are interested in implementing Families Facing the Future, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

The parent training component consists of a 5-hour family retreat and 32 90-minute lessons that are delivered twice a week. Children attend twelve of these 32 sessions. The home-based case management component lasts 9 months and begins 1 month prior to initiation of the parent training component and concludes 4 months after the parent training component is finished. During the 9 months, case managers conduct a 90-minute home visit and two phone calls each week. The length of the phone calls varies.

Program materials include the Families Facing the Future workbook and curriculum, which cost $100 each.

EVALUATION PLAN

To move the Families Facing the Future program to the Promising category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence at least one peer-reviewed evaluation should be performed demonstrating positive program effects lasting at least one year from the beginning of the program or at least six months from program completion for the risk and protective factors related to children's future drug use identified by the program.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

CONTACT

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program.
Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu
You may also contact the Social Development Research Group by mail UW Box 358734, 9725 Third Ave NE, Suite 401, Seattle, WA 98115, phone 1-206-685-1997, or email sdrg@uw.edu or contact Kevin Haggerty by phone 1-206-543-3188, fax 1-206-543-4507, email haggerty@u.washington.edu, or visit www.sdrg.org/contact.asp

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