Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14

The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is a universal, evidence-based, family prevention program developed and distributed through Iowa State University. The program consists of seven interactive, video-based sessions conducted over consecutive weeks. Sessions usually start with a family meal with all participating families and facilitators. After the meal, during the first hour of each session, parents and youth meet separately. During the second hour, the youth and parents participate together as families to practice new skills they have learned, play games, and do family projects. The program is designed to:

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

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**Developer Website:** [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp10-14/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp10-14/)

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**EPISCenter Contact:** Mary Ann Demi, M.S., Prevention Coordinator, mdemi@episcenter.org, 814-863-2221

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **What population is SFP 10-14 designed to target?**
   - SFP 10-14 is a 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 4th through 8th. However, students in 5th and 6th grade are developmentally most receptive to the curriculum concepts.
   - SFP 10-14 is a universal strength based prevention program building on the existing skills of the family. The program is generally more effective when groups consist of a variety of families with a mix of skill levels and family functioning. For this reason families should be recruited through a variety of community sources, not exclusively through referrals from agencies that are serving delinquent or high-risk families.
2. **What are the risk and protective factors that SFP 10-14 is designed to target?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Targeted for an Increase</strong></td>
<td><strong>Targeted for a Decrease</strong></td>
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<td>Youth and family management practices, including monitoring, age-appropriate parental expectations, and consistent discipline</td>
<td>Child and family management practices, including harsh, inappropriate, or inconsistent discipline, indulgence, poor parental monitoring, demanding/rejecting behavior, and poor communication of rules</td>
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<td>Effective and empathetic parent-child communication</td>
<td>Youth aggressive or withdrawn behavior</td>
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<td>Promotion of healthy beliefs and clear standards</td>
<td>Favorable attitudes toward problem behaviors and substance use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family bonding and supportive family involvement</td>
<td>Friends who engage in problem behaviors – Negative peer influences</td>
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<td>Goal setting and positive future orientation</td>
<td>Poor social and stress management skills</td>
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<td>Positive parent-child affect</td>
<td>Family conflict</td>
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<td>Emotional management</td>
<td>Early initiation of problem behaviors</td>
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<td>Pro-social family values</td>
<td>Early and persistent antisocial behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer pressure refusal skills</td>
<td>Poor school performance</td>
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The target risk and protective factors along with expected proximal and distal outcomes can be found on the SFP 10-14 Logic Model online at: [http://episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/13-06-10%20Full%20SFP%2010-14%20Logic%20Model.pdf](http://episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/13-06-10%20Full%20SFP%2010-14%20Logic%20Model.pdf)

3. **Who can deliver the SFP 10-14 curriculum?**

SFP 10-14 is intended to be delivered by three trained facilitators (1 for the parent session and 2 for the youth session). Additional staff members, such as a program coordinator, participant recruiter, on-site arrangers, fidelity observers, and childcare providers, are also encouraged. The program can be delivered in the evenings or on weekends (or whenever parents and youth can attend together) and at any community location that can accommodate a meal, separate parent and youth groups, large group family activities, and childcare. It is highly recommended that all staff has current child abuse clearances.

4. **How do I schedule training?**

**What should I expect when scheduling and coordinating the training?**

Pennsylvania has established a collaborative infrastructure to oversee and coordinate SFP 10-14 training in Pennsylvania. Collaborative partners from the Pennsylvania State University include: the Prevention Research Center, Cooperative Extension, the Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Support Center
(EPISCenter), and The Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness. Iowa State University has approved that training be delivered in Pennsylvania using a select cadre of Pennsylvania certified Master Trainers.

The recommended training takes place over three consecutive days with each day typically beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending by 5:00 p.m. Training is offered at a site of your choosing. The cost is the same for up to 15 participants. It is highly recommended that as many facilitators as possible be trained in anticipation of any future staff turnover. The program coordinator and key program partners, such as those responsible for recruiting, should also attend. Currently, costs are estimated at $4000 plus travel expenses (estimated at approximately $850) for one trainer (training up to 15 participants). Larger groups can be trained with an additional trainer at an added expense. For more information regarding scheduling initial and follow up trainings due to attrition, access: http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/sfptraining

Are there other sites in Pennsylvania that have been trained in the SFP 10-14 model?

Coordinating training in partnership with other Pennsylvania sites to train replacement staff due to facilitator attrition can potentially reduce costs. The EPISCenter maintains a list of sites funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). Please contact Mary Ann Demi, at (814) 863-2221 or mdemi@episcenter.org to learn about other Pennsylvania sites and coordinate training.

5. How do I purchase the curriculum?

Iowa State University – University Extension handles dissemination, training, and material distribution for SFP 10-14. For start-up and delivery to one group of 10 families, the developer recommends purchasing at least 3 basic teaching manuals, a set of 9 videos or DVDs, Love and Limits Magnetic Clips (1 per family), and a set of 30 posters. In January, 2016, the estimated minimum cost for these materials was $1,040 plus shipping and handling. It is recommended that the curriculum be purchased prior to and be available for the initial training. Curriculum materials and cost estimates can be viewed online at: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp10-14/content/ordering-information

6. What supplies are needed?

In addition to the curriculum manuals and DVD’s, other supplies are needed. The list of supplies are outlined in the curriculum and can be viewed online at:

http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/ebp/strengthening/resources.

7. What costs should I budget for?

The EPISCenter has prepared a budget checklist that can be accessed at:

http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/node/144

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 by the third quarter of the second year of funding. As of January, 2016, the estimated cost is $750 plus travel expenses (estimated at $850)
- Pennsylvania funded sites are also expected to produce an outcomes report in the third quarter of the second year of funding. Although the EPISCenter provides tools and support for completing the

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8. What are some common barriers that I might encounter when implementing SFP 10-14?

- For most sites, the greatest challenge is recruiting families to participate. Failure to adequately prepare for and carry out active family recruitment will almost certainly result in program failure.
- Selecting facilitators with strong communication and relationship skills is important. It is common for facilitators to struggle in the beginning with time management and behavior management.
- Data collection and survey administration can pose challenges. The EPISCenter has developed tools to summarize survey data, but identifying/hiring a skilled staff person or an evaluator to aid in reporting and communicating outcomes may prove helpful.
  
  Fidelity observations are important in maintaining model adherence (and required for PCCD funded sites). It is important to have trained facilitators to conduct the observations, share their observation results with Program Coordinator and Facilitators.
- SFP 10-14 demands a large facility (rooms for the family meal, the parent session, the youth session, the family session, and childcare) and a storage area for the program and facilitation supplies.
- Securing/preparing supplies and incentives can be time intensive. Identify individuals that are organized and willing to approach potential donors to assist with these responsibilities.

9. How should I recruit families?

Recruiting families to participate in SFP 10-14 can be time intensive and ample staff time should be allotted to developing and enacting an effective recruitment strategy. Recruitment strategies can be found online at:

http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/RECRUITMENT%20STRATEGIES%20202712.pdf

10. What evaluation tools should I use?

The EPISCenter will offer guidance in the use of the required outcome measurement tools.

- A pre and post survey to all caregiver and youth participants.
- Fidelity observations are to be conducted by a certified facilitator who has been trained as an observer of 2 parent, 2 youth, and 2 family sessions during each 7-week program.
- PCCD funded sites are required to report quarterly process and outcome measures in E-grants. The EPISCenter provides sites with a spreadsheet tool to summarize and report data to PCCD.

Evaluation tools can be accessed online at:

http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/ebp/strengthening/outcomemeasurementtools

If more extensive analysis is desired locally, sites may wish to consider hiring evaluation support.

11. In what ways can I involve my local collaborative board?

Local collaborative boards, such as the local Communities That Care board, can play an important role in program development and sustainability. The following steps are helpful:
• At start-up, present the theory and research behind SFP 10-14, an SFP 10-14 fact sheet, and the SFP 10-14 logic model to the board. Provide ongoing program outcome reports (at least annually).
• Help them to understand the ways in which they can contribute to the program’s local success, such as providing space for program delivery, and donating incentives and family meals.
• Solicit their help marketing the program with their agency newsletters or websites.
• Encourage the board in identifying potential program champions fostering supportive relationships that will help recruitment families.
• Identify board members to become engaged in generating outcome reports and securing sustainability funds.

SFP 10-14 Research:

SFP 10-14 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. Analysis of the survey data on SFP 10-14 has demonstrated positive results for both parents and youth. Information and research articles demonstrating the impact of SFP 10-14 can be accessed at:

- Iowa State University: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/sfp/inside/research.php
- Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence: http://www.colorado.edu/csvp/blueprints/promisingprograms/BPP18.html
- Partnerships in Prevention Science Institute: http://www.ppsi.iastate.edu/record.htm
- EPISCenter Website: http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/ebp/strengthening/resources

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