

## Strengthening Families Program (SFP)

### **Overview:**

- The SFP was designed to reduce environmental risk factors and improve protective factors with the objective of increasing personal resilience to drug use and other risky-behavior in high-risk youth. The SFP is a 14 week course which combines three program trainings:
  - Parent Training
  - Children's Skills Training
  - Family Skills Training

### **Program Objectives:**

- Improve Family Relations
- Increase Parenting Skills
- Develop Child's/Teens Life Skills and Behavior
- Increase Children's/Teen's Social Competencies
- Reduce or Prevent Alcohol and Drug Abuse

### **Programs by Age:**

- SFP programs focus on high risk families and are organized by target youth age: 3-5, 6-11, 12-16 and 7-17
  - Iowa State University has also developed an SFP 10-14 model that is focused on low risk/universal populations
- In 2012 SFP lesson content was reduced to a 12-week format, combining subjects from SFP 6-11 and SFP 12-16 to create SFP 7-17. A DVD for SFP 7-17 is now available for at home training.
- SFP 7-17 covers a wide age range and may not be most appropriate for a target population of late adolescents, the SFP 12-16 program is still available
- In 2015 the skill of Mindfulness was added to program content.
- SFP 3-5 uses the same format, but a younger version of 6-11.

### **What is needed to implement SFP:**

- Positive and skilled group leaders
  - Teachers, community agency staff or counselors
- Meeting space, equipment, and supplies
- Incentives for completion of take home activities
- Implementation Timeline: Startup: 3 to 6 Months

### **Where can I get SFP Training?**

- Program Developer: Dr. Karol Kumpfer
- Age intended: 6-55 years
- Subjects Covered: Substance abuse, delinquency and family relationships
- Location Targets: Urban, suburban, rural and tribal
- Cost: Materials \$450 per set      Training \$5,000-16,000
- Website: <http://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/index.html>
- Contact: Hope Hefferan (812) 787-1668    [strengtheningfamiliestraining@gmail.com](mailto:strengtheningfamiliestraining@gmail.com)

**Below you will find a breakdown of the content that is covered in 3 SFP programs. Also provided is a brief overview of the online curriculum provided by the Center for the Study of Social Policy.**

## Comparing the new Strengthening Families Program 7-17 Curriculum with the Original Strengthening Families Classes

<b>Strengthening Families Program for ages 7-17</b> <i>Parents and kids study same subject; "kid" emphasis in italics</i>	<b>Strengthening Families Program for ages 6-11</b> <i>Parent Lesson are listed in bold; Kid Lessons in italics</i>	<b>Strengthening Families Program for ages 12-17</b> <i>Parent Lesson are listed in bold; Teen Lessons in italics</i>
<p><b>INTRO Lesson: About SFP; the Brain; and Mindfulness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have Family Dinners, squash Automatic Negative Thoughts, play "One-on-One" daily with parent</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Notice and Compliment the Good; Stress Reducers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notice &amp; compliment the good in parents, siblings</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2. Good Communication Skills &amp; Fun Family Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen, Understand, Validate; respectful I-messages</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>3. Use the R's of Successful Families: Rules/ Rewards/ Responsibilities/ Routines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make &amp; follow family Rules; set up homework Routine</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>4. Positive Discipline &amp; Effective Consequences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accept "no" Nicely, Follow Instructions; Staying Calm</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>5. Problem Solving and Negotiations Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify potential trouble; use refusal skill to say "no"</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>6. Stress Reducing and Anger Management Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce stress, use relaxation response; chart anger triggers, re-program brain with pro-social responses</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>7. Make Goals and Contracts to Change for the Better</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Goals and contracts help me achieve my dreams; give Positive Criticism; receiving criticism calmly</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>8. Harms of Alcohol &amp; Drugs; How to Avoid Addiction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alcohol &amp; drugs harm the teen developing brain</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>9. Help Choose Good Friends; Monitor Kids' Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify qualities of a good friend, use new social skills to cultivate positive friendships; plan alcohol-free fun</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>10. Share Values, Enjoy Traditions, Give Service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pro-social values, giving service helps us feel happier</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>11. Review, Reduce Conflict at Home; Graduation</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Introduction, Power of Play and Praise</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcome, class rules, why we're here</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2. Kids' Abilities by Age and How To Manage Stress</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social Skills 1: Listening</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>3. Using Social Rewards (effective praise)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social Skills 2: Speaking With I-Messages</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>4. Goals and Objectives Help Create Good Behavior</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating Good Behavior in Others</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>5. Noticing and Ignoring: Reward Charts &amp; Spinners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to Say "NO" to Stay Out of Trouble</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>6. Communication: Better Relationships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication: Better Relationships</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>7. Communications: Family Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication: Family Meetings</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>8. Alcohol, Drugs and Families; Risk Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harms of Alcohol and Drugs</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>9. Solving Problems and Giving Directions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problem Solving</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>10. Setting Limits 1: Getting Kids Back on Track</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following Instructions (Parent's Game)</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>11. Setting Limits 2: Practice Setting Limits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coping Skills 1: Recognizing Feelings</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>12. Setting Limits 3: Solving Behavior Problems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coping Skills 2: Dealing with Criticism</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>13. Building and Using Behavior Programs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coping Skills 3: Coping with Anger</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>14. Getting and Keeping More Good Behavior</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Graduation, Resources and Review</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Intro, Group Building, Noticing teens' positives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Class Rules; Having Goals &amp; Dreams</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2. How to Handle Stress</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication, appreciating parents</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>3. Encouraging Good Behavior using Rewards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dealing with stress, conflict, anger</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>4. Goals and Objectives for Teens</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rewarding &amp; ignoring</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>5. Communication for Better Relationships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speaking &amp; Listening</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>6. Communication and Family Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication, Family Meeting</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>7. Helping Teens Handle Peer Pressure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peer pressure and temptation</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>8. Alcohol, Drugs and Families; Risk Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harms of Alcohol and Drugs</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>9. Problem Solving &amp; Giving Directions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problem Solving</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>10. Relationships, Love, and Sexuality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Friends, dating &amp; sexuality</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>11. Setting Limits – Noticing and Ignoring</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managing Emotions</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>12. Setting Limits – Consequences &amp; Punishments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Handling Criticism</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>13. Contracts for Changing Behavior</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coping with Anger</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>14. Review and Graduation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review and Graduation</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## About The Center for the Study of Social Policy’s Strengthening Families Curriculum

CSSP’s Strengthening Families Curriculum was designed as a resource for those training or doing professional development with child welfare workers around Strengthening Families. Some of the curriculum content will also be relevant for other audiences. To provide the most complete set of resources for the field, the curriculum was designed to be a standalone tool which includes:

- Slides, scripts and tips for trainers
- Handouts for participants
- Activities to be used in training

## Adapting and Using Strengthening Families Curriculum Content

While the curriculum was designed so it can be used as a standalone training, we recognize that most jurisdictions have existing training for child welfare workers. *One very powerful way to use the materials and tools within the scripted curriculum is to integrate them into existing trainings already being provided for child welfare workers.* We encourage such adaptation as we think it is much more powerful, for instance, for workers to learn about how they can use the protective factors to design case planning objectives and activities while they are learning to use their own jurisdiction’s case planning tools.

We ask only that as you adapt and use the curriculum you send a brief e-mail to [cailin.oconnor@cssp.org](mailto:cailin.oconnor@cssp.org). We want to learn about what you are doing so we can connect you with additional resources and with peers who are looking at common issues.

## Overview of CSSP’s Strengthening Families Curriculum

Title	Time	Learning Objectives
Introduction to Strengthening Families : A protective factors framework	60 min	<p>The four big ideas behind the Strengthening Families approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A protective factors approach</li> <li>• An approach, not a model</li> <li>• A changed relationship with parents</li> <li>• Alignment with developmental science</li> </ul>
Understanding the Strengthening Families protective factors	90 min to 3 hr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and describe each of the five protective factors</li> <li>• Understand how they can use everyday actions to support families in building their own protective factors</li> </ul>
Youth Thrive: A protective factors approach for older youth	90 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The five protective and promotive factors in the Youth Thrive framework</li> <li>• Strategies for working with older youth in ways that help them to build their protective and promotive factors</li> <li>• Ways they may be able to use both the Strengthening Families and Youth Thrive</li> </ul>
Trauma and brain development: A protective factors approach	60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood brain development</li> <li>• The significance of a nurturing adult</li> <li>• Adolescent brain development</li> <li>• How stress affects children and youth</li> <li>• The cascading impact of child abuse and neglect</li> <li>• Signs and symptoms of trauma</li> <li>• A protective factors approach for caregivers</li> </ul>
Making small but significant changes in child welfare practice	90 min to 3 hr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protective factors and safety practice</li> <li>• Applying critical thinking in child welfare</li> <li>• Building protective factors through core practice areas</li> </ul>
Taking a community approach to Strengthening Families	60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe what a Strengthening Families approach looks like at a community level</li> <li>• Understand what some of the different community approaches look like</li> <li>• Be able to facilitate Strengthening Families engagement at a community level</li> </ul>

The research behind Strengthening Families	45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That Strengthening Families is an evidence- informed approach</li> <li>• The knowledge building process behind Strengthening Families</li> <li>• How Strengthening Families continues to grow, adapt and incorporate new knowledge</li> </ul>
Tools to support Strengthening Families implementation	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials describing the Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework</li> <li>• The Toolkit for Child Welfare Practitioners</li> <li>• Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Tools for Child and Family-Serving Programs</li> <li>• The Strengthening Families Evaluation Portal</li> <li>• Tools used to measure protective factors</li> <li>• Online Training</li> <li>• Café Conversations</li> </ul>