

## **Brief Strategic Family Therapy**

The family is defined by an organizational structure that is characterized by degrees of collectiveness, love, loyalty, and purpose as well as high levels of shared values, interests, activities, and attention to the needs of its members. Families may be considered a system, organized entities or units made up of several interdependent and interacting parts. Each member has a significant influence on all other members. For positive change to be identified client, therefore, family members have to change the way they interact. If family therapists work with the present relationships rather than the past, they are interested in the behavior families maintain between regular sessions that characterize dysfunctional families.

Strategic refers to the development of a specific strategy, planned in advance by the therapist, to resolve the presenting problem as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **DESCRIPTION**

Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT) is a short-term, problem-focused therapeutic intervention, targeting children and adolescents 6 to 17 years old, that improves youth behavioral by eliminating or reducing drug use and its associated behavioral problems and that changes the family members' behaviors that are linked to both risk and protective factors related to substance abuse. The therapeutic process consists of:

Joining—forming a therapeutic alliance with all family members

Diagnosis—identifying interactional patterns that allow or encourage problematic youth behaviors

Restructuring—the process of changing the family interactions that are directly related to problem behaviors

### **PROGRAM BACKGROUND**

BSFT was developed at the Spanish Family Guidance Center in the Center for Family Studies, University of Miami. BSFT has been conducted at three centers since 1975. The Center for Family Studies is the Nation's oldest and most prominent center for development and testing of minority family therapy interventions for prevention and treatment of adolescent substance abuse and related behavioral problems. It is also the Nation's leading center of research on family therapy for Hispanic/Latino families.

### **INDICATOR**

This program was developed for an indicated population. It targets children with conduct problems, substance use, problematic family relations, and association with antisocial peers.

### **CONCENTRIC FOCUS**

ALCOHOL, ANTI-SOCIAL/AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR, ILLLEGAL DRUGS, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE, TOBACCO

This program addresses family risk and protective factors to problem behaviors, including substance use among adolescents.

Focuses on a primary target population.

The program involves family systems therapy, involving all family members. It seeks to change the way family members act toward each other so that they will promote each other's healthy and behaviors that are required for the family to achieve competence and to impede undesired behaviors.

### **INTERVENTIONS BY DOMAIN**

INDIVIDUAL: Life and social skills training

FAMILY: Home visit, Parent education/family therapy, Parent education/parenting skills training

Individual-based family education sessions combining social skills training to improve family interaction to g. communication skills)

PEER: Peer resistance education