



Blueprints Model Programs FACT SHEET

FS-BPM08

1998 (Updated 03/2007)

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) is a cost effective alternative to group or residential treatment, incarceration, and hospitalization for adolescents who have problems with chronic antisocial behavior, emotional disturbance, and delinquency. Community families are recruited, trained, and closely supervised to provide MTFC-placed adolescents with treatment and intensive supervision at home, in school, and in the community; clear and consistent limits with follow-through on consequences; positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior; a relationship with a mentoring adult; and separation from delinquent peers.

Program Targets:

MTFC targets Teenagers with histories of chronic and severe criminal behavior at risk of incarceration and those with severe mental health problems at risk for psychiatric hospitalization.

Program Content:

MTFC Training for Community Foster Families emphasizes behavior management methods to provide youth with a structured and therapeutic living environment. After completing a pre-service training and placement of the youth, MTFC parents attend a weekly group meeting run by a program supervisor where ongoing support and supervision are provided. Foster parents are contacted daily during telephone calls to check on youth progress and problems. MTFC staff are available for consultation and crisis intervention 24/7.

Services to the Youth's Family occur throughout the placement. Family therapy is provided for the biological (or adoptive) family, with the goal of returning the youth back to the home. The parents are supported and taught to use behavior management methods that are used in the MTFC foster home. Closely supervised home visits are conducted throughout the youth's placement in MTFC. Parents are encouraged to have frequent contact with the MTFC program supervisor to get information about their child's progress in the program.

Coordination and Community Liaison. Frequent contact is maintained between the MTFC program supervisor and the youth's case workers, parole/probation officer, teachers, work supervisors, and other involved adults.

Program Outcomes:

Evaluations of MTFC have demonstrated that program youth compared to control group youth:

- Spent 60% fewer days incarcerated at 12 month follow-up;
- Had significantly fewer subsequent arrests;
- Ran away from their programs, on average, three time less often;

- Had significantly less hard drug use in the follow-up period;
- Had quicker community placement from more restrictive settings (e.g., hospital, detention); and
- Had better school attendance and homework completion at 24 months follow-up.

Program Costs:

The cost per youth is from one-half to one-third less in MTFC than in residential, group or hospital placements and averages approximately \$3,900 per month. The average length of stay is seven months.

The information for this fact sheet was excerpted from:

Chamberlain, P., & Mihalic, S.F. (1998). *Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care: Blueprints for Violence Prevention, Book Eight*. Blueprints for Violence Prevention Series (D.S. Elliott, Series Editor). Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado.

Chamberlain, P., Leve, L., & DeGarmo, D. (2007). Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System: Two Year Follow-up of a Randomized Clinical Trial. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 75(1), 187-193.

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Gerard Bouwman
TFC Consultants, Inc.
1163 Olive Street
Eugene, OR 97401
Phone: (541) 343-2388
Fax: (541) 343-2764
Email: gerardb@mtfc.com
Website: www.mtfc.com