

WELLNESS

Multidimensional Family Therapy

Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT) is an intensive family and community-based approach for the treatment of adolescent substance abuse and associated mental health and behavioral challenges. Treatment is provided in the client's home, school, and community.

The primary goal of MDFT is to provide strength-based practices to develop and initiate strategies to offset and eliminate both substance abuse and antisocial patterns of behavior among children ages 9–18 and their families' while at the same time working with the family to improve family relationships and encourage positive changes.

HOW TREATMENT WORKS

Therapists seek to gain an understanding of the family and their history as well as contributors to the current challenges that need to be addressed. The family and the therapist develop goals for the duration of treatment and work toward those goals on a weekly basis.

The family is also provided case management services helping to secure necessary resources for the family. Clients are encouraged to participate in recreational activities as a way of integrating prosocial aspects into their life.

LENGTH OF TREATMENT

Treatment varies from four to six months depending on family needs.

HOW OFTEN TREATMENT OCCURS

Treatment typically consists of three sessions a week during the active phase of treatment. There is an individual session with the client, a session with the parent or caregiver, and a session with the family as a whole. All three of the sessions can be accomplished in one day or over the course of the week. MDFT therapists are available to the family via telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The therapist also has ongoing communication with the school and other community resources involved with the family.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN TREATMENT

The adolescent and biological parents or legal guardian living in the home are required to participate in treatment. Anyone else in the youth's natural ecology may be encouraged to participate; this will be determined on a case by case basis.

Parental figures are the key to successful outcomes and are the primary participants. In MDFT the parent is viewed as the "medicine" for their adolescent and is necessary to the treatment.

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ABOUT MDFT THERAPISTS

MDFT Therapists have completed higher education in social work and/or family therapy. Therapists have a Master's Degree, have completed intensive training in MDFT, have continued training in the MDFT model and are bicultural or bilingual (English/Spanish) as well.

The MDFT Program at CJR is comprised of one supervisor, four therapists, and three therapist assistants. Therapists have a caseload of six families which allows them to be available to the families as needed.

REFERRALS

Referrals to CJR's MDFT Program can be made from a Juvenile Probation Officer, DCF Worker, or any community provider, in addition to schools, hospitals, and families themselves. Referred youth who are identified as having substance abuse issues or being at risk of developing a substance abuse issue can greatly benefit from MDFT.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

CJR's MDFT program offers additional treatment for those struggling with opiate addictions through the Helping Youth and Parents Enter (HYPE) Recovery component. This treatment is more intensive and following six months of treatment clients are offered the additional option to receive Recovery Management and Support (RMS) by one of our therapists' assistants for up to six months.

NEXT STEPS

After a referral is received and deemed appropriate for services, a therapist will be assigned. The assigned therapist will contact the family to schedule the initial interview and begin services.

For further information or to make a referral, please contact:

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