Resilient Families Program

Evidence ratings: This resource is supported by multiple published studies. See our Help/Q&A section for more details.

Year: Year 7–8
Targeted Drugs: Drugs (General)
Tags: Families intervention, parent education, parent-adolescent communication, social support
Time Allocated: 7 lessons or more
Links to National Curriculum:
ACPPS072 (Yr 7–8), ACPPS073 (Yr 7–8), ACPPS074 (Yr 7–8), ACPPS075 (Yr 7–8)
Origin: Australian
Cost:
Costs Involved
Attachments

Developers
Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne.

Available
For information about access to the Resilient Families program and associated costs, contact:

Format
The program is comprehensive, involving the following components:

1. School Planning and Staff Training. Resilient Families staff meet with school leadership to plan program and policy objectives. A professionally-facilitated "staff development" half-day training session is provided to explore the benefits of working with parents and to examine potential problems and solutions.

2. Student Social Relationship Curriculum. Teachers participate in a half-day training session that provides guidance in the delivery of a 10-session curriculum that can be flexibly placed within the school's health and well-being, or pastoral care program. The curriculum includes social relationship homework that students complete with their parents.

3. Quiz Night (Plus distribution of book). In schools that consider themselves ready for this - parents are brought together in the school for a professionally-led interactive evening.

4. Parenting Adolescents: A Creative Experience. An 8-week professionally-facilitated program for parents run at the school (2 hours per evening).

Training & Costs
School Planning and Staff Training is offered by the Resilient Families staff. Schools have the option of parent education programs being delivered by external facilitators or alternatively having their own staff trained to deliver these programs. Contact Professor John Toumbourou (Email: john.toumbourou@deakin.edu.au) for updated cost information (see attachment for program costs in 2014).

The Resilient Families team can assist with funding applications for paying the program fees.

Summary
The Resilient Families program aims to provide a structured sequence of activities and resources that secondary schools can utilise to encourage family support for education and positive student experiences with parents. The program aims to increase family involvement and enhance parent education opportunities and through these means improves student adjustment to secondary school. The student curriculum is a 10-week program, delivered to Year 7 students by their classroom teachers covering communication skills, emotional awareness, conflict resolution, stress reduction, responsibilities in the family, and changes that occur in families.

The initiative draws on evidence showing that family resiliency characteristics play an important role in buffering the impact of risk factors such as negative life events. Resilient Families adopts a strengths-based approach that recognises the existing strengths of families and teenagers. The Resilient Families intervention was delivered in 2004 and 2005 in 12 metropolitan Melbourne schools and demonstrated beneficial outcomes for student drinking compared to students in 12 schools receiving education as usual.

Benefits
- Reduced use of alcohol and reduced progression to frequent or heavy use
- Reduced general substance use (inhalants, cannabis, tobacco, alcohol)
- Reduced delinquent behaviour (physical fights, graffiti, truancy, property damage)
- Reduced teenager-parent conflict.

Evidence Base
To date, one randomised control trial in Australia and 2 published studies support the benefits of the Resilient Families program:


Benefits of the parenting component have been evaluated separately in one Australian trial: