Positive Choices
Drug and Alcohol Information
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Recommended program

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), AC9HP8P08 (Yr 7-8), AC9HP8P04 (Yr 7-8), AC9HP8P06 (Yr 7-8), AC9HP8P10 (Yr 7-8)

Origin: Australian

Cost:
Costs Involved

Attachments

Resilient Families Program Information and Price List

Available

The Resilient Families program is managed by Professor John Toumbourou at Deakin University.
Click below to email Professor John Toumbourou for access to the program.

Email Professor John Toumbourou for access to Resilient Families

Developers

Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne.

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.

Expected Benefits

Studies that have tested this resource (see sources below) have found evidence for the following 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 controlled trial in Australia and 4 published studies support the benefits of the Resilient Families program as listed below.

Sources

Shaykhi, F., Ghayour-Minaie, M., Toumbourou, J.W. (2018) Impact of the Resilient Families Intervention on adolescent antisocial behavior: 14-month follow-up within a randomized trial. *Children and Youth Services Review.* 93, 484-491.

Buttigieg, J. P., Shortt, A. L., Slaviero, T. M., Hutchinson, D., Kremer, P., & Toumbourou, J. W. (2015). A longitudinal evaluation of the Resilient Families randomized trial to prevent early adolescent depressive symptoms. *Journal of Adolescence*, *44*, 204-213.

Toumbourou, J. W., Gregg, M., Shortt, A. L., Hutchinson, D. M., & Slaviero, T. M. (2013). Reduction of adolescent alcohol use through family–school intervention: A randomized trial. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 53*, 778-784.

Shortt, A.L., Hutchinson, D.M., Chapman, R., Toumbourou, J.W. (2007) Family, school, peer and individual influences on early adolescent alcohol use: First year impact of the Resilient Families program. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 26*, 625-634.

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

Toumbourou, J. W., & Gregg, M. E. (2002). Impact of an empowerment-based parent education program on the reduction of youth suicide risk factors.*Journal of Adolescent Health, 31*, 277-285.

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