

## MULTIDIMENSIONAL FAMILY THERAPY (MDFT)

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MDFT is an intensive, in-home model that is a family-centered, comprehensive treatment program for children and adolescents with substance use, are at risk of substance use, and have related behavioral and emotional problems.

### Target Population

MDFT is for children and adolescents 9 to 18 years old who meet the following criteria:

- a) Have at least one parent/guardian, or parental figure able to participate in treatment;
- b) Not actively having suicidal ideation and plan which requires immediate stabilization; and
- c) Not suffering from a psychotic disorder (unless it is temporary and due to drug use).

### Referral and Service Initiation

- The Contractor will be available to accept referrals Monday-Friday, 52 weeks per year at least but not limited to the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- DCF will have a gatekeeper /liaison who will determine initial appropriateness for the model utilizing MDFT eligibility criteria that has been sanctioned by DCF and model developers. Requests for services will be sent to the DCF gatekeeper/liaison and reviewed weekly with the MDFT supervisor for triaging when a child is accepted for services.
- An initial intake interview will be conducted with the child and family within 48 hours of the referral. The child must meet the current inclusionary and exclusionary MDFT criteria, as set by the model developer.
- Priority access to service will be determined primarily by clinical need rather than eligibility category (e.g., DCF Involved, referred by the school, etc.) or place on the wait list.

### Caseload and Length of Service

Caseload = 6 per FTE clinician. The average length of service is 5 months.

The frequency of family contact will be 1 to 3 times a week by therapist and/or therapist assistant, is dictated by the needs of the adolescent and family, but will not be less than six hours per month. Towards the end of therapy, therapists will decrease the frequency of contact with family.

### Services and Interventions

- The Contractor will offer flexible, strength- based interventions for children and their families. The majority of services are to be offered in the client's home, in community agencies, schools and other natural settings. To ensure an orderly transition for children awaiting discharge from a hospital, residential treatment facility or detention center, services will be initiated while that child is in that level of care.
- Interventions include weekly sessions of individual therapy with the child/adolescent, therapy with the parent(s), and family therapy to address child/adolescent and family issues specific to this youth.
- Interventions also focus on promoting communication and relationship-building among the family members.
- Therapists and/or therapist assistants administer on-site urine screens that offer immediate results.

### Crisis Response

Support to families in crisis on their active caseload occurs 24 hours per day, seven days a week including weekends and holidays by a MDFT clinician who is on call.