

### **For further Information**

Please phone and ask to speak to a member of the FFT team.

We are:

Serena Mullings	Functional Family Supervisor
Barbara Arthur	Functional Family Therapist
Gill Westwood	Functional Family Therapist
Zoe McLeod	Functional Family Therapist

### **We are based at**

Lewisham YOS,  
9 Holbeach Rd  
London SE6 4TW  
Telephone number - 0208 314 7474

If you are working from a Lewisham.gov address, please e-mail your documents to [FFT@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:FFT@lewisham.gov.uk) . If you do not have a Lewisham e-mail, please ensure that documents are password protected



Lewisham Functional Family Therapy Team



## Information for Referrers

For families with children 11 to 17 years of age

## **Introduction**

FFT is a therapeutic intervention for families with a young person **where there is identified offending or a concern about risk of offending**. The young person will often also struggle in **School, and Home settings**. These problems may include aggressive behaviour, school refusal, negative peer association, persistent antisocial behaviour, conflict within the family home and/or substance misuse. FFT is a systemic approach which involves the therapist working with the young person and members of their family. At the very least, this means working with the young person and their primary care givers.

## **FFT Team**

We are a team of practitioners who have worked within the Youth Offending Service and additionally who are experienced in working with children who have chronic emotional and behavioural problems and their families. A key feature of the programme is that FFT practitioners work hard in attempting to work with families that do not readily access statutory services.

## **The FFT Model**

FFT is provided over 3 to 6 months and involves weekly sessions which are often in the family home, or wherever will support the families engagement.

The therapy aims to look with the family members at how relationships are functioning, where they are working well to support the family unit and where they may need some attention and changes.

Therapy progresses through 3 distinct phases:

### **Engagement and Motivation**

The initial phase focuses on engaging and motivating all family members to work towards positive change by initially reducing negativity and blame and helping everyone see that they share responsibility for their problems.

### **Behaviour Change**

This phase focuses on behaviour change and involves family members setting small goals for change and learning skills that they need to achieve change such as problem solving, positive communication and conflict resolution.

### **Generalisation**

The final phase focuses on helping family members apply the skills they have learnt in other context particularly to access support from other agencies e.g. from health and education if appropriate.

## **Outcomes**

There is a strong evidence base for FFT in the United States and parts of Europe. It has proved to be effective for reducing:

- Youth re-offending and violent behaviour
- Anti-social behaviour
- Risky behaviours in siblings

FFT has also been shown have a positive impact on :

- Family conflict, family communication and parenting
- Young people's emotional state and behaviour

## **Referral Criteria**

- Young people between the ages of 11 and 17 **who are at risk of offending or who are currently engaged in criminal activity**. There should also be evidence of challenging behaviour at home and/or school
- Young people who are living at home with their parents/ carers. The family must live in Lewisham.

FFT is **not suitable** for young people:

- Who mentally unwell through psychosis, or who are actively suicidal
- Who are the subject of a current Child Protection Investigation (sec 47)

## **How to refer.**

We are currently taking referrals from the Youth Offending Service, CAMHS, Pupil Referral Units, Sedgehill and Prendergast Schools. If you are working for another agency with a family whom you think would benefit from FFT and who are known to the above services, please discuss a referral to FFT with them.

- Please contact Lewisham FFT Team (see details below) and ask to speak to the FFT duty worker who can discuss the family with you and provide you with a referral form.

**We are always happy to discuss any referrals with you**

## **Recording**

Family details and information about the therapy sessions will be recorded on IYSS (the integrated Youth Support System) and on the FFT Clinical Feedback System.