

NORTH CAROLINA IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAM 6-11

Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina (PCANC) provides support for quality implementation of the Strengthening Families Program 6-11 (SFP 6-11). These guidelines reflect the components necessary for effective implementation with program fidelity.

TARGET POPULATION

SFP 6-11 serves families with children between the ages of 6 to 11. The program has been proven effective with families from diverse backgrounds in a variety of settings. In any setting, both adult caregivers and children should participate in the program together. Ideally, families participating in an SFP 6-11 series should not be combined with those participating in the 3-5 or 12-16 curriculums, due to the developmental differences among children in these age groups.

Providers should also ensure that their target population aligns with any funder requirements.

STAFFING

SFP 6-11 requires a minimum of 5 trained staff; this includes a site coordinator, two parent group leaders, and two child group leaders. Trained back up group leaders are also recommended.

COORDINATORS

- Attend SFP training prior to implementation.
- Coordinate pre-group planning and recruitment efforts.
- Coordinate meeting space, meals, childcare, incentives, and donations for each series.
- Provide on-site support for each session, including ensuring parent and child groups stay on schedule so that parents and children transition together.
- Coordinate post-group debriefing and provide opportunities for peer support within your team.
- Provide regular, ongoing one-on-one supervision for each parent group leader and child group leader.
- Conduct at least two fidelity assessment observations per year, for each facilitator, to ensure model fidelity and provide strength-based feedback based on these observations
- Encourage and track facilitators' time and engagement in coaching and implementation support from PCANC, including video reviews.

Recommended Staff Time for Effective Implementation: Coordinators

- Coordinator will need approximately 20 hours per week throughout the year. This is based on agencies implementing 2 to 3 SFP series annually. Additional time should be allotted if implementing more than 3 series or more than one series simultaneously.
- Coordinators are encouraged to participate in 7.5 hours of PCANC support per semester. Coordinators can participate in up to 8 additional hours of support based on need.
- Not having a separate site coordinator poses safety issues, in addition to compromising fidelity and quality assurance, resulting in a program being below standards.

PARENT AND CHILD GROUP FACILITATORS

- Attend SFP group leader training prior to implementation.

- Commit to implementing the manualized SFP curriculum as intended.
- Support families in using positive discipline strategies and developing new skills.
- Review curriculum and plan before each session, individually and with co-leader.
- Greet families as they arrive for group. All parent and child group leaders are encouraged to sit with families throughout mealtime to foster a warm and welcoming environment while providing coaching and praise.

Recommended Staff Time for Effective Implementation: Parent and Child Group Facilitators

- Parent and children’s facilitators need at least 8 hours each per week for program preparation, delivery, planning, and 1:1 supervision.
- All facilitators need a minimum of 9 hours per semester for staff time to participate in PCANC support, including video reviews, and up to 9 additional hours of support based on need.

LOCATION & CHILDCARE

- Parents’ and children’s groups should meet in separate spaces. Additional space should be designated for childcare or activities for older siblings.
- Meeting locations will also need space that can accommodate a family meal and the family session where both adult caregivers and children ages 6-11 participate.
- Younger and older siblings should remain in childcare during family sessions as the family session activities are designed to be developmentally appropriate for school age children.
- The meeting location should minimize travel barriers for families. Transportation should be provided if needed.
- Agencies should plan for appropriate childcare ratios by determining in advance how many siblings outside of the 6-11 age range will be attending.

GROUP DURATION AND DOSAGE

- Dosage is one, two-hour session per week. In addition, a 30-minute meal is provided prior to group. Providing two sessions in one week should be avoided because families need time to practice new skills.
- The first hour will consist of a parent’s group and a children’s group running concurrently. This is followed by a 45 minute to 1-hour family skills training group where parents and children practice new skills together.
- Parent, Child, or Family components should be delivered during the same session.
- Program content should be covered as intended and presented in the same order as outlined in the curriculum.
- Six-month follow-up booster sessions are a core component of the SFP curriculum and should be provided to promote continued maintenance and use of skills.

GROUP SIZE, RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, & COMPLETION

GROUP SIZE

- Optimal group size is 6 to 12 families; however, group size will also depend largely on the number of adults and children participating for each family.
- Agencies should limit each parent or children’s group to no more than 14 individual participants, even if the number of families served is within the accepted range.
- Groups smaller than 6 families or larger than 12 should be avoided.

RECRUITMENT & ENROLLMENT

- Recruitment should be viewed as an ongoing process. At a minimum, agencies should plan for at least 6 weeks of recruitment and preparation prior to each series.
- Providers should speak with each prospective family prior to a series to determine goodness of fit, review goals and expectations, discuss barriers to attendance, and confirm family members who will be participating.

- Agencies should enroll custodial caregivers as well as other adults in a parenting role.
- No new participants should join a series after session 3.

COMPLETION

- Participants should be encouraged to attend as many of the 14 sessions as possible to graduate.
- Make-up sessions should be offered to support families in returning to group after an absence.
- Make-up sessions should be offered in person or via a virtual platform. Make up sessions by phone should be avoided.
- Providers should check with their funders regarding other specific requirements for completion.
- Incentives are encouraged throughout the series to support participant retention.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Network agencies participate in a statewide evaluation process and receive agency level and statewide reports as part of this process. Agencies are encouraged use both process and outcome evaluation data to inform their work.