



# ***Celebrating Families!*<sup>TM</sup>**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **WHAT IS CELEBRATING FAMILIES!?**

*Celebrating Families!* (CF!) is an evidence-based, trauma-informed, skill building program of 16 sessions serving the whole family: children ages birth -18, their parents and caregivers. Each session begins with a family meal, followed by 90-minute age-appropriate instructional session and ends with a 30-minute family activity where families practice the skills they are learning. CF! was developed specifically for families dealing with, or at high risk for, multiple problems: substance use disorders (SUD); multi-generational trauma; physical and mental health challenges; cognitive deficits due to trauma, genetics, or in-utero exposure; and safety (child abuse/neglect and family violence). Effective in-person and online program strategies are available.

### **IS CELEBRATING FAMILIES! A PARENTING PROGRAM?**

Published reports and current evaluations have shown that CF! is effective in improving parenting skills, family relationships, and family communication for parents whose substance use has resulted in involvement with child welfare and dependency drug courts. But as a whole-family recovery program, it is much more than that! Each session provides educational support that is age appropriate for every member of the family. Further, Caregiver Pages are available for foster parents, family members involved in Kinship programs, and parents. Caregiver Pages provide additional information so that every adult who cares for children in the program are aware of skills taught to better practice these skills in day-to-day situations in-between sessions. Further, through the 0 thru 3 Years Supplement, parents of young children learn, experience, and practice family skills that support attachment, communication, social skills, and resiliency. Group leaders nurture the development of the attachment between parents and their young children.

### **DOES CF! HELP WITH FAMILY REUNIFICATION?**

Evaluation studies document CF!'s effectiveness in increasing the rate of reunification while decreasing the time.

### **IS CELEBRATING FAMILIES! AVAILABLE FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS?**

Yes, there are three versions of *Celebrating Families!* to meet the needs of diverse populations. *Celebrando Familias!* was created for Spanish speaking families and the Wellbriety/ *Celebrating Families!* Partnership supports Native American Families. Curriculum, training, and consultation support is available for every version of the *Celebrating Families!* program.

### **HOW LONG IS THE CF! PROGRAM?**

CF! is a 16-week program. CF! builds healthy living skills and educates on important areas to promote healing and nurture resiliency. Every week families are introduced to, and practice, important skills with their peers in an age-appropriate manner. With the planning that takes place a few weeks prior to the program, and a final review after the program ends, a 16-week program can extend to 18 or 19 weeks in total for staffing considerations.

### **WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED DURING THE 16 WEEKS?**

- |                        |                                       |   |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Orientation         | 7. Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs     | 13. Healthy Friendships & Relationships |
| 2. Healthy Living      | 8. Addiction Is a Disease             | 14. How We Learn                        |
| 3. Nutrition           | 9. Addiction Affects the Whole Family | 15. Our Uniqueness                      |
| 4. Communication       | 10. Goal Setting                      | 16. Celebration                         |
| 5. Feelings & Defenses | 11. Making Healthy Choices            |   |
| 6. Anger Management    | 12. Healthy Boundaries                |   |

## **WHAT KIND OF STAFFING IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE PROGRAM?**

*CF!* can be provided by paid staff, volunteers, or community collaborations. An administrator/program coordinator is key. It is also advisable to ensure your team includes a person who is clinically trained. Depending upon the requirements of your state, one group leader may need prevention certification. It is also helpful to consider peer support specialists in healthy recovery for both addiction, and family impact. More mature program can even consider graduates of the program as group leaders. Depending upon the size of your program, you may wish to start with a team of 8 – 10 group leaders. After the family meal, families are divided into five groups - one parents group and four children's groups – where each group will need two group leaders. For small groups, at times a single group leader is possible with access to a floater who provides assistance when needed. For online groups, two group leaders are always recommended.

## **WHAT KIND OF CURRICULUM IS NEEDED?**

Each group leader will need a set of curriculum guides. Typically, a new site will order an Implementation Package, which includes ten sets of curriculum guides as well as videos, a CD, and one copy of a popular book used during the program *The Kissing Hand*. Single sets of materials are also available. One 0 Through 3 Years Supplement Package is needed per site providing a program to support pregnant mothers and young children. The preface in Volume One provides additional guidance for other materials your site may wish to have on hand for a successful program.

## **IS IT POSSIBLE TO PROVIDE *CF!* VIRTUALLY?**

The *CF!* Development Team proactively adapted the in-person program to be provided online March 2020. Despite the contexts of COVID-19, research findings provided evidence that such relational group interventions can be feasibly administered online and can effect changes required to break the cycle of substance use problems and adverse family experiences. Additional materials have been created to support online adaptations.

## **IS TRAINING AVAILABLE?**

Yes, Group Leader and Train-the-Trainer training programs are available both in-person (when appropriate, given Covid-19 provisions and risk) and online. Trainings will help your team – staff, volunteers, or community collaborators – become more familiar with the program and prepared to work with your families!

**Group Leader Training Objectives** include:

- 1) To discover the uniqueness and effectiveness of the *CF!* program
- 2) To introduce, and become comfortable using, the *CF!* curriculum
- 3) To experience program exercises to increase working knowledge of the program
- 4) To begin planning your *CF!* program

**For our Train-the Trainer program**, group leaders need to take part in a certified *CF!* Group Leader training, complete one cycle leading a parents' group, and complete one cycle leading a children's group. Train-the-Trainer opportunities prepare training candidates to successfully provide, and present, their first *Celebrating Families!* Group Leader training.

**Consultation services** are also available. Consultants can work individually with administrators/coordinators, attend planning meetings, or review the success and outcomes of your cycle with your team. Services are available in 3-hour bundles.

**For more information about the *Celebrating Families!* program, contact NACoA Director of Programs Mary Beth Collins: [mbcollins@nacoa.org](mailto:mbcollins@nacoa.org) or call 301.468.0985.**