

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

***Family-Oriented Intervention Reduces
Delinquent Behavior, Drug Use, and Recidivism Among Arrested Youth***

Family-oriented interventions can improve the behavior and psychosocial functioning of youths arrested on misdemeanor or felony charges, according to an evaluation of the Family Empowerment Intervention (FEI).¹ Arrested youths and their families participated in three one-hour family meetings per week for approximately ten weeks. The meetings sought to improve family functioning by establishing boundaries and expectations, improving parenting, communication, and problem-solving skills, and connecting the family to other social support systems.

Compared to youths who only received services routinely provided by the juvenile justice system, youths participating in the FEI had lower rates of reported drug sales, a reduced frequency of getting very high or drunk on alcohol, and less short-term marijuana use. In addition, youths completing the intervention were more likely to have favorable outcomes than all other youths. FEI completers had lower rates of reported involvement in drug sales, total delinquency, and crimes against persons; fewer new arrests and new charges; a reduced frequency of getting very high or drunk on alcohol; and less short-term marijuana use.

The evaluation also found that implementing the FEI could result in substantial cost savings. The researchers projected that during a three-year period, \$4.7 million in direct costs would be saved for 3,600 cases processed through the FEI. For more information about the FEI, contact Dr. Richard Dembo at 813-931-3345.

¹The FEI was developed for, and implemented in, a NIDA-funded clinical trial called the Youth Support Project, which operated out of the Hillsborough County, Florida, Juvenile Assessment Center. Following baseline data collection, youths and their families were randomly assigned to receive FEI services or the routinely provided juvenile justice system services. Depending on their year of entry into the project, psychosocial follow-up interviews were completed on the youths up to 36 months, and information was gathered on new arrests for up to 48 months.

SOURCE: Dembo R. and Schmeidler J., Family Empowerment Intervention: An Innovative Service for High-Risk Youths and Their Families, Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Press, in press.

National RUN FOR RECOVERY® 5K to be held in Virginia on Sunday September 16th

As part of the September 2001 National Recovery Month, the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) is sponsoring the 6th annual RUN FOR RECOVERY® 5K. The event will be held in Arlington, Virginia, on Sunday, September 16th, at 9:00 a.m.

Proceeds will go to the Vanguard Foundation's new Phoenix Program treatment center. For more information, visit www.vanguardservices.org or contact Jay Jacob Wind at racedirector@vanguardservices.org or 703-841-0703, ext. 97.