

Functional Family Therapy Clinical Guideline

MVP Health Care, as part of its continuing Quality Improvement Program, adopted the Functional Family Therapy (FFT) guide. The full guideline is available at: [Functional Family Therapy \(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov/fft/)

Impact of The Condition

FFT is a short-term therapy usually over three to five months. The risk level of the family determines the quantity, frequency, and intensity of services. FFT works primarily with children and adolescents who have been referred for behavioral or emotional problems by the juvenile justice, child welfare, school, or healthcare systems.

Youth selected for treatment are often at risk for delinquency, violence, substance use, or have a pattern of behavior suggestive of Oppositional Defiant Disorder or Conduct Disorder.

FFT is a strength-based model. FFT works on decreasing risk factors and on increasing protective factors within and outside of the family that impact the adolescent's healthy development. FFT is used to improve positive behaviors by providing individualized services based on a specific family's goals, allowing for treatment- and cost-effective services that are really needed and avoiding unnecessary duplication of services.ⁱ

Summary of the Guidelines

Family Functional Therapy has 5 components to its structure. They are engagement, motivation, relational assessment, behavior change and generalization.

- Engagement: emphasis on youth and family factors that protect from dropping out of program
- Motivation: change maladaptive emotional reactions and beliefs; increase alliance, trust, hope, and drive, for lasting change
- Relational Assessment: clarifies individual, family, and larger system relationships, particularly in terms of interpersonal functions and how they relate to change techniques
- Behavior change: incorporates therapeutic interventions such as communication training, parenting skills, youth skill building strategies
- Generalization: extend changes made in the prior component to other family systems and maintain changes through relapse prevention techniques

Additional tools to assist providers with educating their patients on behavioral health conditions are included in the Provider Quality Improvement Manual under Behavioral Health.

[Quality Programs and Initiatives | MVP Health Care](#)

For providers in New York State who care for children and adolescents with mild-to-moderate behavioral health needs, an additional resource, Project TEACH, is available. Project

TEACH is funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health and aims to strengthen and support the ability of New York’s pediatric primary care providers to deliver care to children and their families experiencing mild-to-moderate mental health concerns including anxiety, depression, and ADHD, in children, adolescents, and young adults up to age 22. Project TEACH offers providers consultations, referrals, and training at no cost. Project TEACH may be accessed at <https://projectteachny.org/>.

[Read about Project TEACH](#)

In conjunction with these guidelines, MVP Health Care offers Case Management for members with behavioral health conditions. If you would like to refer your patients to the Case Management program, please call the MVP Case Management Department at **1-800-852-7826**.

This guideline is not intended to replace the role of clinical judgment by the physician in the management of this, or any other disease entity. It is an educational guideline to assist in the delivery of good medical care. All treatment decisions are ultimately up to the physician. Where medication recommendations are made, please refer to each health plan’s formulary for coverage considerations.

MVP Health Care updates its clinical guidelines at least every two years. The review process is also initiated when new scientific evidence or national standards are published. Practitioners are alerted via the web site and by written notices from the plan via fax or newsletter. A hard copy of the clinical guideline can be requested by calling the MVP Quality Improvement Department at **(800) 777-4793 extension 2247**.

ⁱ <https://youth.gov/content/functional-family-therapy-fft>