



## MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY

### Description

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive intervention designed to assist youth across various settings. Its primary objective is to foster pro-social behavior while reducing criminal activity, mental health issues, out-of-home placements, and illicit substance use in adolescents aged 12 to 17. MST addresses the underlying causes of delinquency and antisocial behaviors by conducting an ecological assessment of the youth, their family, and the school and community environments. Based on this assessment, personalized intervention strategies are developed to target the identified drivers of problematic behavior.

The program typically spans three to five months, offering round-the-clock availability for crisis management and providing families the flexibility to choose convenient meeting times. Master's level therapists, employed by licensed MST providers, maintain a small caseload to ensure they can adequately meet the needs of their clients.

MST is recognized as a well-supported practice by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse (<https://preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov/>).

### Target Population

This program provides services to **youth between the ages of 12 and 17 and their families**. Target populations include youth who are at risk for or are engaging in delinquent activity or substance misuse, experience mental health issues, and are at-risk for out-of-home placement due to the severity of their behavioral issues.

### Dosage

Treatment using MST typically involves multiple weekly visits between the therapist and family, over an average timespan of 3 to 5 months. The intensity of services can vary based on clinical needs. The therapist and family work together to determine how often and when services should be provided throughout the course of treatment.

### Recommended Locations/Delivery Settings

Therapists can deliver the program in multiple settings, including home, school, and community. Therapists may also work directly with these settings as part of the treatment plan.

### Education, Certifications and Training

MST is delivered by therapists who work for licensed MST teams and organizations. MST therapists, supervisors, and other staff complete an initial five day training. This training is provided by Ph.D. and Master's level mental-health specialists. Therapists that deliver MST also participate in ongoing



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trainings. These include quarterly clinically-focused booster sessions that aim to refresh MST skills and weekly consultations provided by MST experts. MST teams use a structured fidelity assessment approach to ensure clinical service delivery is consistent with the MST model.



**Materials are available in languages other than English, including Norwegian, several other European languages, and Spanish.**

### **Contact Information for Developers**

Website: <http://www.mstservices.com/>

Phone: (843) 856-8226

Email: [info@mstservices.com](mailto:info@mstservices.com)

### **States outside of Florida implementing MST under FFPSA:**

- Virginia
  - Website: <https://familyfirstvirginia.com/index.html>
  - Email: [familyfirst@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:familyfirst@dss.virginia.gov) or [ebplab@vcu.edu](mailto:ebplab@vcu.edu)
- Kansas
  - Website: <https://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/pps/pages/ffpsa.aspx>
- Nebraska
  - Website: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Family-First.aspx>
  - Email: [DHHS.FamilyFirst@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.FamilyFirst@nebraska.gov)
- Ohio
  - Website: <https://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/family-first.stm>
  - Email: [familyfirst@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:familyfirst@jfs.ohio.gov)
- Washington
  - Website: <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/practice-improvement/ffpsa>
  - POC: Phyllis Duncan-Souza, Family First Prevention Services Administrator
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- North Dakota
  - Website: <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/family-first>
  - Email: [dhscfs@nd.gov](mailto:dhscfs@nd.gov)