

Paperwork. If you are selected to deliver the BSFT intervention, you will complete weekly case summaries.

Training. Therapists assigned to BSFT will receive 140 hours of training over a 5-month period. The overall BSFT training includes approximately 96 hours of training delivered in four 3-day workshops, and 44 hours of supervision that occur in weekly supervision sessions. At the end of training, therapists will be evaluated to determine if they meet criteria for implementing BSFT.

No additional clinical training or supervision of TAU therapists will be provided as part of this protocol, except as required for research purposes.

Treatment Manual Adherence. In many community clinics, therapists tend to use whatever techniques seem to work with their patients. As is typical of clinical therapy trials, in the BSFT study, you will need to deliver your therapy sessions according to the therapy condition you are assigned. You will use the techniques you learned in training and you will follow guidelines for each session as outlined in the BSFT manual. If you are a designated TAU therapist, you will not be required to change the way you normally treat clients.

Supervision/Monitoring. In addition to supervision you will receive during your training period, you will continue to be monitored through videotapes of your BSFT sessions to assure that you are following the intervention manual. These, along with independent adherence ratings and your weekly case summaries, will be used to guide supervision.

Your clinical supervisor will hold weekly conference calls with all therapists at your site. During the call, your supervisor will review material collected that week, address any clinical issues, and plan activities for the upcoming week.

Home-Based Services. Because of the unique nature of BSFT, home visits and home-based therapy are often required to engage all important family members. As a therapist in the study, it is possible that you will be asked to provide services in the homes of your clients.

What should I tell clients about the CTN and the BSFT Study?

The CTN has developed brochures for clients interested in participating in clinical trials. Familiarize yourself with these so that you can answer questions and refer potential participants to the right sources. *What are Clinical Trials?* is an excellent summary of the benefits of participating in a research study.

If you ever find yourself unable to answer a question about the research, consult your supervisor, research assistant, Node Study Coordinator, or an investigator for more information.

For more information on the CTN, visit the NIDA website at www.drugabuse.gov.

For information on other clinical trials, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has created a website to help patients, family members, and the general public obtain information about government-sponsored clinical trials. You may log on to www.Clinicaltrials.gov to learn about ongoing or new trials for all types of health-related conditions. The descriptions for individual trials include eligibility criteria, purpose of the trial, location, and how to apply if interested. The website is maintained and updated regularly by the National Library of Medicine.

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CTN-0014

Clinical Trials Network



Brief Strategic Family Therapy for Adolescent Drug Abusers

A research study
involving the family

For clinicians

NIDA NATIONAL INSTITUTE
ON DRUG ABUSE

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The agency you work for has agreed to participate in a clinical trial to study a behavioral intervention called Brief Strategic Family Therapy. This pamphlet describes this intervention and answers questions you might have about participating as a therapist in this research project. More information about clinical trials can be found in the National Drug Abuse Treatment Clinical Trials Network brochure, *What Are Clinical Trials?*

What is Brief Strategic Family Therapy?

Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT) is a therapy that works to engage members of the family in the recovery process of adolescent drug abusers. It helps families create new interactions that build on existing strengths and correct interactions that lead to drug use or other problem behaviors.

Unlike some interventions regularly used in community treatment programs, BSFT is a manualized intervention, which means that therapists who deliver the intervention follow a written set of guidelines (the intervention manual).

What will it be like to provide BSFT to my clients?

If you are chosen to be a “BSFT therapist,” you will provide 12 to 16 sessions of BSFT over a 4-month period, plus up to 8 “booster” sessions to your clients. Using the steps outlined in the BSFT manual, and practiced during extensive training, you will help families identify positive and negative interaction patterns in their relationships. You will then help them outline and implement a plan to build on family strengths and change those patterns that lead to drug use and other problem behaviors. The treatment will be provided in a community setting, such as a clinic, home, or school.

Why is BSFT being tested?

BSFT has been shown in preliminary studies to dramatically impact drug use and related problems in young people. This study will examine the effectiveness of BSFT in the treatment of 12-17 year old drug abusers in different sites across the country and compare it to treatments used in community treatment programs. The study looks at changes in drug use, problem behaviors, sexually risky behaviors, positive activities, involvement of family members, and family functioning.

How are study therapists chosen?

The supervisor/director at each site will review the training and clinical experience of their therapists to ensure that they meet the criteria for Treatment as Usual (TAU). The BSFT Master Trainer will then meet with all eligible therapists to ensure that they meet criteria for implementing BSFT. The assessment will focus on 1) general interpersonal skills; 2) openness to learning new information and responding to feedback; 3) openness to recognizing the role of relationships in influencing behavior; and, 4) directness and clarity of communication. Therapists will also be asked to provide a videotape of a therapy session with a family that will be reviewed by the BSFT Clinical Master Trainer and the Lead Investigator. Therapists who meet criteria for both BSFT and TAU therapies will be included in the study.

Why will you randomly assign us?

To make sure that the characteristics of the therapists providing therapy to both groups are balanced, random assignment is necessary. It is possible that more therapists of a certain gender, race, or level of experience would choose to do a certain intervention. In such a situation, when statisticians analyze the results it would be hard to tell whether differences between the BSFT and TAU groups were the result of so many therapists with a certain characteristic giving therapy to that

group or whether the outcome was the result of actual differences in the interventions. Random assignment will help to minimize the chances of an imbalance related to therapist characteristics.

Why should I participate as a therapist in a research study?

There are many reasons to participate as a therapist in a clinical trial. First, you will learn techniques and therapies that are not yet commonly used in community treatment settings, but that have been shown in previous studies to help people stop or reduce their drug and/or alcohol use. These techniques will be helpful in your work with clients for many years to come—and will add to your skills as a therapist.

The training and supervision you receive may also help you with licensure, and certification. If you are considering returning to school, experience in a research trial can enhance your application.

Additionally, you will be helping in the process of transferring research-based treatments into clinical practice. And finally, as a therapist in the CTN, you are in a unique position to contribute your wisdom to research in drug abuse treatment.

How will participating as a therapist on a research trial differ from my current role and responsibilities?

It is expected that your activities as therapists in the CTN trials will be similar to your duties before you joined the study. However, there will probably be differences in the following areas: