

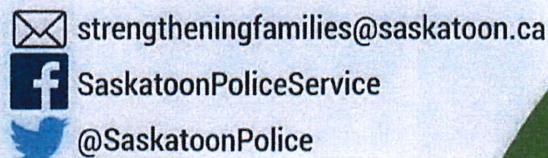
Partnering Agencies

Saskatoon Police Service
City of Saskatoon
Child and Family Program -
Ministry of Social Services
Saskatoon Health Region
Saskatoon Public Schools
Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools



Apply or make referrals online to:
www.strengtheningfamiliesaskatoon.ca

or mail to:
Strengthening Families Saskatoon
PO Box 1728
Saskatoon, SK S7K 3R6
306-986-3089



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SASKATOON

Making Saskatoon
STRONGER
ONE FAMILY at a time.

This voluntary 14 week program for children, youth and their families encourages positive communication between family members while strengthening relationships within the family.

Family members have the opportunity to practice skills that have been learned during the program sessions.

This program is available to families living in the city of Saskatoon.

Exhibit: *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*

Location/Phase: Part 2 Regina

Witness: Clive Weighill

Submitted by: Ashley Smith

Add'l info: P02P02P0301

Date: JUN 27 2018

Initials

I/D

Entered

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SASKATOON

Strengthening Families Saskatoon is a federally funded project that is using a recognized evidence-based parenting and family program.

Families participate in a **14 week program** that is held one evening per week. Each evening session is **2.5 hours in length**. A meal is provided at each session.

The program focuses on three key components:

Child and youth sessions include:

- Communication skills to improve caregiver, peer, and teacher relationships
- Resilience skills
- Problem solving
- Peer resistance
- Anger management, and
- Coping skills

Parents and caregivers sessions include:

- Mentoring parents/caregivers to interact positively with their children, and improve family cohesion
- Parents/caregivers learn to be better communicators using active listening skills
- Establishing family meetings to improve order and organization, and
- Discipline techniques including consequences and time-outs

Family sessions include:

- Allow parents/caregivers and children/youth time to practice what they learned in their individual sessions, and
- Facilitators to coach and encourage positive family interactions

Program Objectives

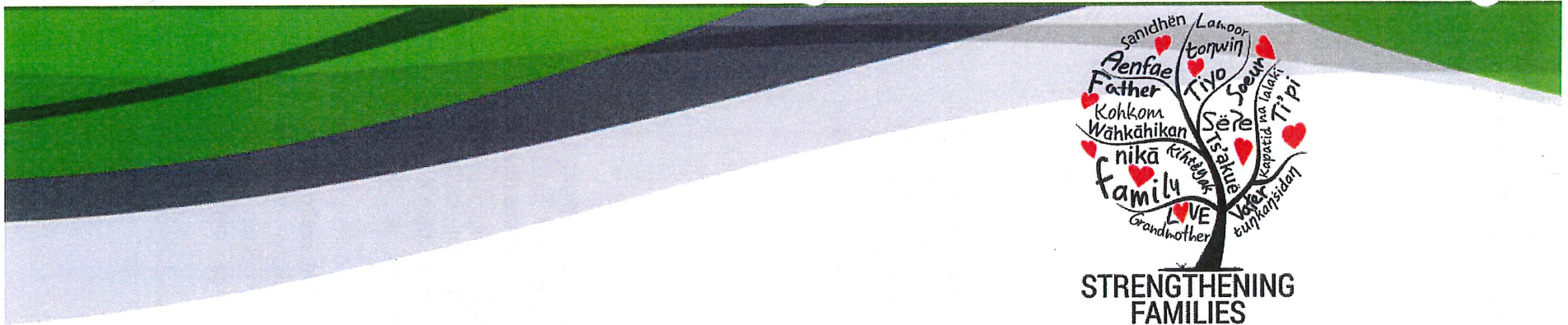
Families with high risk children (ages 6-11) and youth (ages 12-17) are encouraged to participate in the Strengthening Families Saskatoon program.

Participation in this program is voluntary and is expected to reduce problem behaviors, delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse. Violent behavior and anti-social behavior in high risk children and youth is also addressed.

The program will attempt to improve social competencies and school performance among the school age participants.

The program will encourage improvement in social and life skills for all family members. Other improvements are expected in the areas of family dynamics, relationships, family cohesion and parenting skills.





STRENGTHENING FAMILIES LOGO

Throughout time, the tree has been a symbol of enduring strength. The tree represents blessings from nature, good fortune, stability, shelter, security and things having to do with family. The tree has also symbolized beauty, strength, wisdom and eternal life.

For many people, the tree represents the Tree of Life. The roots reach deep into the earth to provide stability, its trunk establishes a foundation and is the main part of the tree, the branches and leaves reach out for sustenance and capture the sunlight and the rain.

A tree is representative of nurturing energies, particularly when it bears fruit. The Strengthening Families' tree is bearing the fruit of love as displayed by the hearts that are spread throughout the tree's branches.

The tree logo developed for Strengthening Families Saskatoon is symbolic of the program itself, the cultural diversity of the people of Saskatoon and the people that are welcomed to its sessions. Cultural groups represented on the tree include:

- Plains Cree
- Saulteaux
- Dene
- Dakota
- Tagalog
- German
- Michif
- French
- English



"PUBLIC AGENDA"

TO: Darlene Brander, Chairperson
Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Troy Cooper
Office of the Chief

DATE: 2018 February 20

SUBJECT: Strengthening Families Program

FILE NO.: 2,010

ISSUE:

Two of the primary key themes of the Saskatoon Police Service 2015-2019 Business Plan are the Reduction of Crime and Victimization and Community Partnerships. In keeping with these goals, the Saskatoon Police Service has implemented the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) which is an inter-agency collaborative effort. This program teaches family based skills and communication techniques which work towards improving family relationships, parenting skills and youth's social and life skills.

RECOMMENDATION:

That this report updating the progress of the program be received as information.

BACKGROUND:

The Strengthening Families Program has been in existence for over 30 years and has operated in 36 countries. It is an evidence-based, culturally sensitive family skills program that has been peer reviewed and evaluated by independent researchers. The program has three formats that are designed specifically for 6 to 11 year olds, 12 to 17 year olds, and for family units. It works toward the reduction of risk factors for problem behaviors in high-risk children, including behavioral, emotional, academic and social challenges. Parents and caregivers are taught skills related to supervision, effective consequences, consistency, family cohesion, as well as communication and organization.

The SFP is provided guidance and support from various partner agencies that make up the Strengthening Families Steering Committee. Representatives from the Ministry of Social Services, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatoon Public Schools, Saskatoon Greater Catholic Schools, and the City of Saskatoon have all signed letters of commitment which outline their contribution to the program by way of 'in kind' support, and program referrals.

“PUBLIC AGENDA”

In December of 2016, a contract was signed between the National Crime Prevention Strategy and the Saskatoon Board of Police Commissioners as represented by the Saskatoon Police Service which provides funding over a five year term. The Program Coordinator and SFP Constable are responsible for managing referral intakes, conducting risk assessments, and providing support to families and facilitators throughout the program. They are actively promoting the program with various community organizations and institutions through presentations and education.

DISCUSSION:

To date, SFP has completed one full program with the target group being 12 to 17 year olds, and is currently running a second program with the target group being 6 to 11 year olds. Testimonials from families involved in the first program have been positive and speak to the skills acquired through role playing and scenario discussions offered in class. Family time during the pre-session meals and cultural support offered by Métis and Indigenous Elders provide a model for positive and meaningful family engagement.

The six month and one year follow up meetings with families are an essential component of the program, and provide an opportunity to gather data to support the evidence based research in support of the program. These “boosters” also act as a refresher to recognize positive change, provide encouragement and support, and reinforce skills previously taught.

The Steering Committee continues to meet every third Thursday of the month to receive updates on the progress of the program and offer support and recommendations to the Coordinator and the SFP Constable.

The short term goals of the program are:

- To change awareness, knowledge, attitude, perceptions, feelings and skills of the program participants. The intermediate term goals are to lower risk factors and provide a more stable and healthier family environment.

The intermediate goals of the program are:

- To change the risk factors and provide a more stable and healthier family environment;
- To decrease anti-social behavior;
- To increase attendance and encourage better performance in school;
- Reduce substance abuse;
- Increase attachment to caregivers;
- Increase mental and emotional resilience.

The long term goals of the program are:

- Change negative behaviors;
- Reduce police contact, criminality, involvement in gang related activity, victimization and anti-social family behaviors;

"PUBLIC AGENDA"

- Provide a more stable family environment and have healthy family engagement and more involvement in pro-social behavior.

CONCLUSION:

The initiation of this program began with a collaborative process involving the Saskatoon Police Service and several community stakeholders. This "Early Intervention" committee now forms the Steering Committee where each member can provide their expertise and insight in their area of responsibility. The value and success of the program relies heavily on these contributions.

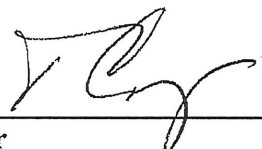
This is a cost-effective prevention program that has been proven to reduce problem behaviors in youth and results in a future reduction of expenses associated to offenders entrenched in the justice system. "Analyses by researchers from the Institute for Social and Behavioral Research found economic returns of up to \$9.60 for every dollar spent implementing Strengthening Families Program 10-14, and a cost benefit of up to \$5,923 for each youth participating in SFP 10-14."¹

Written by: Lisa Lafreniere
Inspector, Northwest Division

Approved by: Mitch Yuzdepski
Superintendent, Patrol

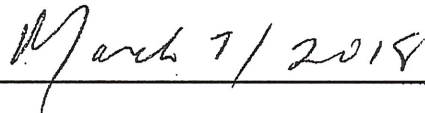
Dave Hays
Acting Deputy Chief, Operations

Submitted by:



Troy Cooper
Chief of Police

Dated:



March 7/2018

¹ Fact Sheet Created by the Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Support Center (EPISCenter) at Penn State University. 2014