

# Adapting a Model Program for Different Racial and Ethnic Groups

Pat Davenport and Bettina Friese, PhD

Families And Schools Together, Inc.

## Abstract

This presentation will examine how a model program can be adapted for racial and ethnic groups without jeopardizing program fidelity. Families and Schools Together (FAST) is a multi-family group intervention designed to build protective factors for children and empower parents to be the primary prevention agents for their own children. FAST is an award-winning model program for the prevention of substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, school failure, child abuse and neglect and mental health problems. FAST has been implemented by more than 800 sites across the US. Each site follows predetermined guidelines that include training from a certified FAST trainer, regular site visits and feedback. Any adaptations are made with the permission of the trainer and in collaboration with program participants. Each program cycle is evaluated for its outcomes and program fidelity. As a result of this process, sites have been able to adapt the program for their participants without losing program fidelity.

## FAST Program Goals

The goal of the FAST process is to increase the likelihood of the child being successful in the home, in school, and in the community.

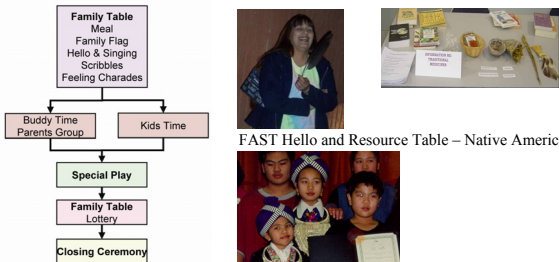
- Enhance family functioning
- Prevent target child from experiencing school failure
- Prevent substance abuse, depression, and domestic violence
- Reduce the stress and social isolation that children, youth and families experience from daily life situations

## Evaluation

The FAST evaluation consists of a pre- and post-test completed by parents. The instrument includes:

- Social Support (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991)
- Family Environment Scale (Moos & Moos, 1986)
- Self-Efficacy Scale (Scherer, et al., 1983)
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997)

## Program Activities & Successful Adaptations



FAST Hello and Resource Table – Native American



Graduation Ceremony – Hmong

2801 International Lane, Suite 105  
Madison WI 53704  
(608) 663-2382 Fax: (608) 663-2336

## FAST Participants

6,600 families completed the program from 2002-2007

### Age Range of participants:

- **Parents:** average age of 34.9 years (range 16-84 years, SD=8.63)
- **Children:** average age of 7.4 (range 3-15 years, SD=1.92)

### Race/Ethnicity

	Parents		Children	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Black	2,261	36.3	2,248	36.1
White	1,750	28.1	1,558	25.0
Hispanic/Latino	1,477	23.7	1,447	23.2
Native American	222	3.6	247	4.0
Other	216	3.5	204	3.3
Mixed Ethnicity	184	3.0	436	7.0
Asian or Pacific Islander	92	1.5	71	1.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	25	0.4	21	0.3
Total Reporting	6,227	100	6,232	100

### Marital Status

	Frequency	%
Married	2,862	46.2
Never been married	1,540	24.8
Divorced	724	11.7
Separated	481	7.8
Member of an unmarried couple	459	7.4
Widowed	132	2.1
Total	6,198	100

### Highest Grade Completed

	Frequency	%
Grades 1 through 8 (elementary)	425	6.9
Some high school	908	14.8
High school graduate or GED	1,994	32.6
Junior or vocational college	522	8.5
Some college (not junior/vocational)	1,190	19.4
College graduate	618	10.1
Some graduate or professional school	199	3.3
Graduate/professional school degree	267	4.4
Total Reporting	6,123	100

### Total Income in Last Year

	Frequency	%
Less than \$10,000	1,356	23.1
\$10,000-\$14,999	913	15.5
\$15,000-\$24,999	1,162	19.8
\$25,000-\$34,999	960	16.3
\$35,000-\$49,999	668	11.4
\$50,000-\$74,999	535	9.1
\$75,000-\$99,999	185	3.1
\$100,000 or more	98	1.7
Total Reporting	5,877	100

### Employment Status

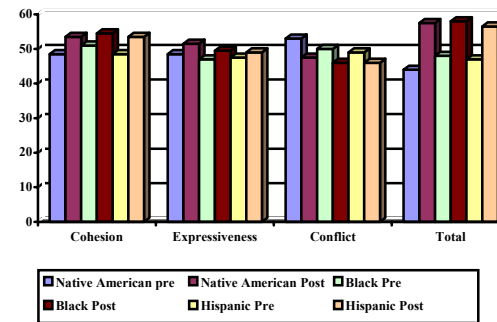
	Frequency	%
Full time job	2,650	43.6
Part time job	925	15.2
Unemployed, looking for work	908	14.9
Not employed outside home	784	12.9
Disabled, unable to work	442	7.3
Student	279	4.6
Retired	96	1.6
Total Reporting	6,084	100

## Outcome Data

		Native American	Black	Hispanic	
Cohesion		n=183	n=1,964	n=1,295	
	Pre Mean	SD	6.66 2.03	6.82 2.06	6.66 2.00
	Post Mean	SD	7.26*** 1.84	7.39*** 1.72	7.31*** 1.76
Expressiveness		n=184	n=1,955	n=1,299	
	Pre Mean	SD	5.30 1.76	5.09 1.68	5.14 1.60
	Post Mean	SD	5.69** 1.86	5.39*** 1.63	5.40*** 1.60
Conflict		n=182	n=1,957	n=1,294	
	Pre Mean	SD	3.69 2.33	3.15 2.14	3.09 2.12
	Post Mean	SD	2.76*** 2.18	2.53*** 1.96	2.49*** 1.96
Total Family Relationships		n=181	n=1,946	n=1,287	
	Pre Mean	SD	8.27 4.67	8.75 4.55	8.70 4.34
	Post Mean	SD	10.16*** 4.48	10.25*** 4.03	10.23*** 4.06

\*p≤.05 \*\*p≤.01 \*\*\*p≤.00

Figure 1. Family Environment Scale Reported by Parents



		Native American	Black	Hispanic	
Community Social Relationships		n=192	n=1,966	n=1,286	
	Pre Mean	SD	7.14 1.53	7.37 1.58	7.89 1.61
	Post Mean	SD	7.90*** 1.25	7.98*** 1.36	8.53*** 1.23
Parent-Child Relationships		n=191	n=1,964	n=1,295	
	Pre Mean	SD	7.47 1.71	8.13 1.71	7.84 1.80
	Post Mean	SD	8.51*** 1.37	8.75*** 1.36	8.84*** 1.23
Total Social Relationships		n=195	n=1,995	n=1,318	
	Pre Mean	SD	7.31 1.44	7.75 1.995	7.86 1.54
	Post Mean	SD	8.20*** 1.17	8.36*** 1.22	8.69*** 1.10

\*p≤.05 \*\*p≤.01 \*\*\*p≤.00

		Native American	Black	Hispanic	
Parent School Involvement		n=175	n=1,892	n=1,238	
	Pre Mean	SD	2.06 1.07	2.23 0.90	2.25 0.98
	Post Mean	SD	2.21* 0.98	2.49*** 0.82	2.52*** 0.92
Parent to School Contact		n=174	n=1,805	n=1,213	
	Pre Mean	SD	1.21 1.01	1.38 1.03	1.37 1.08
	Post Mean	SD	1.43** 1.04	1.49*** 1.05	1.69*** 1.10
School to Parent Contact		n=178	n=1,835	n=1,227	
	Pre Mean	SD	1.26 1.16	1.41 1.19	1.45 1.20
	Post Mean	SD	1.46* 1.18	1.46 1.19	1.74 1.23
Total Parent Involvement in School		n=164	n=1,758	n=1,166	
	Pre Mean	SD	1.50 0.82	1.70 0.81	1.71 0.91
	Post Mean	SD	1.71** 0.81	1.85*** 0.82	2.01 0.90

\*p≤.05 \*\*p≤.01 \*\*\*p≤.00

		Native American	Black	Hispanic	
Support Provided to Others		n=184	n=1,923	n=1,242	
	Pre Mean	SD	1.47 1.63	1.43 1.65	1.82 1.71
	Post Mean	SD	2.15*** 1.54	2.23*** 1.69	2.54*** 1.70
Support Received from Others		n=184	n=1,931	n=1,265	
	Pre Mean	SD	1.31 1.54	1.27 1.57	1.76 1.68
	Post Mean	SD	2.00*** 1.59	2.13*** 1.64	2.47*** 1.69

\*p≤.05 \*\*p≤.01 \*\*\*p≤.00

## Findings

Following the eight week program, parents of all represented ethnicities report significant improvements family functioning, social relationships, social support, and involvement in school.

## Conclusion

FAST can be adapted for various racial and ethnic groups without jeopardizing program fidelity. Even though core activities have to be implemented as designed, the program gives enough freedom to individual sites to make the program into something that feels right to families. Adaptations are surprisingly simple and tend to include what is familiar: foods, music, greetings, and language. The success of FAST can be attributed to a strict quality implementation protocol, an insistence on core components being implemented with fidelity, and a strong training structure. However, another, less tangible component is that FAST is based on universal values that are important to all families: belonging to a happy and healthy family and community.