

MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST)



OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant (JJIG) program is a statewide competitive grant administered by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The program offers funding and technical support for juvenile courts to implement nationally recognized community-based treatment programs appropriate for youth scoring moderate- to high-risk on the Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment (PDRA).

Evidence-based programs (EBPs) provide support and supervision to address youth needs; promote a positive relationship among the youth, their families, and their communities; and ultimately reduce out-of-home placements, associated higher costs, and recidivism while maintaining public safety.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

EBPs target specific risk and protective factors that influence the problem for their target population. **Risk factors** are aspects of a person or their environment that increases the likelihood they will experience a negative outcome. **Protective factors** are aspects of a person or their environment that have a positive influence and serve as a buffer against negative outcomes. The main goal for EBPs is to strengthen existing protective factors or build new ones and reverse risk factors in youth.

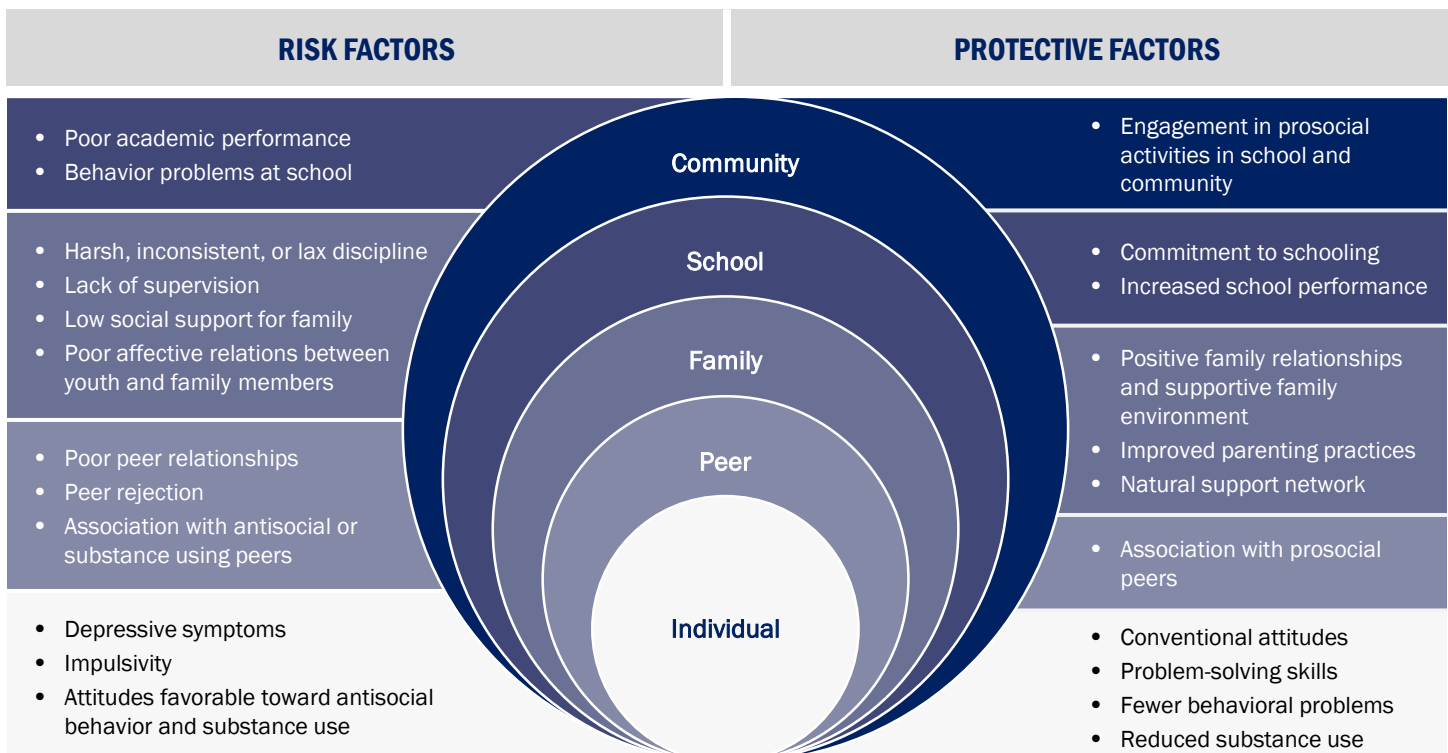


A youth with risk factors is more likely to experience more risk factors and less protective factors.

Each protective factor a youth has reduces the impact of one or more risk factors.

MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST) PROGRAM SUMMARY

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive individual-based family intervention that addresses the environmental factors that impact chronic and/or violent youth offenders.



MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

What is MST?

- Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive family- and community-based treatment program intended to identify the practical issues that impact a youth's serious antisocial behavior within his or her environment.
- Therapists have small caseloads and work as a team; are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and provide services to families at times convenient for them.
- MST clinicians go where the child lives, socializes, and attends school. They work intensively with parents and caregivers to keep the youth focused on school and gaining job skills, while avoiding antisocial activities.
- MST views the youth as embedded within multiple, interconnected systems: family, peers, school, neighborhood, and community/culture.

What is the main goal of MST?

- The overarching goal of MST is to keep youth who present with serious clinical problems (drug use, violence, severe criminal behavior) at home, in school, and out of trouble.

Is MST evidence-based?

- MST's website reports over 30 years of research, including 54 studies, have been conducted on the model.
- MST Services provides a strong fidelity system which includes clinical and ongoing programmatic support to ensure adherence.

How long is the MST program?

- The average treatment time is four to six months, although there is no designated length of time.
- Therapist/child/family contact can be every day, to several times a week, to one day a week, depending on the needs of the family.

What is the target population for MST?

- Youth aged 12 to 17 with serious antisocial and problem behavior with serious criminal offenses.
- MST is appropriate for both males and females and all race and ethnicities.

What is the implementation process for MST?

- All MST programs must be licensed by MST services.
- Each MST treatment team consists of three to four therapists, with each therapist carrying a caseload of four to six families.
- MST Services created the MST Program Development Model™ (PDM™) to include information on implementation; however, given the variation in organizations, it is recognized that PDM is applied differently across locations. Autonomy is given to the local program's developer to implement MST relative to the needs of the community.
- The core of MST services provided consists of an initial 5-day training, ongoing MST clinical support, quarterly booster training, ongoing organization assistance and quality assurance support through the monitoring of treatment fidelity/adherence.
- Additional MST training and certification information can be found [here](#).

How many counties are using MST in Georgia?

- Through the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant, 11 counties are currently providing MST.

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