Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care
Overview

The MTFC Model, Supporting Research & Implementation

“Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care” and “MTFC” are registered service marks of OSLC Community Programs, Inc.
What is MTFC?

• Alternative to institutional, residential and group care placement for children and youth with serious behavior problems
• MTFC foster parents participate in the treatment
• Includes services for permanent caregivers/discharge resources
• Program duration: 6 – 12 months
The MTFC Model

- Treatment is provided in a family setting
- New skills are practiced & reinforced in-vivo
- Treatment is facilitated by core program components for:
  - Youth
  - Families
  - MTFC Parents
Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care

• Objective
  • Change the trajectory of negative behavior by improving social adjustment across settings

• How is this achieved?
  • Simultaneous & well-coordinated treatments in multiple settings
    • Home
    • School
    • Community
    • Peer group
Who has participated in the studies?

Eight randomized trials:

- Children and adolescents from CWS leaving a state psychiatric hospital
- Boys from juvenile justice for chronic delinquency
- Girls from juvenile justice with severe mental health problems and abuse histories (2)
- Child welfare “challenging” children
- Children receiving next placement
- 6th grade girls in foster care
- Young children in foster care
Girls Have Mental Health and Behavioral Problems

- 17 transitions in parent figures (6 before age 13)
- 2.4 prior out-of-home placements
- 81% had at least one parent convicted of a crime
- 93% have a history of documented physical or sexual abuse
- 79% have witnessed domestic violence
Girls Mental Health and Health Risks

- 50% had a suicide attempt
- 75% had 2 or more axis 1 diagnoses
- 26% have been pregnant
- 66% have used hard drug in last year (36% use hard drugs 1-7 times/week)
- 78% are academically below grade/age level
- 12 average lifetime arrests (first at age 12 ½; 72% have at least 1 felony)
Days in Psychiatric Hospitals or Incarcerated (locked settings)

2 year follow-up

Chamberlain, Leve, & DeGarmo Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 07
Homework Completion at 12-Months

Days/week spent 30 min on homework

Group Care
- Baseline: 2.1
- 12-months: 2.0

MTFC
- Baseline: 2.0
- 12-months: 3.5
Boys’ Outcomes in Follow-Up Compared to Group Care

- Safety:
  - 1/2 the number of arrests (and significantly lower violence rates)
  - 2/3 fewer days incarcerated
  - Significantly less hard drug use

- Permanency:
  - Significantly more time living with family
  - Fewer runaways
  - Less time with antisocial friends on the street

- Well-being:
  - Higher rates of school attendance and homework
  - Higher ratings of life satisfaction
Youth Problem Behavior Drives Disruptions

Project KEEP

After 6 behaviors, every additional behavior on the PDR increases the probability of disruption by 17%
**Probability of failed placement by condition**

**MTFC-P**

![](chart1.png)

**Project KEEPS**

![](chart2.png)
Which program components drive the positive results?

- Effects mediated by:
  - Supervision
  - Relationship with a mentoring adult
  - Consistent non-harsh discipline
  - Less association with delinquent peers
  - Homework completion

Referrals and Placements
Who is served by MTFC?

• Children and youth in need of out-of-home placement due to serious behavioral and emotional problems, and their families

• Youth 12 – 17 years old – MTFC-A
• Children 7 – 11 years old – MTFC-C
• Preschoolers 3 – 6 years old – MTFC-P

• Those who may have failed in prior placements or treatments

• Can be used as step-down from institutional placements
• Can be used as diversion from institutional placements
Exclusionary Criteria

- Absence of serious behavior problems
- Substance abuse is the only problem behavior
- Sex offending/acting out is only problem behavior
- Active suicidal/homicidal
- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia
- Bi-polar disorder with psychotic features
- Insufficient cognitive ability to understand the point and level system
Placement process

MTFC Program Supervisor reviews referrals and matches youth to foster home

MTFC Program Supervisor may decline referrals

• If youth is not appropriate for the program
• If no good match can be made/no trained home is available
• If foster parents decline the placement

Referrals will be declined less frequently as the program matures
What does the MTFC model look like?
Core Components for Youth

- Daily structure and support via a point and level system
- Daily school card
- Weekly individual therapy
- Weekly skill building and advocacy
- Close supervision of whereabouts and associations
- Recreational skill building
- Psychiatric consultation
- Daily mentoring by MTFC parents
- Weekly contact with parents and frequent home visits
Level System for Adolescents

- Three levels
- Opportunities to earn points for compliance, prosocial behavior
- Points are lost for rule violations, misbehavior
- Provides a framework within which interaction can occur without engagement in conflict
## School Days Level 2 Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Things to Do to Earn Points</th>
<th>Earned</th>
<th>Bonus</th>
<th>Taken</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>UP ON TIME</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>READY IN MORNING</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>MORNING CLEANUP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GO TO SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/CLASS</td>
<td>CARRY SCHOOL CARD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/CLASS</td>
<td>BEHAVIOR IN CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>SCHOOL CARD BONUS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>READ AND STUDY</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>CHORE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 A.M.</td>
<td>ATTITUDE/MATURITY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 P.M.</td>
<td>ATTITUDE/MATURITY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-10</td>
<td>VOLUNTEERING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>BED ON TIME</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DAILY TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Level 2 Privileges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIVILEGE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>POINT COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BASICS</strong></td>
<td>Use of telephone for 15 minutes daily, radio in your room. 9:30 P.M. Bedtime</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TV</strong></td>
<td>Can watch TV after homework and/or chore(s) are completed</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LATER BEDTIME</strong></td>
<td>10:00 P.M. Bedtime Daily, 11:00 P.M. Bedtime on non-school days and holidays with permission.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACTIVITY TIME</strong></td>
<td>With prior planning, permission and approval, you may plan to go skating, swimming, to a movie, school activity, etc. If you are late or not where you said you would be, you will lose 1 point per minute.</td>
<td>½ point per minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BONDS</strong></td>
<td>1 Bond costs 100 points. You need 6 bond to buy Level III.</td>
<td>50 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTRA PHONE TIME</strong></td>
<td>One 20 minute call (not long distance)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER</strong></td>
<td>Foster Parents will choose if applicable</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALLOWANCE</strong></td>
<td>$5.00 per week. All purchases must have receipts and you must show your money to your foster parents. Money spent at school in pop/candy machines must have Case Manager approval.</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MTFC Foster Parent profile

- Interest in treatment aspect of role
- Preference for team work
- Tends toward reinforcement, encouragement rather than discipline
- Time availability, household composition
- Willingness to learn and follow structure of program
- Willingness to accept direction from program supervisor
Core Components for MTFC Parents

- Conducts daily behavior management point and level system
- Daily telephone contact (M-F) and data collection (PDR)
- Weekly support and training meetings
- 24-hour, 7-day on-call program supervisor
- Respite
- Pre-service training
# WebPDR™ Weekly Report

Client ID: (Age Group: 12 to 18) Dates:

Client Name:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference: 1 = Occurred &amp; Not Stressful; 2 = Occurred &amp; Stressful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Cruelty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backtalking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bedwetting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complaining</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daydreaming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defiance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression/Sadness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Destructiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encopresis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fearfulness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interrupting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irritability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jealousy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lying</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nervous/Jittery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not minding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pant wetting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pouting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short attention span</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sleep problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sluggishness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stealing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swearing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teasing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worried</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competitiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irresponsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug/Alcohol use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Runaway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skipping meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staying out</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Outs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Points Earned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Points Lost</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Med given:</td>
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<td>Note 2:</td>
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<td>Note 3:</td>
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<tr>
<td>General:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Program Components for Families

- Weekly family counseling focusing on Parent Management Training
- Instruction in behavior management methods
- Home visits with crisis back-up
- 24-hour, 7-day on call to program supervisor
- Aftercare services
Schedule of Contacts

• For the placement youth:
  • Daily focus on behavioral issues in MTFC foster home
  • Weekly therapy in office or community
  • Weekly skills coaching sessions in the community

• For the permanent caregivers:
  • Weekly counseling in the home or the office

• For the MTFC foster parents:
  • Daily telephone contact
  • Weekly group meetings
  • Add’l contacts as needed/desired
Staff Role Descriptions

- Treatment Foster Parents
- Program Supervisor (1.0 FTE)
- Family Therapist (.50 FTE)
- Youth Therapist (.50 FTE)
- Skills Trainers (hourly)
- PDR Caller/Foster Parent Recruiter (0.75 FTE)
- Consulting Psychiatrist (hourly)
- Clinical Supervisor/Program Director
Role Stratification

- Clearly defined roles of each treatment team member are specified and careful planning is taken to maintain the distinction of these roles.
- Minimal overlap in roles is allowed in order to:
  1. Increase the predictability of the treatment environment
  2. Decrease emotionality
- Clear expectations and roles help to create opportunities for teaching and reinforcing adaptive responses.
How is MTFC different?

• Foster parents are trained in the model and are part of the treatment team
• Foster parents use a point and level system in the home daily
• Placements end when treatment is complete (6 – 12 months)
• MTFC placement prepares youth for successful long-term placement
• Program collects behavioral information daily to aid in treatment planning and measure progress
Other things to know about MTFC

- Only one youth is placed in each home, generally
- No co-occurring treatments should take place during MTFC placement, except for psychiatric services if needed
- Contact with permanent family is limited during first 3 weeks of placement (approx.)
- Electronic and phone communications are monitored
Other things to know about MTFC (cont’d)

• Home visits are short and less frequent initially and increase in duration and frequency as both the youth and the permanent caregivers make progress in the program
• Timing of home visits is based on therapeutic benefit rather than fixed schedule
• Drug testing is recommended in MTFC for many placement youth
MTFC Training, Implementation and Quality Control
Pre-service MTFC Clinical Team Training

First day – for Program Supervisors and Program Managers:

• Foster Parent Advocacy and Support
• MTFC Treatment Team Supervision
• Managing the Daily Parent Report
• Service Coordination and Stakeholder Liaison
• Placement and Transition Coordination
• Working with the Site Consultant
Pre-service MTFC Clinical Team Training (cont’d)

Second through fourth days – for all MTFC team members:

• Overview and Research
• Program roles and role stratification
• Point and Level System
• Parent Daily Report
• Foster Parent Recruitment and Training
• Weekly Foster Parent meetings
• Weekly Clinical Team meetings
Pre-service MTFC Clinical Team Training (cont’d)

Fifth day – for Program Supervisors, Therapists and Program Managers:
• Engaging the Youth and Family
• Targeting Behaviors
• Teaching Social Skills
• Teaching Problem Solving Strategies
• Avoiding Risk
• Developing Short term and Long Range Plans
• Encouragement and Emotional Support
• Family Sessions
Pre-service Foster Parent Training

- Approximately 12 hours – Train the Trainer
- Program Overview and research
- MTFC Program Roles
- House Rules
- Noticing Behavior
- Encouragement
- Purpose and use of PDR Data
- Point and Level System
- On-Call Support
Ongoing foster parent training

• Provided in weekly foster parent meetings (one of several purposes)
• Focuses on identification of problem behaviors and their pro-social opposites
• Focuses on improvement of the strategic use of the point and level system
Consultation and Video Review

- Weekly telephone consultation with Program Supervisor
- Weekly video review of foster parent meetings
- Weekly review of clinical team meetings
- Review of PDR data
- Frequency reduced after first year, depending on progress made
Consultant Site Visits

- Three 2-day site visits by the consultant during the first year
- Attendance of program meetings, on-site problem solving, training boosters, other as needed
- Frequency reduced after first year depending on progress made
Program Indicators and Evaluation Measures incorporated in the MTFC Implementation Protocol
Periodic Implementation Progress Reports

• Three reports during first implementation year, frequency reduced thereafter depending on progress made
• Summary of progress, strengths and areas in need of improvement
• Strategies to strengthen the program
Program Assessment

- Occurs for first time at end of first year
- Identifies areas of strength and areas not yet meeting program certification standards
- Identifies follow-up services needed to address remaining issues
Program Certification

- Program applies when assessment indicates criteria are met
- Independent process by OSLC Community Programs
- Initial certification valid for 2 years
- Subsequent certification renewals valid for 3 years
MTFC Program Certification Criteria

1. Program completion/Outcomes
   • 67% completed Rx and discharged to lower level of care
   • At least 7 successful discharges
MTFC Program Certification Criteria (cont’d)

2. Therapy Components
   • Measures dosage of individual and family therapy and skills coaching
   • Weekly sessions for each component are the norm
   • To pass, 70% of youth must receive 70% of normative services
MTFC Program Certification Criteria (cont’d)

3. Behavioral Components
   A. Parent Daily Report
      • Consistency
      • Variation in number and types of behavior
      • PDR score accounts for 40% of overall score
   B. Point and Level System
      • Consistency
      • Variation
      • Giving/Taking Points
      • Translation of Points to Privileges
      • PALS score accounts for 40% of overall score
3. Behavioral Components (cont’d)
   C. School Card
      • Consistency
      • Completeness
      • Information incorporated in the Point and Level System
      • School card score accounts for 20% of overall score
MTFC Program Certification Criteria (cont’d)

4. Foster Parent Meetings
5. Clinical Team Meetings
   • Frequency of Meetings
   • Attendance
   • Content
   • Structure
   • Minimum score to pass is 70%
MTFC Program Certification Criteria (cont’d)

6. Staffing
   - Are all positions filled
   - Are all team members engaged in role-appropriate activities?

7. Staff Training
   - Are all current staff appropriately trained?
   - Is there an adequate replacement training plan?
MTFC Program Certification Criteria (cont’d)

- Criterion 1 must be met
- Five of the remaining six criteria must be met
- Initial program certification is valid for 2 years
- Re-certifications are valid for three years
Ongoing Focus on Model Adherence

- Periodic program assessments in between certification points (every 9 to 10 months)
- Remedial services to correct model drift as needed
- Replacement staff training available in Oregon every three months
Implementation costs

- Planning and preparation (readiness process): $2,000
- First-year implementation costs: $49,750 plus travel/lodging
- Second-year implementation costs: variable depending on progress made in yr. 1, average $29,000 plus possible travel/lodging
- Program certification: $2,050
- Post-certification: $5,000 - $10,000/year, depending on staff replacements and model drift. The low amount covers use of the database and a program assessment
Program costs

- Varies by location
- Commonly between $110 - $150/day (care + treatment)
- Most significant factors are staff salary levels and foster parent compensation
Feasibility and Costs

• MTFC placements cost a third to ½ less than GC placements not counting school costs

• Considering outcomes, MTFC saves taxpayers from $21,000-$87,000 per case over the long run according to the Washington State Institute of Public Policy (www.wsipp.wa.gov)