

CONVERSATIONS ON YOUTH (COY) 2021

The Functional Family Probation (FFP)[®] Experience

9 Sep 2021

Probation and Community Rehabilitation Service (PCRS)



Agenda



- ▶ Our Journey towards FFP®
 - ▶ The FFP® Model
 - ▶ Benefits of FFP®
 - ▶ Understanding the FFP® Experience through a Case Study
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Why FFP[®] ?

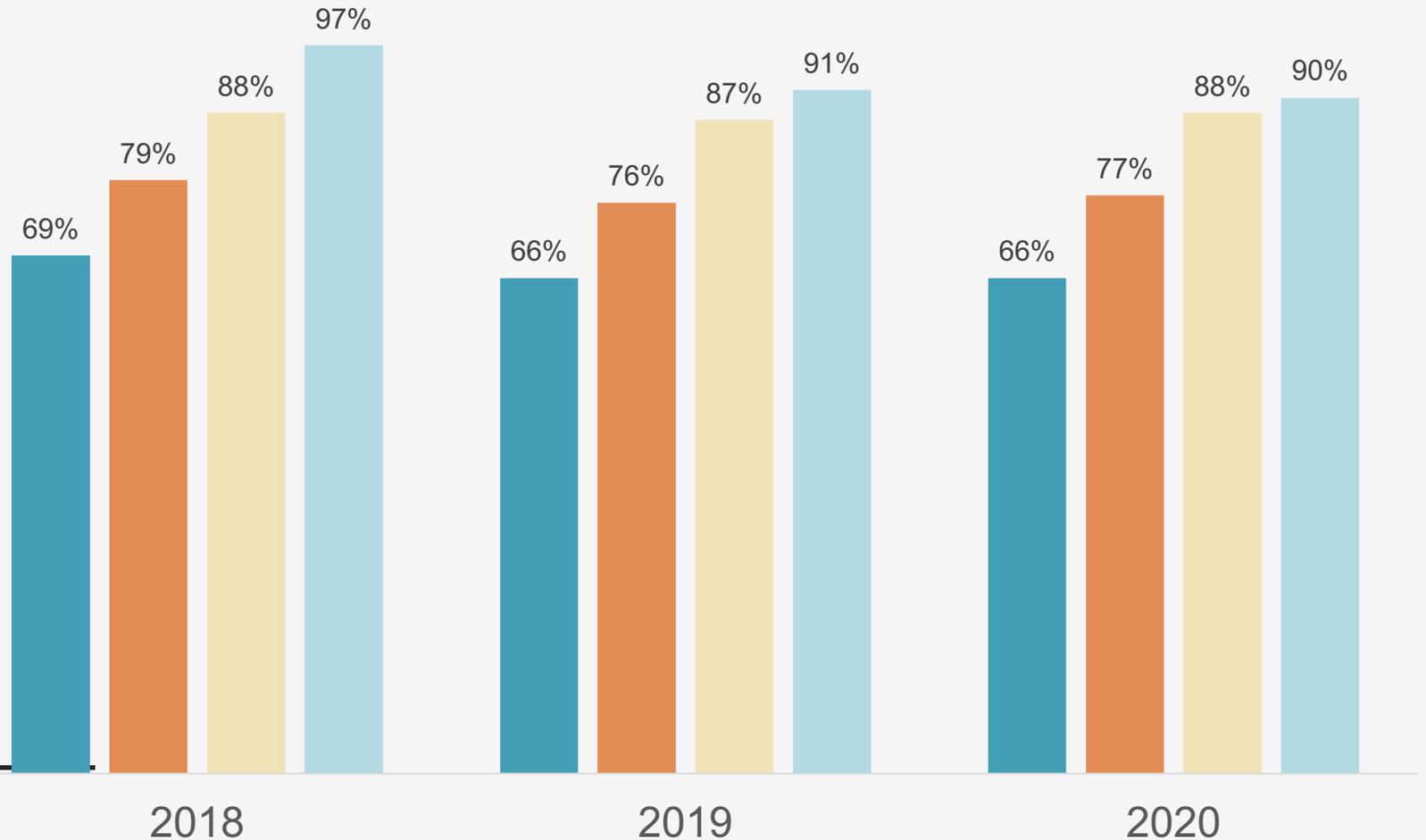


Younger probationers face more difficulties completing Probation

*Our
Journey
Towards
FFP®*

Completion rates by Age at start of Probation

■ Below 16 ■ 16 to 17 ■ 18 to 20 ■ 21 and above



Family Factors: A Key Role in influencing Probation Outcomes



Youths with high family supervision were **3.47 times more likely** to complete their probation orders as compared to those with low family supervision*



Family domain on the risk assessment tool (YLS/CMI) was one of the **strongest predictors** for general recidivism**



Probationers on Functional Family Therapy (FFT) were **4 times as likely** to complete their probation orders.

*Li, D et al. (2019). Risk and protective factors for probation success among youth offenders in Singapore. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 17(2), 194-213.
**Chu, C. M et al.. (2015). Assessing youth offenders in a non-Western context: The predictive validity of the YLS/CMI ratings. *Psychological Assessment*, 27(3), 1013-1021.

What is FFP® ?



Functional Family Probation (FFP®)

Strengths-based and family-focused case management approach

- A systematic way of guiding families to deal with their challenges
- Leverages on their strengths

- Probation Officers hold regular sessions with the whole family
- Encourages family to be involved in the youth's probation journey

- Aims to build a supportive home environment where the youth can make and sustain positive changes

Functional Family Probation (FFP®)

Three Phases

- Engagement & Motivation, Support & Monitoring and Generalization
- Addresses different stages of family's motivation for change

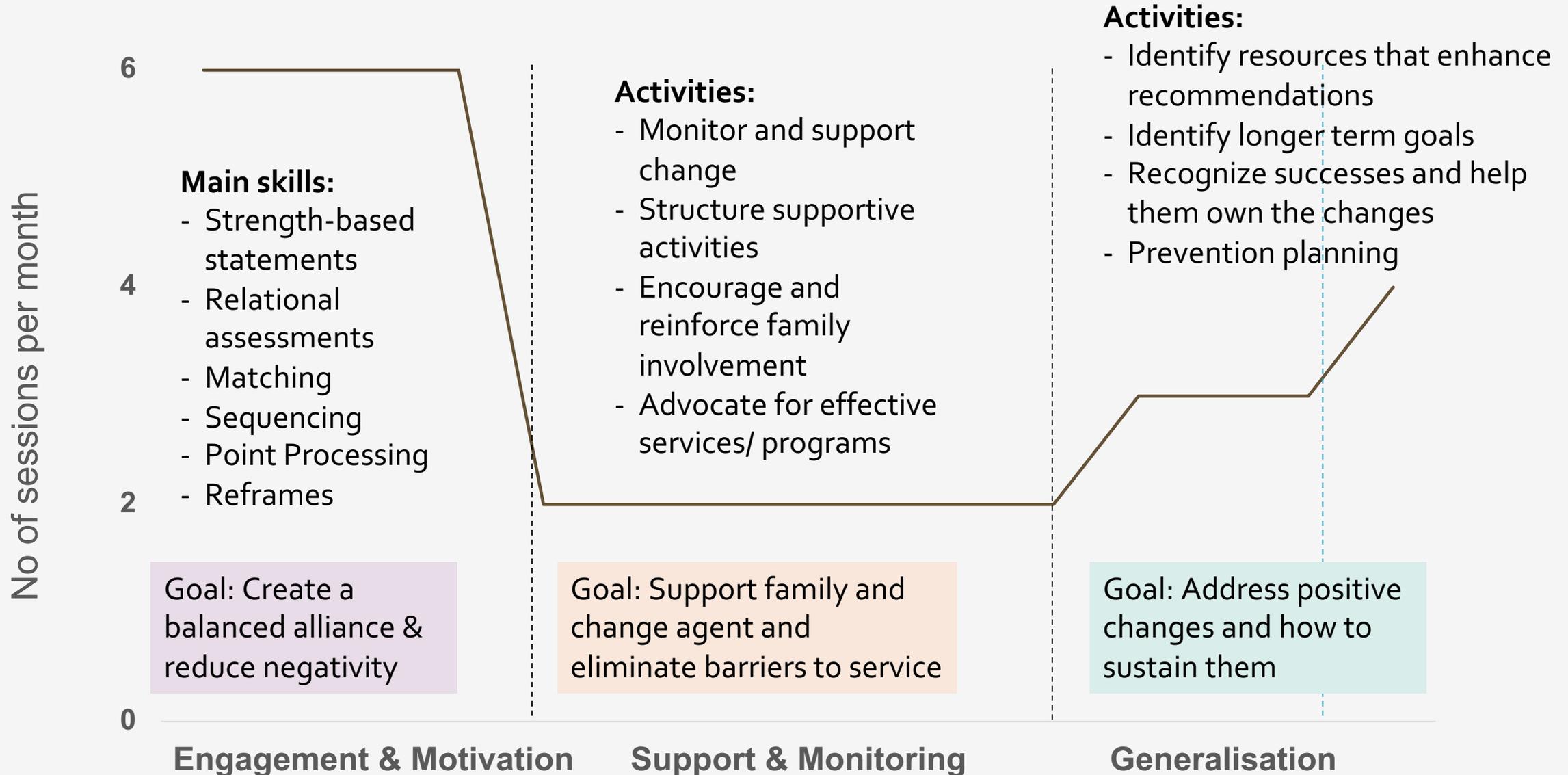
Systematic Approach

- Owned by US-based company, FFT LLC
- Training and supervision provided for by trainers and consultants from FFT LLC
- Probation Officer works with the family throughout the order

Different from Functional Family Therapy

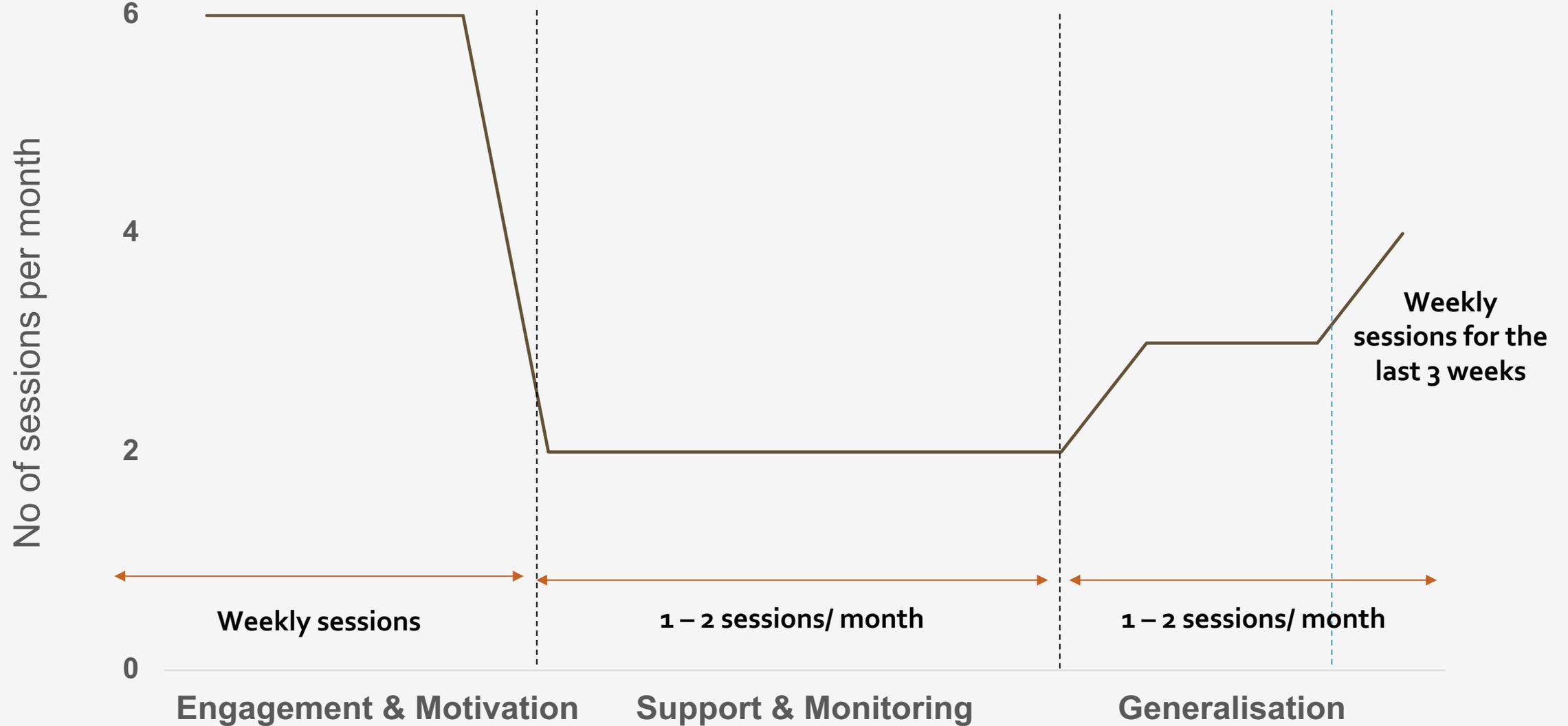
- Based on similar principles
- FFT is a short-term, intensive, therapeutic intervention model, lasting 3-4 months
- Implemented in Clinical and Forensic Psychology Service of MSF with psychologist as therapist

The FFP[®] Model



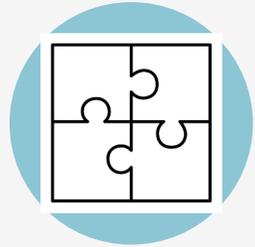
Case example:
Sam, placed on 18
months' probation

The FFP® Model



Skills used in FFP®

RELATIONAL FOCUS



Matching

Helping the family feel that you respect and understand them, their language & norms

e.g. Scheduling around their free time, colloquial language



Strength-based statements

Statements of nobility about a family member's effort towards another

e.g. "You walked away and tried to regulate because you know everyone's affected by this. You want to protect their feelings"



Relational assessments

Understanding relationship patterns in degrees of relatedness and hierarchy

e.g. The level and intensity of contact between family members, and the degree of control and influence



Skills used in FFP®



Point Processing

Describing negative interaction in the moment in a strength-based way

e.g. "I noticed you interrupting her, is that your way of wanting to be heard?"



Sequencing

Re-telling negative interactions that happened outside of the session in a strength-based way

e.g. "You waited up till 1am, is that you being relieved that she's home safe?"



Reframes*

Suggesting that a problem behaviour may include a more positive but misguided intent

e.g. "Did you skip school often because..."

CHANGE MEANING

The pilot of FFP® in PCRS since 2020

Case Profiles



- Below 18 years
- Home probation at the start of order



- Higher risk of re-offending based on Youth Level of Service / Case Management Inventory
- Multiple needs & issues

The FFP® Team



- 6 Probation Officers, 2 Supervisors
 - A total of 4 trainings
 - Weekly group supervision
- Active reviews with US Consultant

Clear supervision framework

Challenges Faced by FFP® Cases

School truancy

Poor family
Communication

Multiple failed
interventions

Lack of
resources

Co-occurring
risks (e.g. drug
use, gangs)

General Issues Observed in Cases

Early dropout

Low
motivation

Lack of family
support

Poor balanced
rapport with
officer

High
negativity

Observed Benefits of the FFP® Approach

Consistent and structured approach to engage families in rehabilitation process

Families display motivation for change and attend sessions regularly

- Families are open to address issues and are receptive and participative during sessions
 - Engagement and motivation phase also focuses on decreasing negativity and reducing blame within the family
-

Observed Benefits of the FFP® Approach

Families are more involved and take ownership to address issues

- Model emphasizes empowering families and working with community partners
 - Families take ownership to address issues faced by them and probationer instead of blaming probationer for his/her behaviour
 - Builds a more supportive family environment
 - Shared responsibility between Probation Officer, parents and community partners in working with probationer
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THE FFP® EXPERIENCE

A case study – Transiting Between Stages



Qris & Family*



Presenting Issues

- ▶ Multiple developmental disorders
- ▶ Divorced parents
- ▶ Trauma history
- ▶ Lack of stable caregivers

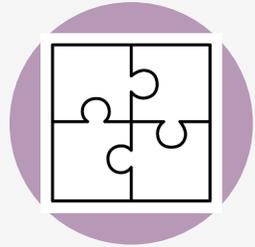


Intervention Approach

- ▶ Family sessions with key persons (e.g. main caregivers & reconstituted parent)
- ▶ Liaisons with therapeutic group homes, IMH, DAS
- ▶ Reframing themes of loss

Engagement & Monitoring: Qris & Family

1
2



Matching

- Using colloquial language
- Scheduling around parents' free time
- Fixing sessions at safe places (e.g. hostel, home)
- Referral to a therapeutic group home for trauma systems therapy



Strength-based statements

- Strength based statements when the parents struggle with multiple systems
- Highlighting the noble intent of each parent



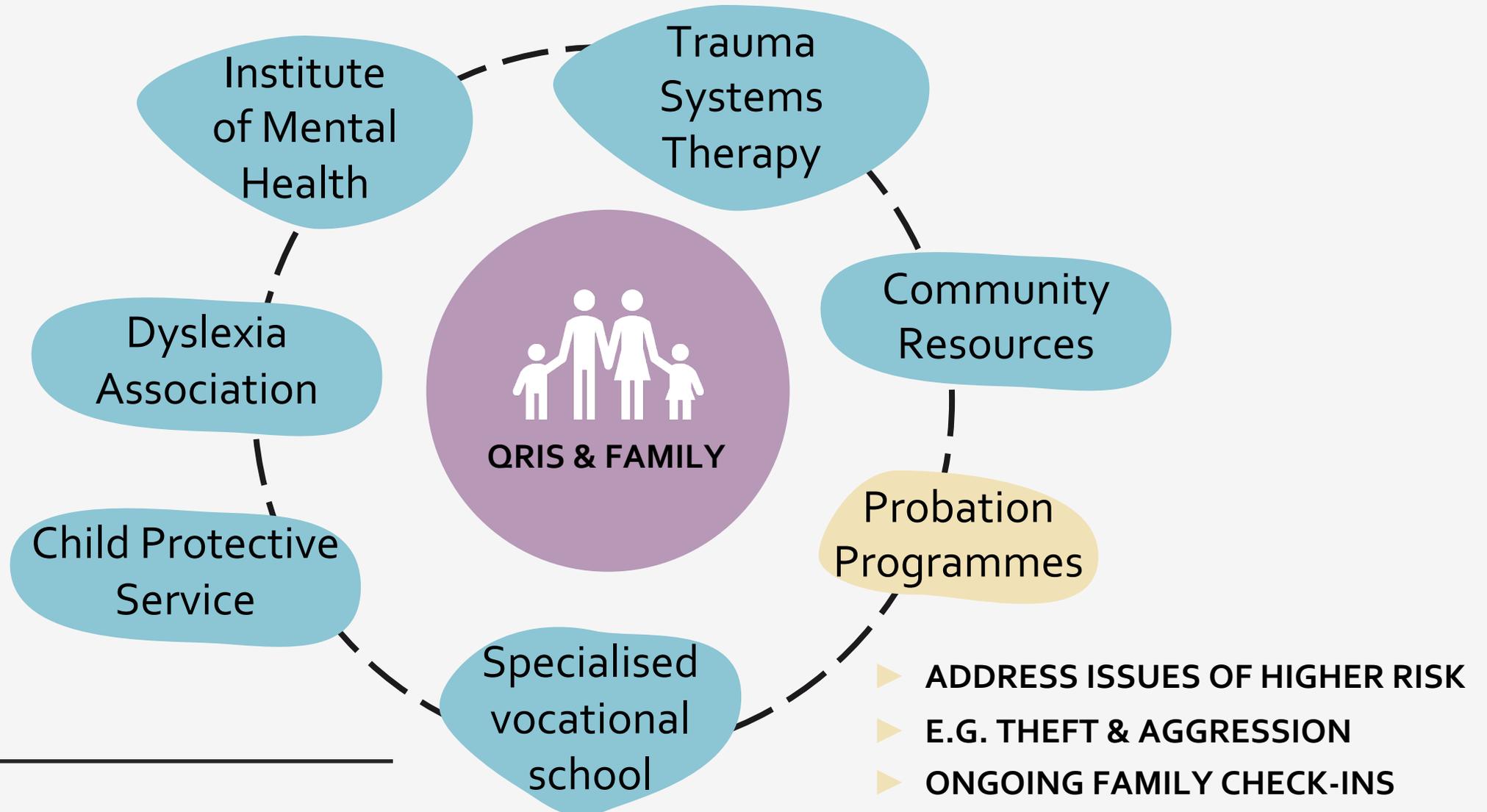
Relational assessments

Understanding relationship patterns in the family

e.g. The intensity of contact between youth and step-parent, and the degree of control and influence biological parent has despite absence

Support & Monitoring Phase: Qris & Family

1
2



INSIDE THE FFP® EXPERIENCE II



A live role-play of the Engagement & Motivation Phase

Inside the FFP® Experience



- ▶ Zac & Family
- ▶ Protective
- ▶ Covers up breaches



- ▶ Point processing
- ▶ Strength-based
- ▶ Reframing



Zac & Family



- A protective family
- Caregivers are hesitant to tell Probation Officer (PO) the situation at home
- Covers up for his infringements
- The session is to address a curfew breach



- ▶ **POINT PROCESSING**
- ▶ **STRENGTH-BASED**
- ▶ **REFRAMING**

Zac & Family



PO: "Mum and Sis, I noticed you both seem anxious when I brought up his infringement. I can see that you're being protective of him and you're afraid he'll get in trouble if you told me about his breach."



▶ **POINT
PROCESSING**

Zac & Family



PO: “I can see that you’re not entirely comfortable with sharing certain things about Zac’s infringement. I wonder if the family is trying to show that you’re on his side.”



▶ **REFRAME
(PROTECTION)**

Zac & Family



PO: "I can see that the family is really affected when something like this happens. You all want to protect the relationships so much that you don't want to 'rock the boat' by drawing attention to Zac's issues. You don't want to lose him."



▶ **REFRAME
(PROTECTION)**

Zac & Family



PO: “I noticed the word ‘better’ popped up a few times in our conversation. This tells me that the family wants things to get better. This family wants to keep everybody together.”



- ▶ **POINT PROCESSING**
- ▶ **STRENGTH BASED**

Zac & Family



PO: "Moving forward, let's find a way for the family to stay together. For that to happen, let's have honest conversations to help Zac avoid breaching his curfew again."



▶ **STRENGTH
BASED**



Q&A



The Voices of Qris & Family

“I missed out a lot of time with my son and I get to make up for that loss during weekly sessions with my son. These are the times I get to learn about him all over again.” – **Mr D (Father)**

“I was very stressed when I had to stay in hostel and family couldn't visit at first. I was happy when my family spoke to me over video calls because I missed them a lot. My mother sent me letters to remind me to behave, asked me what I learnt in hostel and what do I wish for when probation ends. I'll tell her I want to stay with her.” – **Qris**

“I felt alone trying to get Qris to see me as his mum again at first. When we all meet for sessions, I felt like I have a voice. I don't feel judged anymore, it's all about how the family can make it out together, not just Qris – **Mdm M (Mother)**