

COPMI's Family Focus Intervention - what's involved?

The Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) national initiative's Family Focus is an evidence-based public mental health intervention modelled on the work of world-leading child mental health expert, Dr William Beardslee, and proven to build resilience in the children of parents with depression or anxiety.

Although a variety of safe and effective tools exist for treating adults with elevated symptoms or major depression; these treatments generally do not target parents or measure its impact on parental functioning or its effects on child outcomes (except during the perinatal period).

This is what sets COPMI's program apart, the Family Focus intervention is proven to:

- Prevent or improve depression and anxiety in the parent
- Target vulnerabilities of children of depressed and anxious parents
- Achieve sustained reduction of internalising symptoms in children leading to a reduced risk of depression and anxiety
- Improve parent-child relationships.

COPMI's FREE online Family Focus training involves seven sessions:

1. Taking a history
2. Psychoeducation and the family's history
3. Seeing the children
4. Planning the family meeting
5. Holding the family meeting
6. One week follow-up
7. Long-term follow-up



1. Taking a history

Worker meets with parents

1. If possible, include both parents
2. Elicit the history of the illness and identify strengths in the family.

4. Planning the family meeting

Worker meets with parents

1. Feedback about the meetings with children
2. Identify discussion points for the family meeting
3. Role play family meeting discussion points.

2. Psychoeducation and the family's history

Worker meets with parents

1. Provide psychoeducation on depression, anxiety and resilience
2. Discuss how each child is going and identify parents' perception of children's strengths and concerns.

5. Holding the family meeting

Worker meets with parents and children together

1. Parents or worker provide information on depression and anxiety
2. Support family discussion.

3. Seeing the children

Worker meets with parents who then introduce each child so that the worker can meet with the children individually to:

1. Identify strengths
2. Do a brief assessment
3. Identify questions that the children have regarding their parent's mental illness.

6. One week follow-up

Worker meets with parents

1. Check-in to ensure that everyone is ok
2. Support parents to plan next steps for the family.

7. Long-term follow-up

Worker meets with parents

1. Check-in with families every six to nine months
2. Be available for continued follow-up.

For further information visit www.copmi.net.au/familyfocus or contact the COPMI national initiative on 08 8367 0888 | copmi@copmi.net.au



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