

Referral Information

Services at River Oak can be initiated by calling the Sacramento County Child & Family ACCESS team at (916) 875-9980.

River Oak Center for Children has a team of specially trained Functional Family Therapy (FFT) clinicians who can provide family therapy using the FFT model in both the Intensive In-Home and Outpatient programs.



The Functional Family Therapy model was developed by James Alexander, Ph.D., at the University of Utah. For more information on FFT Inc. go to www.fftinc.com.

For more information, please contact:

Amy Fierro, LMFT
Vice-President—Outpatient Division
Phone: (916) 609-5100
Email: afierro@riveroak.org

Debbie Mendez, LMFT
Clinical Program Manager
Phone: (916) 609-5100
Email: dmendez@riveroak.org



River Oak
Center for Children

SHARED CORE VALUES

- Children's Needs Come First
 - Team Work
- Integrity and Commitment
 - Responsibility and Accountability

Established in 1966. Awarded Gold Seal of Approval™ by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

Administrative Offices

5030 El Camino Avenue
Carmichael, CA 95608
Phone: (916) 609-5100
Fax: (916) 609-5160
www.riveroak.org

In collaboration with Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services Division of Mental Health.

A Place for Children and Families to Grow

**Functional Family Therapy
(FFT)**

An Overview

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is a short-term family-based prevention and intervention program.

- FFT targets youth between the ages of 11 and 18, although younger siblings of referred adolescents are also included in sessions.
- The youth referred may be at risk for and/or are presenting with delinquency, violence, substance use, conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, or disruptive behavior disorder.
- The length of services ranges from, on average, 8 to 12 one-hour family sessions for mild cases and up to 30 hours of direct service for families with more challenges. Family sessions are typically once a week for 60-90 minutes.
- In most cases, family sessions are spread over a 3-month period.
- FFT is delivered by one therapist in the office, school, home, juvenile court, and/or within community-based settings.
- Family sessions should include as many members of the family as appropriate.

Core Principles and Goals

- The goal of FFT is to improve family functioning while reducing youth's negative behaviors through the use of specific goals, objectives, and therapy interventions.



- The treatment focus is family therapy, exploring family relationships and how family relationships affect behaviors.
- FFT is delivered in three phases and the length of each phase is individually determined, based on accomplished goals.
- The program is strength-based and leads to self sufficiency for participants.
- Clinicians emphasize the importance of respecting all family members on their own terms.

Evidence of Program Effectiveness

Studies of the effectiveness of FFT have shown the following:

- Reduction in:
 - * criminal activity
 - * violent behavior
 - * high-risk behaviors of younger siblings
- Low treatment drop-out rate
- Improvement in family interactions
- Decrease in:
 - * family negativity and hostility
 - * child behavior problems
 - * the need for out-of-home placement
- Increase in parenting competencies

