



SFP SAMPLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES



1/1/2015

Excerpt from Ballymun SFP Handbook
2015

These Policies and Procedures are applicable to all SFP supported events, meetings, or other SFP supported activity.

SFP Sample Policies & Procedures

EXCERPT FROM BALLYMUN SFP HANDBOOK 2015

SFP Family Referral & Attendance Policy Family Referrals

Referrals to Ballymun SFP are voluntary and families should agree and consent to a referral being made on their behalf.

- All families with teen/child between 12 and 16 years old or children 6 to 12 year olds are welcome to apply, depending on availability of programmes. “Families” come in all different shapes and sizes. An adult who plays a parenting role with a teen/child is considered a “parent”.
- SFP 12-16 is aimed at teen/child in secondary school (12-16 years old) or who have completed their primary school education at the time of referral.
- SFP 6-12 is aimed at primary school aged children.
- Participation on the programme is voluntary. A family may disengage from the programme at any time.
- Referral agencies/agents should link in with families (parent and teen/child/children) as a support throughout SFP and to meet family needs outside of the programme, unless a family “opts out” of this support. However, where a statutory agency (such as the HSE / Social Work) are the referrers/engaged with the family, SFP will continue to liaise with those agencies and vice versa.
- Referral Agent should notify schools/education centres involved with the teen/child(s)/child(ren) of the referral to SFP.
- Families can choose to self-refer if, for example, no agency is currently linked in with them, and the level of need does not exceed the capability of SFP.
- A family who has participated or been referred to SFP before is welcome to apply again. Every term is treated as a new term and a new application form must be completed.
- Referrals must be received by the closing date each term.
- It may not be possible to accept all families. A waiting list of suitable families may be drawn up. They may be invited to join in the first 3 weeks of the programme, should there be a drop off, or the referral will be reviewed again in the following programme.
- Transportation and/or childcare may be available on request for families where either/both may affect attendance.

Family Selection Process

A Selection Process is implemented for each term of SFP, involving a Referral Committee who review all applications for suitability of the programme to meet the needs of the family. SFP tries to accommodate as many referred families as possible. There are times, however, when other services or interventions may be needed prior to involvement on SFP or where involvement on SFP would counteract/make it difficult to continue attending another important service. Where the needs of the family is greater or more specialized than can be provided by SFP, families may be asked to apply in a later term if suitable, or other more appropriate programmes/services may be recommended.

Each family is considered on the basis of the following to determine the suitability of SFP to the family:

1. A fully completed application form delivered to Programme Manager by the closing date, with all sections completed and
2. A meeting between Site Coordinator/Programme Manager, Referral Agent and family applying.
3. Meeting of the Family Referral Committee.
4. Numbers and make-up of families who have applied.
5. Nature and extent of emerging or existing issues within the family.

Family Attendance

- SFP participation is voluntary for all families.
- SFP takes place one evening per week, usually from 6-8:30pm for families with teen/child and for families with children 6-12, Wednesday evenings from 5-7:30pm.
- Families commit to attend the full 15 weeks (including Introductory Evening) of the course. SFP is officially a 14 week programme, with an introductory night (one week before programme start) to help families get to know each other and the personnel of SFP.
- To benefit completely from the programme, it is recommended that all 14 weeks are attended. A minimum of 8 weeks of the 14 week programme must be attended to graduate and take part in the evaluation.
- As detailed in Referral Agents section, families should be able to avail of ongoing SFP support through their Referral Agent. However, families may also “opt-out” of this support, and they have the right to do so. However, where child protection issues may arise or exist, or serious concerns arise for the SFP Team, further support and/or intervention may be required by the referral agent and/or other appropriate service.
- Teen/child/children must attend in the presence of their care giver/parent. SFP can try to accommodate a parent/care giver wishing to continue on SFP without the teen/child(s)/Child(ren) (where the teen/child/child is unable to or does not wish to attend), with due consideration to the circumstances and should be discussed with the Site Coordinator and Programme Manager.

6 Steps to Referring a Family

Step 1: Agency identifies family who may benefit from the programme.

Step 2: Referral agent meets with the family to discuss the Programme and the potential involvement of the family. This is to ensure families are familiar with the programme and agree to be referred in.

Step 3: Referral form is then completed by agency, signed by both Referral Agent and parent/care giver and then given to SFP Programme Manager (Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force). This must name: The Primary Referral Agent who will work directly with the family and a nominated Secondary Agent who can work with the family if Primary Referral Agent is unavailable (where applicable); any other agencies/schools/education centres involved with the family (or parent or teen/child individually) (with consent from the family).

Please note families may self-refer if there is no agency or support engaged with parent or teen/child. However, a suitable agency may be sought where further follow up or support may be deemed necessary.

Step 4: Following receipt of referral form a meeting is scheduled between the Site Coordinator/Programme Manager, the Family and Referral Agent to review the application, needs of the family and SFP process.

Step 5: A Referral Sub-Committee, made up of SFP Management Committee, Programme Manager, and Site Coordinator review applications. If the programme is deemed suitable for the family's needs, a place may be offered. The Site Coordinator/Programme Manager contacts the agency/family to inform of decision.

Step 6: Once accepted, an induction meeting may be held for Referral Agents and an Introductory Evening is set up one week before programme start for families and referral agents to attend with the SFP Team.

Please read the section on Roles and Responsibilities for further details on Referrals Agents role throughout SFP and after.

Confidentiality & Sharing of Information

All information and data regarding families who apply to or partake in Ballymun SFP is kept strictly confidential within the SFP Team. (Please also see “Data Protection”)

- Ballymun SFP is governed under the Protocol of the Ballymun Network for Assisting Children and Young People. This protocol is an agreement between agencies in Ballymun for the welfare and protection of young people and children that agencies work with. Ballymun SFP is an initiative supported by the Network and as such the confidentiality aspect of this protocol also extends to the processes involved in BSFP.
- Under the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children: “giving information to others for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality”. Therefore, part of this protocol permits the sharing of information between those agencies involved in Ballymun SFP on a need to know basis:
- “Agency representatives / hired staff of SFP can share information about children/young people/care givers in order to ensure their welfare and protection. Sharing information in this context is not a breach of confidentiality”.
- Therefore, the SFP Team (including the Management Committee; Facilitators; Assistant Facilitators; Floaters; Family Referral Committee; Site Coordinator; Referral Agent; Childcare Workers; Contract/Ancillary Staff and Programme Manager) may on certain occasions (including briefing and debriefing with facilitators, selection of families; updates on families; throughout the course of SFP) share information about parents or young people where the information:
 - May inform attendance or participation on the programme.
 - Relates to a young person who may be at risk or to family concerns.
 - Relates to progress while on the programme.
 - May inform the appropriateness of the programme to meet the family’s needs.
 - Relates to illegal or criminal activity.
 - Relates to harm to themselves or others.
- Information shared amongst the SFP Team will not be shared outside this system and all members of the SFP Team are bound by and agree to the Confidentiality Agreement. See Appendix 2.

Sharing of Information with Support Agencies

Agencies/agency representatives who refer families to the programme become named contact & support person (aka referral agent). The referral form also asks the family and agency to note the schools and other support agencies involved with the family members taking part. SFP is designed as a structured, complementary brief intervention of 2.5 hours per week (for 15 weeks). The referral agent, support agencies and schools are the main supporters of the family, within the capacity of that agency/schools remit. It is therefore crucial, that the SFP Site Coordinator/Manager, agencies and schools, who are actively involved with the family, and the family themselves, are all in close contact. A consent form, detailing these agencies, and named contacts will be given to parents to sign, so that it is clear and transparent as to the nature of the contact. Please see roles and responsibilities section for further clarification.

Data Protection

Ballymun SFP is governed under the Data Protection Act (1998), and subsequent amendment (2003). Under Section 16 (1b) of this act, Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force as a non-profit organisation, and Manager/Funder of Ballymun SFP, is not required to register as a Data Controller or Data Processor with the Data Protection Commission.

However, certain rights and obligations exist for any organisation when any personal information is held. Ballymun Strengthening Families Programme undertakes to adhere to Data Protection Policy to protect all individuals and ensure good practice rules are in place regarding the obtaining, processing and retention of all data.

Ballymun SFP adheres to the 8 principles of Data Protection, as described by the Data Protection Commission:

1. Obtain and Process Information Fairly
2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purpose
3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes
4. Keep it safe and secure
5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date
6. Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive.
7. Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose of purposes
8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to an individual, on request.

Principle 1: Obtain and Process Information Fairly

1. At the time of obtaining information about the family or individual, the SFP shall make the individual(s) aware of how this information will be used, and the organisations and persons it may be shared with, within or outside the SFP Team, where deemed appropriate by BLDATF. The SFP Team in this case includes the Referral Agent (where applicable); Facilitators; Programme Manager, Site Coordinator and Management Committee.
2. The Manager, Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force, shall process initial information via the SFP Application Form, which shall then be further processed by the Site Coordinator.
3. Families/individual(s) will also be made aware that certain necessary information may be obtained from their respective Referral Agent, following initial referral.
4. Should there be any secondary or further use of the information gathered, the Manager or Site Coordinator of Ballymun SFP shall bring this to the care givers attention at the time of obtaining the information. The individual(s) concerned have the right to refuse the use of this information for those purposes except in the case of child protection; to prevent injury to the individual or others; to prevent damage to the property of individual(s); for the administration of justice; or for the purposes

of matters related to the public interest.

5. Where this information may be used for new or unforeseen purposes, SFP will request the permission of the individual(s) concerned to use information in this way. Individual(s) have the right to refuse the information being used for this purpose.

Principle 2: Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purpose

1. Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force obtains information for SFP only for the purposes of the Ballymun Strengthening Families Programme. As an interagency initiative, individuals will be made aware that certain necessary information may be shared with the Referral Agent; Site Coordinator and Facilitator(s).

2. Certain information will be used for evaluation and statistical purposes, where this information will not identify any individual families or individuals. Families and Referral Agents will be made aware of this.

- Specific Purpose Statement:

Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force obtains and holds information about its participants on the Ballymun Strengthening Families Programme in order to provide the most appropriate service for the families involved; to understand individual/family circumstances and background and to provide the best service for the family to prevent possible injury and to protect the health and safety of the families and Facilitators/Site Coordinator/Programme Manager and for statistical purposes.

Principle 3. Use and further processing of Personal Information

1. Where Strengthening Families and BLDATF obtains personal information it will not use the data or information for any other purpose than that stated above and will not divulge personal information to a third party, except in ways that are “compatible” with the specified purpose.

2. Transference of data to agents of SFP, such as Referral Agents or Facilitators, does not constitute a “disclosure” and is “compatible” with the specific purpose stated above.

3. A participant’s right to privacy will be “balanced against other needs of civil society, or where the processing is in the interests of the individual” (Data Protection Commissioners, 2010, Data Protection Rules. Accessed: 20/8/2010

(<http://www.dataprotection.ie/viewdoc.asp?m=y&fn=/documents/responsibilities/3e.htm>)

4. Exceptions apply in the cases of:

Child protection; to prevent injury to the individual or others; to prevent damage to the property of individual(s); for the administration of justice; or for the purposes of matters related to the public interest. Or where the individual(s) or family consents to the use of data in this way.

Principle 4. Security of Personal Data and Information

Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force and Site Coordinator will take all appropriate security measures to ensure that data is protected against any unauthorized access:

- Computers will be password protected, accessed only by authorized personnel.
- Manual files containing personal information or data will be kept in locked filing facilities.
- All waste documents containing personal information or data will be shredded.
- Access to any information will be on a need to know basis, closely monitored and safe guarded.
- No information will be visible to callers to either the Site Agency or Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force.
- Data on the server has a back up procedure.
- All relevant SFP agencies will be notified of these measures and security measures for data protection.

Principle 5. Accurate and Up-to-Date Information

1. SFP will handle personal data and information with due care to ensure that information retained will be reviewed, and kept up to date where new information is received.

2. Data on file can be rectified should new information and evidence be provided that the information should be altered.

Principle 6. Data is relevant, adequate and not excessive

SFP endeavors to collect and keep only information necessary for the programmes purposes.

- Criteria is adequate, relevant and not excessive – What information is recorded/kept – e.g. name, address, children's names, DOB's.
- Personal/ Sensitive information will not be recorded by any member of the SFP team unless in extreme circumstances such as child protection referral and/or where the Site Coordinator/Programme Manager/Management Committee has deemed it necessary to record the information.

Principle 7. Retention of Information/Data

- Personal Data and information will only be kept for an agreed period of time (5 years) in hardcopy. After this time, hard copies will be destroyed.
- The Programme Manager, Ballymun Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force who holds all hardcopies will be responsible for this.
- Information stored on computer will remain for a period of 10 years, under the Security measures outlined above.
- Where individuals/families may wish to engage in further SFP related programmes/events, records will be maintained.

Principle 8. Right to Access Personal Data

- All individuals involved with SFP whose personal information is stored in hard copy or on computer has the right to request access to the data stored.
- A written request can be submitted to the Programme Manager outlining the information requested and personal details (such as name, address and date of graduation) which will aid in sourcing the information.
- Where a request is approved by the SFP Management Committee, the individual will be responded to within 40 days of receiving the request.
- The right to access does not apply in certain circumstances:
- Where there is a child protection issue; or where the administration of justice or the greater public interest must be protected.

Child Protection

Policy Statement

“Ballymun Strengthening Families is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all its participants. In particular, the welfare of all children / teens on SFP is the paramount consideration. Agency representatives should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the participants rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the principles of Ballymun Strengthening Families”.

Ballymun Strengthening Families Programme adheres to the HSE's Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011). Under Children First Guidelines, Ballymun Strengthening Families has a duty of care to all its participants. At all times, agency representatives, contract/ancillary staff on SFP should hold the interest of the child at the centre of all actions. Therefore, in the interest of the child it is important to share relevant information within the structures that exist, where reasonable grounds exist for concern.

Reasonable Grounds (Children First)

- o Specific indication from the child that (s)he was abused
- o An account by a person who saw the child being abused
- o Evidence, such as injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way.
- o An injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse.
- o Consistent indication, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- o Admission or indication by someone of an alleged abuse.

Indicators (Children First)

- o Disclosures of abuse by a young person
- o Age-inappropriate or abnormal sexual play or knowledge
- o Specific injuries or patterns of injuries
- o Signs of injury for which there is no explanation or which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in some other way.
- o Absconding from home
- o Attempted suicide
- o Under-age pregnancy or sexually transmitted infection
- o Someone else (a parent, friend, co-worker) may disclose that a young person has told them they are being abused, or may have witnessed the abuse themselves
- o A young persons behaviour may raise concerns
- o A volunteer/employee may personally witness abuse taking place.
- o There may be consistent indication, over a period of time that a young person is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- o Signs in one or more of the above categories at any one time.

All parent and teen/child facilitators should remind participants that SFP has a duty of care and policies that it must follow for the protection of all participants. It should be emphasized that follow up action may have to be taken on information which suggests a young person or adult is at risk. Parents/care givers will be informed of the policy and procedure and asked to sign a Family Consent Form describing our Duty of Care and follow up procedures. An Emergency Contact Page will be

completed by all families.

Under these guidelines, should a concern or a disclosure be made from a parent/child/teen/child which questions the safety or treatment of a young person, the following steps should be taken:

Note: The Designated Person for all disclosures is the Site Coordinator. Where the Site Coordinator is unavailable, concerns should be passed onto the Programme Manager.

1. Where a disclosure or concern arises, the SFP Team Member(s) should inform the child/adult that information will be brought to the attention of the Site Coordinator and Programme Manager and it may have to be forwarded to the relevant authorities (Gardaí, Social Work department) where this is appropriate and safe to do so.
2. SFP Team Member will inform Site Coordinator (or Programme Manager) and will record in writing, the facts of what happened, and what was disclosed or witnessed. The Site Coordinator/Programme Manager will assess if the risk is immediate and the appropriate follow up required.
3. Site Coordinator will notify Programme Manager and Referral Agency that a report may need to be made.
4. Duty Social Work may be contacted to confirm if a report is necessary in the given scenario, if applicable. Where a case is already known to and engaged with the Social Work Department, clarification should be sought as to whether a further report needs to be produced.

If a report is deemed necessary:

5. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted by the Site Coordinator to inform them that a child protection issue has arisen, unless to do so would place the child(ren) at significant/further risk. In the event that a parent/guardian is not reachable, a letter will be sent to the recorded address to notify them.
6. The Site Coordinator is responsible for the coordination and submission of a report to Social Work. All conversations, actions and updates will be recorded in writing by the Site Coordinator.
7. Referral Agency will support the family through the process. Where a Referral Agency is not available, or the family is self-referred, the Site Coordinator will coordinate a referral to a relevant agency should this support be requested.
8. A child protection issue may not be discussed within the general Facilitators debriefing, unless to share this information safeguards the young person concerned or other person(s).
9. Continuation on the programme may be assessed in collaboration with the family, by the Site Coordinator/Programme Manager, referral agent and/or Management Committee, where necessary.

Mental Health Concerns / Self Harm / Suicide

Positive mental health is an important contributor to one's confidence, belief in abilities, coping skills and hope for the future. SFP facilitates the learning of skills to effectively deal with daily family life.

However, there may be times when mental health concerns arise for participants. This information can come through the referral agent, secondary agent or from the family/individual concerned. Where there is information available on these matters, it is important that this is shared with the Site Coordinator and Programme Manager upon referral either by the family or referral agent, to ensure the safety and welfare of all potential participants can be protected and managed to the best ability of the team. There are times, nonetheless, when there is no forewarning, and SFP may need to respond in a timely manner.

Where a young person or adult expresses or makes reference to wishing or planning to harm themselves or others:

- Those trained in ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) will be identified before the programme starts to apply this intervention.
- Inform the individual that the Site Coordinator/Programme Manager must be informed, so that follow up can be made.
- The Site Coordinator & Programme Manager should be notified as soon as possible and will consider appropriate action.
- A risk assessment may be carried out to assess the need for interventions.
- A family meeting may need to be called for a young person or participant in question to understand the risk involved and what supports may be necessary. Referral agent will be updated.
- Where an immediate response is needed, a member of the SFP Team should contact emergency services.

Garda Vetting of Agency Representatives to Work with Young People and Families

The welfare of all children, families, and agency representatives on the Programme is a paramount priority for the Management Committee. To this end, the agency of the representative is responsible for ensuring that the agency representative is Garda vetted, trained and qualified to work with families and children. Under the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2013:

- A Facilitator/Assistant Facilitator/Floater/Site Coordinator/Programme Manager must be an agency representative who is Garda Vetted (for the current position held in their agency).

- In the case of a suitably qualified/interested **volunteer**, consideration can be given to their participation. Roles can be allocated on the basis of suitability and qualifications. A “volunteer” should have completed the 2 day Group Leader Training and could be:
 - An agency representative, partaking in SFP in their own time.
 - An individual or parent graduate who has an interest in SFP and is
 - Connected to a volunteer agency
 - Garda Vetted
 - Willing to contribute to SFP in the areas needed.
 - Open to further training.
 - Where a potential Facilitator/Site Coordinator is not Garda Vetted, it will be the responsibility of the named agency and worker to ensure the Garda Vetting process is undertaken and completed. The SFP Manager can support in this if necessary.

Physical Restraint

Ballymun Strengthening Families Programme does not tolerate aggressive or violent behaviour and all participants and team members will be clearly informed of this.

Ballymun Strengthening Families does not advocate the use of physical restraint of participants. If there is an immediate threat of harm to any person or property, a minimum appropriate amount of physical restraint may be required, and should only be used as a last resort. SFP team members should try to alleviate a volatile situation verbally.

Where a participant may become violent or aggressive:

- Another member of the SFP Team should be sought for support.
- The Site Coordinator or Programme Manager should be notified of any incidents that occur during SFP, who will notify either/both the relevant authorities and parents, as appropriate.
- All incidents will be followed up with the person(s) in question by the Programme Manager and Site Coordinator. Incidents will be reported to the Management Committee, where necessary.
- An Incident Report/written account of the events and witnesses should be recorded as soon as possible.

Health and Safety

Strengthening Families, through the agencies and agency representatives involved, aim to provide a safe and healthy environment for both families and individuals involved. The Management Committee is committed to complying with local and national safety laws and regulations and the provision and maintenance of a work environment which is safe and healthy. SFP encourages the acknowledgment of individual's responsibility for safety and health and assurance that safety and health matters will be handled in strict conformity with professional, ethical and legal standards. The Management Committee and all agencies involved will seek to ensure that all precautions are taken to ensure that everyone involved in this programme is protected from accident or ill health.

- A First Aid kit will be available onsite during each programme. A trained First Aider will be identified to apply First Aid care where appropriate and necessary.
- Strengthening Families will adopt the Health & Safety policy of the venue for SFP - HSE Family Resource Centre, Geraldstown House. A copy of this policy is available from the HSE.
- Every individual who partakes in SFP has a responsibility to take due care in their activities and conduct during the SFP process, while the Site Agency is responsible for preventing, where possible, and minimizing such incidents.
- Critical Incident Procedure
 - In the event of any slips, trips, falls, or accidents on the premises or in the vicinity of the venue for SFP, the following procedure should be followed:
 1. Identification of an incident may be identified by any member of the SFP Team when an incident occurs /unexpected outcome is detected. Family participants may also express concerns or complaints about a service, at the time of the incident or at a later time. The person(s) involved in the incident should not leave the premises.
 2. The incident should be managed immediately to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of the person(s) affected are protected.
 3. The Programme Manager or Site Coordinator should be informed as soon as possible.
 4. A trained First Aider should attend to the individual(s) should First Aid be required and/or appropriate care should be provided.
 5. Where a child is injured on the premises, the above procedure should be followed and the parent/care giver should be notified as soon as possible.
 6. Where a parent/care giver is injured, the Emergency Details Form should be used to notify next of kin for care of the child(ren) onsite.
 7. If further follow-up is required, the Programme Manager or Site Coordinator will call for an ambulance or arrange transport to a hospital.
 8. An Incident Report Form should be completed by the individual representatives who witnessed/responded to the incident and by the Site Coordinator. Incident Report Forms are available from the HSE, Geraldstown House.
 9. All incident reports will be filed on the SFP site, and where necessary, the site agency/Management Committee should ensure that all necessary investigation has taken place.

Conduct & Behaviour

Strengthening Families is committed to ensuring that a family's and agency's involvement with the programme is a positive, pleasant and rewarding experience.

- All team members of SFP are expected to behave in a professional manner, with due regard for the safety and welfare of all participants and other team members.
- Where a behaviour of SFP Personnel is considered inappropriate, violent or aggressive:
 - A report should be made to the Site Coordinator and Programme Manager.
 - Site Coordinator/ Programme Manager will follow up with the person(s) involved to clarify the situation and to resolve internally if possible.
 - Where further follow up may be necessary, particularly where a matter cannot be resolved internally, the Named Agency and SFP Management will be notified.
 - The person(s) involved may be asked to disengage from SFP.
 - Appropriate follow up will be decided by the Management Committee and Named Agency. Likewise, SFP participants should treat personnel and other participants in a respectful manner. Where an SFP participant behaves in an inappropriate, violent, or aggressive manner towards SFP personnel or to any other SFP participant:
 - The Site Coordinator/Programme Manager should be notified of the behaviour.
 - The SC will notify the participant, parent(s) (where it relates to a young person) and the referral agent, where necessary, about the behaviour/incident. Every effort will be made to resolve any issues internally.
 - Where the behaviour continues, and/or cannot be resolved internally, further follow up may be necessary, where:
 - The participant/family may be asked to withdraw from the programme.
 - The matter will be brought to the SFP Management Committee and referral agent, where possible, will be contacted.

SFP Reviews and Feedback

Ballymun SFP gathers formal and informal information on the programme implementation and process each term. Informal information may come through referral agents or families own feedback throughout the programme or after; and formally through a retrospective pre and post evaluation questionnaire administered in the final week of the programme or shortly after.

Where a family or parent(s) would like to provide feedback regarding certain aspects, or experiences on the programme:

- The Site Coordinator/Programme Manager should be informed and will arrange to meet with the participant to discuss the experiences.
- Where the matter can be resolved internally, every effort will be made by the SC and PM to do so.
- Where the matter cannot be resolved internally:
 - The participant may write a letter to or meet formally with the PM.
 - A representative of the SFP Management Committee may attend such a meeting.
 - A record of the notes from the meeting will be held confidentially by the PM. These notes can be viewed by the family or parent in question.
 - Insofar as possible, the feedback will be considered for the review of any upcoming programmes and will be reviewed at the following Management Committee meeting.
 - Any matters that relate to personal or formal complaints about individual personnel, may be brought to the attention of the respective or sponsoring agency.
 - Where there is any incident/behaviour/matter involving a complaint of a very serious nature or criminal activity (such as criminal activity, abuse, or harm to oneself or others), the SC or PM will have a duty of care to notify the appropriate authorities. Likewise, the participant will be advised to do so, should this not already have taken place.

Drugs and Alcohol

One of the main aims of the Strengthening Families Programme is to prevent substance use through increasing understanding and skills between parents and teen/childs to communicate around drug and alcohol issues. It is therefore important to the values of SFP, that healthy behaviours and lifestyle choices are promoted as much as possible.

Although drugs and alcohol may be viewed as a “normal” part of daily life for some families, it is important insofar as is possible, to ensure the safety and welfare of both participants and team members. Therefore:

- It is not acceptable for a SFP Team Member or Participant to come to the programme under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Prescribed medication which may affect concentration or participation should be notified to the Site Coordinator in advance.
- It is not acceptable for a SFP Team Member or Participant to supply, sell or consume drugs or alcohol on site.
- Team Members should not supply cigarettes to young people under the age of 18 (legal age is 18 and over)and should discourage same of other adults on the programme. Team Members should not smoke with Participants unless they are over 18 and smokers. Smoking is only allowed in outdoor designated areas, which will be marked.

If an incident related to drugs/alcohol occurs during SFP:

1. The Site Coordinator should be notified as soon as possible.
2. The Site Coordinator will follow up with the person(s) involved. Where the incident involves a young person, the parent will be notified by the Site Coordinator.
3. The Site Coordinator will decide whether it is appropriate for the person(s) concerned to return to the programme the following week or to remain on site.
4. Further follow up may be needed by the Programme Manager and Site Coordinator should an incident happen again, and the family will be made aware of this.
5. This will be made clear to both team members and participants before beginning the programme.
6. If illegal substances are consumed, held, supplied, or sold within the vicinity of SFP, relevant authorities will be notified, such as the Gardaí and Social Work.