



# **National Strengthening Families Programme Council of Ireland (NSFPC)**

## **Strategic Plan 2020-2023**

*Supporting Quality Implementation of the Strengthening Families Programme in Ireland.*

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## OUR VISION

*To foster and develop a pool of SFP expertise through shared learning and critical reflection of programme implementation and delivery.*

*Implementation in Ireland has proven exceptional in many ways, in none more than the creation of the National SFP Council of Ireland. This collaborative, mutually supportive efforts to establish best practices and support continued implementation is without parallel at any level – city/state/province or national – anywhere in the world. It's an example we often cite in trainings, presentations and publication. We can only hope to see the 'greening of SFP' repeated elsewhere.*

Karol Kumpfer & Henry Whiteside  
Programme Developers (2018:4) cited in "Family Effects: Strengthening Families Programme 10 Year Outcomes in Ireland".

## FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure we launch the first National Strengthening Families Programme Council (NSFPC) of Ireland Strategic Plan. This plan 2020-2023, developed collaboratively by members will assist to guide and direct the actions of the NSFPC over the next four years to build on achievements to date. It is devised upon the knowledge gained through the successful implementation of the Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) in Ireland since 2007. The strategic objectives outlined in our plan include the continued promotion of SFP and the National SFP Council in Ireland, further research and evaluation of SFP in an Irish context and the continued development of local SFP trainings to ensure families, facilitators, agencies and communities across Ireland continue to receive a professional and supportive experience by participating on Strengthening Families Programmes.

**Gemma O'Leary (NSFPC Chair)**



## **Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) is a skills-based programme for the 'whole family'.**

**Regarded as an effective prevention intervention by international review groups such as WHO, Cochrane Collaboration Reviews, UNODC.**

**Delivered in 36 countries. Implementation with fidelity to programme is essential to deliver outcomes.**

**1<sup>st</sup> SFP in Ireland Cork, 2007 (12-16yrs). In Ireland, SFP 12-16 years and SFP 6-11 years are delivered locally or regionally.**

## **SFP is effective in decreasing risk factors and promoting protective factors.**

**A national analysis of outcomes of 573 families who graduated from the programme for the period 2007-2017 showed statistically significant positive results for all measured 19 outcome variables therefore demonstrating significant positive changes within the families at post-test following graduation. The top 3 changes were in relation to;**

- family communication**
- family organisation**
- family strengths and resilience.**

**Many regional and local sites have commissioned mixed methods research highlighting similar positive outcomes at a family, practitioner, organisation and community levels. \***

**\*To download reports: [www.sfpcouncilireland.ie](http://www.sfpcouncilireland.ie)**

## **National Strengthening Families Programme Council of Ireland (NSFPC)**

The National SFP Council of Ireland (NSFPC) is a group of site co-ordinators, trainers and managers who operate under the principles of interagency cooperation & practice and voluntary engagement by agencies/organisations to support the development of SFP in Ireland. Members of the Council work collectively representing SFP in Ireland and their respective site/organisation. The Council was set up in October 2012 in response to an expanding implementation of SFP across the island of Ireland, together with an identified need for inter-regional collaboration, advocacy, and the promotion of quality standards and fidelity towards the progression of SFP in Ireland. NSFPC was established with agreement of the programme developers.

Membership is voluntary and is open to any representative (SFP Site Co-ordinators/Managers/Trainers) who are working in an interagency capacity in their respective areas. Nominations for membership can be brought from local steering committees or the Chair for consideration and agreement by Council Members.

## **Strengthening Families Programme – Key Elements**

- Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) is a whole family skills intervention; families learn and practice skills together;
- SFP ten-year national outcomes report has reaffirmed the effectiveness of SFP in Ireland at young person, parent and family level;
- SFP can be non topic specific and therefore can respond to a range of areas including; substance use prevention, youth justice, education, mental health and social and family functioning;
- SFP integrates and meets the needs of families from different social, ethnic backgrounds and geographical areas;
- SFP referrals come from community, voluntary and statutory service providers - families can also self-refer to the Programme.
- SFP is delivered over 14 weeks (& induction week) under the principles of inter-agency co-operation and practice. This model is essential to providing a comprehensive range of supports both during and following the programme. A booster session is also delivered three months following graduation.

## Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) & Policy Alignment

SFP is regarded as an effective intervention by International and National review groups including World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime in Vienna (UNODC), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). SFP whilst developed in 1982 in the US by Dr. Karol L. Kumpfer and associates at the University of Utah, it has been evaluated comprehensively to stand the test of time, travel across many countries and here in Ireland can be aligned with national policy documents and implemented in the suite of national policy in the safe guarding of children, young people and families.

Relevant national policy documents includes but is not limited to;

- ▶ *Department of Children and Youth Affairs, (2014) Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures. The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020. Dublin: Government Publications* in its transformational goals and outcomes, outlines actions aimed at local planning, co-ordination and delivery of universal and targeted evidence informed parenting and family supports. The SFP lends itself to meet these goals and has demonstrated its ability to intervene early, provide and strengthen supports for children, teens and families.

*The nature and quality of family life influences not only how a child copes with life growing up, but also helps determine the quality of their relationships, parenting and mental health in adulthood. Having caring relationships and experiencing love and trust builds resilience – a significant protective factor in enabling children and young people to get through difficult times (National Outcome, 3:1).*

- ▶ *Department of Health (2017), 'Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery – a health led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025' Department of Health* identifies the role and participation of families in prevention and education activities and implementation of evidence informed policies and initiatives. It explicitly highlights the importance of strengthening relationships between children and their parents and developing parenting skills which can

impact on child behaviour. Furthermore, it points to the need to develop and adopt evidence-based family and parenting skills programmes for services engaging with high risk families impacted by problematic substance use (p31).

*There is a need to ensure continued support for family support programmes. Strengthening Families, Parenting under Pressure and the 5-step method (Stress-Strain-Coping-Support model) are examples of programmes that have been supported in Ireland to build the resilience of families and support them in their own right (p29).*

- ▶ **Department of Health (2013), 'Healthy Ireland – a framework for improved health and wellbeing 2013–2025'. Dublin: Department of Health** In particular, theme 2 which focuses on partnerships and cross sectoral work to strengthen community supports and the implementation of evidence-based prevention and early intervention initiatives aimed at children and families. SFP as a family evidence-based approach is built on the contribution of professionals, agencies and volunteers to support its implementation and as referenced in Healthy Ireland strengthens community support. Similarly, theme 3 highlights and promotes actions around empowering people and communities.
- ▶ **Department of Health (2015), Connecting for life: Ireland's national strategy to reduce suicide 2015-2020. Dublin, Department of Health.** The Suicide Reduction Strategy likewise highlights the importance of community-based initiatives and how these can provide protective factors for families and individuals.

*“Well-structured and co-ordinated community-based initiatives can translate into protective benefits for families and individuals, which contribute to reduced risk of suicidal behaviour. An empowered community can respond to the needs of its members and protect them in difficult times and can sustain these positive effects over time”.  
(Connecting for Life - Goal 2: Empowered Communities)*

- ▶ **National Strategy on Children and Young Peoples Participation in Decision Making 2015-2020.** One of the key fundamentals of this strategy is the recognition that children and young people are not 'beings in becoming', but rather are 'citizens of today' with the right to be respected and heard during childhood, their teenage years and in their transition to adulthood. This publication requests those of us who are working with young people to not merely see them as passive but active agents and further supported in the roll out of SFP throughout Ireland.



- ▶ **C Devaney, A Gillen, F Landy, J Canavan (2013), 'What works in Family Support? Child and Family Agency.** This document presents an overview of evidence-based family support practices and programmes for children and families. Strengthening Families Programme is included as an international and national example of an evidence-based programme and as a model which can respond to Hardiker levels one, two and three.
- ▶ **Tusla, Child and Family Agency (2013) 'Meitheal - A National Practice Model for all Agencies working with Children, Young People and their Families'.** Meitheal is a TUSLA led, multi-agency early intervention process for children, teens and parents/guardians who are experiencing difficulties. Families are enabled and supported to identify their own needs and are responded to by a range of agencies to assist them in addressing these needs. There are two junctions at which the SFP process is supportive and supported by the Meitheal process. Families who are identified as having further needs following attendance at an SFP can find the Meitheal process a productive way of addressing these needs. Likewise, SFP can often also be considered as part of an existing Meitheal in response to meeting a family's need.
- ▶ **DCYA. (2018) Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex (LGBTI+) National Youth Strategy 2018–2020.** The three-year Strategy is a key commitment to strive for the full inclusion of LGBTI+ people in Irish society. The Strategy sets out three overarching strategic goals that will support the achievement of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy mission and vision to 2020. The goals are aligned to the Better Outcomes Brighter Futures five national outcomes. The strategy reminds those working with children, young people and families that they must explicitly make it their mission to ensure LGBTI+ young people are visible, valued and included.
- ▶ The publication of the **Joint Hidden Harm Strategic Statement by Tusla and the HSE** in January 2019 (Barlow, J.) and **Hidden Harm Practice Guide. Seeing Though Hidden Harm to Brighter Futures** marked a significant step forward in agency understanding of and focus on the needs of children in Ireland living with parental alcohol abuse. In turn this report considers the evidence of what works in the context of the life cycle of the child/young person affected by parental problem alcohol and other drug use and areas of support. As a response to Hidden Harm, SFP is a 'whole' family intervention model whereby parents and children/teens impacted by parental alcohol and other drugs can participate together.

- ▶ **Department of Children and Youth Affairs Child Safeguarding Statement (March 2018).** *The statement asks of those providing services to: a) Undertake an assessment of any potential risk for harm to a child while availing of the service; b) Prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement and c) Appoint a relevant person for the purpose of the Child Safeguarding Statement. This ensures SFP sites are in adherence with same and appropriate procedures are in place for the safe guarding of children.*
- ▶ **Creating Effective Safety: Child Protection and Welfare Strategy 2017-2022** *sets out Tusla's strategic vision to provide an appropriate, proportionate and timely response to children at risk or in need of support in Ireland. There are six elements all of which are interconnected and will work together to transform how we protect children.*
- ▶ **The Department of Children and Youth Affairs Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) 'Shared Vision, Next Steps' 2019–2024.** *The CYPSC model focuses on inter-agency working to improve the lives of children, young people and families. This report provides a succinct road map for the further development of the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) initiative. The inter-agency delivery of SFP aligns with Action 2.4 below.*

***"The Community & Voluntary Sector in tandem with their local CYPSC will work to ensure that there is an appropriate response to existing and emerging needs of children and families. C&V Sector, CYPSC Co-ordinators, CYPSC members 2019-2024".***

- ▶ **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** *provides a comprehensive, internationally binding agreement on the rights of children, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989. The UN Convention is a corner stone obligating countries to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of the child and place this responsibility on those that work with Children, Young People and families. Ireland signed the UN Convention on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1990 and ratified it on 28 September 1992 and in doing so the Irish State entered committed to meet its provision and obligations.*

***"The UN Convention acknowledges the family as the fundamental unit of society. It stresses the role of parents as the primary care-givers with responsibility for the up-bringing of their children and obliges governments to support parents in fulfilling their essential role".***

## Delivery of SFP in Ireland



# INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION



The National SFP Council of Ireland is a unique collaborative network with members representing communities and agencies from North to South of Ireland. Members are nominated by local SFP steering/management committees comprising of statutory, voluntary and community organisations. The vision of the National SFP Council is to foster and develop a pool of SFP expertise through shared learning and critical reflection of programme implementation and delivery. Since the development of the NSFPC in 2012 membership has grown with many different areas and agencies supporting each other with knowledge, expertise, funding and shared resources to continue to develop SFP in communities across Ireland.





## Support

- shared learning between Council members
- SFP implementation across areas and within organisations

## Develop

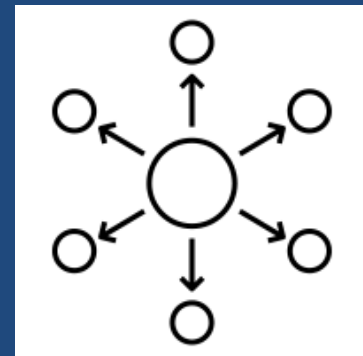
- a pool of SFP implementation expertise
- opportunities for SFP development
- good practice guidance and resources
- the current allocation of resources for SFP

## Promote

- SFP as an evidence-based approach
- Council membership and activities
- SFP effectiveness in Ireland

## Review

- impact and process of SFP
- international, national and regional/local evidence
- implementation of NSPFC Strategic and annual action plans



## Structure of SFP in Ireland

### **SFP Operational Delivery**

Site Co-ordinator  
Facilitators & Site Support Team  
Referral Agents  
Funding Sources & Community Supports

### **Steering Groups/Management Committees**

Comprises of local agencies/organisations, funders, graduates which oversees the strategic implementation and direction of SFP in their area. Member selected to represent area/site at the National SFP Council.

### **National Strengthening Families Programme Council of Ireland (NSFPC)**

Comprises of trainers, managers, site co-ordinators, funders from areas/sites across Ireland.

# Irish Implementation Practice

NSFPC promotes 7 core SFP implementation components which exist at each level of delivery; family, practitioner and community.

Core Implementation Components	Multi-Level Application		
	Family	Practitioner	Community
1. Governance Local & National	✓	✓	✓
2. Fidelity*	✓	✓	✓
3. Inter-Agency	✓	✓	✓
4. Building Capacity	✓	✓	✓
5. Active Participation	✓	✓	✓
6. Inclusiveness	✓	✓	✓
7. Shared Learning	✓	✓	✓

**Fidelity** to the programme is essential to achieving effective outcomes and adherence to fidelity benchmarks as established by the Programme developers. The application of the other 6 components can differ from site to site and from one programme implementation to the next.

Multi-Level Irish Application of SFP (Examples)			
Core Components	Family	Practitioner	Community
1. Governance (Local & National)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referral Process &amp; Selection</li> <li>Guidelines &amp; Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site Policy &amp; Procedures</li> <li>National Legislation</li> <li>Clear roles &amp; responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering Committee/ NSFPC</li> <li>Aligned to National Strategies/Local Plans</li> </ul>
2. Fidelity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culturally adapted SFP Programme &amp; Manual</li> <li>Home practice/catch up sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fidelity benchmarks</li> <li>Training delivered multi-agency/ culturally adapted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessments of community contextual factors</li> <li>Review &amp; monitoring</li> </ul>
3. Inter-Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi agency exposure</li> <li>Reduces barriers to local services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mix of skill sets &amp; expertise</li> <li>Supported &amp; integrated referral pathways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interactive community network</li> <li>Sharing of resources</li> </ul>
4. Building Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of barriers</li> <li>Referral agency supports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collective team response</li> <li>Graduate Facilitators</li> <li>Group leader/self-care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cluster groups activated in regions</li> <li>Connectivity post programme</li> </ul>
5. Active Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills based programme</li> <li>Self-referral opportunity</li> <li>Supported weekly in programme &amp; home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diverse roles &amp; skills</li> <li>Weekly team supports and site co-ordination</li> <li>Group size</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service reconfiguring or aligning for SFP</li> <li>Shared language</li> <li>SFP as core work</li> </ul>
6. Inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustained friendships/peer support</li> <li>Barriers addressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referral process open to all agencies</li> <li>Creative new ways of working with families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-disciplinary support &amp; engagement</li> <li>'Shop local' – venue, catering, transport programme supports</li> </ul>
7. Shared Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a group/family/wider environment</li> <li>Using skills in community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed standards of delivery</li> <li>Enhancing professional relations/development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dissemination of best practice/ outcomes</li> <li>Influencing community systems.</li> </ul>



# Key Strategic Objectives 2020-2023

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Promotion of Council and SFP in Ireland**

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Research & Evaluation**

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Training & Development**

Promote

Support

Develop

Review



# Key Operational Objectives 2020-2023

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Promotion of Council and SFP in Ireland

### **Operational Objective 1.1: Good Governance, Good Practice & Shared Learning**

**Measurement:** National delivery model of SFP, promoted by the Council, which is in line with fidelity benchmarks, protects health and safety of families and workers and works collaboratively with and within communities.

### **Operational Objective 1.2: To develop further and strategically use the NSFPC website [www.sfpcouncilireland.ie](http://www.sfpcouncilireland.ie) to enhance and contribute to the work of SFP within sites and across Ireland.**

**Measurement:** The NSFPC website [www.sfpcouncilireland.ie](http://www.sfpcouncilireland.ie) is an up to date comprehensive resource for families interested in the Programme and/or those working in the area of child/family services which reflects current activities of SFP across Ireland.

### **Operational Objective 1.3: To continue to ensure SFP as a model of family support intervention in Ireland is aligned to and responds to National policy documents and frameworks.**

**Measurement:** SFP is included in local, regional and national policy documents and action plans as an effective evidence-based family skills programme.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Research & Evaluation

### **Operational Objective 2.1: Development of measurement tools which can capture Irish adaptations.**

**Measurement:** Culturally specific process and outcome data available which reflect Irish implementations.

### **Operational Objective 2.2: Expanding the reach of the National Strengthening Families Council in pursuit of SFP being embedded as an evidence based effective model of intervention.**

**Measurement:** Increase in new SFP sites, SFP implementations/numbers of families and agencies participating.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Training & Development

### **Operational Objective 3.1: Review and develop SFP group leader training to increase engagement by agencies and relevance to existing roles.**

**Measurement:** Training is up to date and accurately reflects best practice in family-based prevention work.

### **Operational Objective 3.2: Explore opportunity to make site co-ordinator training available throughout Ireland.**

**Measurement:** Site co-ordinator training is available regularly as a resource to build capacity and sustainability of sites for programme delivery.

### **Operational Objective 3.3: Continue to work to create SFP linkages available in community.**

**Measurement:** SFP is part of a continuum of intervention available for families in communities. SFP complements existing work of agencies and continues to build inter-agency networks.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Promotion of Council and SFP in Ireland

### Operational Objective 1.1: Good Governance, Good Practice & Shared Learning

**Measurement:** National delivery model of SFP, promoted by the Council, which is in line with fidelity benchmarks, protects health and safety of families and workers and works collaboratively with and within communities.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>Regular NSFPC Meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSFPC quarterly scheduled meetings</li> <li>• Dissemination of approved minutes to SFP Steering Committees around Ireland.</li> <li>• SFP area site updates and annual report information provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of Council members.</li> <li>• Opportunity to work together.</li> <li>• Adherence to membership, terms of reference documents.</li> </ul>	Chair	2020-2023	Ongoing
<b>Review of NSFPC Role &amp; Functions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual review of Council membership &amp; roles</li> <li>• Annual General Meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness of members to take on roles.</li> <li>• Working on an inter-agency capacity.</li> <li>• Availability to travel to meetings.</li> <li>• Organisation and site support.</li> <li>• Contributions during/following meetings.</li> </ul>	Chair Sub Group	2020-2023	Ongoing
<b>Monitor SFP Policy &amp; Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yearly review of SFP policy &amp; procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National policy</li> <li>• Funder requirements</li> <li>• Individual sites</li> </ul>	Council Members  Site Steering Committees	2020-2023	Ongoing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of new policies/procedures or modifications.</li> </ul>		Programme Developers		
<b>Streamline key SFP resources and materials used by sites.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis undertaken to identify streamlined resources that would be beneficial to ongoing programme development and monitoring.</li> <li>Materials are compiled and collated to agree templates which can be promoted by Council.</li> <li>'Site Set up' pack available and disseminated for new and existing sites.</li> <li>Health &amp; Safety SFP materials are up to date with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and data protection best practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council Members to highlight/share current practice, documents.</li> <li>Based on each site/steering group to implement.</li> <li>Agreed inter-agency approach for pack.</li> </ul>	<p>Council Members</p> <p>Site Steering Committees</p> <p>Programme developers</p>	2020	Ongoing
<b>Support areas and agencies implementing SFP by providing them with up-to-date on best practice, evidence and research.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best practice SFP implementation workshops will be held bi-annually to share learning and knowledge.</li> <li>Continue to develop opportunities for sites to rotate or shadow programme implementations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working group established</li> <li>Linkages with European and International SFP partners.</li> </ul>	<p>Council Members</p> <p>Prog. Developers &amp; International SFP partners</p> <p>Family support practitioners and networks</p> <p>Services and agencies</p>	2021 2023	Ongoing

<b>National Council to support ongoing availability of SFP in Ireland by advocating for and advancing the current allocation of resources.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submissions and meetings conducted with relevant policy and practice personnel and departments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified opportunities to progress action.</li> </ul>	Chair Council Members	2020-2023	Ongoing
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**Operational Objective 1.2: To develop further and strategically use the NSFPC website [www.sfpCouncilireland.ie](http://www.sfpCouncilireland.ie) to enhance and contribute to the work of SFP within sites and across Ireland.**

**Measurement:** The NSFPC website [www.sfpCouncilireland.ie](http://www.sfpCouncilireland.ie) is an up to date comprehensive resource for families interested in the Programme and/or those working in the area of child/family services which reflects current activities of SFP across Ireland.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>Regular submissions by Council members to the NSFPC website.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website populated with current SFP activity reflective of geographic spread.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members to send content/share information</li> </ul>	Members	2020-2023	Ongoing
<b>Regular articles prepared and shared on NSFPC website.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles completed &amp; added to NSFPC website.</li> <li>• NSFPC invitations to prevention researchers/practitioners to write themed based articles or posts.</li> <li>• Ongoing family feedback opportunities developed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listing and defining of relevant articles</li> </ul>	Council Members  Families  Prevention Practitioners  Academic Bodies	2020-2023	New

**Operational Objective 1.3: To continue to ensure SFP as a model of family support intervention in Ireland is aligned to and responds to National policy documents and frameworks.**

**Measurement:** SFP is included in local, regional and national policy documents and action plans as an effective evidence-based family skills programme.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>Continue to highlight SFP alignment to National policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSFPC formal response to new &amp; relevant National Policy.</li> <li>• Training is updated based on new national policies or practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness and information sharing among Council.</li> <li>• Readiness of Council to respond in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	Chair  Council Members	2020-2023	Ongoing
<b>Create linkages with various promotional events.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SFP promoted through launches, events, workshops.</li> <li>• Increased awareness of SFP and work of the Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify conferences to present work and share learning.</li> <li>• Use opportunities national/international to advance SFP in Ireland.</li> <li>• Communicate work with relevant Government and policy departments.</li> </ul>	Council Members	2020-2023	Ongoing

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Research & Evaluation

### Operational Objective 2.1: Development of a measurement tool which can capture Irish adaptations.

**Measurement:** Culturally specific process and outcome data available which reflect Irish implementations.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>Develop a national evaluation tool.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of key evaluation needs of NSFPC.</li> <li>• Review of models, selection and piloting among Council sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness to support or fund.</li> <li>• Endorsement by programme developers.</li> <li>• Ability to implement within range of different sites and communities.</li> </ul>	Research Sub-Group  Link with Universities	Pilot 2020	Ongoing
<b>Centralising of SFP data.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of members only section of the website.</li> <li>• Easily obtained information for annual report, press releases, SFP articles etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Responsibilities</li> <li>• Members submitting information</li> </ul>	Council Members  Sub Groups (Research, Training)  Website administrator	2020	Ongoing



**Operational Objective 2.2: Expanding the reach of the National Strengthening Families Council in pursuit of SFP being embedded as an evidence based effective model of intervention.**

**Measurement:** Increase in new SFP sites, SFP implementations/numbers of families and agencies participating.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>Compilation of NSFPC Annual Reports for the period 2020-2023.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dissemination, visibility and awareness of SFP and Council activities and developments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information from members/sites.</li> </ul>	Chair Council Members	Compiled annually.	Ongoing
<b>Explore long-term effect and impact of SFP on teen graduates who are now parents.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for research is sourced</li> <li>Brief compiled</li> <li>Research Report and Launch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of funding or interest from academic department.</li> <li>Family/teen participation and engagement.</li> </ul>	Council members  Graduate families and teens  Research & Academic bodies or consultants	2020	New
<b>Undertake cost benefit analysis of Irish implementation of SFP.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for research is sourced</li> <li>Brief compiled</li> <li>Research report and launch</li> <li>SFP funding sources expanded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measurement of inter-agency work, community effects.</li> <li>Member engagement and participation.</li> <li>Funding for research to be sourced.</li> </ul>	Council Members  Graduate families  Research & Academic bodies or consultants	2021	New

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Training & Development

**Operational Objective 3.1: Review and develop SFP group leader training to increase engagement by agencies and relevance to existing roles.**

**Measurement:** Training is up to date and accurately reflects best practice in family-based prevention work.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>Review and update SFP 2 Day Group Leader training content and delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional information on 6-12yrs implementation.</li> <li>Review and update of manuals</li> <li>Half day refresher training developed and provided.</li> <li>Annual audit of those trained and trainers.</li> <li>Active list of trainers is maintained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information from members</li> <li>Maintaining records</li> </ul>	Council Members  Sub group	2020-2023	Ongoing
<b>Develop training fidelity benchmarks for Irish implementation to include; minimum numbers in training, co-ordination of delivery etc.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core components identified and agreed by Council members.</li> <li>Included in site set up pack.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of other benchmarks currently operating in evidence-based prevention programmes.</li> </ul>	Council Members  Sub group	2020	New
<b>Explore Accreditation/CPD Points for SFP Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awarding body for CPD points</li> <li>SFP Training aligned to CPD points</li> <li>Participation and engagement of other agencies in SFP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable accreditation body</li> <li>Paperwork and responsibility.</li> </ul>	Council Members  Sub group	2020	New

### Operational Objective 3.2: Explore opportunity to make site co-ordinator training available throughout Ireland.

**Measurement:** Site co-ordinator training is available regularly as a resource to build capacity and sustainability of sites for programme delivery.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>'Train the Trainers' SFP Site Coordinators Workshop</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery and completion of the Site Coordinator Training Workshop and numbers availed of training.</li> <li>• Co-facilitation of 2 Site Coordinator Training Workshops</li> <li>• SFP Site Coordinator Training Workshop delivered in site/area</li> <li>• Experience received from sites of training application and roll out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness of personnel to become SFP Site Coordinator Trainers.</li> <li>• Availability of Site Coordinator Trainers to train other trainers.</li> <li>• Ability of agencies to release staff for training.</li> </ul>	Site Coordinator Trainers  Local Site Coordinators	2020	Ongoing
<b>Site coordinator training included as a fidelity benchmark.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Coordinator training recognised by the National Strengthening Families Programme Council as a fidelity benchmark.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement of Programme Developers</li> <li>• Recognition of NSFPC Members &amp; Individual Sites</li> </ul>	Cork & Kerry SFP Steering Committee as Developers of SFP Site Coordinators Training	2020	Ongoing

### Operational Objective 3.3: Continue to work to create SFP linkages available in community.

**Measurement:** SFP is part of a continuum of intervention available for families in communities. SFP complements existing work of agencies and continues to build inter-agency networks.

Key Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Interdependencies	Who	Timescale	Status
<b>SFP is promoted and considered for inclusion in care plans where suitable.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness of SFP by agencies working with families in communities across Ireland.</li> <li>SFP is promoted as a programme available to families in communities from a range of support agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency participation</li> <li>Inclusion of SFP within the case management/care plan system.</li> </ul>	All relevant agencies in communities	2020-2023	Ongoing
<b>Continue to build on the commitment and inter-agency involvement of statutory and community agencies in SFP in Ireland.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustained participation of agencies as referral agent, facilitator or steering committee member.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buy-In from agencies to refer families and support them throughout the process.</li> <li>Time &amp; availability of agencies to become referrers, facilitators and steering committee members.</li> </ul>	All relevant agencies in communities	2020-2023	Ongoing
<b>Continue to engage with a broad range of organisations to ensure continued support and greater outcomes for families post programme.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies complement SFP by having similar learning objectives for families.</li> <li>Agencies reinforcing families learning post programme to maintain positive changes achieved by participating SFP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies awareness of SFP and inclusion of SFP core objectives with their own activities</li> <li>Time and commitment.</li> </ul>	All relevant agencies in communities	2020-2023	Ongoing

## Factors affecting NSFPC Work

- SFP implementations across Ireland are funded in different ways, there is no direct funding stream. This can place immense pressure on sites to source funding for each programme.
- Financial constraints are restricting SFP development as opposed to commitment.
- National SFP Council sites have demonstrated the effectiveness of SFP Ireland and as a robust model which can respond to national priorities and align to national policy and frameworks.
- In order to sustain its implementation, there is a need to develop outcomes measurements which reflect the inter-agency implementation of SFP in the Irish context and its contribution to these outcomes.
- The importance of highlighting and recognising SFP as a model of effective intervention when commissioning family-based interventions.
- Continued commitment of agencies to allow participation of staff in SFP as core work to ensure the long-term sustainability of SFP.

## Monitoring and Reviewing the Strategy

The Strategy will be routinely reviewed and updated in accordance with the terms of reference of the Council.

Implementation of the Strategy will be prioritised in addition to setting out lead agencies and partners for actions. A progress report of the Strategy will form part of the Annual General meeting and a review will take place at the end of 2021. A key part of the work of the Council is the dependency on Council members by their organisations and SFP Steering Groups to attend and participate in the work of the Council. Communication to and from the Council will continue to be an essential element in going forward to assess the extent to which the Strategy is meeting its core objectives and actions in addition to identifying any emerging needs and issues impacting on the work of the Council or SFP programme implementation across sites.

## National SFP Council of Ireland

Current Membership 2020\*

	Name	Organisation
1.	Anne Conroy	Le Chéile Mentoring
2.	Ann Lacey	FDYS Wexford
3.	Caroline Morris	Foróige Kildare
4. & 5.	Cathy Whelan Trish Egan	Meath Community Drug & Alcohol Response
6. 7. & 8.	David McPhillips Maria Finn Jimmy Prior	SFP Midwest -Community Substance Misuse Team -CASP -Family Resource Centre, Southill
9.	Donna Butler	Alcohol Forum, Donegal
10.	Gemma O'Leary (Chair)	Cork Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force
11.	Gordon Kinsley	Southern Regional Drug & Alcohol Taskforce
12.	Karen Gorman	Foróige Dublin North
13.	Leona Bradley	Developing Healthy Communities, Derry-Londonderry
14. & 15.	Marie Lawless Róisín Byrne	Ballymun Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force
16.	Niamh Wogan	Bray Family Resource Centre
17.	Noel Loughran	An Garda Síochána Louth
18.	Rosemary Fox	Young Persons Probation Cork
19.	Valerie Scully	Foróige Dublin South
20.	Tom O'Donnell	Tusla PPFS DNC – Geraldstown House
21.	Trevor Bisset	Dublin 12 Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force
<i>*membership as at January 2020</i>		



## Acknowledgments

-Thank you to the Management/Steering Committee members in sites across Ireland who ensure implementation of the Programme with fidelity to the model in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for participating families and communities.

-To programme site co-ordinators, teams and agencies who implement the programme collaboratively to the inter-agency delivery model which is in place.

-Sincere thanks to all families who have participated in the Programme since 2007 and those who continue to be involved in the delivery. They have informed the delivery of SFP in Ireland through their open and honest participation and feedback.

-To funders of SFP and the wide range of community supports provided by areas which enable the Programmes to take place.

-To the programme developers, Karol Kumpfer and Henry Whiteside who have been strong and continuous supporters and advocates for the development of SFP and the National Council in Ireland.

-To current and former members of the National SFP Council of Ireland since 2012 who are committed to promoting best practice of SFP in Ireland as an effective family skills programme.

**National Strengthening Families Council of Ireland  
(NSFPC)**



c/o Ballymun Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force  
Axis Centre  
Ballymun  
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