

Creating Lasting Family Connections

SUPER: Substance Use Prevention Evidence-Based Resource, UCLA ISAP

Developer website: <https://copes.org/topics-of-interest/the-original-creating-lasting-family-connections-clfc-program/>

Practice record last updated August 29, 2025

Cost	Prevention Category	Practice Focus	Practice Focus
Over \$500	Universal Direct, Selective, Indicated	SU	MH

Practice Summary

The Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC) Program is an evidence-based curriculum for youth aged 9-17 and their families. It strengthens families by enhancing self-awareness, emotional expression, and communication while teaching refusal and social skills to reduce substance use risks. The program is divided into six modules and provides separate tracks for parents and youth, focusing on resilience, responsibility, and family management. CLFC can be implemented in community settings such as schools and churches, with materials available in English and Spanish.

Practice Details

Substance Use Prevention Category	• Universal Direct • Selective • Indicated
Practice Level	• Individual • Relationship • Community or Society
Substance Use Prevention Strategy	• Education
Practice Components	Individual • Anger Management • Civic Responsibility • Cognitive Behavioral Strategies • Connection to More Services • Cultural/Religious Focus • Education • Insight Building • Psychoeducation • Self-Efficacy or Self-Esteem Enhancement • Skills Training Relationship • Parenting Education/Skills Community/Society • Community-Based Processes
Population Age	• Age 6-12 • Age 13-17
Populations of Focus	• General Population • Hispanic or Latino • Rural

Settings	• School (K-12) • College or University • Community-based program • Other
Parent/Caregiver Involvement	• Required
Recommended Staffing	• Community members • Prevention staff
Prevention Focus	Substance Use Prevention Focus • Alcohol • Substance Use - General Mental Health Wellness and Promotion Focus • Mental Health - General
Training and Technical Assistance	The developer offers in-person trainings and on-site implementation training. After training, the developer offers ongoing technical assistance by telephone for implementation support, and individualized consultation is available for a fee. The developer also has a Master Trainer Certification program for individuals who have successfully implemented CLFC with positive results.
Program Costs	Over \$500. Please visit the developer's website listed above for updated information about implementation costs.
Adaptations	The program has been adapted for use with families with adults in recovery from substance use disorders and prison re-entry populations, and to focus on issues related to fatherhood and healthy marriage.

Risk and Protective Factors

Youth Substance Use Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Early and persistent antisocial behavior • Early initiation of substance use • Favorable attitudes towards substance use • Poor coping skills and behaviors	• Positive social orientation (e.g. engaging in healthy activities, accepting rules and community values, positive social engagement) • Emotional self-regulation • Personal engagement in two or more of the following: school, peers, athletics, employment, religion/spirituality, culture • Strong coping skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, ability to stand up for beliefs and values)
Family and Relationships	• Poor attachment with caregivers • Family conflict • Family management problems • Substance use among caregivers	• Attachment between caregivers and youth, including unity, warmth, and attachment • Communication and contact between caregivers and youth • Clear expectations for behaviors and values • Family environment with structure, rules, predictability, and parental supervision • Supportive relationships with family

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
School, Peer, and Community	• None	• Opportunities for the development of skills and interests • Opportunities for prosocial engagement in the school and community • Positive social norms • Presence of mentors and healthy adults for positive emotional support

Youth Mental Health Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Poor coping skills and behaviors	• Emotional self-regulation • Personal engagement in two or more of the following: school, peers, athletics, employment, religion/spirituality, culture • Strong coping skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, ability to stand up for beliefs and values)
Family and Relationships	• Family conflict • Family management problems • Substance use among caregivers	• Attachment between caregivers and youth, including unity, warmth, and attachment • Communication and contact between caregivers and youth • Clear expectations for behaviors and values • Family environment with structure, rules, predictability, and parental supervision • Supportive relationships with family
School, Peer, and Community	• None	• Ability to make friends and get along well with others • Strong peer relationships • Opportunities for prosocial engagement in the school and community • Positive social norms • Presence of mentors and healthy adults for positive emotional support

Shared Substance Use and Mental Health Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Poor coping skills and behaviors	• Emotional self-regulation • Personal engagement in two or more of the following: school, peers, athletics, employment, religion/spirituality, culture • Strong coping skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, ability to stand up for beliefs and values)
Family and Relationships	• Family conflict • Family management problems • Substance use among caregivers	• Attachment between caregivers and youth, including unity, warmth, and attachment • Communication and contact between caregivers and youth • Clear expectations for behaviors and values • Family environment with structure, rules, predictability, and parental supervision • Supportive relationships with family

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
School, Peer, and Community	• None	• Opportunities for prosocial engagement in the school and community • Positive social norms • Presence of mentors and healthy adults for positive emotional support

Empirical Evidence of Impact

Prevention Focus	Outcome	Population Age	Evidence Strength and Study Populations of Focus
Alcohol	Changes in Knowledge, Attitudes, or Beliefs	9-17	Promising (General Population) [References 1-2]
Alcohol	Reduced Use or Delayed Initiation	9-17	Practice-Based Evidence (General Population) [References 1-2]
Substance Use (General)	Reduced Use or Delayed Initiation	9-17	Practice-Based Evidence (General Population) [References 1-2]
Mental Health (General)	Improved Relationships and Community Connectedness	9-17	Promising (General Population) [References 2]

References

- [1] Johnson, K., Strader, T., Berbaum, M., Bryant, D., Bucholtz, G., Collins, D., et al. (1996). Reducing alcohol and other drug use by strengthening community, family, and youth resiliency: An evaluation of the Creating Lasting Connections program. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 11(1), 36-67. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743554896111004>
- [2] Johnson, K., Bryant, D.D., Collins, D.A., Noe, T.D., Strader, T.N., Berbaum, M. (1998). Preventing and reducing alcohol and other drug use among high-risk youths by increasing family resilience. *Social Work*, 43(4):297-308. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/43.4.297>

What California Providers Are Saying

What They Like About Creating Lasting Family Connections:

- The program is designed to strengthen positive communication, family bonds, and interactions to reduce youth substance use.
- Clear guidance for implementation is provided by the program.
- Substantial training is required to ensure fidelity and effectiveness.

Tips and Recommendations for Implementing Creating Lasting Family Connections:

- Training and material costs should be considered as developer-led training is required for all staff, which can be expensive, especially for out-of-state organizations.
- Every new staff member must be trained by developers, increasing logistical challenges.
- Follow the curriculum as intended as the program has strict implementation guidelines with little room for modification.
- The program can be delivered in various community settings, such as churches, schools, and community centers.