

## Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)

### OVERVIEW

**Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)** is a goal-oriented, comprehensive treatment program designed to serve multi-problem youth in their community. MST is a home-based program that has been the focus of several major research studies and has demonstrated clinical and cost-effectiveness for youths with complex emotional, social, and academic needs.

Caseloads of the therapists are small (4-6 families per therapist) and treatment is intensive, often including multiple contacts with the family in the home every week. The average length of treatment is from 2-5 months.

#### Who could benefit from MST?

MST helps youths with chronic behaviors as truancy, serious disobedience, aggressive behavior, running away and substance abuse.

### SERVICES

- ◆ Assesses the youth in the context of his family, school, and community
- ◆ Seeks to understand the youth's problems and the contributing factors
- ◆ Focuses on helping parents build supportive social networks
- ◆ Empowers parents to address the needs of the youth
- ◆ Emphasizes long-term change that families can maintain after the program
- ◆ Helps to reduce recidivism

### REFERRALS

#### Who is eligible for MST?

Bergen County youths, from the ages of 12 to 17½, who are referred by the Juvenile Family Court, Juvenile/ Family Crisis Intervention Unit, parents, schools or service agencies

### WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM MY MST THERAPIST?

Any combination of the following:

- ◆ Family therapy
- ◆ Individual sessions with parents
- ◆ Evaluation of the youth's peer network and development of alternative activities
- ◆ Consultation with schools
- ◆ Coordination of programs with the court and other agencies
- ◆ Consultation in parenting issues
- ◆ Chemical dependency assessment and treatment planning
- ◆ Assistance available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week



## COUNTY OF BERGEN

### Department of Human Services Division of Family Guidance

#### MISSION STATEMENT

Bergen County's Division of Family Guidance provides clinical, residential, educational, correctional, case management and monitoring services to at-risk children, adolescents, and families, particularly those who are otherwise unable to receive needed services.

#### VISION

The Division of Family Guidance is Bergen County's resource for youth and families in need.

#### VALUES

- Collaborative, Creative, and Empirically Driven Programming
- Safe, Respectful, Dependable and Therapeutic Environments
- Developmentally Appropriate Expectations
- Empowerment through Opportunity
- Community Safety

### **Multi-Systemic Therapy Program**

One Bergen County Plaza, 2nd Floor  
Hackensack NJ 07601

**Phone: (201) 336-7350**

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## COUNTY OF BERGEN



**James J. Tedesco III**

*County Executive*

### **BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**Melissa DeBartolo, Esq.**

*Department Director*

#### **DIVISION OF FAMILY GUIDANCE**

**BERGEN**  
NEW JERSEY *County*

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County of Bergen  
Department of Human Services  
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[www.bergencountynj.gov/familyguidance](http://www.bergencountynj.gov/familyguidance)

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