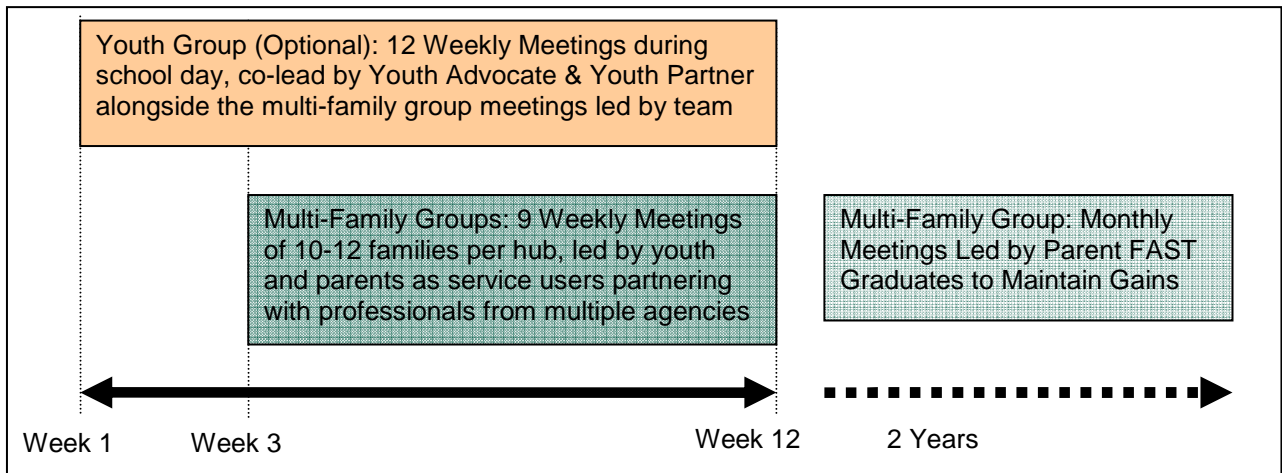
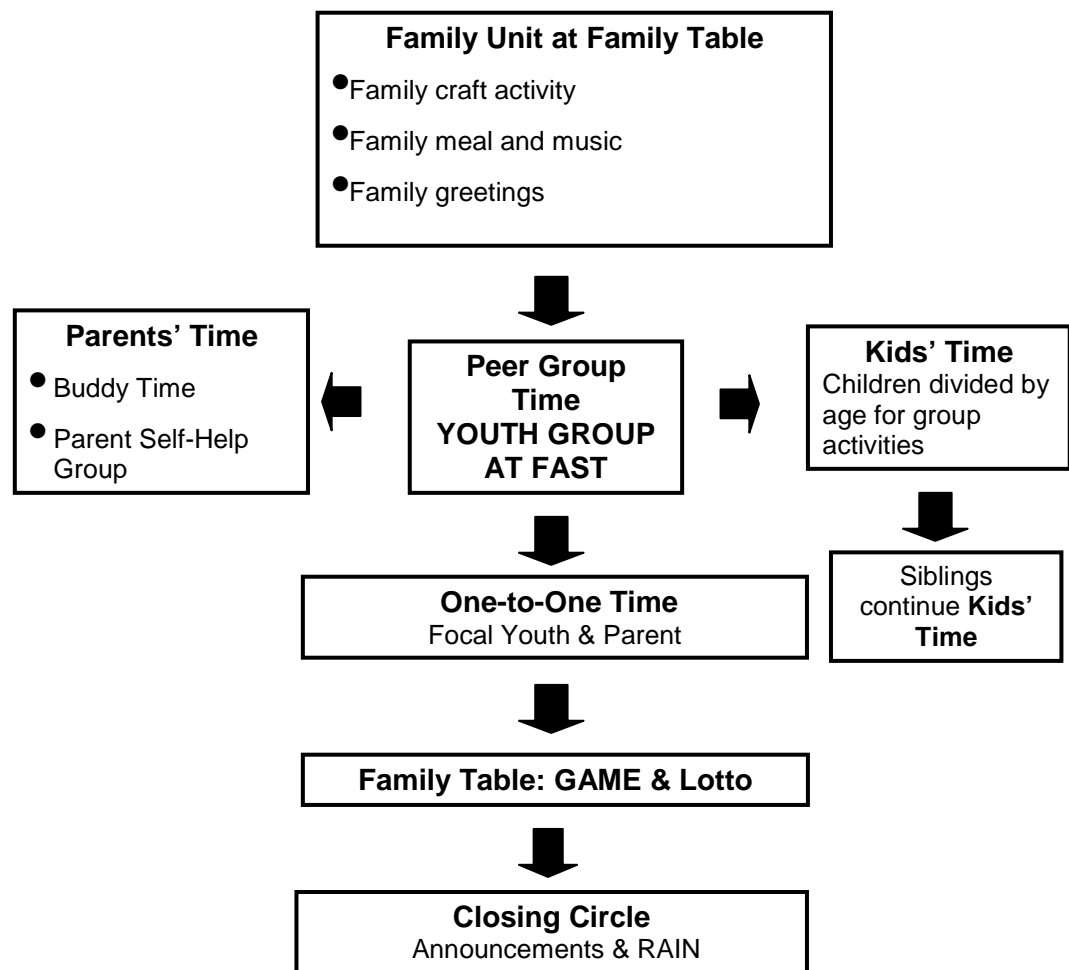


Appendix 1 –

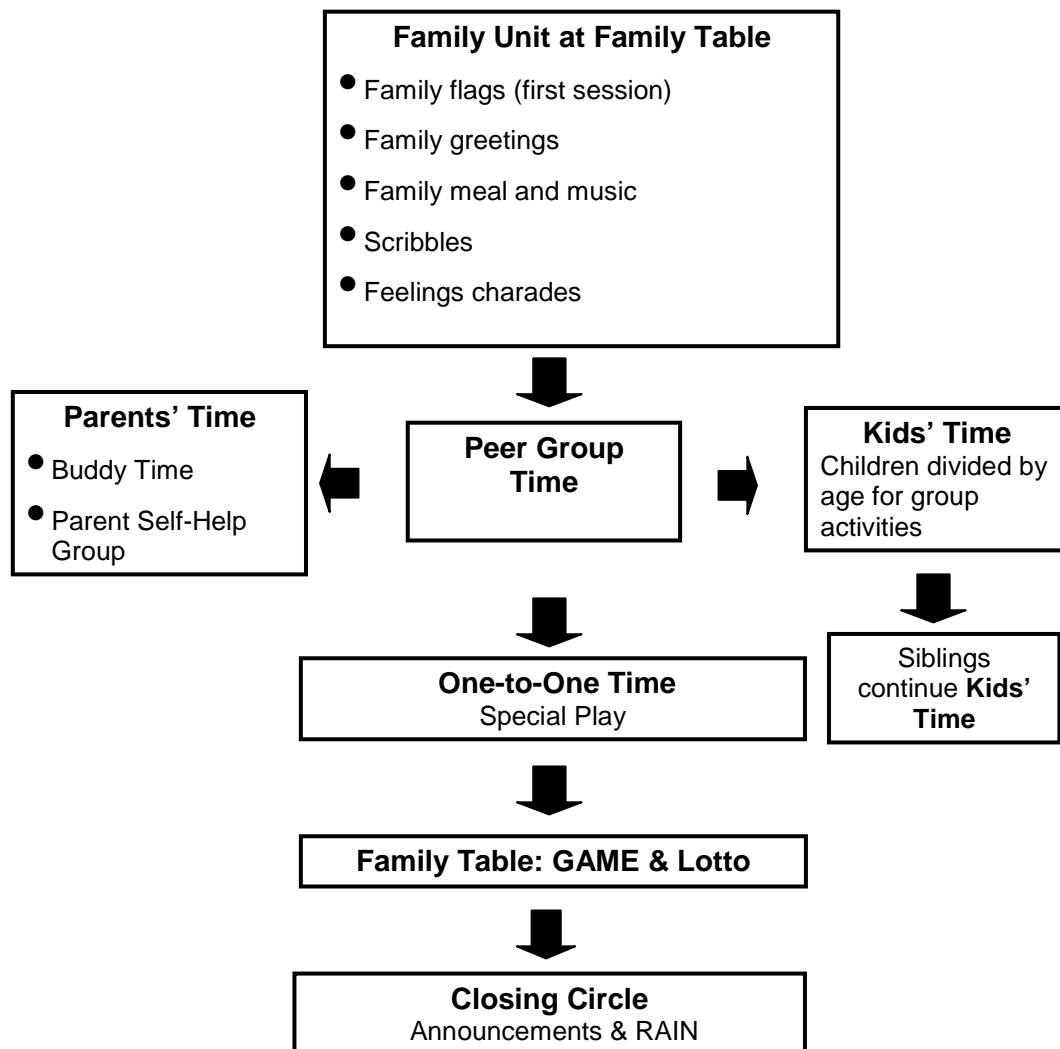
Time Line Diagramme of FAST Secondary School (Weekly & Monthly) [Figure 1]



Session Activities for Multi-Family FAST Groups Secondary Schools [Figure 2]



Session Activities for Multi-Family FAST Groups Primary Schools [Figure 3]



Appendix 2 - Research supporting the different elements of the FAST programme

One of the great strengths of FAST is that it is built both on a theoretical level, supported by previous research, as well as a practical level. Theory needs to work in practice; that is what FAST is all about. With the strength of trial and error and systematic tweaking of the processes for two decades, FAST has grown into a very effective approach, and is on several lists of evidence based practice. Developed with social work values of anti-oppressive practice, FAST values strengths of youth and empowerment of parents, and uses a relationship based, social justice model of change. Published research studies support and justify each of the eleven core processes facilitated by the team:

- (1) Weekly meetings: Family time: Crafts done together; greetings; rhythm and music
- (2) Family time: Meal at a Family Table (one family cooks for others each week);
- (3) Youth Group Time to build social ties, and select a topic to discuss with parent;
- (4) Parent Group Time to build social ties, and discuss the youth selected topic together;
- (5) One-to-One Talk Time to build parent-youth bond, and rehearse talking and listening;
- (6) Family time: Communication game, take turns, be silly, laugh, learn about one another
- (7) Lottery; every family wins once! It is fixed; but no one knows when they will win!
- (8) Closing Circle and Rain; calming, whole group activity while gathered together, and
- (9) Family Graduation with ceremony and head teacher congratulations
- (10) Monthly meetings: shift to parent graduate led agenda; 22 months to maintain bonds

FAMILY CRAFTS AND FAMILY GREETINGS:

1. Family systems theory and family therapy by Salvador Minuchin suggest that activities that draw a boundary around the family unit to the exclusion of non-family members and the inclusion of family members will strengthen that family unit. Making a family flag and doing a family hello reinforces the boundary of the family as a unit.
2. Minuchin's family systems therapy and research (called structural family therapy) suggest that families in which parents are in charge of the children are the strongest families. He recommends that therapists support the hierarchy of the family, i.e. the executive subsystem. By explicitly designating the parents as the family leaders, the team supports that process by giving the parents the information, thereby strengthening the family unit and reducing delinquency, substance abuse, and other mental health problems. The team supports the parents being the boss of these activities.
3. Parsons and Alexander, in their family-based, delinquency-prevention research (called functional family therapy), suggest that communication styles of the family unit predict recidivism of court-involved youth. They studied exactly which aspects of family communication correlate with troubled outcomes. They, then, trained families in the positive interactive sequences and reduced rates of youth incarceration in half, compared to experimental groups. These communication styles include having each family member take a fair turn and insuring that family members inquire about each other's turn with questions and reactions.
4. Brief family therapy (MRI) suggests that helping families to enact positive activities that do not erupt into familiar conflicts builds new family sequences that strengthen the family.
5. Repeated introductions helps everyone to learn and remember names over time. This supports the building of friendships of parents with youth the same age attending the same school. Social capital: a school has high social capital when the average parent in a school knows 4-5 other parents in that school. High social capital is correlated with high academic outcomes, longevity and good health, reduced crime, bullying, delinquency, drinking, drugs, violence and neglect.



FAMILY DINNER

1. Family systems theory/structural family therapy by Salvador Minuchin suggests that activities in which a boundary is drawn around the family unit to the exclusion of non-family members and the inclusion of family members will strengthen the family unit. Eating together at a table is a positive activity that many families fail to organize on a regular basis, because their lives are so busy; the youth miss out on this ritual.
2. Minuchin's family therapy supports parents to be in charge of their family; parents use power and delegate power by requesting that a child serves them their meal, and this clarifies the hierarchy.
3. Dunst's research on empowering low-income, socially isolated parents suggests that it is best to structure opportunities for reciprocity, rather than charity giving to parents without expecting any return. Each week the meal is cooked by the parent(s) who won the lottery the previous week. Each whole family wins prizes once, and in exchange for being the winner one week, the family becomes the hosts for the next week.
4. Research shows that family meals without alcohol in a family at-risk for substance abuse strengthens the likelihood of the children not becoming alcoholics. Sharing the ritual of a family meal together as a unit without drugs builds family resistance to transmission of drug abuse.
5. Research shows that regularly sharing family meals in which people take turns talking and listening together, results in SAT scores being elevated and academic success.



FAMILY MUSIC



1. New brain research on "beat competence" shows that children and youth exposed to rhymes, rhythm and music, learn beats. This ability to show 'beat competence' is correlated with better academic outcomes.
2. Music is a stress reducer for all ages. High stress combined with social isolation can increase the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. Activities that promote group cohesiveness and reduce social isolation are antidotes for highly stressed families. Families share songs at FAST. In addition, they all sing the theme song together every week. This builds feelings of affiliation.
3. Everyone standing up to sing and move and clap together gets people in a positive mood; the mood shift is a change from the stresses of daily life. Music lifts the mood.

PARENT TIME: BUDDY TIME/SELF-HELP GROUP TIME

1. Reuben Hill, family sociologist, in reviewing the Great Depression in the United States developed a family stress theory that has informed family researchers for many years. He identified two complex factors associated with family survival of the economic depression. Basically, his theory is: without social supports and hope, the stresses of economic despair result in family crises. These could include illness, accidents, violence and child abuse, depression and suicide, divorce and desertion, etc. If a family has social networks of support within the family, across the extended family, and with other families in the community AND also has a positive perception of optimism, the family will succeed despite its experiences of job loss and financial strain. If the family sees the silver lining in the clouds, sees the crisis as an opportunity, and can make a lemon into lemonade, it can override the impact of many stressors on the family. If the family has sustaining, trusting, and communicative relationships in the



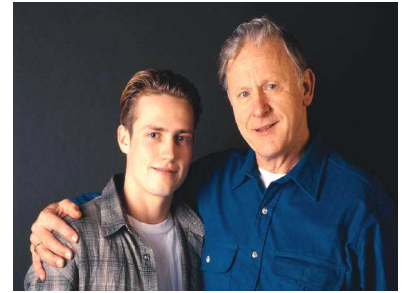
marriage and in the family and has supportive friendships and relationships in the community, it will avoid the family crises. Hill's two complex protective factors for families under duress are both basic to the FAST multi-family group process model.

The Team works to enhance the social networking of the FAST families with one another while also supporting positive attributions of possibility and hope. FAST brings together many families who share something in common—kids the same age going to the same school. They cluster for positive and fun activities in a safe environment, offering the families the opportunity to build social safety networks of support.

2. Wahler's research on behavioural parent training with single mothers, who had been referred for child abuse and neglect, showed that six months later their gains were often lost. He followed up with them six months later and found out that if they were socially isolated, they did not use the parent training he had provided them. He called them "insular" mothers and suggested that unless they had social support networks, parent training was fruitless. FAST starts by building the networks, and later parents who want parent training can request it during the 22 months follow up.
3. Werner and Smith conducted a thirty-year longitudinal study on over 600 babies from Hawaii. Many were from poor families who had multiple problems. They analyzed the data to identify the resilient survivor children from these circumstances. They collected data about individual and family functioning as well as environmental data. Their results were published in many forms, including a book entitled *Vulnerable but Invincible*. In it, they inform readers of the many factors that characterize resilient young adults. A major finding was that the mother needed to have other adults supporting her in her parenting and sharing the burdens of parenting with her. This helped to produce a child who could and did survive the poverty, oppression, illnesses, poor housing, etc. Developing a parent support network that can share the impact of raising children in difficult circumstances would increase resilience in a child.
4. Egeland's prospective fifteen-year studies on parents at risk for child abuse and neglect showed that researchers had been wrong about some important things: although parental personality and parental knowledge about children and parental history of their own parenting were important, they have been overblown as predictors of child abuse and neglect. Because Egeland followed a total population of high-risk parents from the hospital with their newborn, he discovered something important: the biggest predictor of child abuse and neglect was the terrible combination of many stressors and social isolation. The same stressors can be survived without the parent hitting his or her child, if the parent has lively social connections. This suggests that it is important to build social networks, to optimize later parent education classes.
5. Deborah Belle's research on low-income, depressed mothers showed that these mothers interacted with their children in predictable ways: neglecting them when they were preoccupied and interacting in a hostile, angry, or potentially abusive manner when the children tried to engage the mothers. Belle found that if these mothers had a supportive adult relationship (with a husband, lover, mother, sister, friend, neighbour), these negative cycles of interactions did not take place. Only fifteen minutes a day talking with another adult could reduce the risk of becoming abusive or neglectful. Each week in FAST, the parents split up first into dyads to do a daily hassle review. This is to build relationships within the parent group on a more intimate level to reduce stress and to have a taste of the supportive one-to-one time they each need.
6. Paulo Freire, a world-renowned adult educator, wrote books including *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and *Pedagogy of Hope*. He argued that bringing groups of adults together and providing them a safe environment to express their opinions about their challenges of daily living, rather than lecturing facts to them, was the basis for adult education. His work illustrates that more profound learning occurs for adults if they express their own voice within a group of others who listen and exchange ideas. FAST does not allow lectures to adults but provides a respectful structure for parents to discover the wisdom they know already.

ONE-ON-ONE TALK TIME— PARENT-YOUTH BOND

1. A recent national survey of parents done by Sylvia Hewlett, a woman economist who is also a mother, showed that parents all share the most urgent reported need across the country. The randomized, stratified sample included parents from the city and the country, parents with differing levels of income and education, and parents from differing cultural backgrounds. The urgent need shared by all parents was NOT ENOUGH TIME. FAST gives parents efficient ways to spend time with their own family and with other parents of kids in the same age group. In One-on-One Talk time, FAST gives parents uninterrupted time to focus on their youth.
2. Elaine Blechman's research on at-risk youth in schools identifies the impact of positive and behaviourally specific teacher notes about a youth's behaviours at school when sent home to the parents. After identifying and tracking the individual youth's performance for several days, the teacher is instructed to send a note home when the youth does his best. This positive attention, shared by the teacher with the parent, for the successes of the at-risk youth results in dramatic improvement of classroom-based behaviours. We apply this research in the notes collected from the teachers each week, which are given to the parents just prior to the One-on-One Talk time.
3. Carl Rogers wrote about the importance of reflective listening on self-esteem, and he developed the idea that generalized and focused approval would facilitate the development of emotional growth. In FAST we request that, with support, parents should provide this form of non-directive, non-critical listening time to their youth on topics selected by the youth as a group.
4. Bonnie Bernard summarizes the many recent studies on resilience in youth and identifies critical factors that youth need in order to rise above adversity: love, challenging, safety, and mastery. In the one to one talk time with a parent, safety for both is provided in several ways: it is taking place in a public place, there are several supportive coaches, and rules for behaviour are provided to both the parent and the youth. Under these conditions of safety, the youth and the parent are willing to take risks to communicate with one another in new ways. They talk and listen to one another about the youth generated topic, with two coaches nearby to support them or interrupt conflict.
5. Michael Resnick's publication from the University of Minnesota on the factors that protect youth from harm and risk is based on strategic randomized sampling of 10,000 middle and high school youth from all social classes across the U.S. His team interviewed the students in person and discovered that there were three critical and predictive factors for youth outcomes: positive connections with the parents, positive connections with the school, and lack of access to guns were the factors that helped youth avoid violence and delinquency, substance abuse, and school dropout. In FAST groups, the youth get multiple opportunities to strengthen bonds with parents and school, both critical predictors of positive outcomes for youth in this cross sectional study.
6. Hawkins' and Catalano's excellent series of research studies over 15 years on youth examine the balance and effect of both risk and of protective factors on predicting youth outcomes. They sought to understand the extent to which risk factors relate to protective factors, and whether protective factors can outweigh risk factors. Their studies have shown that there is a threshold effect and that 5 or more risk factors dramatically increase the likelihood of bad outcomes for youth. In the most recent work, they show that just one or two protective factors can wipe out the risk factors, even when there are more than five risk factors. On the other hand, their prevalence studies suggest that very few youth with over five risk factors have even one protective factor. They now urge clinicians to develop strategies that can build protective factors for youth, especially relationships, to override the impact of risk factors especially for the high-risk youth. FAST is positive and works to build assets, and multiple levels of protective factors for youth.



7. Recent brain research shows that successful mastery of delayed gratification experiences will help the child to be more patient about pursuing his or her goals. The executive functions of impulse control take years to develop, including into adolescence. Youth have a basic sense of fairness and will be patient if they believe that the process is fair to everyone. They will wait to get their turn if it is fair. Turn-taking is organized into several FAST activities. Lottery is organized by the team, but youth know that it is fixed and fair; they practice waiting for their turn and their family's turn, because they know it is fair. Practice in waiting is part of the experiential learning.
8. Recent brain research shows that in order for new behaviours to be mastered and for change to occur which stays, the dendrites and synapses need to become strong by multiple repetitions. If they are not used or exercised, there will be a washing away process, called 'pruning' of under-utilized dendrites, during early adolescence. Researchers say that there should be 300 repeats to firmly entrench the new positive behaviours, prior to neurological pruning. Multiple repetitions of positive communications within the family, small familial behavioural positive exchanges, turn taking, 'imbedded compliance requests', one to one listening and talking time without family conflict, laughing in the Game, talking at family meals, repeatedly, can be mastered over time.
9. Recent brain research has identified how differently the brain processes information when a child or youth is stressed. High cortisol levels of youth will compete with learning. Research shows that transitions into a new school building increases stress (cortisol) levels and interferes with cognitive learning. Youth need to practice use of their cortex (i.e., thinking things through plan-fully) without being stressed, i.e. without reacting impulsively and reactively. By being in a safe, public place with supportive team coaches, the family stress levels are reduced, and the youth can learn better. Having familiar, predictable family routines reduces stress and enables learning of new positive parent-youth interactive sequences. Being with one's family having fun without conflict in the school building, can generalize feelings towards the safer environment to increase learning.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS GAME— POSITIVE COMMUNICATION IN FAMILY UNIT

1. This board game is the work of a team of social workers who did in-home family therapists (Carolyn Reagen) with highly conflicted and disengaged families of court offending youth. The game is based on a family systems approach to working with families, enhancing family cohesion, practicing turn taking, and developing the individuation of each family member. The game has no individual winner. Each person, young or old, rolls the dice and picks a card to take a turn to move one's piece on the board. The cards require an action response, which levels the hierarchy of the family. Each person is equally likely to pick a card demanding a silly action or posing a serious question. After two weeks, even resistant, conflicted and disengaged families begin to seek out the game and choose to use it as a vehicle to start laughing together as a family.
2. The new brain research supports the repetition of positive interactive games in which moods are lifted for the family unit as a whole. The board game acts as an interactive structure which the family can use to promote positive interactions and use to block familiar conflicted family routines. The board game becomes a symbol for the family that they can have fun together, and a structure for achieving the positive interactions.
3. Peter Bensons' Search Institute assesses the research-based assets a community needs in order to support the success of youth. The institute's positive approach to youth development suggests that building stronger relationships between the youth and their parents will increase their chances of success. Playing this fun, interactive, imaginative game every week enhances the relationships of the youth with their family. The game has lots of room for communication and self-expression.



LOTTERY—FAIRNESS AND WINNING: EACH FAMILY WINS ONCE AND RECIPROCATES

1. Reuben Hill, a family sociologist from the University of Minnesota, formulated from data on the Great Depression a theory about family stress. He was interested in what brought a family

down and which ones survived the calamitous circumstances of that period. Two factors stood out that protect a family with multiple stressors of poverty and unemployment from experiencing the collapse of the family. Hill considered them to be of equal weight. The first was social support, and the second was the perception that the family had about the stresses. The rather intangible second factor, perception, was about optimism and reframing a disaster into an opportunity for growth and change. This second factor is addressed with the Lottery. Everyone gets the chance to experience winning. Everyone in FAST is queen for the day, with the focus on that family as the winners and with everyone watching what they get and clapping for them as winners. The amount of stuff that the family wins is only a small aspect of this component of the curriculum. We are interested in people feeling like they deserved good things to happen to them and experiencing that life can bring good things. Being the winner for the evening is followed the next week by becoming the host or hostess for the evening; the Lottery prize-winners also receive money to buy food for a menu they plan and execute for the FAST meal. This indicates to the family that the members are perceived as responsible, capable, and trusted to be able to take the money and bring back a meal for a large number of people. Perceptions of oneself as competent, trusted, a winner, and centre of attention are all shaped in the FAST experience. Actually, all of the weeks are structured to reduce the feelings of being alone, defective in any way, and a failure, as well as to increase feelings of being connected, competent, and a winner. As a group, these families become empowered with a shared experience and a common voice that can be used to articulate a perspective in many forums.

2. As a structural family therapist, Minuchin supports enactments that put a boundary around the family unit. Winning the Lottery is always done by the whole family rather than by one person. "United we stand, divide we fall" could be the motto. The message here is that the family is a winning team. The family sticks together. If one person wins, the whole family wins. This is an important message about the family system. The family therapy part of this lottery exercise is to underline the family group at the end of the evening. The family should be back at its family table for this part. The coming together again after being split up into generational activities helps, through process, to acknowledge the importance of the family unit.
3. Research by Richard Barth on positive reinforcement for attendance in parenting groups supports the use of the Lottery with substantial prizes. Barth is a behaviourist who specializes in families and children. He reviewed the literature on how to optimize attendance with hard-to-reach families. Others have used cash payments for each week or for the end of the whole program. Vouchers have been used to turn in at a "store," and small door prizes have been given out each week. These have all been studied for effectiveness. The advantages of a substantial lottery are that the reinforcement is random, guaranteed, and significant. Therefore, you need to come regularly until you win the lottery. Since you know that you will win, you will keep coming until you do, but you never know when it will be. The substantial nature of the prize (thirty dollars budgeted per family – the FAST programme gets discounts, so actually there is more than thirty dollars worth of presents) would not be too little to want. The amount of money allows a kitchen appliance worth a lot or one major item and many smaller items. The parent must not know which week his or her family will win, only that this is guaranteed and random. (Dr. McDonald's addition was to tie winning to hosting the meal. This encouraged the universal reciprocity rule to go into effect. It also minimized the chances of simply winning the lottery and then dropping out of the FAST group.)
4. Researcher Carl Dunst, a developmental psychologist who has done research on small children and their families, explored various ways of encouraging participation of poor families and empowering families in the process of this participation. His work explains the importance of the universal cultural rule of reciprocity: if you receive, then you want to give back. No one feels dignified or proud of themselves if they only receive (the exception being children). It is essential to the empowerment of parents who are low-income to exchange, barter, and reciprocate. To only give and not expect anything in return is an insult.

Appendix 3 – Local Area Agreements that are supported by the FAST programme

The FAST programme is a multi-level group intervention and can contribute to a wide range of local area agreement outcomes that will help multi-agency teams to realise the benefits of working together, not only in terms of supporting outcomes for youth, children, parents and families but also for the wider community in terms of health, citizenship and social capital..

- 1 **% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area**
- 2 **% of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood**
- 3 **Civic participation in the local area**
- 4 **% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality**
- 5 **Overall/general satisfaction with local area**
- 6 **Participation in regular volunteering**
- 13 **Migrants English language skills and knowledge**
- 17 **Perceptions of anti-social behaviour**
Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the
- 21 **local council and police**
Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the
- 22 **area**
- 23 **Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration**
- 45 **Young offenders engagement in suitable education, employment or training**
- 50 **Emotional health of children**
- 51 **Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHs) services**
- 52 **Take up of school lunches**
- 55 **Obesity among primary school age children in Reception Year**
- 56 **Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6**
- 58 **Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children**
- 69 **Children who have experienced bullying**
- 71 **Children who have run away from home/care overnight**
- 88 **Percentage of schools providing access to extended services**
Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation
- 92 **Stage Profile and the rest**
Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers
- 102 **achieving the expected level at Key Stages 2 and 4**
- 106 **Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education**
- 109 **Delivery of Sure Start Children Centres**
- 110 **Young people's participation in positive activities**
- 114 **Rate of permanent exclusions from school**
- 115 **Substance misuse by young people**
- 116 **Proportion of children in poverty**
- 119 **Self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing**
- 161 **Number of Level 1 qualifications in literacy (including ESOL) achieved**
Proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at
- 163 **least Level 2 or higher**
- 199 **Children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas**