

# What Makes MST® Such an Effective Intervention?

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MST features the largest body of evidence, by far, of successful interventions for high risk youth.



**MST**<sup>®</sup>  
Services

**Proven Results**  
for Families and Communities

# Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

## MST FEATURES THE LARGEST BODY OF EVIDENCE, BY FAR OF SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS FOR HIGH RISK YOUTH

Therapists work in the home, school and community and are on call 24/7 to provide caregivers with the tools they need to transform the lives of troubled youth. Research demonstrates that MST reduces criminal activity and other undesirable behavior.



74

STUDIES



\$75m+

RESEARCH  
FUNDING



140+

PEER-REVIEWED  
JOURNAL ARTICLES

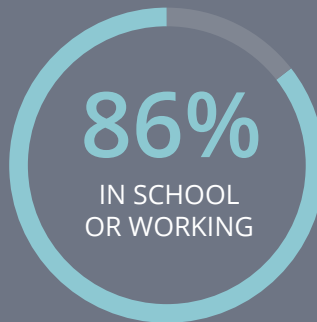


57,000+

FAMILIES INCLUDED  
ACROSS ALL STUDIES

## PROVEN RESULTS

MST is the only intervention for high risk youth where results have been repeatedly replicated by independent research teams.



\*AT THE CLOSE OF TREATMENT\*

## SAVINGS TO TAXPAYERS AND CRIME VICTIMS

MST DELIVERS  
SUPERIOR CLINICAL  
& FINANCIAL RESULTS  
RELATIVE TO INCARCERATION  
& ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

UP TO  
**\$23.59**  
ROI FOR EVERY  
DOLLAR SPENT

UP TO  
**\$200K**  
NET BENEFIT  
PER YOUTH

To learn more visit us at [www.mstservices.com](http://www.mstservices.com)

# What Makes MST Such an Effective Intervention?

When you have young people who can't seem to keep themselves out of trouble, who are heading toward prison, they and their families need help. Some have bounced from one therapy and therapist to another. And still, they repeat offend. Parents and caregivers can get to the point where they believe placement might be best for all involved.

It isn't. Studies have shown prisons and detention centers are schools for crime where youths pick up new ways to get in trouble. Tens of thousands of dollars are spent on locking them up, only to have them end up back in prison again. But there are alternatives to this endless cycle.

One alternative is Multisystemic Therapy (MST®), an intensive family- and community-based treatment that addresses the many different factors that lead to serious anti-social behavior. The MST approach views the individual as being surrounded by a network of interconnected systems that include the teen, family, peer group, school and neighborhood. Work may be necessary in any one or a combination of these systems. The MST "client" is the entire ecology of the youth - family, peers, school, and neighborhood.

Using and building on the existing strengths of each system to reach positive outcomes, MST strives to promote long-lasting and sustainable positive change.

## MST IS DELIVERED IN THE HOME

One of the defining features of MST is that it is delivered in the natural environment of the youth and family—including the home, school and wider community. Visits can be in the family home, in the youth's school, or in the community, depending on what needs to be accomplished. The treatment itself is not cookie cutter—it is specifically tailored to the strengths and needs of each individual youth and family, with family members playing an integral role in helping design and implement the treatment plan.

Therapists work with families on an ongoing and intensive basis. Sessions are scheduled as frequently as necessary to achieve observable and measurable changes. Because of the nature of home-based therapy, sessions are often scheduled outside of typical working hours. Therapists are on call 24 hours a day, seven

days a week. Caseloads are kept between four and six per therapist, with an average of five, to ensure that each family receives the attention they deserve and need.

This family- and home-based approach helps overcome barriers to accessing services, increases the likelihood that families will stay in treatment, provides them with intensive services and helps maintain treatment gains.

## THE ROLE OF THE THERAPIST AND FAMILY

MST therapists are responsible for engaging the family and other key participants, including mandated agencies, in the MST treatment process. Our motto is "whatever it takes," and therapists truly adopt that attitude to get the necessary parties on board with the treatment goals and plans. Therapists are evaluated and held accountable for achieving positive case outcomes. Cases are reviewed weekly by the team of therapists, their supervisor, and their MST Expert to ensure adherence to the nine MST treatment principles and the MST analytical process.

*"By treating the family as a whole, the court is not sending 'rehabilitated' youths back into the same dysfunctional environment. The goals are healthier families and reduced recidivism. MST aims to stop the cycle of dysfunction and criminality generationally."*

Judge Dorene S. Allen, Midland Country Probate Court



The MST therapist empowers the caregiver and youth to build skills and utilize social supports to better manage the problems they encounter. It is no good to place demands on the adolescent that can't be met because they are beyond his or her development. Each family is different and must be given individualized help tailored to their situation and concerns—which is exactly what MST does.

## **MST GOALS AND TREATMENT TECHNIQUES**

The goals of MST include providing parents with the skills and resources that they need to meet the challenges of raising teenagers, and giving the young person the skills to cope with family, school and neighborhood problems. But it's not good enough for the family to be able to cope with their teenager just during treatment. The successes need to remain long after the MST team exits.

This is accomplished, in part, by mobilizing individual, family and community resources that can support and maintain the long-term behavioral changes that occur during MST treatment. MST interventions build on pre-existing strengths and typically aim to:

- Improve how the caregiver disciplines
- Enhance family relations
- Decrease a youth's association with negative peers
- Increase a youth's association with pro-social peers
- Improve a youth's school or vocational performance
- Engage youth in positive recreational outlets



“For me, it was easy to champion MST. In the dark of night, I’ll tell you, it’s what I’d want if my daughter were to find herself in the spot that so many children do.”

Julie Revaz,

Connecticut Judicial  
Branch

- Develop a natural support network of extended family, neighbors and friends to help caregivers achieve and maintain changes

MST uses various research-proven treatment techniques to achieve positive results. These include cognitive, behavioral and pragmatic family therapies.

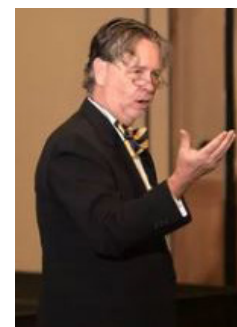
## **MST IS AN EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT**

MST is an evidence-based program and has been shown in rigorous, scientific tests to be superior to other treatments for at-risk adolescents, many of whom are exhibiting severe anti-social and criminal behavior.

The importance of having a clinical treatment undergo such testing might not, at first glance, seem that important. However, it is just as important as the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) approving the drugs you take.

Think about it. When you have a pounding headache, you might reach for Advil, Excedrin or aspirin. Each drug has been developed and proven to help get rid of a headache and has been shown to be more effective than doing nothing. For a new drug to be used as a treatment, it must establish a track record in clinical trials and be vetted as “safe and effective” by the independent FDA.

MST used the same rigor that a drug company uses to develop and test its mental-health treatments. MST is based on scientific trials and methodology, and there are independent organizations that have verified it as an effective evidence-based treatment.



“MST is one of the best evidence-based programs to deal with families who are suffering

from trauma, of which many are living within poverty, because they are confronted with so many obstacles that they need somebody to help them figure it out. It's not a handout. It's a helping hand.”

Chief Judge Steven Teske

See Chief Judge Steven Teske's video testimonial at <http://www.mstservices.com/mst-videos>

## Because evidence-based practices have positive outcomes supported by study results, those paying for the services know they will get value for their money.

MST has endorsements from these organizations with the most rigorous standards:

- Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development
- Office of the Surgeon General
- Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy
- SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP)
- CrimeSolutions
- Many more



## MST IS DELIVERED WITH FIDELITY TO THE MODEL

Adherence to the MST treatment model is essential to achieving positive outcomes. MST is proven to be a cost-effective program that reduces re-arrests and out-of-home placements for at-risk youth. But crucial to these findings is that strong adherence to the model is correlated with strong case outcomes.

Following the model makes good sense. Changing it, even slightly (hiring less credentialed therapists, shortening or lengthening treatment, referring clients who don't quite match the eligibility criteria), makes the treatment no longer MST.

To ensure adherence to the model, training is intensive and ongoing. Clinicians go through a week of introductory training, weekly consultation, weekly on-site clinical supervision and quarterly training update sessions.

The temptation to "customize" an evidence-based program is strong. However, when the rules of the model are broken, the empirical data that grounds MST no longer stands. MST is delivered with consistency, and represents a low investment risk for communities.

## GLOBAL REACH

 **15**  
COUNTRIES

 **34**  
STATES

 **2,500+**  
CLINICIANS

 **200,000+**  
YOUTH



**MST**<sup>®</sup>

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