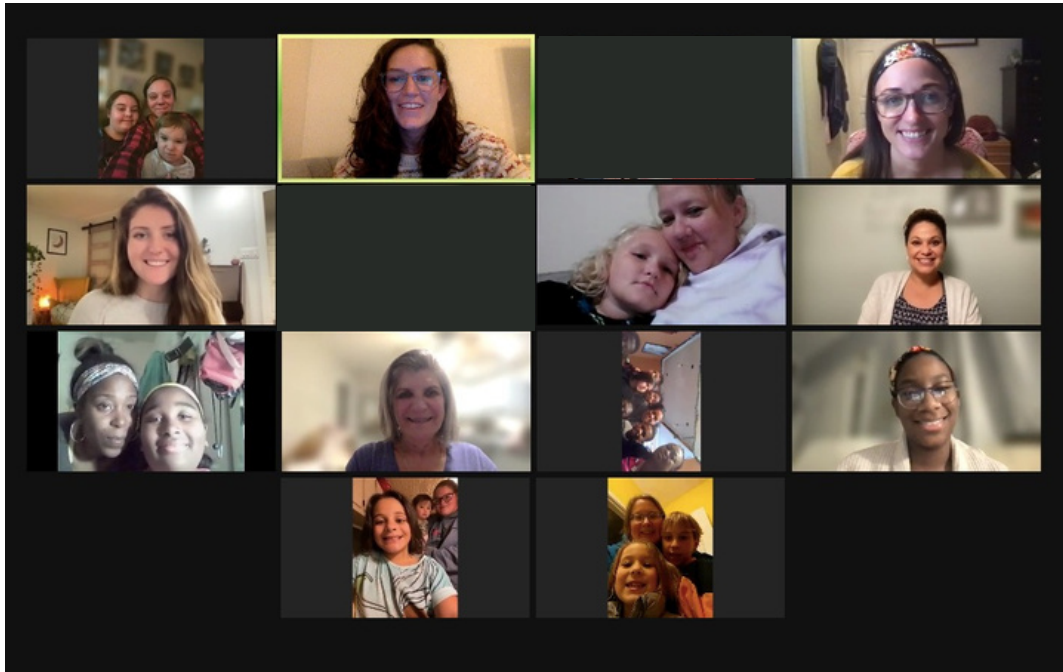




ATLANTIC  
PREVENTION  
RESOURCES | Providing Prevention,  
Treatment & Personal  
Recovery Support

# Program Newsletter

Issue No. 2 | Summer 2022



Pictured above: Fall 2021 Atlantic County Strengthening Families Participants.

## Remaining resilient

As we slowly emerge back to normal, Atlantic Prevention Resources can proudly say that we never gave in or gave up.

We fulfilled the requirements under our program grants, through virtual means in some cases, but many back in-person. With our increased technical knowledge from learning how to facilitate our programs virtually provided, we were able to accommodate any school or space that wasn't ready for in-person instruction, making us very well-rounded when it comes to serving our community.

Our team has proven that we are adaptable, determined, and persistent. We were able to divide and conquer, using all of our individual strengths where best fit in order to accomplish our goals. As a team, we were able to facilitate our programs with fidelity and excellence, while overcoming barriers.

We are beyond proud to have been able to provide our evidence-based programs during the challenging times. We took these challenges and turned them into strengths of creativity, organization, and innovation.

We are grateful to the following funders for their flexibility and support in the necessary transitions made to continue our evidence-based prevention programs:

NJ Dept. of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, (DMHAS), Atlantic County Youth Services Commission (YSC), NJ Dept. of Health, Office of Minority and Multi-cultural Health, (OMMH) New Jersey Prevention Network (NJPN), and Municipal Alliance of GCADA.

*Kathleen A. McFadden*  
Associate Director

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# Strengthening Families Program

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## About the program

Funding from the State of NJ allows us to provide *Strengthening Families* (SFP), an outcome-based program proven effective in preventing and reducing substance misuse and other unhealthy behaviors. We provide participants with a family meal, instruction and activities that improve the communication and coping skills that result in better family management and stronger family bonds. Additional funding through a contract with NJPN gives us the opportunity to also provide this program for military families throughout Atlantic County.



Pictured above: "Family Shields" created by participating SFP families.

## Facilitating virtually, and soon in-person!

We have found great success in facilitating SFP virtually, via Zoom, and have been able to reach almost 100 families since March of 2020. We have found that facilitating virtually also eliminated several barriers to accessing the program, such as transportation, inclement weather, and time restraints. We look forward to beginning our first in-person SFP (since March of 2020), this summer!

Pictured below: An SFP family selfie.



## Family dinner and incentives

Providing dinner for families to sit down together to enjoy a meal is an integral part of the Strengthening Families Program. Prior to the pandemic, we provided them with a variety of family meals each week. To adapt virtually, we were able to get dinners delivered to families from local restaurants. Families were also able to earn up to \$100 in either Amazon or Walmart e-gift cards, Five Below gift cards for the youth, and small appliance and game giveaways for the family. These "giveaway prizes" were delivered by staff members via porch drop-off to abide by COVID-19 guidelines.

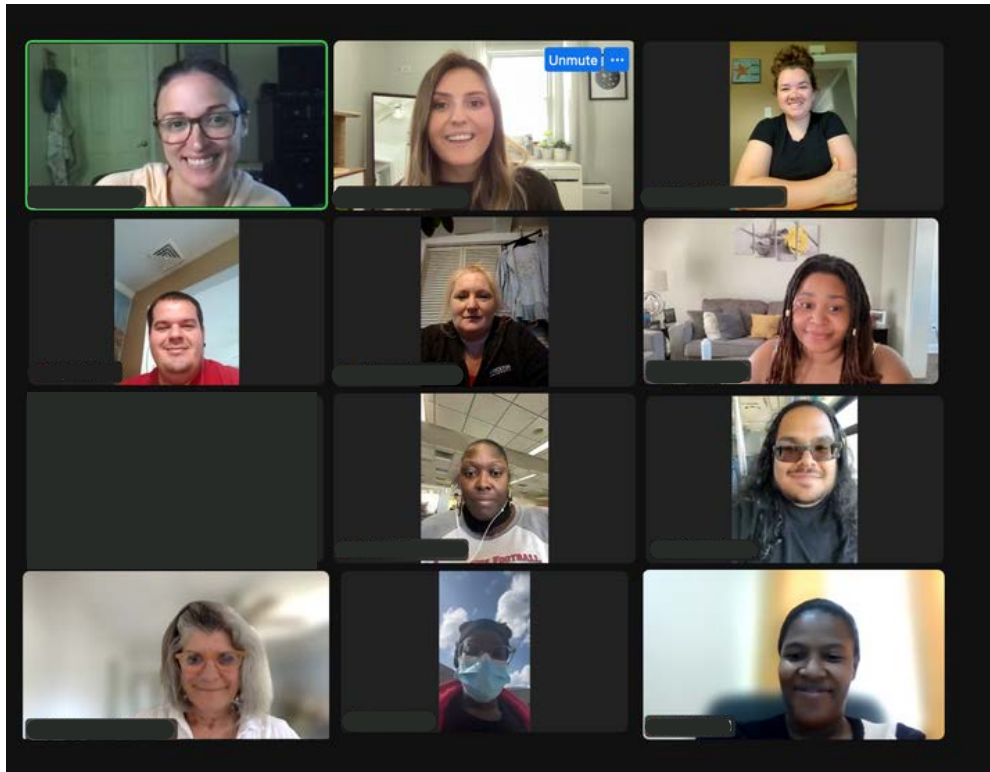


Pictured above: A participating SFP family shows off their family strength.

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# Achieving Personal Balance

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Pictured above: Participants from Spring 2022

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## About the program

*Achieving Personal Balance* (APB) is specifically designed for men and women who currently or previously served in the military. APB is a program designed to develop and apply effective coping strategies to deal with stress at work and home, in an effort to help them find and maintain balance within their lives. This program is funded by NJPN.

## Facilitating virtually

Prior to the pandemic, *Achieving Personal Balance* was facilitated in-person in small groups with participants from one city. So far, we have completed six virtual programs that have reached over 60 participants from all over Atlantic County. We have found that facilitating APB virtually has allowed the program to be far more accessible for members of Atlantic County by removing the barrier of transportation and travel time. Participants received Amazon Fire Tablets along with up to \$100 in Amazon e-gift cards as incentives to participate.

## Feedback from participants

**"This program is truly needed. The presenters are awesome and the participants feel like close friends. I've found more creative ways for dealing with stress and finding solutions. I absolutely love this program and I would love to do it again in the future."**

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# Life Skills Training

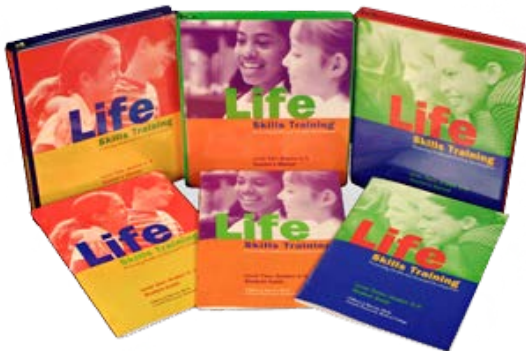
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## About the program

The *Life Skills Training Program (LST)* is a comprehensive, dynamic, and developmentally appropriate social-emotional learning program. This highly effective curriculum has been proven to help increase self-esteem, develop healthy attitudes, and improve their knowledge of essential life skills – all of which promote healthy and positive personal development and mental health. The LST program is facilitated once weekly for 12 weeks. This program is funded by DHMAS, YSC, and the Atlantic County Municipal Alliances.

## Virtual, and in-person!



To accommodate the needs of our Atlantic County schools, we offered to facilitate the *Life Skills Program* both virtually and back-in-person! We were excited to be in-person in the schools that could accommodate that option. We have learned so much from facilitating virtually, and look forward to using the tools and skills to continue whenever virtual is the more effective method.

## Participating schools

Throughout the pandemic, we have facilitated almost 100 Life Skills classes, reaching over 1500 students in the following schools:

### **Atlantic City:**

- Texas Avenue School
- Our Lady Star of the Sea School
- Martin Luther King, Jr. School
- Pennsylvania Avenue School

### **Brigantine:**

- Brigantine Community School

### **Egg Harbor Township:**

- EHT Miller School
- Fernwood Middle School

### **Estell Manor:**

- Estell Manor School District

### **Folsom:**

- Folsom School District

### **Hamilton Township:**

- William Davies Middle School

### **Northfield:**

- Northfield Community School

### **Pleasantville:**

- Pleasantville Middle School
- Pleasantville South Main Elementary School

### **Somers Point:**

- Dawes Avenue School

## Feedback from students

"Thank you for teaching us. I learned a lot about smoking, how the tar can turn lungs black, and how vaping is dangerous too!"



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# Forest Friends

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## About the program

*Forest Friends* is designed to help children learn basic life skills and character enrichment that they will use throughout their entire lives. Each session includes a story portrayed by animal puppets, followed by a discussion and an activity to reinforce the lesson conveyed by the story. Presented weekly for six weeks, the stories build off one another so that each presentation teaches a lesson while reinforcing previous lessons. This program is funded by the Atlantic County Municipal Alliances.

### Lessons

Respect

Beauty Comes From Within

Feelings

Decision Making

Talent

Honesty & Trust

## Virtual, and in-person

When facilitating the *Forest Friends* program virtually, we wanted to meet the schools and teachers where they were, and came up with the solution to offer a pre-recorded version of the program, or a "live" facilitation via Zoom or Google Meet. We found that giving the schools these options insured that the program was easily accessible regardless of the schools' schedule or virtual barriers.

Pictured below: A snapshot of a *Forest Friends* video that was sent to the schools who were unable to meet "live".



## Participating Schools:

Throughout the pandemic, we have facilitated almost 80 *Forest Friends* reaching over 1200 students in the following schools:

### Brigantine:

- Brigantine Community School

### Egg Harbor Township:

- Slaybough Elementary School

### Estell Manor:

- Estell Manor School District

### Folsom:

Folsom School District

### Hamilton Township:

- Joseph Shaner Elementary School

### Northfield:

- Northfield Community School

### Ventnor:

- Ventnor Elementary School

## Feedback from parents

"Please tell Miss Amanda, THANK YOU for posting this video! It is a BIG lesson we ALL need to focus on more in this house! Especially during days of distress. A helpful video is much appreciated in helping me teach respect, manners, and kindness".

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# Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (WISE)

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Pictured above: The Galloway Senior Center Wise Participants, 2022.



## About the program

The *WISE* Program is a six-week wellness and prevention program targeting older adults, which is designed to help them celebrate healthy aging, and make healthy lifestyle choices. The program provides valuable educational services to older adults on topics including medication misuse and management, stress management, depression, and substance misuse. Created by NJPN and implemented locally by prevention agencies across the country, WISE promotes health through education concerning high-risk behaviors in older adults. Since the program was launched in 1996, prevention programs presented by WISE facilitators have reached over 40,000 individuals.

The *WISE* Program was awarded a 2009 National Exemplary Award for Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices, and Policies by The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD). The curriculum is listed on the Results First Clearinghouse Database, Administration for Community Living's Aging and Disability Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (ADEPP) and was approved on SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

## Participating Senior Centers

The Galloway Senior Center welcomed the *WISE* program for their older adults. It was a successful collaboration, and 17 seniors completed the program. WISE is comprised of several interactive lessons and activities, such as "Sharing Truths and Busting Myths Related to Aging" and "Sharing Experiences with Cultural and Generational Diversity". Participants also received valuable resources such as medication lock boxes and Deterra medication disposal systems.



## Feedback from participants

"These were really great lessons, I truly enjoyed each session. I looked forward to my Thursdays at the Senior Center. It was a great environment to socialize, have fun, and learn with Lisa, Kathy and my friends."

Presently, we are excited to be facilitating another WISE Program for enthusiastic participants at the Egg Harbor Township Community Center.

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# Stand Up and Rebel

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## About the program

*Stand up and Rebel* (SUAR) is comprised of high school students interested in learning more about and addressing issues regarding underage drinking, tobacco and other drug use. Our focus is to empower students to make healthy choices and positively affect their peers, schools, and the community. As a group, we focus on different topics for each quarter. Monthly meetings are held for each individual school chapter.

County-wide meetings are also held monthly at local restaurants such as Olive Garden, Cousin Mario's, or at the park with takeout from local pizza places. These meetings give students the opportunity to discuss important topics such as vaping and underage drinking. We also hold events that give students the opportunity to create change in their communities.



Pictured above: Local high school students helping to clean up their community.

## Stand Up and Rebel Events

- Gilda's Club Holiday Party Event
- Local Beach Clean Ups
- Sticker Shocks
- Great American Smokeout Activities
- Take Down Tobacco Day Activities
- Annual Stockton Youth Summit
- Annual CADCA Conference in National Harbor, MD.
- Bay Fest Zombie Project
- Local Roadside Clean Ups
- Incorruptible.US iPlay Event

### Participating Schools

- Oakcrest High School
- Mainland High School
- Buena High School
- Egg Harbor Township High School
- Absegami High School
- Atlantic City High School



## SUAR Quarterly Topics

- **Quarter 1:** January-March
  - Alcohol Awareness and Take Down Tobacco Day
- **Quarter 2:** April-June
  - Marijuana and Environmental Tobacco
- **Quarter 3:** July-September
  - Prescription Drug Misuse and the Great American Smoke Out
- **Quarter 4:** October-December
  - Stress Management and Mental Health

