



Powering the Future

Teen FAST is our program for high school-aged youth (years 9 – 10). It includes an 8-week course on building success factors in pre-adult youths in a unique process that encourages development and leadership. In this model, youth rather than parents are approached and become interested in the program. They recruit a parent or a mentor, and work within the process to create a community of support for their needs. As with all of our FAST programs, Teen FAST includes an ongoing mutual support community involvement phase where kids meet regularly for two years.

Teen FAST helps kids discover their talents and gives them the strength to avoid problems as they prepare for adulthood.

I learned and grew a lot during the program. I met lots of new people and I extended my abilities. It gave me confidence, team skills and leadership skills.
- Youth Team Member Alice Springs

Each parent and family faces unique challenges, and all teens have their own set of concerns as well as resiliency factors. We help kids inventory their strengths, and learn how to build a life plan through a process on interaction and value assimilation. FAST helps teens remove uncertainty and doubt as they build a better future and become leaders in their own right. For families of teens with younger siblings, this program helps shape younger kids by demonstrating leadership and building confidence. In this way, we help teens stay off drugs, involved in school, and ready for their future.



Teens Reported:

- Reduced stress at home, in school, and improved coping skills in life
- Learn to transition accountability from parents to community
- Increased focus on education and school
- Protection from the influences of unhealthy behaviours and bad peer relationships
- Reduced exposure to aggression and violence
- Increased understanding of rules and norms and how to succeed
- Improved self esteem; refusal skills; developmental assets
- Teens begin to think about the future and the kind of life they want for themselves

Program structure:

- Teens enrol in open enrolment sessions and recruit each other. Schools may help select prospective participants
- Parents are recruited by their kids; kids enrol through outreach programs and open enrolment.
- After being shown the program content, parents who commit to FAST meet together weekly for eight weeks.
- Each session lasts approximately 2½ hours.
- FAST programs are typically held in school rooms or libraries, community centres, CBO facilities.
- Program cycles conclude with graduation ceremonies.
- After graduation, parents and teens continue to meet, collaborate and support each other for mutual benefit

FAST team leaders may include:

- Parent member (preferably FAST graduate)
- School representative (guidance, teacher)
- Mental health or AODA specialist
- Teen advocate
- Other community or faith based agency representative

Team must consist of 50% Youth and 50% Adult partners

We thoroughly train FAST teams and coach them through the process of delivering this exciting and absorbing program.

Long term evaluation data shows strong and consistently positive outcomes in graduating family functioning (2002-2007). Teen FAST delivers highly rated rankings from parents and teachers.

- **90% retention and graduation rate for families in the program**
 - **85% rate FAST as beneficial or highly beneficial to parents and kids**
 - **School administrators and teachers notice a change in behaviours of FAST teens and their peers**
 - **FAST teens are much more likely to focus on scholastic and social success after taking our course**
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For further information check out the FAST NT website <http://www.fastnt.org.au/>