

CAST (Coping and Support Training) Fact Sheet

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| Program Development | CAST was developed through a grant from NIH from 1995-1998 at the University of Washington School of Nursing, Reconnecting Youth Prevention Research Project. |
| Brief Description of the Program | <p>Coping and Support Training (CAST) is a 12-lesson skills training program used by schools, community centers, and youth-oriented agencies. It is appropriate for middle or high school-aged youth. Features of the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills training, with a focus on building self-esteem, monitoring and setting goals, decision making and personal control, including help & support seeking strategies.• A group context of adult and peer support, developed to enhance the personal and social protective factors of youth.• A crisis response plan that includes both school and community-based strategies and resources for responding to a range of suicide-risk behaviors.• Parent involvement, including active parental consent, support of the CAST goals for their teen, and awareness of school and community support resources. |
| CAST Outcomes | Relative to 'usual care' controls, youth participating in CAST research evidenced: |
| ★Mood Management ★Drug Use Control ★Protective Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant, sustained reductions in suicide-risk behavior (65%) & depression (44%)• Declines in anxiety (34%) and anger control problems (24%), even more rapid for females than males• Substantial reductions in hard drug use (62%)• Reductions in alcohol use (16%) as well as in drug use control problems (33%)• Enhanced and sustained higher levels of problem-solving coping (24%), personal control (24%), and family support (27%) |
| Essential Group Structure and Instructional Methods | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. CAST is a 12-session prevention program that may be offered in a middle or high school or mental health or community setting as part of prevention programming.2. The group meets for twelve 1-hour sessions, typically twice a week for 6 weeks. The small group format is critical with a 1:6-8 teacher-student ratio.3. CAST Leaders are chosen from those who excel in building positive interpersonal relationships with and have a desire to work with at-risk youth.4. A four-day training session for all CAST Leaders is highly recommended. A self-paced online tutorial for Administrators and a one-day advanced training for all CAST Coordinators are also highly recommended. |
| CAST Participants | <p>CAST was designed and tested with students who were known to be at risk for school dropout and evidenced suicide-risk behaviors (e.g., suicide thoughts, threats and/or attempts, depressed mood).</p> <p>However, CAST can be offered to an entire population (as "universal" prevention), to a high-risk group ("selective" prevention), or to specific at-risk students ("indicated" prevention). CAST participants must be INVITED and consent to join the group.</p> |

For program information and training/curriculum ordering arrangements contact:

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