

Lowndes County is currently seeking proposals from qualified firms and/or individuals for the implementation of Strengthening Families Program 7-17 (SFP 7-17). The selected provider will work with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), prosecutors and others involved in the Juvenile Justice process within Lowndes County to identify youth for who would be appropriate for SFP 7-17 and implement services under the purview of the Lowndes County Juvenile Court.

The goal of this program is to enhance the capacity of Lowndes County to reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors for at-risk youth through evidence-based programs. The selected provider will be required to ensure that at least 75% of the youth who enter the program successfully complete all program requirements while maintaining model fidelity.

SFP 7-17 is an evidence-based family skills training program designed to address risk and protective factors and increase resilience in families with children between the ages of 7 to 17 years old. The program includes four sessions and is delivered in 12 weekly, two-hour groups. The different sessions are parent, teen, child, and family. SFP 7-17 suggests to include all children in the home for programming, not just the youth being served. A typical group starts with the children, teens, and parents arriving and sitting down together for a meal that is provided to them by the program. Once they are finished eating, children, teens, and parents separate for the first hour to attend different sessions. Each week the subject matter and skills are the same for parents, teens, and children in the first session, even though they attend them separately. This is to assist with practicing the skills at home. After the first session is complete, children, teens, and parents are brought back together for a family session, which focuses on parent-child skill practice. Additional information on SFP 7-17 can be accessed at: <https://strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/>.

Providers seeking to provide SFP 7-17 services for Lowndes County will be required to meet the following minimum requirements. Providers may provide additional detail on their qualifications and experience to further enhance their proposal if desired.

- All facilitators will be required to have current training in SFP 7-17. Information on training can be obtained by reaching out to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) or directly to Strengthening Families Program. Each session will require a minimum of four (4) facilitators but may require as many as six (6). SFP 7-17 requires at least two (2) facilitators for the parenting session, two (2) facilitators for the youth sessions and it may be necessary to provide two (2) additional facilitators for a third group if there are younger siblings who are not otherwise appropriate to be included with the original youth group.
- Selected provider will be responsible for providing a location for conducting sessions which allows sufficient space for up to 12 families per cohort. Sufficient space will include an area large enough to allow for the group meal and large group sessions. At least one smaller space will be required to allow the parents and youth to be broken into separate groups following the meal. Additionally, space may be needed to accommodate a third group session, if there are younger siblings who are not appropriate for the primary youth group setting and/or if there are siblings outside of the 7-17 age range who may require childcare while parents participate in the parenting