



Family Connections Leaders Two Day Training in Wellington

(This training will give participants an understanding of the Family Connections programme and practical skills to deliver the education to whānau)

Date: Monday 9th and Tuesday 10th June 2025

Venue: Te Papa - Moa Room, Ngā Wāhi Ākonga, 20 Upper Main Drive, Ratonga Rua o Porirua, Porirua, Wellington.

Trainers: Dr Tessa Brudevold-Iversen and Dr Maria Sampson

Total Cost: \$250 for the two-day training

NB: Whānau members are only required to pay \$50 as their costs are subsidised by other attendees.

What is Family Connections?

- Family Connections (FC) is a free 12-week evidence-based course for people who have a loved one who experiences difficulties regulating their emotions. This program is delivered across the world in USA, Canada, South America, UK, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.
- The program, developed by Dr Alan Fruzzetti and Dr Perry Hoffman, provides education, skills training based on Dialectic Behaviour Therapy (DBT), and gives whānau an opportunity to share experiences and develop a support network.
- NEA BPD (National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder) in the USA is the parent organisation for the FC program <https://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.org/> & free groups are delivered in NZ by trained FC Leaders : see NZ FC website <http://familyconnections.org.nz/>.
- Family Connections (NEA BPD) NZ Inc. became an incorporated society in March 2021 and, six months later, a charity, to support the provision of groups across NZ and ensure FC groups align with the 12-week evidence-based program as developed and co-ordinated through NEA BPD.

Who can attend Family Connections Leaders training?

- **Staff who are committed to co-facilitating a 12-week FC group for whānau** in their local area as part of an organised FC program and have the support and approval of their service manager to do so. It is recommended they attend with at least one other colleague from the service. Prior knowledge of DBT skills is an advantage though not a prerequisite.

- **Whānau members who have completed a 12-week Family Connections group in the last 18 months** and have endorsement from their FC group facilitator to co-facilitate future FC groups as part of a local program. There is now a clear expectation from NEA BPD that FC groups are most effective when one of the co-facilitators is a trained family member FC Leader.

Who will provide the training?

Dr Tessa Brudevold-Iversen is a clinical psychologist who specialises in DBT for adolescents and adults, and is involved in treatment development of DBT for eating disorders. She was a co-researcher on a treatment development project utilising DBT to treat adolescents with eating disorders and emotional dysregulation and provides DBT trainings for individuals, teams, mental health services, NGOs, and universities. She is also part of training team at DBTNZ and runs a small private practice focused mainly on delivering treatment following experiences of trauma. Tessa has facilitated Family Connections groups and been involved in this since it first started in New Zealand. She did DBT-specific post-doctoral study in Seattle, Washington, USA working with Marsha Linehan and other Behavioral Tech clinicians. Tessa provides DBT supervision and consultation to both individual clinicians and teams and is a DBT-Linehan Board of Certification Certified Clinician.

Dr Maria Sampson is a clinical psychologist who specialises in DBT for adults within a busy central specialist adult mental health service where she provides all modalities of the treatment. She also runs a busy private practice. Her research has focused on the effects of adverse experiences on mental health and clinical assessment practices. She has facilitated Family Connections groups since 2015 and provides DBT supervision and consultation. She has also been involved in developing innovative group interventions for psychosis and adaptations of DBT skills group curriculums for the DHB.

What will you get from attending the Family Connection Leaders training?

- A certificate that will enable you to deliver FC groups alongside an experienced FC group leader.
- Access to resources on international NEA BPD website after confirmation of group dates.
- As a FC group leader you will be involved in facilitating positive change for whānau with flow-on positive effects for the person who experiences hard to control emotions and their relationships.

What is expected from you after attending the training?

- Delivering a 12-week group within 12 months of the training and regularly thereafter as part of a local program.
- To evaluate each FC group and email a completed FC (NEA BPD) NZ Inc group reporting form.
- To facilitate the FC program as it is manualised (not adapted).
- To provide FC groups free of charge to participants in your locality.
- To respect NEA BPD ownership of copyright over Family Connections material.

How do I register for the two day training so I can co-facilitate a group in 2025 & beyond?

- Please fill out the registration form (attached to flyer) as soon as possible or by Friday 30th May. Payment will be required to confirm your place.

Queries

Any queries please email Leigh at familyconnections nz@gmail.com or phone 021 781255