

## **Family Institutes Overview**

### **Multi-Family Group Work: Family Institutes of Bold Hope Model**

Family Institutes of Bold Hope (FI) is an opportunity to pause and boldly recreate how social and emotional challenges are confronted and addressed. The purpose of FI is to assist parents in transforming concerns about their children's behavior into opportunities for healing and empowerment for the entire family. Each group cycle is an *Institute*, because it becomes a space of deep learning for parents and children to notice the patterns which make them feel stuck and collectively figure out how to move forward.

Children and parents, who once felt either greatly frustrated, discouraged, or isolated, are able to connect with others in FI. Suddenly they aren't alone and are able to breathe, laugh, and cry in company—which is the foundation of FI. Parents and children meet classmates, neighbors, and others with similar strengths and/or challenges. Mutual support is provided. Hope is kindled. On a larger scale, we aim to promote alternative interventions within schools, decrease the need for restrictive educational settings, and positively impact social and emotional wellness for young people. Ultimately, like the program name states, FI is a space to grow bold hope.

#### **Nuts and Bolts of FI Program**

FI consists of eight multi-family group sessions, offered weekly, plus program graduation. Sessions are 1.5 hours, which consists of group and dinner. The program setting can be a general room in a community center or classroom in a school, with some sense of privacy. FI sessions can accommodate up to 7 families. However, it is ideal with no more than 10-12 participants, or less than four families. Topics covered in the curriculum encompass communication, negotiation, and emotional awareness concepts and strategies. Children and adults will participate in hands-on activities and discussions, which highlight:

- reframing
- critical thinking
- goal setting
- scaling success
- voice tone
- self-reflection
- finding exceptions to generate solutions
- developing mutual understanding
- evaluation
- identifying strengths
- increasing hopefulness, a positive outlook, and personal motivation