

## Needs Assessment

To tailor the program to your site-specific needs, a needs assessment may be helpful during the planning stages of program implementation. First, discussing the program with colleagues is essential in building a referral source and starting to publicize the program. Colleagues generally express strong support for family programming, and many are willing to assist in the creation and presentation of the series.

Second, asking family members in the various mental health units at the medical center to complete a brief needs-assessment survey can be useful. This assessment process serves a dual function, namely identifying specific interests of the local population and advertising the upcoming program.

Variables assessed in the [needs assessment survey](#) include:

- Level of interest in participating in program
- Preferred time of day
- Preferred length of program
- Family member's diagnosis(es)
- Preference of topics
- Ideas on how to advertise program

Responses to these questions can shape decision making during the planning phase of program implementation.