The Role of Parent Peer Support in a System of Care for Children and Youth

Presented by
Family Run Executive Director Leadership Association (FREDLA)
Presenters

Jane A. Walker, MSW
Executive Director
Family Run Executive Director Leadership Association (FREDLA)

Paige Pierce
Executive Director
Families Together New York State

Peer Support

Walk a mile in my shoes
Definition

• Peer support occurs when people provide knowledge, experience, emotional, social or practical help to each other

• Key element is “lived experience”

• Must be trained and/or certified

• Many titles – family support partner, parent support provider, family navigator, advocate, peer specialist

Why is It Important?


• Workforce predictions – peers will be ¼ of workforce in behavioral health

• A survey conducted by FREDLA of 31 statewide family organizations reported that over 109,000 families had received parent peer support in FY 13.
### Differences Parent Support and Adult Peer Support

#### Parent Peer Support
- a) Works with entire family
- b) Major changes with child’s developmental stages – early childhood through transition age youth
- c) Multiple systems that change with developmental stages
- d) Requires additional competencies because of complex systems

#### Adult Peer Support
- a) Works with adult experiencing mental health needs
- b) Some developmental stages from transition age youth to adulthood
- c) Not as many systems changes
- d) Basic core competencies, are the same

### Role of Parent Support Provider
- Reduce isolation
- Inform, interpret and educate
- Advocate and navigate complex systems
- Promote positive parenting skills
- Empower not create dependency
- Partner with parents and providers
- Not a substitute for clinical services
- Not an aide but skilled professional
Services Provided by Parent Support Providers

• One-to-one support
• Support groups
• Special populations – child welfare, juvenile justice, special education, developmental disabilities, early childhood, transition-age youth
• Parent education
• Training and education
• Social/recreational activities
• Public awareness
• Public policy

Levels of Intensity for Parent Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information &amp; Referral</th>
<th>Navigation</th>
<th>Wraparound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone only) Self-referral</td>
<td>Short term - less than 90 days Face-to-face or phone</td>
<td>Partner in wraparound team Eligibility for program and must be referred Long term - more than 90 days - depends upon program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Where to Start?

- Recruiting and hiring families
  - Post position
  - Word of mouth most effective
  - Need to access parents with lived experience
  - Best resource is families being served
  - Role description and clear expectations
- Interview process
  - Emphasis not on employment resume
  - Communication skills
  - Experience navigating system
  - Use behavioral examples or role play
Essential Qualities of Parent Support Provider

• Has moved past anger and “pay back”
• Comfortable with self-disclosure at appropriate times
• Build partnerships with professionals
• Recognize and build on strengths
• Provide non-adversarial advocacy
• Practice and teach self-care
• Maintain a stance of acceptance
• Build connections and provide linkages
• Preserve a respectful and non-judgmental attitude

Challenges Along the Way

• Some parent support providers with the best skills have challenges:
  ✓ Transportation
  ✓ Computer skills
  ✓ Ability to write/document
  ✓ Knowing boundaries
• Getting other staff to accept/understand role
• Not condescending to families
• Dealing with normal employee issues
Training and Certification

• Core competencies
  – National Practice Guidelines for Peer Supporters
  – National Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health
    http://www.ffcmh.org/sites/default/files/%234%20Competencies%20of%20PSP.pdf

• Certification
  – National certification
  – Many states are developing their own core competencies and certification process

Financing

• Grant funded
  ✔ System of Care
  ✔ Block grant
  ✔ Local

• Fee for service
  ✔ Medicaid waiver
  ✔ Medical State Plan Amendment (SPA)
  ✔ Resource: Publication by CHCS

  Medicaid Financing for Family and Youth Peer Support: A Scan of State Programs
  http://www.chcs.org/publications
Medicaid Payment

- Medicaid Provider
  - Direct payment through Medicaid
- MCO Network Provider
  - Payment through managed care organization (MCO)
- Subcontractor
  - Payment through another provider who is paid either by Medicaid or MCO
- Medicaid Administrative Dollars

Relationship between Medicaid Service Definition (Allowable Activities) and Rate

- What is allowable/billable under service definition?
  - Start-up costs
  - Telephone time
  - Travel? Meals
  - Documentation time
  - Supervision/coaching
  - Training
- How many hours of service (per day, per week, per month, per year) are allowed?
- What are requirements for who can provide service?
Sustainability

• Medicaid rates will not cover entire cost for parent support
  – Overhead
  – Supervision
  – Training
• Addition funding is needed to support parent support

Conclusion

• Parent support is a vital component in a System of care delivery system
• Parent support requires a culture shift within organizations
• Parent support requires training and resources
• Parent support works!