Research Findings, Training Issues, and Capacity Expansion for Family and Youth Peer Support and Advocacy

Presenters: Kimberly Hoagwood, Anne Kuppinger, Robert Lettieri
October 6, 2022
Types of Peer Support and Categories of Support

- Family or Caregivers as Peer Support Specialists
- Adult peers (grew out of substance use and mental health systems)
- Youth/Young Adult Peers (emerging)

- Emotional
- Instrumental
- Educational/Instructional
- Advocacy
Benefits of Family Peer Support

- Family Peer Support improves self-efficacy and empowerment among families who receive it and
- Has been associated with outcomes such as
  - service initiation and completion
  - Increased knowledge about their child’s condition
  - Increased knowledge about relevant services
  - Increased satisfaction
  - Improved youth functioning at discharge

Benefits of Family Peer Support for Parents/Caregivers

- Research shows receipt of family peer services is also associated with:
  - Improved caregiver mental health and improve self-care (Kuhn and Laird 2014)
  - Increased caregiver empowerment and improved child academic achievement (Hoagwood, Cavalieri et al. 2010)
  - Improved knowledge and beliefs about children’s mental health, which is associated with use of higher quality services for children (Fristad, Gavazzi et al. 2003, Fristad, Verducci et al. 2009)
  - Decreased conflict and negative communication between caregivers and their children (Brister, Acri et al. 2012)
  - Increased hope (Kutash, Duchnowski et al. 2011)
  - Reduction of stress (Kutash, Garraza et al. 2013)
Research on Adult Peer Support

• Emerging research shows that adult peer support is effective for supporting recovery from behavioral health conditions. Benefits of peer support may include:

• Increased self-esteem and confidence (Davidson, et al., 1999; Salzer, 2002)
• Increased sense of control and ability to bring about changes in their lives (Davidson, et al., 2012)
• Raised empowerment scores (Davidson, et al., 1999; Dumont & Jones, 2002; Ochoka, Nelson, Janzen, & Trainor, 2006; Resnick & Rosenheck, 2008)
• Increased sense that treatment is responsive and inclusive of needs (Davidson, et al., 2012)
• Increased sense of hope and inspiration (Davidson, et al., 2006; Ratzlaff, McDiarmid, Marty, & Rapp, 2006)
• Increased empathy and acceptance (camaraderie) (Coatsworth-Puspokey, Forchuk, & Ward-Griffin, 2006; Davidson, et al., 1999)
• Decreased psychotic symptoms (Davidson, et al., 2012)
• Increased engagement in self-care and wellness (Davidson, et al., 2012)
• Reduced hospital admission rates and longer community tenure (Chinman, Weingarten, Stayner, & Davidson, 2001; Davidson, et al., 2012; Forchuk, Martin, Chan, & Jenson, 2005; Min, Whitecraft, Rothbard, Salzer, 2007)
• Increased social support and social functioning (Kurtz, 1990; Nelson, Ochocka, Janzen, & Trainor, 2006; Ochoka et al., 2006; Trainor, Shepherd, Boydell, Leff, & Crawford, 1997; Yanos, Primavera, & Knight, 2001)
• Decreased substance use and depression (Davidson, et al., 2012)
Peer Parents in Child Welfare

• A review by Saeteurn et al (Child Abuse and Neglect, 2022) concluded that participation in peer parent programs was positively associated with reunification.

• Four programs met eligibility criteria:
  • Berrick et al., 2011; Bohannan et al., 2016; Chambers et al., 2019; Enano et al., 2017

• Results regarding time-in-care and re-entry post reunification at 12 and 24 months were mixed.
Family & Youth Peer Support in New York State
Partnership is Everything!

Families Together in NYS

Youth & Families

CTAC & IDEAS

Provider Organizations, FPAs and YPAs

NYS Office of Mental Health
Rich History and Promising Future!

- Gaining acceptance as a part of all child and family mental health services
- Growing across systems including: mental health, health, youth development, substance use, juvenile justice, child welfare, and education
- Defined scope of practice and code of ethics. Training developed and delivered by peers, specific to each role.
- Credential -> development of peer professions, provides advancement opportunities, expands reimbursement options.
Some Challenges…

- Systems, unlike families, are still ‘silhoed”
- Significant workforce challenges
- Rates & rules
- Need more varied and flexible funding sources
- Maintaining fidelity to peer approach as peer services become part of ‘the system’
- Uneven commitment to organizational culture change
Youth Peer Support
What is Youth Peer Support?

- YPA’s offers young people developmentally appropriate opportunities to gain emotional support, information, skills, and connection to resources, and foster trusting and supportive relationships with people of their own generation who recently experienced similar challenges (ROSC, September 2020).
Youth Peer Support Services

- One-on-one coaching and advocacy
- Facilitation of groups
- Promoting youth’s active engagement and participation with multidisciplinary teams and services
- Sharing stories of hope, recovery, and healing
- Support the individual to identify strengths
- Support young people as they learn to navigate services or community activities

Values and Principles of Youth Peer Support

- Youth Guided
- Partner with Young People
- Promote Independent Recovery
- Provides Mentoring
- Promotes Advocacy
- Culturally Curious/Humble
Benefits of Youth Peer Support

- Young people are more likely to turn to their peers for help before they turn to professionals.

- Young people who had access to YPS were more satisfied with services than were those who didn’t.

- When asked, young people express a strong desire for peer support services to be available to them.

Benefits of Youth Peer Support

- Youth Peer Advocates link to positive social affiliations
- Mutuality increases engagement
- Helps to remove stigma and feelings of isolation
Youth Peer Advocate Credential Requirements at a Glance

- Lived Experience
- Be between the ages of 18 - 30 years old
- Online Training Modules
- Virtual Training (via Zoom)
- Consultation Calls
**YPA Credential Requirements**

**Provisional Credential**

- Lived Experience
- Level 1 Training
- 18 or over
- High School Diploma or equivalent (Education Waiver for eligible candidates)
- 2 letters of Recommendation
- Statement of Lived Experience
- Signed Code of Ethics

**Professional Credential**

- Level 2 Online Training & Virtual Training
- Supervisor Letter of Recommendation
- Documented Work Experience
  - 600 hours for YPAs
- Signed Code of Ethics
- Renewed every 2 years with 20 hours of Continuing Education
Lived Experience of YPAs

Lived experience relates to personal experience navigating one or more child service system/service such as:

- Mental Health Outpatient
- Mental Health Inpatient
- Mental Health Residential
- Special Education/IEP/504 Plan
- Child Welfare, Foster Care or Adoption
- Child Welfare Residential
- Substance Use Treatment or Addiction Services
- Juvenile Justice PINS Diversion
- Juvenile Justice Probation or Placement
- Juvenile Justice Probation or Placement
- Criminal Justice Criminal Court
- Intellectual or Developmental Services
- Employment Services, Vocational Rehab or Career Centers
- Complex Healthcare Needs
- Other
Professional Development and Technical Assistance

• **Continuing education** modules for YPAs and YPA Supervisors

• **Webinars, Learning Communities, and Special Topic Learning Series** in partnership with CTAC

• **Monthly Technical Assistance Meetings** (YPM & PSM)

• **Individual Training & Credentialing Support**

• **FTNYS Website**: Workforce Development Tab
Family Peer Support
The FPA Role

- Outreach and Information
- Engagement, Bridging and Transition Support
- Self-Advocacy, Self-Efficacy and Empowerment
- Community Connections and Natural Supports
- Parent Skill Development
- Promoting Effective Family-Driven Practice
Lived Experience Defined

The parent (biological/foster/adoptive) or primary caregiver of a child/youth, who has a significant social, emotional, developmental, medical, substance use and/or behavioral disability which manifested itself prior to age 21.

A parent or caregiver is the person who is primarily responsible for the day-to-day care of a child.

The broadness of this definition gives us the opportunity to be inclusive of non-traditional family arrangements.

*For this definition, Caregiver does not include providers.*
Parent Empowerment Program (PEP)

- 25+ interactive online learning modules
- 16 hours of in-person (virtual training)
- 12 hours of coaching calls

Developed by: Family Peer Advocates + Clinicians + Researchers + Supervisors
# FPA Credential Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provisional Credential</th>
<th>Professional Credential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lived Experience</td>
<td>• Level 2 Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Level 1 Training</td>
<td>• Supervisor Letter of Recommendation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • 18 or over           | • Documented Work Experience  
  • 1000 hours          |  • 1000 hours           |
| • High School Diploma or equivalent (Education Waiver for eligible candidates) | • Signed Code of Ethics |
| • 2 Letters of Recommendation | • Renewed every 2 years with 20 hours of Continuing Education |
| • Lived Experience Statement |                          |
| • Signed Code of Ethics |                          |
Additional Supports Available
For more information:

Families Together in New York State
Administers the FPA and YPA Credential

[website link]

Community Technical Assistance Center of New York (CTAC)
Provides training and technical assistance for peers and their organizations

[website link]
Additional Resources at CTAC Website

Family Peer Support Special Initiatives Page

Youth Peer Support Special Initiatives Page
Contact Information

Robbie Lettieri  
Youth Peer Services Training and Credentialing Manager  
Families Together in New York State  
rlettieri@ftnys.org

Cortney Lovell  
Director of Workforce Development  
Families Together in New York State  
clovell@ftnys.org

Anne Kuppinger  
Senior Research Coordinator  
IDEAS and Community Technical Assistance Center (CTAC)  
anne.kuppinger@nyu.edu


