

THE BENEFITS OF FAMILY PEER SUPPORT SERVICES: LET'S EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE

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Disclaimer

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this webinar, participants will have gained knowledge on:

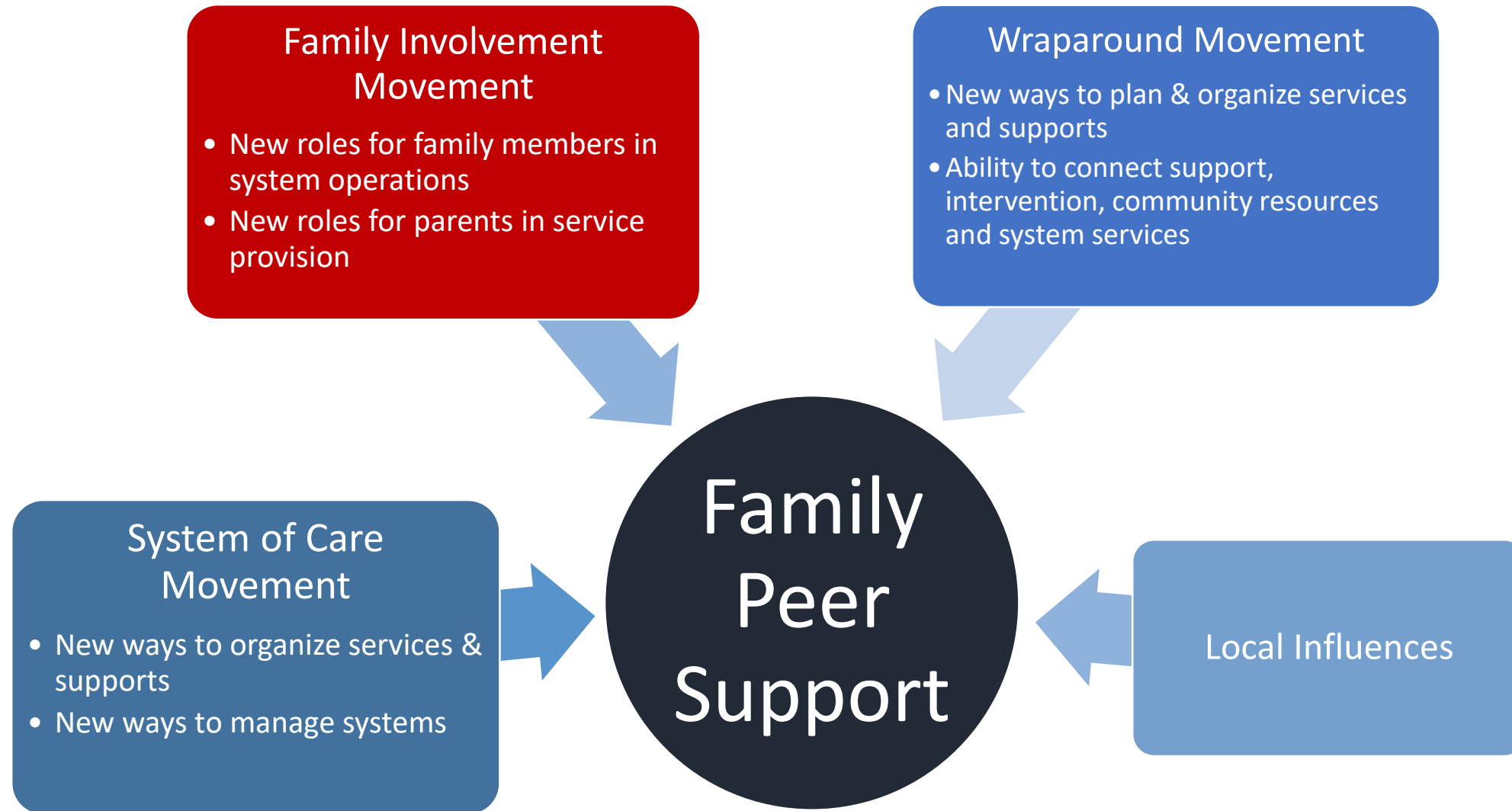
- What is Family Peer Support
- The qualifications of those providing Family Peer Support
- How Family Peer Supports are Utilized
- What are the identified benefits of Family Peer Support
- The general research and literature review for Family Peer Support services

Agenda

- History of Family Peer Support
- What is Family Peer Support
- Who Provides Family Peer Support
- Foundation of Family Peer Support
- Utilization
- Examples from Family Involvement Center
- Benefits of Family Peer Support
- Research and literature reviews of Family Peer Support

Note: Slide content that is underlined is a live link.

Roots of Family Peer Support



Examining the Similarities and Differences

Peer Family Support

- **Lived Experience**
- Provides intentional peer family support with unrelenting focus on the parent/primary caregiver of the child
- Based on strategic self-disclosure related to family experiences
- Encourage and supports parents to achieve their own identified outcomes
- Communicates active acceptance in all interactions
- Partnered with rather than delivered to parents and family members
- Suspends bias and blame
- Holds a relational stance of respect in all interactions with parents and family
- Links with others in collaborative problem solving

Family Involvement

- **Lived Experience**
- Family members have **access** to the decision making process and actively participate at the practice and/or program level
- Family members' **voice** is listened to and heard, and are meaningful decision makers in their own Child & Family Teams
- Family members have **ownership** of their plans and are committed to the outcome
- Family members participate in program decisions
- Family members as emerging leaders participate in meetings, committees and boards where decisions are made that influence mental health services at local and state level

Family Leadership

- **Lived Experience**
- Parents/Family members leverage their personal life story and expertise to influence decision making and example that induces a group to take action in accordance with the leader's purpose
- This can occur at a practice, program, state, national and policy level, and is part of system transformation efforts
- Connected to the collective voice of other parents and family members
- Family members as leaders participate in meetings, committees and boards where decisions are made that influence mental health services at local and state level

4 Peer Support Models: Different Workforce Qualifications and Training



Family/Primary
Caregiver Peer
Support

Children's System



Youth Peer
Support and
Transitional Age
Youth Support
ages 16-25

Children's / Adult
System



Adult Peer to
Peer Support

Adult System



Adult Family
Support

Adult System

Defining Family Peer Support

Family Peer Support services are a critical and essential service component that can exist within any child-serving system:

- Family Peer Support is the instrumental, social and informational support provided from one parent to another in an effort to reduce isolation, shame and blame, to assist parents in navigating child serving systems and provide other relevant life experiences
- Family Peer Support is the unrelenting focus on the parent/primary caregiver(s), while other team members focus on the identified child and family

Who provides family peer support services?

Family Peer Support Qualifications:

Lived experience as a parent or primary caregiver who is raising or has raised a child receiving mental, behavioral, mental health or substance use needs and has received services on behalf of their child/youth

Meets the qualifications to function as a behavioral health paraprofessional, behavioral health technician or as a behavioral health professional

Uses strategic self-disclosure (*ability to listen to and strategically use their story in a way that is healing to the parent they are supporting*)

Has received specialized training and ongoing coaching and supervision



Additional Resources

National Certification for Adult & Parent/Family Peers - Parent/Family Peer Support Certification

<https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/Peer%20Certification%20%20Webinar%20Amended%202.22.17.pdf>

TA Coalition Webinar: An Overview of Family Peer Support Certification: Insights Into State Implementation

<https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/NASMHPD-ParentPeerCertification-9.1.2016.pdf>

Parent Support Provider National Certification Initiative: Creating A Standard of Practice for an Emerging Workforce

<https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/TAC-Webinar%2332015Final.pdf>

Recovery to Practice

<https://www.samhsa.gov/recovery-to-practice>

In May, 2013, a joint CMS/SAMHSA Bulletin was released that confirmed the inclusion of families and youth in the definition of “Peer.”

<https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/cib-05-07-2013.pdf>

National Certification and Reciprocity

<https://theinstitute.adobeconnect.com/p170l5phxv33/?proto=true>

National Certification: An Effective Tool for Family/Parent Support Sustainability

<https://theinstitute.adobeconnect.com/p9njon6ukmsm/?proto=true>

Growing and Sustaining Parent Engagement: A toolkit for Parents and Community Partners

<https://www.cssp.org/publications/growingandsustainingparentengagementtoolkit.pdf>

Basic Foundation of Family Peer Support

Grounded in lived experience

Permanent relationship with a child & seeking/sought service

Experience navigating complex behavioral health systems

Communicates Active Acceptance

Ability to recognize & manage own bias

Committed to working on starting from a place of welcome for all parents

Based on strategic self-disclosure

Willing to share parts of your personal story in helping parents find their path to healing

Ability to build connections of partnership

Partnered with rather than delivered to parents

Ability to stay in a peer relationship

Support for support's sake rather than service sake

Access and Utilization of Family Peer Support

Jane Knitzer's Landmark Study Unclaimed Children in 1982

Many families felt disenfranchised

- Children's mental health problems were often poorly identified and diagnosed
- Ineffective service plans
- Parents blamed, frustrated, despairing

Jane Knitzer's Unclaimed Children Found Something Else Too

Parents, against all odds, remained committed to their children

- Parents fought, often heroically, for their children
- Parents were resilient, tenacious
- Many of yesterday's parents are now leaders and mentors

25 Years Later: Unclaimed Children Revisited Report Indicates

The vast majority of states are taking tangible steps to improve their mental health delivery systems.

These changes, while promising, are often severely limited in scope and shallow in depth due to lack of concerted strategic plans.

The clear message from this report is that children, youth and families need leaders to implement an agenda that places at the forefront the best knowledge about what children and youth need at different stages of their development, effective practices and the settings and systems most equipped to support them in family- and youth-responsive and culturally and linguistically competent ways.

This framework would put those at risk of mental health conditions on a par with those with mental health conditions.

Now is the time to move forward!

Emerging Best Practices & Use of Evidence Based Practices

Family Peer Support - a critical service that can be provided within any child-serving system, not just an enhancement to other service models

Pilot Projects utilizing Family Peer Support services in collaboration with Juvenile Probation and Child Welfare

Providing Family Peer Support services at the beginning of a parent's entry to systems

Credentialed Family Peer Support Training and Coaching Model that is trauma-informed

Utilization of the evidenced informed 5 Protective Factors in our Family Planning Assessment Tool

Utilization of the evidenced informed 5 Protective Factors for outcome results

Parent to Parent (P2P) – an evidence-based practice, provider of emotional and informational support to families of children with special health care needs, disabilities, and mental health challenges

Parents Anonymous – an evidence-based family strengthening program, offers weekly support groups for parents and caregivers and separate groups for children and youth

Utilization of evidenced-based parenting programs that are facilitated by trained parents:

- [Strengthening Families and Communities](#)
- [Nurtured Heart Approach](#)
- [Parenting Wisely](#)
- [Triple P Parenting](#)
- [Active Parenting](#)

A 2012 Policy Paper drafted by the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, identified the following about parent/family peer support:

- Provide parents and children with better understanding of the challenges and resources associated with children's mental health concerns ([Robbins et al 2008](#))
- Increase the child's early engagement with appropriate health resources ([Koroloff, Friesen, Reilly & Rinkin 1996](#))
- Reduce the rate of missed appointment and premature terminations from treatment thereby reducing overall cost by at least \$300 per month compared to teams without a Parent Support Provider (Davis-Groves, Byers, Johnson, McDonald 2011)
- Provide a workforce that is culturally aware of the needs of family members since they have similar experiences and come from the same community ([Munson et al 2009](#))
- Reduced lengths of stay in foster care for children will have a reduction in out of home placements ([Marcenko, Brown, DeVoy, & Conway, 2010](#)) (5) ([Romanelli et al., 2009](#))
- Will result in parents being more than four times as likely to be successfully reunified with their children than a comparison group without a PSP ([Anthony, Berrick, Cohen, & Wilder 2009](#))
- Children will stay in school rather than drop out ([Kutash et al., 2010](#))

Insures more Uninsured Children, Improves Access and Eliminates Disparities

A study published in March 2016 revealed that Family Peer Support Partners are more effective than traditional Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) methods in:

Insuring uninsured minority children

Obtaining insurance

Improving access to primary, dental and specialty care;

Reducing unmet needs and out of pocket costs

Achieving parental satisfaction and care quality

Sustaining long-term coverage

Creating jobs

Eliminating disparities



Insures more Uninsured Children, Improves Access and Eliminates Disparities

WHAT'S KNOWN ON THIS SUBJECT

Six million US children are uninsured, despite two-thirds being Medicaid/CHIP eligible; minority children are at high risk. Few trials have evaluated interventions to insure uninsured children, and none has assessed the effectiveness of parent mentors in insuring uninsured minority children.

METHODS

We conducted a randomized trial of the effects of parent mentors (PMs) on insuring uninsured minority children. PMs were experienced parents with ≥ 1 Medicaid/CHIP-covered child who received 2 days of training, then assisted families for 1 year with insurance applications, retaining coverage, medical homes, and social needs; controls received traditional Medicaid/CHIP outreach. The primary outcome was obtaining insurance 1 year post-enrollment.

RESULTS

We enrolled 237 participants (114 controls; 123 in PM group). PMs were more effective ($P < .05$ for all comparisons) than traditional methods in insuring children (95% vs 68%), and achieving faster coverage (median = 62 vs 140 days), high parental satisfaction (84% vs 62%), and coverage renewal (85% vs 60%). PM children were less likely to have no primary care provider (15% vs 39%), problems getting specialty care (11% vs 46%), unmet preventive (4% vs 22%) or dental (18% vs 31%) care needs, dissatisfaction with doctors (6% vs 16%), and needed additional income for medical expenses (6% vs 13%). Two years post-PM cessation, more PM children were insured (100% vs 76%). PMs cost \$53.05 per child per month, but saved \$6045.22 per child insured per year.

CONCLUSIONS

PMs are more effective than traditional Medicaid/CHIP methods in insuring uninsured minority children, improving health care access, and achieving parental satisfaction, but are inexpensive and highly cost-effective.

WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS

Parent mentors are more effective and faster than traditional methods in insuring uninsured minority children, renewing coverage, improving health care and dental access, reducing unmet needs, and achieving parental satisfaction, but are inexpensive and highly cost-effective, saving \$6045 per child.

Financial Returns on Investment

This study, led by Medica Research Institute Distinguished Chair in Health and Policy Research Glenn Flores, was the first to assess the effectiveness of Family Peer Support in insuring uninsured minority children:

Family Peer Support Partners are inexpensive costing \$53/child/month

Savings of \$6,045.22/insured child

Six Million U.S children are uninsured and two-thirds to three-quarters of them are Medicaid/CHIP eligible

Furthermore, racial and ethnic disparities exist in insurance coverage for U.S. children compared with a uninsured rate of 5% for white children, 12% of Latino, 8 % of African-American, and 8% of Asian/Pacific Islander children are insured

Latino and African-American children comprise 57% of **uninsured children**, although constituting only 42% of children in the United States

Among children in low income families, 84% are eligible for but **not enrolled** in Medicaid CHIP

"Conditionally assuming that PMs could also potentially be effective for uninsured children of all races/ethnicities, similar calculations suggest that national implementation of PM interventions to insure all Medicaid/CHIP-eligible uninsured children might possibly save \$21.2 to \$24.7 billion."

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2016/03/16/peds.2015-3519.full.pdf>

Social Returns on Investment

- Practice that meets the needs of families in obtaining positive outcomes
- Mutually beneficial nature of parent/professional partnerships
- Future for families where they do not need to rely so heavily on formal systems
- Increased connectedness to community resources and natural supports
- System transformation that is persistent, enduring and even life long



Literature Review: Benefits of Family and Youth Peer Support Services

Literature Review from Center for Health Care Strategies, Inc.

[Family peer support provides benefits of experiential learning and helps connect families to each other](#)

[Family peer support programs help parents who have children with special needs find and become reliable allies for each other](#)

[Parent-to-Parent support programs are valued by parents and may improve the emotional functioning of parents who have children with disabilities and help them improve their coping skills](#)

Self-efficacy and empowerment of families can be enhanced by providing family support. This has been associated with a variety of improved outcomes such as service initiation and completion; increased knowledge about the youth's conditions and relevant services; satisfaction; and youth functioning at discharge

- <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1022937327049>
- <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1022687331435>
- <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/106342669700500306>
- <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1009483425999>

[There is encouraging initial evidence of the value of family education and support in reducing child symptoms and improving child functioning](#)

Furthermore, there is evidence of some benefits to the parents and caregivers; including a reduction of stress, improved mental health and well-being, increased self efficacy, perceived social supports and increased treatment engagement.

https://www.chcs.org/media/FYPS_Literature_Review_FINAL.pdf

Literature Review: Benefits of Family and Youth Peer Support Services

- The findings in the [Family Experience Study](#) suggest a need to increase contact with, and access of families in wraparound to other families who experience similar problems with their children
- [Parents in the Parent Connectors group displayed a greater increase in hopefulness from baseline to follow-up than parents in the comparison group](#)
- [Use of formal peer support or advocates to increase family involvement in children's mental health services appears to be increasing](#)

Literature Review: Benefits of Family and Youth Peer Support Services

Roles of Families:

- A large majority (over 90 percent) of agency directors believe the most important roles for families are educating other families, advocating for mental health services, and **peer to peer support**.
- Other key roles identified by over 79 percent of agency directors include **leading support groups, training other families, serving as a direct liaison with mental health providers, and direct advocacy on behalf of individual families**.



Workforce Sustainability Literature Review

Participants who participated in peer support groups were **overwhelmingly satisfied** with their experiences.

Given the shortages in the mental health work force, there may be opportunities to **expand the role of families and service capacities within Family-Run Organizations.**



“My family was involved in a variety of services in our community. Once we began to work with a parent support professional, we felt that we had a person in our corner who worked just for us. It made a huge difference.”

— David

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/family-parent-caregiver-support-behavioral-health-2017.pdf

“I don’t know what I would have done without our parent support provider. She understood what I was going through, and she didn’t judge me. She was available whenever I needed her, not just during business hours. She helped my family get back on our feet.”

—Stacey

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tac/family-parent-caregiver-support-behavioral-health-2017.pdf

Outcomes

- Family Peer Support programs help parents who have children with special needs find and become reliable allies for each other
- Parent-to-parent support programs are valued by parents and may improve the emotional functioning of parents who have children with disabilities and help them improve their coping skills
- Parents displayed a greater increase in hopefulness and were overwhelmingly satisfied with their experiences
- There is encouraging evidence of reducing child symptoms and improving child functioning as a secondary result of supporting the parent
- Evidence of some benefits to the parents and caregivers including a reduction of stress, improved mental health and well-being, perceived social supports and increased engagement into services

Further Information

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