

Parents, Caregivers and Family Members who have traveled the journey of raising a child, youth or young adult with mental health issues, substance use issues, or developmental disabilities have learned from others with lived experience how to be more resilient. They have come together across the nation to create a sense of urgency about the need for others to have access to Family Peer Support services.

# Session 1

## **Welcome/Overview and Issues that Impact Families**

*This Session provides an opportunity for the group to create the common understanding and guidelines for an effective training experience.*

# Welcome and Introductions

## Evolution of the FSP Training Curriculum

Sections of this training curriculum were originally developed by Vroon VanDenBerg, LLP. The curriculum “Family Support Provider (FSP) for High Fidelity Wraparound” has been our full training curriculum for over 5 years. We have learned from our experience and evaluations of past trainings that we need to be able to provide new and updated information as it becomes available. We are also in the process of integrating more information about the needs of parents/caregivers of transition age youth and the skills needed to provide support for this population. Our latest evolution was the decision to use the Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) Curriculum as a foundation for the Family Support Provider Curriculum. Many sections of the CPS trainings have been modified to be more applicable to prepare Family Support Providers to provide support to Parents and Family Members of children, youth and young adults who have emotional and mental health issues, with the new addition of CSTAR and Developmental Disabilities services. (DD services provided through a DD waiver)

## Resiliency

Resiliency is the ability to withstand stress and catastrophe. We all experience a wide range of emotions, grief, and sadness after adversity, or loss. Becoming resilient is what occurs when you work through the emotions of those painful events. We develop this skill. Youth & family resiliency are increased through education of resource availability, skill building, advocacy, and assistance in navigating and communicating with multiple child serving systems.

## **It’s all about “Increasing Protective Factors and Building Resiliency”**

The role and functions of the FSP can be seen as the key components to helping parents and caregivers increase *protective factors* for their families. Protective factors help to maintain family cohesiveness during stressful times. These factors include: having connections to family, community, and services; having access to information and resources; being able to effectively communicate with service providers and youth serving systems; and having the ability to remain hopeful and optimistic allowing the family to feel safe in their home and community.

## **AND “Reducing ‘Risk Factors’”**

Clinical professionals spend more time with activities and interventions to reduce *risk factors*. Risk factors are those happenings and events that expose the family to harmful situations and can often lead to a variety of problems: marital or partner relationship issues, loss of employment, loss of services, loss of home, isolation, or a change in community status. Risk factors may also lead to out of home placement for children, thus disrupting the family unit further. In addition, risk factors or risky behaviors may endanger the life of the youth as well as other family members. Risk factors may lead to the parent or caregiver losing their voice to care and plan for the well-being of their family. Building resiliency in families is an integral part of the Family Support Program. These 2 roles working together to support the family should help the family increase their ability to be resilient.

## **What you won’t learn in this training**

Because the FSP service is not a clinical service you will *not* learn specific information related to types of mental health or substance use diagnosis. The skills you will be learning are applicable to working with individuals in many settings and with varied backgrounds. You are free to ask questions and relate personal experiences with mental health, substance use, or co- occurring disorders during this training.

# IMPORTANT POINTS

*Why we think this training is so important!*

## **The vital role of the Family Support Provider (FSP).**

The role of the FSP is not new to the behavioral health field, but the functions and skills needed have evolved in recent years. In early versions of the job, the only real qualifications were life experience with children with complex needs. However, as the job emerges nationally, it is clear that the work, when done competently, is a very complex job with a complex set of skills. This curriculum offers a basic look at these skills. It provides information on how the FSP works within the mental health system and is part of the child/family team. The Community Support Worker (CSS) and the Family Support Provider (FSP) work together to support the family to reach their identified goals. The CSS provides clinical services and the FSP provides family support that is based on common lived experience and is a non-clinical service.

## **Integrating the Family Support Provider Program into a Community Mental Health Center (CMHC)**

Each Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) is in a different place related to providing FSP services. Some have had FSP’s since the early 2000’s. Others have recently decided to start offering this service to the families they serve. One of the unique components of the Division of Behavioral Health’s Family Support Provider program is the requirement for FSP Supervisor’s to attend the FSP training. It’s critical that the FSP Supervisor have a clear understanding of the value, role and key functions of an FSP. The supervisor will not only help integrate the FSP program into the agency but will also be providing support for the FSP to be a part of the child/family team. Providing guidance and support to the FSP and the CSS will help them understand the differences in their roles but how they complement each other as they work to support families and their children and youth.

# Family Support Provider (FSP)

## Principles of Family Support

- Strength Based
- Family Driven
- Acceptance & Belonging
- Empowerment & Hopefulness

## Family Support

- Not a Clinical Service
- Real Life
- Common Lived Experience
- Not about a diagnosis
- Exploring the possibilities

MO DMH-DBH  
Family Support  
Provider

**Definition**

Provide support to assist the parents and caregivers of children up to the age of 25 with serious emotional disorders, substance use disorders, or developmental disabilities (DD). (DD has no age restriction).

**Activities are directed and authorized by the child’s treatment plan.**

The Family Support Provider partners with the Community Support Specialist to support the family as they work to reach their identified goals. **(Outcomes)**

**Provider Qualifications**

An individual that meets the requirements specified in the Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services Family Support model which includes:

- Family member with a child who has been or currently has a behavioral or emotional disorder
- Meet appropriate background checks from DSS, DMH and law enforcement agencies
- Missouri resident for at least two years
- Minimum educational level of a high school graduate or GED equivalent.

Both the FSP and their supervisor must successfully complete the Family Support Provider training as approved and provided by DMH, Division of Behavioral Health.

## “Key Service Functions”

- Provide information and support to the parent/caregiver so they have a better understanding of their child/youth’s needs and explore options to be considered as part of their treatment.
- Assist the parent/caregiver in understanding the planning process and the importance of their voice in the development and implementation of the individualized treatment plan.
- Provide support to empower the parents/caregivers to be a voice for their child/youth and family in the planning meeting.
- Work with the family to highlight the importance of individualized planning and the strengths-based approach.
- Assist the family in understanding the roles of the various providers and the importance of the “team” approach.
- Discuss the benefit of natural supports within their family and community.
- Introduce methods for problem solving and developing strategies to address issues that need work.
- Provide support and information to parents/caregivers of Transition Age Youth related to the shift from being the decision maker to being the support to the youth as they become more independent.
- Connecting families to community resources.

## Three Possible Factors that Impact the work you do with Parents and Caregivers

1. Poverty
2. Trauma
3. Parents/Caregivers with Mental Health  
and/or Substance Use Disorders



## Session 1 – Review Questions: Welcome/Overview and Issues that Impact Families

1. What is the role of the Family Support Provider and Community Support Specialist that supports building family resiliency?
2. Family Support Provider
3. Community Support Specialist
4. What are some examples of the key area of focus of the Family Support Provider in supporting the parent/caregiver in building resiliency?
5. What are 3 Factors that impact the work you do with family members and caregivers?



