

OFFICE OF COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

ADMINISTERING THE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES ACT FOR AT-RISK YOUTH AND FAMILIES



Family Support Partners in the High Fidelity Wraparound Process

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High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) is a team driven process for developing and implementing individualized care plans for at-risk youth and families. HFW is grounded in Systems of Care principles and strives to meet the prioritized needs identified by the youth and family, to increase and strengthen the family's natural supports, to improve the family's level of self-efficacy, and to integrate the work of child-serving agencies and service providers. The use of Family Support Partners (FSP) as workforce partners enhances the team's ability to honor the ten guiding principles of HFW (Family Voice and Choice, Team Based, Natural Support, Collaboration and Integration, Community Based, Culturally Competent, Individualized, Strengths Based, Unconditional Care, and Outcome-Based and Cost Responsible).

Family Support Partners (FSP) are an integral part of the HFW process. Because of their lived experience, FSP's are able to deeply engage with families; earning their respect and developing a trusting relationship. The lived experience of FSP's also makes them excellent keepers of information regarding resources and supports in the community; a vital trait for the mission of increasing a family's natural supports. FSP's are formal members of the HFW team, and are equal workforce partners.

The primary role of a FSP is to be sure that the needs of the family are addressed, and to ensure that the family is heard. This is done by partnering with the HFW facilitator (which assists in assuring that the HFW process is successful for the youth and family), and by providing peer support to the family. Peer support is the process by which FSP's provide education, modeling, active listening, and the disclosure of personal experiences. This process empowers families to use their voice to express their needs, strengths, and preferences and assists them in making informed decisions regarding their care plan. Throughout the four phases of HFW (Engagement, Initial Plan Development, Engagement, and Transition), there are distinct skill sets for the FSP as well unique opportunities to align with the family and natural supports; thus supporting the needs of the family, and at times, serving as a bridge between system agencies and the family.

There is a growing body of literature that supports the role of family support when serving at-risk youth and families. A review of this literature by the Center for Health Care Strategies ([Family and Youth Peer Support Literature Review](#)) finds that the use of family support can improve the "self-efficacy and empowerment of families" and has been "associated with improved outcomes such as service initiation and completion; increased knowledge about the youth's condition and relevant services", and improvement in "youth functioning at discharge". The above mentioned review also notes that the use of FSP's is connected to an increase in hopefulness, reduction in stress, improved mental health, increased self-efficacy, and increased engagement in treatment by the parents and caregivers. Parents who receive FSP services report tremendous satisfaction with their experience; stating that their FSP relayed information, connected them to resources, was a good listener and was caring.