Family Partners

Bridges to Families, Supporters of Community

Sponsored by Contra Costa Behavioral Health
Contra Costa Behavioral Health

- The Behavioral Health Division of Contra Costa Health Services combines Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder services into a single system of care.

- The mission of Contra Costa Behavioral Health, in partnership with consumers, families, staff, and community-based agencies, is to provide welcoming, integrated services for mental health, substance abuse, and other needs that promotes wellness, recovery, and resiliency, while respecting the complexity and diversity of the people we serve.
Service Provider Individualized Recovery Intensive Training (SPIRIT)

• In 1994, Contra Costa Behavioral Health, formerly Contra Costa Mental Health or CCMH, designed and implemented a recovery-oriented peer support provider training.
• In 2008, the training was renamed to the Service Provider Individualized Recovery Intensive Training, also known as the SPIRIT program.
• In 2010, SPIRIT became an accredited course.

• In partnership with Contra Costa Community College, the completion of the SPIRIT program has become recognized and highly regarded among local behavioral health service providers and is a requirement for working as a county Peer Provider.
Peer Personnel Grant

- There was a lack of similar preparation and training for Family Partners in the children/adolescent system of care.

- The Peer Personnel Preparation Grant, through OSHPD, allowed for the development of a standardized training program for peers.

- The program aimed to promote the retention and advancement of qualified peer and family staff by adequately preparing staff to work in the mental health system.
Snowball Activity
Family Partner

Family Partners are parents/caregivers who support parents/caregivers.
Family Partners

- Identify with the challenges or the “roller coaster” of emotions that accompany those challenges.
- Support parents and caregivers who sometimes feel alone and do not know where to turn to for help.
- Guide families who need assistance navigating the many avenues of help available to them.
- Serve as a formal team member.
- Empower parents and caregivers to use their voice.
Family Partners are temporary bridges between families, service providers and the system. They help develop the family’s ability to advocate for themselves and navigate the systems.
What Family Partners Do

- Ensure each family is heard and their individual needs are being addressed and met.

- Communicate with and educate agency staff on family voice and choice.

- Gather or support caregivers in gathering information about County and community-based services.

- Work with families who may also have children in hospital and residential placements, Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS), and those involved with Children and Family Services and Juvenile Justice.

- Can engage families more easily because of first-hand experience with Child Welfare, Court, Behavioral Health and other service delivery systems.
Panel Discussion
Questions for the Panel

- What brings you to this work?
- What are key elements for success in the role of a Family Partner?
- What role does culture play in engaging and supporting families?
- How do you pay attention to your own culture and life experiences when working with clients and families?
- How have you worked through cultural challenges or conflicts?