



Part 1: Introduction

Family Peer Support and Advocacy





Presented By:

Geraldine “Jerry” Burton, Parent Partner/Trainer
and Co - Lead CTAC Family Support

Dan Ferris, MPA, Assistant Director of Policy & External
Affairs

McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research
NYU Silver School of Social Work





The TTAC Team

New York Center for Child Development (NYCCD)

- Evelyn Blanck, Director
- Dr. Gilbert Foley, Co-Clinical Director
- Dr. Susan Chinitz, Co-Clinical Director
- Katie Lingras, Psychologist
- Shruthi Deivasigamani, Program Assistant

McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research

- Dr. Andrew Cleek, Executive Officer
- Dan Ferris, Assistant Director, Policy and External Affairs
- Dr. Mary Acri, Senior Research Scientist
- Morgan McGuire, Policy Analyst





Who We Are

- The New York Center for Child Development (NYCCD) is a preschool special education, early intervention, and early childhood mental health agency.
- The McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research at New York University Silver School of Social Work is committed to creating new knowledge about the root causes of poverty, developing evidence-based interventions to address its consequences, and rapidly translating research findings into action.





Technical Assistance and Training

- The McSilver Institute houses the Community and the Managed Care Technical Assistance Centers (CTAC/MCTAC), which offer clinic, business, and system transformation supports statewide to all behavioral healthcare providers.
- NYCCD has a long history of lending its clinical, program, and system-level expertise to informing policy and supporting the field of Early Childhood Mental Health.





Early Childhood Mental Health Network

NYC DOHMH funded initiative through the Mayor's Thrive Initiative established 7 early childhood programs covering all five boroughs and one Training and Technical Assistance Center

- Expand the availability and accessibility of high-quality, specialized mental health services and supports for high-need children birth to 5 and their families
- Build the capacity and competencies of mental health and early care and education professionals to identify and address the social-emotional needs of young children
- Improve the mental health & functioning of children birth to 5





Training and Technical Assistance Center

1. Trainings in EBPs and learning forums on early childhood mental health for:
 - Tier 1: ECTC staff from seven identified agencies
 - Tier 2: Mental health clinicians in other NYC MH clinics
 - Tier 3: Allied early childhood professionals (preference given to EarlyLearn, UPK, Early Intervention staff)
2. Consultation to Clinic Administrators (DC: 0-5; billing, etc.)
3. Evaluation of ECMH Network
4. Consultation and training by Early Childhood Psychiatrist





Family Peer Support – An Overview

What is Family Support?

What do Parent Partners do?

What are Family Support Services?

Principles of Family support

Family Peer Support Programs in NYC





What is Family Peer Support?

- This service provides a structured, strength -based relationship between a credentialed Family Peer Advocate and the parent/caregiver for the benefit of the child/youth.
- The purpose of this service is to support the parent/caregiver and enhance their skills so they can promote positive youth functioning and their child's ability to live successfully in their community.





What is Family Peer Support?

- Family Peer Support Services (FPSS) are an array of services and supports provided to families raising a child or young adult who is experiencing social, emotional, addiction, or behavioral health challenges in their home, school, community and/or placement.
- Family Peer Support Services are provided by a trained and credentialed Family Peer Advocate (FPA) who is uniquely qualified to work with families based on his/her personal experience parenting a child with similar needs and the specialized training they receive. This service can be provided through individual or group or other settings that fits a families needs.





“Family Support means that I am not alone. Others have walked in my shoes, have learned a few things and are able to share that with me and for that I am thankful.”

- A Parent





What are Family Peer Support Services?

1. Outreach and Information
2. Engagement, Bridging and Transition Support
3. Self-Advocacy, Self-Belief and Empowerment
4. Community Connections and Natural Supports
5. Parent Skill Development
6. Promoting Effective Family-Driven Practice





Principles of Family Peer Support CES

- **Is Individualized.** Tailored to the specific needs of parents and families; demonstrates willingness to continuously assess and learn about families' needs, incorporating what is learned into working flexibly with them.
- **Makes Connections.** Facilitates connections to services, agencies, activities, training and other families.
- **Is Respectful and Culturally Competent.** Listens without judgment to families' ideas, preferences, and decisions and acknowledges families' struggles, efforts and successes; accepts and honors differences.





Principles of Family Peer Support

- **Builds Skills.** Creates a safe environment that fosters growth and empowerment; develops competent mental health consumers through training, mentorship and activities.
- **Builds Knowledge.** Provides current information, resources and appropriate interventions to help parents in their own decision-making.
- **Is Engaging.** Invests in parent involvement and actively partners with families.





Principles of Family Peer Support

- **Solution Focused.** Focuses on identifying needs and solutions; bridges successes of the past and options for continued success.
- **Focuses on Outcomes and Success.** Goal oriented, hopeful and encouraging; monitors outcomes in line with what families want.
- **Broadens Horizons.** Expands possibilities for parental involvement at multiple levels and cultivates a community of peer support.
- **Promotes Advocacy.** Informs policymakers and providers as part of a larger advocacy community.





Who Provides Family Support Services?

- A New York State Credentialed Family Peer Advocate (FPA) delivers Family Peer Support Services for families whose children have been involved in many systems including mental health, addiction, special education, juvenile justice, and child welfare. Family Peer Advocates have lived experience as a parent or primary caregiver who has navigated these multiple child serving systems on behalf of their child(ren).





What do Family Peer Advocates do?

- Assist parents while they are “getting up to speed” in learning new skills needed to effectively advocate for their own children
- Often function as a “trusted intermediaries” in whom parents can confide and candidly share fears and worries, particularly in a highly stigmatized and misunderstood area such as childhood mental illness.
- Help build bridges between parents and service providers.





What Family Peer Advocates Bring to the Table?

- Emotional support
- Reduce feelings of isolation
- Provide information to families
- Connect families to other families
- Provide an understanding that others cannot provide
- Work through relationship as someone who has “been there”
- Help build bridges between parents and service providers
- Serve as mentors, empowering parents
- Help develop new skills
- Help families prioritize and plan
- ‘Be’ the voice and ‘Bring’ the voice
- Support family-driven practice



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FPSS and Healthcare Reform

FPSS will contribute value and assist with shared goals in a number of ways:

- FPSS helps coordinate care across systems
- FPSS excels at bridging as children move from one service to another (e.g. home from placement, early childhood to school)
- FPSS knows communities and can help families connect and build natural supports
- FPSS coaches families navigate complex systems
- FPSS helps families communicate with providers, improving satisfaction





“As an Family Peer Advocate I have learned that sharing my experiences as a parent who has been through similar circumstances creates an instant trust with the families I work with. “

- A Family Peer Advocate





Family Peer Support Programs in NYC

Family Peer Advocates work in many settings includes, but not limited to:

- 9 NYCDOHMH Family Resource Centers (FRCS)
- Embedded in OMH programs (HCBS Waiver, RTFs, CR, Hospitals)
- Families on the Move (FOTM)
- Administration for Children's Services
- Child Welfare Organizing Project
- Board of Education
- Community Connections for Youth
- Office of Children and Family Services
- Developmental Disabilities – Parent to Parent
- Substance Use Treatment Programs





Additional Opportunities

Stay tuned for updates and future information on:

- TTAC project website
- Future training opportunities including Family Peer Advocacy and Support

Part II: Credentialing & Resources

January 2017; date and time TBD

Presenters: Susan Burger and Geraldine "Jerry" Burton

Registration information coming soon!





Questions? Thank you!

For more information regarding TTAC or Early Childhood Mental Health:

– General info/inquiries: ttac.info@nyu.edu

- <http://www.nyccd.org>
- <http://www.mcsilver.org>
- <http://www.ctacny.org>

