Lessons from the Field: Creating Smooth Transitions for Youth Peers Experiencing Serious Emotional Disturbances Who are Moving to the Adult Peer Workforce

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DISCLAIMER

This webinar was developed [in part] under contract number HHSS283201200021I/HHS28342003T from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The views, policies and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of SAMHSA or HHS.
Lessons from the Field:

Creating Smooth Transitions for Youth Peers Experiencing Serious Emotional Disturbances who are Moving to the Adult Peer Workforce

Presented by:
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NC High Fidelity Wraparound Training Program
Key Considerations & Learning Objectives

- Who are YSPs?
- Defining the Role
- Organizational Readiness
- Workplace Culture
- Training
- Supervision
Who are Youth Support Partners (YSPs) and Youth/Young Adult Peers?

- YSPs typically fall between the ages of 18-32.
- YSPs have lived experience as a youth/young adult receiving services prior to age 18-21 (depending on the systems navigated).
- Young adults serving in youth peer roles may be new to employment, in general.
- YSPs may also be experiencing major transitions for the first time.
- YSPs are still living their lived experience.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Youth Peer Support Providers Do</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inspire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspire hope that people CAN and DO recover</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
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<td>Walk alongside people on their recovery journeys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce</td>
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<td>Reduce stigma around what it means to have a mental health condition or substance use disorder</td>
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<td>Reinforce</td>
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<td>Reinforce self-advocacy skills and link people to tools and resources</td>
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<td>Support</td>
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<td>Support people in identifying their goals, hopes, and dreams, and creating a roadmap for getting there</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide</td>
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<td>Provide one-on-one support and encouragement to young adults</td>
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<td>Conduct</td>
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<td>Conduct outreach in the community and provide education on youth engagement and identify positive environments and resources</td>
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<td>Advocate</td>
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<td>Advocate for youth voice and the value of lived experience within agencies, communities, and systems</td>
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Questions to Consider

- Is a YSP’s lived experience limited to youth or does it continue into adulthood?
- What kind of lived experience is relatable to the young people you are serving?
- Is the organization ready to invest in professional development?
- What trainings are available to YSPs?
- Are there opportunities for YSPs to engage in state level policy and/or advocacy groups?
- When do you begin planning for a YSP’s transition to another role?
Clarifying Roles/Responsibilities

What are the specific tasks involved in the position?

It is up to the Coach to create a culture on the team to embrace the lived experience role prior to recruiting and hiring.

Define the essential job responsibilities clearly for peer support roles prior to recruiting and hiring.

Establish role clarity for both youth peer staff and their non-peer colleagues.

Understand how the role of peer compliments other critical parts of service delivery.

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Bringing Lived Experience to Family Support

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Why does it matter?

Research has shown that youth peer staff are often unclear on what their own role entails.

Helps to establish boundaries (with clients, with coworkers, work/life balance) through clear role definition.

Role clarification is needed especially when YSPs support a youth and family in partnership with a Family Support Partner.

Helps to prevent burnout/prepare youth peer staff for demands of the job.

YSPs should be recognized as experts and their lived experience should be recognized as an asset.
Organizational Readiness & Workplace Culture

HOW DOES THE YSP FIT INTO THE EXISTING TEAM STRUCTURE?

WHAT DOES COMMUNICATION LOOK LIKE BETWEEN YOUTH PEERS AND OTHER TEAM MEMBERS - CASEWORKERS, THERAPISTS, ETC?

WHEN PEERS NEED TO BUILD SKILLS TO FULFILL RESPONSIBILITIES, IS YOUR ORGANIZATION PREPARED TO SPEND THE TIME/MONEY TO HELP BUILD THESE SKILLS?

DOES ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP TAKE RESPONSIBILITY TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH FOR YSPS?
Beginning with the “end” in mind

- Hiring with intention to elevate that YSP into future positions as they age out of that position
- Creating pathways and opportunities for professional development and growth
- How will you determine lived experience in your recruitment and hiring process?
- Are there written policies/procedures related to recruiting, hiring, and supervising peers?
- Hire multiple peers whenever possible – avoid creating “a cohort of one”
Suggested trainings for YSPs include:

- Motivational Interviewing
- Strategic Sharing
- Trauma-Informed Care
- WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Planning)
- Youth and/or Adult Mental Health First Aid
- System of Care 101
- Child and Family Team Meetings
- Ethics and Boundaries
- Crisis and Safety Planning
- NC Peer Support Specialist (NCCPSS) Certification
Supervision

Best practice says there should be multiple levels of supervision for Youth Support Partners.

Internal supervision with a direct/clinical supervisor.

External peer support with other peer providers.
Self-Care for YSPs

- Self-care is universal; not just for peers
- Plan time off
- Maintain organization
- Create a culture of recovery
Modeling and Supporting Growth

Do For

Do With

Cheer On
ACMH

Preparing Youth Peer Support Specialists for what comes next.

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History of Michigan Youth Peer Support Model

- Family org perspective
- Evolution of Family Driven Youth Guided
- Partnership with MDHHS
- Change agent
- Medicaid service- EPSDT
Michigan YPS Model

Overview of model components

Guiding Tenets
- Non-judgmental support
- Connection through lived experience
- Supporting self-advocacy

Benefits for youth and families

Benefits for agencies, communities and systems
Preparing agencies and YPSSs for temporary role

YPSSs hired by local Community Mental Health agency to provide the YPS Medicaid service

Qualifications for YPS

Organizational Readiness- completed by supervisor

Pre-training questions- completed by YPSS
Supporting Supervisors

- Supervisor Manual
- Orientation
- New Supervisor training and joint event with YPSSs
- Supervisor Round Tables

- Sample job description and interview questions
- Guidance and tools for transition planning
Supporting YPSSs for Transition

- Conversation in initial cohort training
- Support from agency and supervisor
- Support from ACMH as family org
Skill building within YPS Model and Certification

- Peer professionalism
- Communication with supervisor
- Agency culture
- Partnerships
- Self advocacy
- Strategic sharing and boundaries
Key Points and Lessons Learned

• Being clear about time limited role from the beginning
• YPSSs are resilient and in a transition phase in their own lives.
• YPSSs are often planning for what is next for them based on their own interests and goals
• Continued education
• Other roles within the agency
• Other roles with youth and families not related to behavioral health
• Adult peer as possible next step
Preparing for the Journey

- Professional skills
- Knowledge and experience in role
- Lays the groundwork for empowerment
  - Self advocacy
  - Self acceptance
  - Confidence building
  - Owning and celebrating your lived experience!
Contact Information

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• Krissy Dristy- ACMH- Program Manager for YPS and PSP- kdristy@acmh-mi.org
Nothing about us without us.
Questions?
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE INTIMATE DIALOGUE

Join Us For Part Two

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYtfuGtqjooHNessptx1rORSVEy8aPQnhhf

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July 21, 2022 from 1:00-2:00pm ET
* Dive deeper into your questions
* Coordinate your efforts
* Expand your network

Part Two will be via Zoom so you will have the opportunity to interact with the presenters verbally or via chat.