

What is Family Peer Support?

Family Peer Support Services are an array of services and support systems provided to families raising a child or young adults up to age 21 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 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.

"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

Families Together in New York State

Empowering Families.
Coordinating Systems.

📍 737 Madison Avenue, Albany, NY 12208

💻 www.ftnys.org ☎ (518) 432-0333

Establishing a unified voice for families of children and youth with social, emotional, and behavioral health challenges with cross system needs.

Toll-free Information and Referral

☎ (888) 326-8744 ✉ info@ftnys.org

For more information on Family Peer Support Services near you, contact info@ftnys.org.

Families Together in New York State

Family Peer Support
For Families, By Families

Family Peer Support Services

There are six categories of Family Peer Support Services. A Family Peer Support Provider has the capacity to offer all six categories of service based on the individual needs and preferences of the family.

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

"My Family Peer Advocate helped me help my children. She is a parent of a child who has challenges and she understood me in a way only someone who has been there could."

- A Parent

Principles of Family Peer Support Services

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 flexibility with them.

Makes Connections.

Facilitates connections to services, agencies, activities, training and other families.

Respectful and Culturally Competent.

Listens without judgement to families' ideas, preferences, and decisions and acknowledges families' struggles, efforts and successes; accepts and honors differences.

Builds Skills.

Creates a safe environment that fosters growth and empowerment; develops competent mental health consumers through training, mentorship and activities.

Increases Knowledge.

Provides current information, resources and appropriate interventions to help parents in their own decision-making.

Engaging.

Invests in parent involvement and actively partners with families.

Solution Focused.

Focuses on identifying needs and solutions; bridges successes of the past and options for continued success.

Strength-Based.

Moves the focus away from deficits towards building on the strengths and resources of the child and family.

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.

Family-Driven.

Families have a primary decision-making role in the care of their own children, as well as policies and procedures governing care for all children in their community.

Who Provides Family Peer Support Services?

A New York State Credentialed Family Peer Advocate (FPA) delivers Family Peer Supports 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).