



Iowa

Family Peer Support Specialist

Scope of Practice

A. Practice with professionalism and ethics

1. Adhere to ethical limits to confidentiality
2. Comply with mandatory reporting requirements
3. Recognize limitations of FPSS scope of practice
4. Seek the services of nurses, social workers, doctors when needed service is outside FPSS scope
5. Help families understand right to privacy and confidentiality
6. Help families understand consent to release documents
7. Understand the professionalism and culture of employing organization
8. Seek and learn from supervision
9. Model leadership skills
10. Provide services in a culturally aware manner
11. Use person-first language
12. Recognize how personal values, beliefs and biases may affect work
13. Contribute to initial assessments under supervision of social workers, nurses or other agency staff
14. Create and maintain timely and accurate documentation
15. Recognize the warning signs and risks of suicide and be able to access crisis referral sources

B. Engage families

1. Focus on the family, their strengths and preferences, and right to self-determination
2. Demonstrate a willingness to appreciate the values and life experiences of families
3. Utilize lived experience with one's own child and family to empathize, support and connect with the family
4. Strategically share one's own family resilience story
5. Collaborate with families to identify strengths and make the most of them
6. Partner with families to identify and prioritize family needs throughout service
7. Gauge a family's readiness for change and adjust services accordingly
 - a. Help families prioritize/re-prioritize goals
 - b. Help families self-determine and support the choices that they make in an agreed-upon care/case plan
8. Share self-care techniques that have assisted in one's own family recovery
9. Understand physical, cognitive and emotional development of children and youth
10. Understand the grief process and the family's emotional response to a diagnosis
11. Assist families in identifying their own experience and how it has impacted their hopes for the future
12. Introduce recovery oriented activities that assist families in building hope
13. Share personal experiences of the role that hope has played in one's own family experience
14. Practice Trauma-Informed Care
15. Understand the impact of trauma and mental illness of the child and/or parent on the entire family

C. Teach and support families

1. Coach families in skills to advocate for their themselves and their family
2. Teach families how to collaborate with providers in making decisions about their child's care
3. Support the family to implement their goals, assisting in refocusing when necessary
4. Track progress on goals
5. Accompany and/or coach family to fully participate in meetings and appointments
 - a. IEP and 504 meetings
 - b. medical/mental health/PMIC/family therapy appointments
 - c. juvenile court meetings
 - d. family team meetings/wraparound meeting
 - e. human services appointments
6. Model and coach parent-child interactions
7. Model and coach families in problem-solving
8. Assist families to understand the need and plan for youth transition to adulthood
9. Help families navigate the behavioral health system of care
10. Contribute to conflict resolution education
 - a. Help families generate options to get what they want when conflict arises
 - b. Teach the family about grievance procedure options in institutions/agencies

D. Advocate & find resources for families

1. Assert family's key role on all child serving teams or systems
2. Advocate for the family voice within the workplace, with other agencies, providers, and professionals
3. Help families reduce isolation and expand their natural and formal support networks
4. Refer families to appropriate information and services
5. Follow up and monitor outcomes of referrals
6. Network with other FPSS to identify additional resources
7. Identify barriers within the family that impede family functioning (i.e., alcohol and other drug use, incarceration, domestic violence)
8. Know how to research qualifications for state and federal pediatric insurance plans
 - a. Be aware of special services and qualifications of families to access those services
 - b. Provide application assistance as needed
9. Provide guidance in navigating education, healthcare, juvenile justice and child welfare systems
10. Identify techniques and resources that promote good self-care

E. With further training

- Create and facilitate family-to-family support groups
- Conduct informal and formal presentations and in-services for families, health care providers, and others
- Teach parenting skills
- Coach families to advocate for themselves and their families in the community and at state and national levels.

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Iowa Peer & Family Peer Support Training Program

IowaPeerSupportTraining@healthcare.uiowa.edu

www.iowapeersupporttraining.org