

## **Indiana Certified Youth and Young Adult Support Provider (YSP) Program**

The Indiana Certified Youth and Young Adult Support Provider (IN YSP) Program is commissioned by the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration / Division of Mental Health and Addiction (FSSA/DMHA) to provide peer support services to youth and young adults<sup>1</sup> experiencing complex mental health needs with or without co-occurring disorders.

The IN YSP Program will provide young adults the hope, support, skills, and confidence they need to achieve their self-identified goals. Certified Youth and Young Adult Support Partners (YSPs)<sup>2</sup> are trained individuals who have experience living with complex mental health issues, navigating the service systems surrounding mental health, are in recovery and who want to assist their peers.

The YSP's role is to engage young adults and support them as they move through their mental health challenges. YSPs learn about their partner's strengths, needs and priorities. They do not provide any clinical care or give advice. Instead, YSPs listen, respect, support, and mentor young adults as peers. The youth or young adult is in charge. This is a dynamic support that provides hope.

The trust that builds peer support relationships is unique. Each person is an expert in their own experience and appreciated for their knowledge; they are equals. The YSP is attentive to what the young adult wants and provides validation, encouragement and resources. Additionally, the YSP has lived experience which proves that positive change is possible. YSPs are required to take 40+ hours of initial training on a list of essential topics (see list below). The curriculum was designed to match the core competencies of peer support along with education on the unique needs of young adults. IN YSPs practice their profession following the approved Scope of Activities, Code of Ethics, policies and procedures. The YSP will also practice and promote the values and principles of the Indiana Systems of Care and Wraparound.

The YSPs typically provide one-on-one assistance, although they may facilitate groups focused on certain youth-related topics. This one-on-one assistance should occur in person, but could bend to online, phone, or text based on the individual's ideal treatment. Because of the YSP's target audience, drop-in centers may be well-received. The YSP role will be a unique contribution to the mental health system in Indiana because of its flexibility with, recognition of, and focus on transition youth.

The YSP is responsible for knowing community resources and assisting young adults to find and address their self-identified needs. They share many practical tools with young adults, including the Wellness Recovery Action Plan, Psychiatric Advance Directives, and Peer Support Whole Health & Resiliency tool. These tools address holistic wellness: mind, body, and spirit according to each individual. The YSPs have training to mentor young adults on conflict resolution, problem solving, goal setting, and safe relationships. These tools and resources will empower the young adult.

Ultimately, YSPs assist young adults to become effective advocates for themselves by assisting them in navigating an often-complicated services system, and by giving them a real voice to identify and advocate for their goals.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "young adult" and "youth" are used interchangeably throughout the IN YSP documents to describe the individual living with mental health needs between the ages of 16 - 30.

<sup>2</sup> YSPs are typically between the ages of 18 - 30.

## **Youth Support Provider (YSP) Training Topics**

- Role of YSP: Boundaries, Ethics & Scope of Practice
- Youth & Adult Mental Health
- Indiana Systems of Care & Wraparound
- Self-Knowledge & Cultural Competency
- Communication
- Documentation and Time Management
- Advocacy & Empowerment
- Conflict Resolution
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Suicide Prevention
- Motivational Interviewing
- Facilitation of a Support Group
- Substance Use Disorders
- Incorporating Lived Experience
- Justice Systems
- School Systems
- Wellness, Resiliency, Resources & Natural Supports
- Essential Values
- And more...

## **Domains of Competence**

- Ethics
- Confidentiality
- Effecting change
- Communication
- Resiliency
- Identity
- Behavioral health information
- Education information
- Self-care
- Advocacy in and across systems
- Principles of recovery
- Empowerment
- Wellness and natural supports
- Local resource information

## **Benefits of peer support to individual and medical care system**

- Decreased costs to medical system<sup>3</sup>
- Decreased stigma due to mental illness<sup>4</sup>
- Decreased use of emergency rooms and hospitals<sup>5</sup>
- Decreased substance use among persons with co-occurring substance use disorders<sup>6</sup>
- Increase in hopefulness for recovery, sense of community, ability to effect change<sup>7</sup>
- Increase in perceived levels of personal empowerment<sup>8</sup>

**This program has been commissioned by FSSA/DMHA. It has been developed by NAMI Indiana in collaboration with:**

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<sup>3</sup> Bergeson, S. (n.d.) Cost effectiveness of using peer providers. Retrieved from: <http://bit.ly/11bypF7>

<sup>4</sup> Bologna, M.J., & Pulice, R.T. (2011). Evaluation of a peer-run hospital diversion program: A descriptive study. *American Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation*, 14(4): 272-286.

<sup>5</sup> Davidson L., Bellamy C., Guy, K., & Miller R. (2012). Peer support among persons with severe mental illnesses: A review of evidence and experience. *World Psychiatry* 11(2): 123-128.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Rogers, E.S., Teague, G.B. Lichenstein, C., Campbell, J., Lyas, A., Chen, R., & Banks S. (2007). Effects of participation in consumer-operated service programs ... *Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development* 44(6): 785-800.

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