

Family Peer Support Workers

The Power of Shared Experiences



We are the Family Specialist at the UNM Center for Development & Disability

Family & Provider Resource
Specialist:

Assisting families and providers in
navigating systems, education, and
locating resources and services
throughout the state.



OBJECTIVES

- Understand what a CFPSW is
- Understand how family peer support workers help families
- Our roles within the CDD
- How to become a certified family peer support worker

Who We Are and What We Do

Family Specialist – CDD Autism Programs



What Is A Family Peer Support Worker?

We are:

Family members who have first-hand experience in navigating systems and overcoming obstacles to obtain supports and services for our loved ones.

- We have been there, done that. We can relate to the families because we are family members too.
- Our experience allows us to be a buffer and translator between clinicians/providers and the family.
- Trained and certified through state-approved Peer Support curriculum and maintain our certification through on-going trainings and credits.

What we do:

We use *our lived experience* to advocate, navigate, educate, and connect with families as they traverse the world of disabilities.

- We help to locate resources and services based on the needs and location of the family.
- We work with families, therapist, clinicians, and educators to build a network of support.
- We provide guidance and encouragement to families.
- Empower families to make the best choices for *their* needs.
- Create and strengthen relationships within the community.

Video

The Role Of The Family Peer Specialist

Video Credit:

Midwestern Public Health
Training Center

www.iowapeersupporttraining.org



The Peer Support Experience

Benefits and Challenges of Being A Family Specialist



Challenges Faced By Family Specialist

Professional

- Finding resources for families in areas where we've had to fight for our own children.
- Defining our role for each environment we are in (IE. Advocate, emotional support, resource locator)
- Not being able to find the needed resources

Personal

- Keeping boundaries (separation of work and home)
- Remaining Neutral
- Emotionally involved and mentally taxing
- Resist from over-helping
- Reframe from inflicting your personal ideas & opinions

Positive Gains Of Being A CFPSW

- Learning and building skills to help our own families
- Get to meet new families with similar stories
- Networking: learning about different services, providers, and challenges.
- Sense of accomplishment; fulfills need to help and support others and the community
- Continually learning and sharing information



UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION & TEAMWORK

What makes family peer support unique is that family members and the CFPSW are bonded through their experience. Family Peers are role models for advocacy and their experience allows them to be a bridge between the clinical/systematic side and the home. This empowers the family to strengthen their understanding of the systems they must work with to support their loved one and helps to create a better understanding of supports while strengthening relationships and communication skills.

Benefits to being on an interdisciplinary team:

Person/Family centered first

Offer practical, social, and emotional support based on the individuals needs and available resources

Building relationships based on trust and mutual respect rather than expertise

Experience and knowledge of possible barriers to better assist families and providers with navigating systems

Inspiration and encouragement

CFPSWs can be found on case management, IEP, referral, transition, and wraparound teams.



What We Do In The Autism Department

- Answer inquires and assist in locating the needed supports and resources for families and help navigate the often complex systems surrounding an autism diagnosis.
- Work with other in-house departments and clinicians to best support families statewide.
- Network with therapist, physicians, and other organizations to share information.
- Track legislation that affects the community we serve.
- Partner with organizations to provide trainings and education to the autism community.
- Present via conferences and trainings
- Host Webinars series on subjects that affect and advance NM's growing autism population.
- Get Creative! Find new paths and ways to adapt and modify services to better serve our families and work with the families to produce effective and creative solutions.

Becoming A Family Peer Support Worker

Certified Family Peer Support Worker Application:

https://cyfd.org/docs/FamilyPeerSupportWorkerApplication_combined_v1.pdf

Certified Family Peer Support Worker Program Manual:

<https://bhs.nmsu.edu/files/2020/03/CFPSW-Program-Manualwithchecklist.March2020.pdf>

Family Peer Support Services in the Medicaid Behavioral Health Manual – pages 104-106.

<https://www.hsd.state.nm.us/providers/behavioral-health-policy-and-billing-manual/>



New Mexico Credentialing Board for Behavioral Health Professionals, Inc.

Family Peer Support Worker

<http://www.nmcbbhp.org/cfpsw.html>

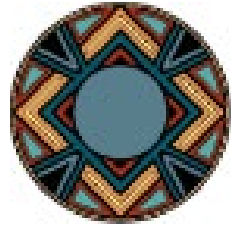
- Family Peer Support Workers must have "lived experience" and experience navigating *child-serving systems. Other specific requirements include:
- Be at least 18 years of age or older
- Have a valid Driver's License
- Have a high school diploma or GED
- Must have been or are a parent or primary caregiver of a child or youth who: has received a mental health diagnosis or developmental disability diagnosis with a co-occurring mental health diagnosis before the age of 18, and has navigated child-serving systems on behalf of their child.
- Ability to manage personal wellbeing
- Must be able to clearly articulate their child's disability and the services utilized
- Other FPSW requirements:
 - Must have familiarity in one or more child-serving system.

*Child serving system include mental health services, special education, juvenile justice, and/or child protective services.

Recertification

Examples of Approved Trainings:

- UNM Autism Programs Imagine Series
- PEER and Family Peer approved courses
- EPICS
- PRO Family Leadership Conference
- Children's Law Institute



New Mexico Credentialing Board for Behavioral Health Professionals, Inc.

- The NMCBBHP handles all recertification applications through an online platform: "Certemy"
- Recertification every two years
- Forty (40) hours of continued education course and training related to YOUR specific credential
 - Six (6) hours must be in professional ethics and responsibilities
 - Six (6) hours must be in Cultural Competency
 - Twenty-eight hours must be related to the child-serving system such as children's mental health, special education, protective services, juvenile justice services, etc.

The Future of Family Peer Support

- Making peer support workers accessible to families:
- First-contact individuals are crucial to sharing information on how to access us (Primary Care Physicians, Therapist, Educators, Social Workers, and MCOs).
- Expanding programs and certification to train more peers in rural areas including reservations & pueblos.
- Increasing number of peers to support families who's first language is not English.
- Keeping the needs of the family at the center.
- Expanding Medicaid service definitions



“Peer support is real and it is happening and it is going to be bigger and bigger as we move into the future, so pay attention”

-Joe Pamphilon, CLEAR Peer Support Project



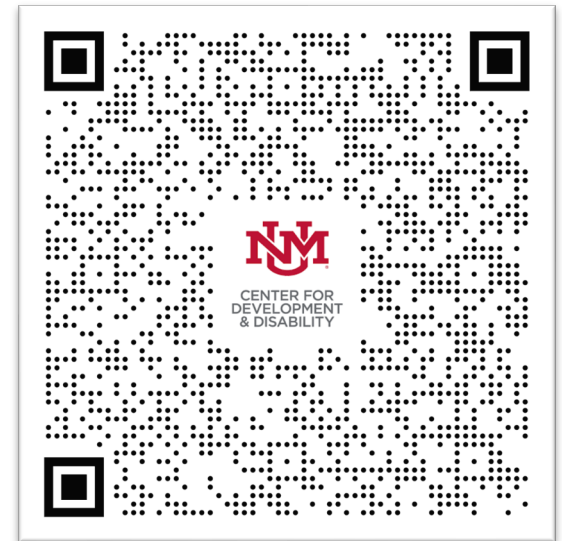
CENTER FOR
DEVELOPMENT
& DISABILITY

Autism Family & Provider Resource Team

(505) 272-1852

Toll-Free 1-800-270-1861

HSC-AutismPrograms@salud.unm.edu





CENTER FOR
DEVELOPMENT
& DISABILITY

Questions?

Autism Programs – Family Specialist