

Youth Peer Support – Group

Service Definition

Youth Peer Support (YPS-G) is a strength-based rehabilitative service provided to youth/young adults that is expected to increase the youth/family's capacity to function within their home, school, and community while promoting recovery. These services are rendered by a CPS-Y (Certified Peer Support – Youth) who is performing the service within the scope of their knowledge, lived-experience, and education. The service exists within a system of care framework and enables timely response to the needs of the youth and all family members across several life domains, incorporating formal and informal supports, and developing realistic intervention strategies that complement the youth/family natural environment.

The services are geared toward promoting self-empowerment of the youth, enhancing community living skills, and developing natural supports through the following interventions:

- a. Through positive relationships with health providers, promoting access and quality services to the youth/young adults and family.
- b. Assisting with identifying other community and individual supports that can be used by the youth/young adult to achieve their goals and objectives; these can include friends, relatives, and/or religious affiliations.
- c. Assisting the youth/young adult and family accessing strength-based behavioral health, social services, educational services and other supports and resources required to assist the family to attain its vision/goals/objectives including
 - i. Helping the youth/young adult identify natural supports that exist for the family; and
 - ii. Working with youth/young adults to access supports which maintain youth in the least restrictive setting possible; and
 - iii. Working with the youth to ensure that they have a choice in life aspects, sustained access to an ownership of their IRP and resources developed.
- d. In partnership with the multi-disciplinary team, working with the provider community to develop responsive and flexible resources that facilitate community-based interventions and supports that correspond with the needs of the youth/young adult and their family.

Interventions are approached from a perspective of lived experience and mutuality, building youth recovery, empowerment, and self-efficacy. Interventions are based upon respect and honest dialogue. The unique mutuality of the service allows the sharing of personal experience including modeling youth recovery, respect, and support that is respectful of the individualized journey of a family's recovery.

Equalized partnership must be established to promote shared decision making while remaining family centered. All aspects of the intervention acknowledge and honor the cultural uniqueness of each family and the many pathways to family recovery.

One of the primary functions of the Youth Peer Support service is to promote family/youth recovery. While the identified youth is the target for services, recovery is approached as a family journey towards self-management and developing the concept of wellness and functioning while actively managing a chronic behavioral health condition, which enable the youth to be supported in wellness within his/her family unit. Youth are supported by the CPS-Y and by participating group members in learning to live life beyond the identified behavioral health condition, focusing on identifying and enhancing their individual strengths as well as the strengths of their family unit as supporters of the youth. As a part of this service intervention, a CPS-Y will articulate points in their own recovery stories that are relevant to

the obstacles faced by the youth/young adult of consumers of behavioral health services and promote personal responsibility for individual recovery as the youth/family define recovery.

The group focuses on building respectful partnerships with youth/young adult members, identifying the needs, and helping the youth/young adult recognize self-efficacy while building partnership between families, communities, and system stakeholders in achieving the desired outcomes. This service provides the training and support necessary to promote engagement and active participation of the youth/young adult in the supports/treatment/recovery planning process for the youth and assistance with the ongoing implementation and reinforcement of skills learned throughout the treatment/support process. YPS is a supportive relationship between a youth/young adult and a CPS-Y that promotes respect, trust, and warmth and empowers the group participants to make choices and decisions to enhance their family recovery.

The following are among the wide range of specific interventions and supports which are expected and allowed in the provision of this service:

- a. Facilitating peer support in and among the participating group youth/young adult members.
- b. Assisting youth/young adults in gaining skills to promote their recovery process (e.g., self-advocacy, developing natural supports, etc.).
- c. Support youth/young adult voice and choice by assisting the family in assuming the lead roles in all multi-disciplinary team meetings.
- d. Listening to the youth/young adults needs and concerns from a peer perspective and offering suggestions for engagement in planning process.
- e. Providing ongoing emotional support, modeling, and mentoring during all phases of the planning services/support planning process.
- f. Promoting and planning for family and youth recovery, resilience, and wellness.
- g. Working with the youth/young adult to identify, articulate and build upon their strengths while addressing their concerns, needs and opportunities.
- h. Helping youth/young adults better understand choices offered by service providers, and assisting with understanding policies, procedures, and regulations that impact the identified youth while living in the community.
- i. Ensuring the engagement and active participation of the family and youth in the planning process and guiding youth/young adult toward taking a pro-active and self-managing role in their treatment.
- j. Assisting the youth/young adult with the acquisition of the skills and knowledge necessary to sustain an awareness of their needs as well as his/her strengths and the development and enhancement of the family's unique problem-solving skills, coping mechanisms, and strategies for the youth's illness/symptom/behavior management.
- k. Assisting the youth/young adult and family participants in coordinating with other youth-serving systems, as needed, to achieve the youth/family goals.
- l. As needed, assisting communicating youth/young adult and family needs to multi-disciplinary team members, while also building the youth/young adult and family skills in self-articulating; needs/desires/preferences for treatment and support with the goal of full family-guided, youth-driven self-management.
- m. Supporting, modeling, and coaching youth/young adult to help with their engagement in all health-related processes.
- n. Coaching youth/young adults in developing systems advocacy skills in order to take a proactive role in their treatment and to obtain information and advocate with all youth-serving systems.

- o. Cultivating the youth/young adult ability to make informed, independent choices including a network for information and support which will include others who have been through similar experiences.
- p. Building the youth/young adult skills, knowledge, and tools related to the identified condition/related symptoms so that the youth/family can assume the role of self-monitoring and self-management; and
- q. Assisting the youth/young adult participants in understanding:
 - i. Various system processes, how these relate to the youth's recovery process, and their valued role (e.g., crisis planning, IRP process).
 - ii. What a behavioral health diagnosis means and what a journey to recovery may look like.
 - iii. The role of services/prescribed medication in diminishing/managing the symptoms of that condition and increasing resilience and functioning in living with that condition.
- r. Empowering the youth/young adult and family on behalf of the recipient; providing information regarding the nature, purpose, and benefits of all services; providing interventions and support; and providing overall support and education to the youth/young adult and family to ensure that they are well equipped to support the youth in service transition/upon discharge and have natural supports and be able to navigate service delivery systems.
- s. Identifying the importance of Self Care, addressing the need to maintain family whole health and wellness in order to ultimately support the youth with a behavioral health condition.
- t. Assisting the participants in self-advocacy promoting family-guided, youth-driven services and interventions.
- u. Drawing upon their own experience, helping the youth/family find and maintain hope as a tool for progress towards recovery; and
- v. Assisting youth and families with identifying goals, representing those goals to the collaborative, multi-disciplinary treatment team, and, together, taking specific steps to achieve those goals.

Admission Criteria

1. YPS is targeted to the youth/young adults who meet the following criteria:
 - a. Individual is 20 or younger; and
 - b. Individual has a substance related condition/challenge and/or mental illness; and two or more of the following:
 - i. Individual and his/her family needs peer-based recovery support for the acquisition of skills needed to engage in and maintain youth/family recovery; or
 - ii. Individual and his/her family need assistance to develop self-advocacy skills to achieve self-management of the youth's behavioral health status; or
 - iii. Individual and his/her family need assistance and support to prepare for a successful youth work/school experience; or
 - iv. Individual and his/her family need peer modeling to increase responsibilities for youth/family recovery.
2. For the purposes of this service, "family" is defined as the person(s) who live with or provide care to the targeted youth, and may include a parent, guardians, other caregiving relatives, and foster caregivers.

Continuing Stay Criteria

1. Individual continues to meet admission criteria; and
2. Progress notes document parent/guardian progress relative to goals which the youth/family identified in the Individualized Recovery Plan, but treatment/recovery goals have not yet been achieved.

Discharge Criteria

1. An adequate continuing recovery plan has been established; and one or more of the following
 - a. Goals of the Individualized Recovery Plan have been substantially met; or
 - b. Individual served/family requests discharge; or
 - c. Transfer to another service/level is more clinically appropriate.

Service Exclusions

1. "Family" or "caregiver" does not include individuals who are employed to care for the member (excepting individuals who are identified as a foster parent).
2. This unique billable service may not be billed for youth who resides in a congregate setting in which the caregivers are paid in a parental role (such as child caring institutions, or any other living environment that is not comprised of family, guardians, or other more permanent caregivers). A short-term exception would be if the youth were preparing for transition back to a single-family unit, the family member is present during the intervention, and the service is directed to supporting the unification/reunification of the youth and his/her identified family/caregiver and takes place in that home and community.
3. General support groups which are made available to the public to promote education and advocacy do not qualify as Parent Peer Support.
4. If there are siblings of the targeted youth for whom a need is specified, this service is not billable unless there is applicability to the targeted youth/family.

Clinical Exclusions

Individuals with the following conditions are excluded from admission unless there is clearly documented evidence of a behavioral health condition overlaying the diagnosis: Developmental Disability, Autism, Neurocognitive Disorder, or Traumatic Brain Injury.

Required Components

1. Individuals participating in the service at any given time must have the opportunity to participate in and make decisions about the person-centered interactions offered by the Certified Peer Specialist(s), while also respecting the group dynamics.
2. The operating agency shall have an organizational plan which articulates the following agency protocols:
 - a. YPS cannot operate in isolation from the rest of the programs/services within the agency or affiliated organization or from other health providers.
 - b. CPS-Ys providing this service are supported through a myriad of agency resources (e.g., Supervisors, internal agency 24/7 crisis resources, external crisis resources, etc.) in responding to youth/family crises.
3. The CPS-Y shall be empowered to convene multidisciplinary team meetings regarding a participating individual's needs and desires as they become known in the group setting.
4. The CPS-Y must be allowed to participate as an equal practitioner partner with all staff in multidisciplinary team meetings.

Staffing Requirements

1. Direct services must be provided by a CPS-Y.
2. Youth Peer Support services are provided in a structured 1:15 CPS to participant ratio.

3. 3. A CPS-Y must receive ongoing and regular supervision by an independently licensed practitioner to include:
 - a. Supervisor's availability to provide backup, support, and/or consultation to the CPS-Y as needed.
 - b. The partnership between the Supervisor and CPS-Y in collaboratively assessing fidelity to the service definition and addressing implementation successes/challenges.
4. When a CPS-P is also providing a service to the parents/guardians of the youth/young adult, these identified CPSs shall coordinate to reinforce various aspects of the youth's IRP.
5. A CPS-Y cannot provide this service to his/her own youth and/or family or to an individual with whom he/she is living.

Clinical Operations

1. CPS-Ys who deliver YPS shall be involved in proactive multi-disciplinary planning to assist the youth/family in managing and/or preventing crisis situations.
2. YPS is goal-oriented and is provided in accordance with the youth's collaborative and comprehensive IRP.

Service Accessibility

1. YPS may be provided at a service site, in the recipient's home, or in any community setting appropriate for providing the services as specified in the recipient's behavioral health recovery plan; via telephone (although 50% must be provided face to face, telephonic contacts are limited to 50%)

Documentation Requirements

1. CPS-Ys must comply with all required documentation expectations set forth in this manual.
2. CPS-Ys must comply with any data collection expectations in support of the program's implementation and evaluation strategy.