



The Alaska Chapter of the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

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Peer Navigators teach, support and empower

- Parents (or permanent caregivers) to understand wellness and recovery management and the system of services in order to be equal partners with professionals in providing for their child's effective neurobehavioral health related services in the least restrictive setting.
- Youth to understand wellness and recovery management and the system of services in order to be equal partners with their family and professionals in putting in place the least restrictive effective neurobehavioral health related services that will lead to their being able to manage their own treatment and recovery.
- Professionals in developing and sustaining an effective consumer-driven system of care for Alaska's children and families.

Alaska Youth and Family Network provides:

- 24 hour access to a Peer Navigator for support
- Education, modeling, preparation and debriefing of advocacy role of parent/youth in meetings related to the needs of the family members
- Weekly support groups for parents or adult family members
- Weekly socialization groups for children while parents are in support group
- Weekly support groups for teens and young adults
- Parenting classes and coaching specialized for parents who have children with behavioral health issues with concurrent children/youth wellness class
- Wellness, recovery management and transitional skills classes for youth
- Leadership training and support for family members in policymaking roles

Peer Navigation services tabulation:

Quarter 1 (July 1-Sept 30 08)	Total Adults served	Anch	Fbx	Northwest Arctic	Mat-Su	Juneau & SE	Other AK
Information and referral	70	38	6	12	4	10	0
Individual Peer Navigation	722 (214)	399 (128)	19 (10)	115 (25)	68 (16)	121 (35)	0
Group Support	123 (34)	109 (28)	0	0	14 (6)	16 (6)	0
# of group sessions	43	28	0	0	7	8	0
Total served	765 (225)	508 (148)	25 (12)	127 (25)	86 (34)	26 (6)	0
Average time in hrs spent w/ind adults	4.9	10.0	1.5	5.8	5.6	5.5	0
Average time in hrs spent w/family	6.9	13.8	2.3	9.2	8.5	9.1	0

Duplicated (unduplicated)

Content of Peer Navigation with parents includes:

1. Listening to what family has experienced, tried, successes and failures
2. Explaining what terms means, where resources are available and how to access them
3. Assisting parents to find and understand behavioral health issues of children
4. Identify the forms that need to be completed and assist parents in including complete answers
5. Allowing the parent to express their grief and changed expectations for their child
6. Pre-teaching and role playing anticipated difficulties with future meetings
7. Coaching parents in positive communication with their children and professionals
8. Attending meetings with family members and the treatment team, IEP/504 team or other meeting the parent requests the presence of a Navigator
9. Debriefing difficult or complex meetings about their children
10. Teaching parenting and wellness recovery
11. Assisting parents to develop a family/community based support system
12. Supporting parents to share information and experiences with other parents

Quarter 1 (July 1- Sept 30 08)	Total Youth served	Anch	Fbx	Northwest Arctic	Mat-Su	Juneau & SE	Other AK
Information and referral							
Individual Peer Navigation	298 (117)	162 (67)	9 (8)	65 (16)	40 (19)	21 (7)	0
Group Support	51 (35)	38 (26)	0	0	13 (9)	0	0
# of group sessions	22	18	0	0	4	0	0
Total served	349 (152)	200 (90)	9 (8)	65 (16)	53 (28)	21 (7)	0
Ave. time in hrs spent w/youth	2.9	3.8	.8	3.4	2.98	5.8	0

Duplicated (unduplicated)

Content of Peer Navigation with youth includes:

1. Listening to what the youth has experienced, tried, successes and failures
2. Explaining what education and treatment terms mean
3. Understanding the role of different professionals and agencies
4. Pre-teaching and role-playing anticipated difficulties with upcoming meetings
5. Coaching youth in positive communication with their parents, friends and professionals
6. Attending meetings with youth and the treatment team, IEP/504 team or other meeting the youth requests the presence of a Navigator

7. Debriefing difficult or complex meetings
8. Assisting youth to address shame, disappointment and anger about behavioral health problems
9. Teaching wellness recovery management
10. Teaching and mentoring transitional living skills
11. Assisting youth to develop a family/community based support system
12. Supporting youth to share information and experiences appropriately with other youth
13. Becoming engaged in positive youth development community activities

July 1, 2007 – June 30 2008	Adults served	Youth served
Information and referral	179	226
Individual Peer Navigation	2066 (432)	352 (168)
Group Support	805 (273)	1210 (152)
# of group sessions	150	120
Total served	3050 (1127)	1788 (503)
Average time in hrs spent w/ind		
Average time in hrs spent w/family		

Duplicated (unduplicated)

Parenting Classes

AYFN teaches parenting classes specifically for parents who have children/youth with behavioral health issues. This quarter, we provided two 7 week classes in Anchorage. Three Peer Navigators were trained electronically to provide classes in Matsu, Juneau and the Northwest Arctic. The quarter's class self-evaluation from 23 parents in the parenting class is as follows:

	Q1
Usefulness of the content class*	5
Satisfaction with presentation*	4.6
Would you recommend the class?*	5
Average # of crises per day with children in past 3 months before class	5-7
# of crises per day with children in during the class	4-5
# of crises per day with children in 3 months following the end of the class	2.5
# of crises per day with children in 6 months following the end of the class	<1

Based on X of Y parents reporting	7 wks	3 mo 25/47	6 mo 52/57	6 + mo 64/104
Usefulness of the content class	5	5	5	5
# of parents who retake the series	n/a	12 %	12%	12%
Average # of crises per day with children in past 3 month	4-5	3.5	<1	<1
My child makes good decisions & behaves responsibly	baseline	15% ↑	31.8% ↑	14.8% ↑
I find myself having fun as a parent	6.1 % ↑	20% ↑	20.8% ↑	6.1% ↑
I find myself really stressed out when dealing with my child	baseline	2 % ↓	22.2% ↓	1.7% ↓

Outcomes of Peer Navigation from families served who had at least one child involved with residential placement:

Ninety two percent (92%) of the families were able to transition their children to home or community based services. Eleven percent (11%) of the families' utilized acute hospitalization to supplement home/community based services. This quarter AYFN served 27 families with 33 children involved with a residential placement and estimated 38 children in the home. For the fiscal year, AYFN served 151 families with 135 children involved with residential placement and an estimated 179 children in the home.

Website

AYFN web site has a calendar of events in Alaska, connection to other agencies, access to Peer Navigators and information about children's health and parenting. AYFN has added a release form on the front page to assist agencies in making referrals. This is the use of the web site:

Month - Year	Average # of hits per day	Total # hits for the month	# of distinct individuals using site
July 2007	1,181	36,628	2,841
August 2007	1,596	47,970	2,440
September 2007	1,890	56,669	2,201
October 2007	1,645	50,994	2,635
November 2007	1,694	40,573	2,475
December 2007	2,025	62,797	2,358
January 2008	2,379	73,777	2,917
February 2008	6,563	190,245	3,049
March 2008	4,317	133,760	4,021
April 2008	3,926	117,798	4,253
May 2008	3,934	122,122	4,316
June 2008	4,937	147,915	2,506
July 2008	2,723	73,796	2,148
August 2008	2,928	92,712	2,519
September 2008	6,395	191,576	2,358

Issues of sustainability of Peer Navigation

Family members contacted by Peer Navigators have not rejected services or the contact even when the family member was initially unaware or unsure what a Peer Navigator does.

Peer Navigators outstationed with some behavioral health center bill Medicaid for some services but this represents less than 20% of the Peer Navigator's time. The balance of the Peer Navigation services are not billable because:

- * There is no open treatment plan at a community behavioral health agency since the child is in residential treatment and the parents need assistance to identify needs, prepare for the child's return to the home and access educational, behavioral health and health services.
- * There is no open treatment plan at a community behavioral health agency since the Peer Navigator is assisting the parents to identify needs and access services
- * The parent needs specialized parenting classes or other services and the child is not available to participate either because of age, current placement in residential, or the child does not receive rehabilitation services through a community behavioral health agency
- * The community behavioral health agency does not have a contract with AYFN and will not use ISA funds to pay for services outside their own agency
- * The family utilizes a private provider of behavioral health services and there is no mechanism to use ISA funds to pay for Peer Navigation services
- * The youth does not qualify for DenaliKid Care, TEFRA or Medicaid based on age/economic status and there is no access to ISA funds to pay for Peer Navigation and transitional services.

Issues raised through Peer Navigation Associated With Residential Care (twelve months)

- Difficulty in getting behavioral and academic goals addressed in schools
 - Parents/youth don't know what to request and give up after plan is not implemented
 - Professionals do not know how or cannot implement goals, especially how learning is affected by behavioral health disorders.
- Parents do not understand the steps needed to transition from one type of service to another or how to access services outpatient and wraparound services
 - Don't know options or don't have time/money to apply for all options
 - Youth won't go to treatment or funding is not available for treatment resulting in the family waiting for a crisis and utilizing emergency services or acute hospitalization/juvenile detention
 - Respite is generally not available, except in the form of acute care or detention
 - Wraparound plan is written but services are often not available or the portion of the services needed are not added to the plan because they are not available

- Residential services tend to isolate the child/youth from the parents and siblings. Family members are not prepared for separation and reunification.
 - Some residential placements have no accommodations for a parent to visit and there is no mechanism for the parent to be reimbursed for lodging, food and ground transportation costs
 - Residential treatment is often a predesigned program rather than a specific treatment plan for the child/youth
 - Education in residential treatment is often not coordinated with the student's prior educational achievements or challenges
 - Non-residential services clinicians or paraprofessionals often have little input in developing or continuing a treatment plan in residential treatment
 - Outpatient services treatment plans are often closed and the child/youth discharged while the child/youth is in residential treatment resulting in very little coordination upon the child/youth discharge from residential treatment.