

Job Title: Youth Peer Support Specialist
Reports To: Operations Coordinator
Program: Moving Forward

Position Summary: The Youth Peer Support Specialist will be an individual who has had direct experience with mental health services and will utilize those experiences to collaborate with, coach and challenge individuals to view their life situations as an opportunity for growth and change within each individual's recovery. The Youth Peer Support Specialist will aid mental health providers and youth/young adults to move toward self-advocacy in the attainment of their own, culturally specific life goals. This will be done using the four tasks of Intentional Peer Support: building connection, helping each other understand how we've come to know what we know, redefining help as a co-learning and growing process, and helping each other move toward what is wanted rather than away from what is not wanted. The Youth Peer Support Specialist will accomplish this through direct support of youth/young adults as a peer mentor relationship, by helping agencies develop services that are youth-guided and serving as a resource to youth/young adults served by each agency through informal meetings at agency-run Wellness or Drop-in Centers.

Organization Description and Expectations: The Youth Peer Support Specialists will be co-located at one of the three partner agencies involved in the Moving Forward Initiative. These agencies are: Tri-County Mental Health Services, Common Ties Mental Health Services, and New Beginnings. While working with these agencies, Youth Peer Support Specialists are expected to:

- Interact with the youth/young adult as a peer by sharing common experiences and modeling resiliency and recovery
- Assist in engaging youth/young adults involved with the welfare system, justice system, education system, and youth and family organizations
- Assist youth/young adults in understanding components of recovery and resiliency and in applying skills to achieve life goals
- Provide individualized direct support to peers according to that person's plan by supporting the individual's choice and building confidence, leading to a greater degree of independence
- Work cooperatively and effectively with individuals and groups from diverse populations

The exact nature of each Youth Peer Support Specialists role will be determined by the needs of individual youth, the needs of the agency to which he or she is assigned, and the venue in which the peer support services are being provided. A Youth Peer Support Specialist can expect to engage in some or all of the following tasks:

1. Peer support to TIP participants as part of the model
 - Interact with youth/young adults as a peer by sharing common experiences and modeling resiliency and recovery.
 - Assist youth and young adults in understanding components of recovery and resiliency and in applying skills to achieve life goals.

- Attend TIP case-based reviews, youth/young adult's case meetings (when asked), other meetings as appropriate/assigned.
 - Provide individualized direct support to peers according to that person's TIP plan by supporting the individual's choice and building confidence.
 - Locate available resources, trainings or skill-building opportunities that will help an individual young person to achieve his/her TIP goals.
2. Assistance to agencies in developing youth-guided approaches to services
- Participate in ongoing program development and enhancement at partner agencies, building on the strengths of youth/young adults and maintaining youth/young adults' connections to the community.
 - Support agency staff in efforts to engage youth/young adults in services.
 - Participate in the development and implementation of workshops/groups to help promote empowerment, advocacy and life skills through agency resources (e.g., at the Wellness Center).
 - Participate in community resource mapping to assist the initiative in the identification of formal and informal community resources as they relate to the transition domains. These resources could be available through the agency or through other organizations, such as Youth MOVE
3. Peer support to any youth/young adult as needed
- Serve as a resource for youth/young adults served by the agencies during scheduled appointments or designated drop-in hours.
 - Interact with youth/young adults as a peer by sharing common experiences and modeling resiliency and recovery.
 - Provide information to youth/young adults about resources, trainings or skill-building opportunities in the community.
 - Provide referral information to youth/young adults interested in the initiative and the TIP model for case management.

The Youth Peer Support Specialist is expected to:

- Participate in all required trainings; expected certification within one year.
- Fill out and submit required paperwork such as contact logs and timesheets
- Communicate promptly and in advance – e.g., Notify supervisor of schedule/changes/cannot attend a scheduled meeting, (e.g., sitting in resource center at 10am and can't make it) or training
 - Youth Peer Support Specialists will be terminated after three unexcused attendance issues, including training
- Provide up-to-date contact information
- Respond promptly to inquiries from agency or Operations Coordinator
- Seek out advice from Operations Coordinator when they have questions
- Report any concerns that arise when working with youth/young adults as specified in mandated reporting training

Education/Qualifications: The Youth Peer Support Specialist will have a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent to be considered for this position. Other qualifications include:

- Identification as having direct experience with mental health services past or present and be able to bring this experience to the Moving Forward Initiative to ensure services, supports, and the TIP process are driven by the youth/young adults
- State of Maine Intentional Peer Support Specialist Certification (CIPSS) preferred
- Provisional CIPSS Certification required within 12 months of hire date
- Understanding of, and ability to apply, the Four Tasks of Intentional Peer Support
- Ability to meet the annual State of Maine requirements to maintain CIPSS Certification
- Access to reliable transportation