Promoting Support from Family, Peers, and Mentors

Module 9 Glossary Terms

Allies: People who provide support by joining and “walking with” a young person.

Community support: Material and resources (including people) that enable young people to pursue and actively engage in community activities of their choice.

Conservator: A person, often a parent, who is appointed by the court to make financial decisions for a person with disabilities after he/she reaches the age of majority.

Family support: The emotional, social, practical, material, and financial assistance provided by parents and other family members to youth with mental health conditions in the transition years. This can include providing a home and facilitating access to community and mental health resources.

Faith community: A community of people who share the same religious beliefs. There are varying levels of commitment and participation in the activities of the faith community. Some faith communities have extensive outreach and social support programs to meet the needs of members and/or the wider community.

Formal mentor: A community member who volunteers and is trained and assigned to provide mentoring and social support to a young person referred to a mentoring program usually because a parent or service provider has assessed him/her as being at risk of adverse outcomes.

Guardianship: A legal process in which the court assigns a parent or other responsible adult to make decisions on behalf of a person who is incapacitated.

Informal mentor: A supportive non-parental adult from a young person’s pre-existing social network, such as a relative, neighbor, coach, or community member (Hurd & Zimmerman, 2014).
**Mentor:** A caring person provides companionship, support and guidance to a young person with goals of developing their skills and character (MENTOR, 2003, cited by Keller).

**Mentoring:** A relationship in which a caring person provides companionship, support and guidance to a young person with goals of developing their skills and character (MENTOR, 2003, cited by Keller, 2007).

**Mutuality:** The process of give and take in some relationships, in which young people receiving support also give support in return.

**Peer support:** Support provided to a young person by a person who has a history of improvement in their mental health.

**Peer support specialist:** A young adult who has had personal experience with the mental health system and who is trained and employed to provide support to youth and other young adults. Job responsibilities range from providing one-on-one support to advocacy at the national level.

**Resilience:** Persistence in the face of adversity (Wolin & Wolin, 1993, cited by Laursen & Birmingham, 2003, p. 241). According to Wolin and Wolin, resilience is characterized by seven individual traits that can be learned and nurtured by supportive adults: insight, independence, relationships, initiative, creativity, humor, and morality.

**Self-actualization:** A term used by Abraham Maslow to represent the capacity to be good, to be fully alive and to find meaning in life which is seen as the highest level of psychological development that can be achieved when all basic and mental needs are fulfilled. Self-actualization can be seen as similar to self-discovery, self-reflection, self-realization and self-exploration.

**Social network:** The people with whom an individual interacts (Gambrill, 2006).

**Social support:** Verbal and/or non-verbal information, advice, tangible help, or action from people a young person has relationships with that has beneficial emotional or behavioral effects (Gottlieb, 1983, cited by Munson et al., 2015).

**Spirituality:** A system of religious beliefs and/or a heightened sense of perception, awareness, performance, or being that heals, connects, or liberates. Spirituality can sustain some young people through adversity and inspire them to make efforts toward recovery. This may be part of belonging to a faith community or the spirituality of experiencing the sense of harmony, balance, centeredness, or serenity in ordinary life.