



Introduction

Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood (PPPA) is an online knowledge translation initiative that was developed to address the need for well-trained service providers to work with youth and young adults in the transition years who have mental health needs. The training integrates the best available practice and research knowledge on how to increase the engagement of transition age youth with serious mental health challenges in services. The training modules are designed to build the capacities of direct service providers, including peer support providers and family support providers who are working with youth and young adults aged 14-29 who have mental health difficulties, and their families. Participants will gain increased awareness of the unique needs of youth and young adults in the transition years, skills to engage with young people, and skills for collaboration with families and across the agencies and systems that young people are involved in. Ten hour-long online training modules were designed in consultation with a national advisory group of young people, family support specialists, cultural experts, service providers, educators, and researchers.



The skill-building trainings are based on a positive youth development and empowerment framework and highlight research findings that can be directly applied to practice. Each module is aligned with one or two core competencies for working with youth and young adults and their families. In line with current best practices for online education, PPPA incorporates: video segments featuring young people with behavioral health service experience, service providers, and family members; interactive exercises; knowledge tests; and, downloadable resources and references. To support the application of this research-based knowledge translation into practice, the accompanying toolkit includes implementation assistance in the form of practice scenarios, video segments with discussion questions, role plays, and questions, based on real-life situations that invite participants to apply their learning to practice in their local context. The identities of the participants and details in their stories have been changed to protect individuals' privacy and to increase the relevance of the scenarios to different types of service providers in different organizational and community contexts.



The Modules

Module 1:

Partnering with Youth and Young Adults

Module 2:

Promoting Recovery

Module 3:

Increasing cultural awareness and building community support for diverse young people with mental health conditions

Module 4:

Increasing resilience and family support for diverse young people with mental health conditions

Module 5:

Promoting cross-cultural and intergenerational relationships with diverse young people with mental health conditions and their families

Module 6:

Providing individualized and developmentally appropriate services

Module 7:

Developing healthy relationships

Module 8:

Planning partnerships with providers of other services and collaborating to bridge service gaps

Module 9:

Promoting support from family, peers, and mentors

Module 10:

Using evidence-supported practices and individualizing interventions



Note to Supervisors and Leaders

For each of the ten modules in the Pathways Transition Training Series, there are module-related discussion questions and accompanying scenarios, and additional video segment discussions, and role plays are provided. These activities are designed to engage service providers in applying the knowledge and principles addressed in each module in their own practice with young people, their families, and communities. As a team leader, we encourage you to print copies of this toolkit for all staff members who are participating in the training and to recommend that staff select the questions or activities that seem to best fit in the local community and agency context. We also encourage you (or whoever will facilitate team discussion) to emphasize that the goal of all these activities is to increase practice skills, not to catch people in poor practice. In order to promote a supportive, strength-oriented learning environment for staff, we recommend that team leaders/supervisors model the same strength-guided and positive development approaches used in the training modules.

Depending on the communities that your organization serves, you may find some of the scenarios and videos linked to each module more applicable than others. For example, some may be more clinical than the program you work in, or they may focus on a youth population that is not served or served only occasionally by your agency. If so, we encourage you to use the discussion questions that best apply to the specific populations you serve.

As the team leader, you may wish to lead the discussion of staff responses to the discussion questions and debriefing sessions. Alternatively, it may be helpful to invite more experienced staff members to volunteer to facilitate discussions. As well as discussing how individual service providers might change their practice as a result of what they learned in each module, you might also invite discussion of how the team might change their approach, too. You may also want to think about ways to work with program administrators and leaders to address ways to improve agency policies and structures.

Although we understand that time is a precious resource for social service providers, we are encouraging participating teams to intentionally set aside about 30 minutes in staff meetings to discuss these activities after completing each module, although there is enough material available for longer discussions if preferred. We realize that not all teams are able to meet regularly face-to-face and if that is the situation in your program, we encourage the use of technology or conference calls for discussion.

