

Family Roles in System of Care Communities

Family Member Readiness*	<p><i>Family member has an INITIATION ROLE when the family member:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeks information</i> • <i>Initiates additional contact</i> 	<p><i>Family member has a SOLUTION-FOCUSED ROLE when the family member:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Commits to address problem</i> • <i>Works on problem</i> • <i>Resolves initial problem</i> 	<p><i>Family member has an EXPANDING INTERESTS ROLE when the family member:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Takes on new problems</i> • <i>Offers to help others</i> • <i>Completes training to help others</i> • <i>Helps others</i> • <i>Impacts local, state, national policy</i>
Area of Involvement	INITIATION ROLE	SOLUTION-FOCUSED ROLE	EXPANDING INTERESTS ROLE
Committee and Workgroup Participation	<p>Make sure you have an interest by learning about the workgroups; Investigate the goals and timeframes for participation; Prepare for each meeting with parent support partner or other involved family members.</p>	<p>Get informed about the purpose so you can determine what your input will be; Attend a meeting before committing; Once you commit to a task or group, follow through with assignments.</p>	<p>Assist other family members with preparation before all meetings; Commit the time needed to participate (nothing worse than no shows at pre-scheduled meetings); LISTEN closely to what others have to say and ask open-ended questions about statements or plans you don't fully understand; Don't spread yourself too thin when taking on committees or workgroups—you can have greater impact if you are passionate about specific parts of the program.</p>

Family Roles in System of Care Communities

*Levels of Readiness taken from Adams, J., Westmoreland, E., Edwards, C., & Adams, S. (2006). The “Keys For Networking”: Targeted Parent Assistance. *Focal Point*, 20(1), 15–18.

Family Roles in System of Care Communities

<i>Area of Involvement</i>	INITIATION ROLE	SOLUTION-FOCUSED ROLE	EXPANDING INTERESTS ROLE
Outreach	Build relationships one-on-one; Seek other families; Build trust to bridge relationships.	Identify needs and strengths of families; Provide connections and resources.	Locate local families to assist and share stories that will engage new families; Provide peer groups to support each other; Impact change relating to families' needs by sharing stories with communities at local, state events; Address legislatures about needs of families.
Service Planning	Seek information regarding the service; Make sure to have time to commit; Obtain training skills and information regarding the goals, etc. so they are informed about the process; See the value of time commitment and own input.	Attend meetings with another more experienced person who will give support during the process; Listen closely to see if others in the group are on the same or near same page as you; Ask questions; Develop strategies to get where you want the plan to go.	Share personal story regarding specific service (in the most positive way possible); Listen and give feedback to others on the committee; Anticipate future needs and strategies.
Social Marketing	Seek information about your audience; Get training on what social marketing is about and how to use it.	Find out what audience wants to know about the subject; Make sure you present in a way so that your audience is receptive to your message.	Use social marketing training to impact policy via personal story telling to engage others and persuade through empathy and understanding of the issues

Family Roles in System of Care Communities

<i>Area of Involvement</i>	INITIATION ROLE	SOLUTION-FOCUSED ROLE	EXPANDING INTERESTS ROLE
Collaborating with Organizations	Learn about all involved partner organizations (i.e., restrictions, how they regard family input); Meet the leaders of those organizations when possible; Learn what need the family organization can meet for the partner organization.	Talk with other family members who use services to gather information; Evaluate how your input will be beneficial to more family-driven systems; Plan to participate in activities where collaboration is essential for overall improvement to families' lives.	Take on a role within agency boards, advisory groups; Become part of the local family organizations and learn how to not only advocate but collaborate regarding services; obtain more intense training through experienced family partners or family organizations that are involved with collaborations.
Working with Education System	Seek information about special education; Learning about the process; Attend your child's IEP (individualized education program) meetings; Seek what the school needs from the family organization, how the family organization can be of service to the school.	Take specific trainings geared to advocating for your own child; Learn mandates of education systems; Access the Federal and State IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) laws; Seek out other supporters such as Legal Aid, PAC or Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities , US Department of Education Websites , Wrightslaw website and trainings.	Prepare for meetings, attend meetings and debrief with other families; Act as peer mentors (Parent Support Provider [PSP] certification); Offer services to other families; Provide peer training on the special education process.

Family Roles in System of Care Communities

<i>Area of Involvement</i>	INITIATION ROLE	SOLUTION-FOCUSED ROLE	EXPANDING INTERESTS ROLE
Peer Support	Learn what you need to know to support your own family; Go with a friend to a meeting as another “ear” to the conversation without interjecting your values/opinions at this stage; Talk with the person and bounce ideas off each other following a meeting.	Attend trainings and events where families gather and conversation is flowing; Be involved within systems so that you can be in position to share with families on a larger scale; Find common ground to make other families feel supported; Create opportunities for family members to have enjoyable conversations via ice breakers and strength-based activities.	Work toward becoming a parent support partner/an organization staff member; continue to stay updated on any changes within the systems; Find someone within the systems who can provide training to families about their mandates for services; Plan a resource meeting or a family forum for families to share.
Training Providers	Assuming you are advocating for a child within your family, make notes about the process you have gone through; Seek help in developing your story; Locate information to better inform professionals about the struggles of your situation.	Partner with providers to deliver training on why and how to work toward family-driven practices; Find one agency that is supportive and plan a small in-service for that group; Expand to others hopefully through recommendations of the first; Inform those you are speaking with that you are a family member (of a child with a behavioral/mental health	Find your strengths and share them; Seek positions on committees, boards, etc.; Look for opportunities to speak at a local or regional event where professionals will be attending; Continue to work with families so that you are not just sharing your voice but the voice of many.

Family Roles in System of Care Communities

<i>Area of Involvement</i>	INITIATION ROLE	SOLUTION-FOCUSED ROLE	EXPANDING INTERESTS ROLE
Training Policymakers	Get informed about how to approach policymakers; Keep data about how the lack of specific services will affect your family (what has helped, what has not); Talk with friends and other families about their experiences.	challenge). Reach out for training through the National Federation of Families , family organizations, etc. regarding approach to legislators; Write out your story and get feedback from the above people who have had experience and success with policymakers.	Speak with policymakers as part of a group; Seek out topics that interest you and submit questions and offer options that you could present to them or discuss.
Policy or Program Development	All planning needs family input and you need to be informed about the planned outcomes for the policy or program; Ask for the ground rules, the time commitment, and get information about why the program or policy is in development; Talk with other parents who may be involved prior to committing.	Be informed about procedures for developing policies by receiving training through organizations that offer those services; Be aware that most programs require family input, and look at other organizations' procedures.	Diplomatically share your experience in these matters; Get input from other families to take back to the policy or program committee—make sure decisions are based on consensus of the group; Make sure you are there for the good of all and not to push your own personal agenda and make that a point when giving input—you are speaking for many families.