

Guiding Principles of Family-Driven Care

Families have accurate and complete information

Educate yourself so you can educate families! Help families ask questions so they can make informed choices. Help the family explore ALL their options for support.

Remove barriers created by stigma

Your willingness to speak out and take on this role is a critical way to combat stigma. Stigma and blame are heavy burdens for families. When you partner with them as a peer, you send a strong message to families and providers.

Celebrate diversity and honor each family's culture

Culture has many dimensions and each family is unique. Be aware of your own bias and alert to stereotypes that can interfere with your ability to form a strong relationship with the caregivers and families you work with.

There are resources to support everyone to adopt family-driven practice

Be an active learner and an active teacher! Help your agency make this a priority by working with leadership to fund training for staff and supervisors. Advocate for family-driven measures to be a part of your staff evaluation and program outcomes.

Continually advance cultural and linguistic responsiveness as your community changes

Stay in touch with your community. Actively reach out and establish relationships with groups in the community that may not be connected with services. Let the families you work with help you build these relationships.

Families and family-run organizations provide direction on funding, policies, and service options.

Connect the families you work with to family-run organizations and support them to serve on committees so that the family perspective shapes policy.

Shared decision making and responsibility

Find creative ways to ensure that the family is a part of any team of people working on their behalf. This means the family is present for all meetings and working together with you and other providers to develop their plan of care. You can play a vital role in helping the family shift from the passive role they might be accustomed to, to a more active role.

Practice changes from provider driven to family driven

As you gain experience, you will begin to see many opportunities to shift practice. Change doesn't have to happen all at once and small changes can add up to a big difference. Be ready to suggest alternatives to business as usual when you see opportunities to empower family voice.

Families have access to peer support

You are a part of helping the system become more family-driven! You bring the passion and perspective that comes from your experience. Outreach will always be a part of your job so that families and service providers understand the importance of peer support and how to access it in your community. Also, you can connect families to one another and grow their peer networks!