

Family Education & Support Caregiver Program

Name of the Topic Area: Session Five – Negotiating Systems

Duration: 60 Minutes

Module learning objectives:

Participants will be able to:

1. Describe elements of becoming educated on and locating services for children.
2. Identify treatment providers in DE.
3. Describe elements of the DCMH / Medicaid Complaint/Appeal Process.
4. Identifying issues related to special education services for children.
5. Describe elements of transitioning to the adult system.
6. Describe a new relaxation technique.

Methodologies:

1. Review “Stress Table.”
2. Sentence completion exercise.
3. “Connecting the Dots...A Guide to finding services for people with disabilities in Delaware”
4. “DCMHS Outpatient Treatment Providers,” “Advocacy Resources and Information,” and “DCMH Client Complaint/Appeal Process” handouts.
5. “Parents can be the key”: A handbook on rights and responsibilities in special education for parents of children with disabilities.”
6. “What happens when my child is turning 18 and still needs services?” “Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health,” “Note about Children in Special Education and/or with Developmental Disabilities,” and “Division of Developmental Disabilities Services” handouts.
7. “Meditation” handout.
8. Sentence completion exercise.

Facilitator’s Actions:

1. Review ground rules.
2. Review stress table.
3. Facilitate members stating one positive thing they did differently during the interim with sentence completion exercise. “What I did differently this week was ____.” This may be related to what each member said they would work on at the end of the previous session.

4. Facilitate discussion about how one can become educated and locating services for children. Refer to the handbook “Connecting the dots... - A guide to finding services for people with disabilities in Delaware” to parents.
5. Facilitate discussion on figuring out how to locating the right mental health / substance abuse services for their children. Refer to the “DCMHS Outpatient Treatment Providers” handout. Let members know that all of the providers listed also accept Medicaid.
6. Facilitate discussion on advocacy and appeal processes. Refer to “Advocacy and Resources Information,” and “DCMH Client Complaint/Appeal Process” handouts.
 - a. Ask if members have had experience in appealing decisions regarding their children’s treatment. Do members have concerns about making complaints or asking for second opinions? Let members know that many families think that their children’s treatment will be jeopardized if they complain. Encourage support among members around this issue.
7. Review “Parents can be the key”: A handbook on rights and responsibilities in special education for parents of children with disabilities.”
 - a. Facilitate discussion on what members’ experiences have been in the education system. Tough spots? Successes? Encourage members to share helpful information based on their experiences.
8. Facilitate discussion on issues related to youth aging out of the child system and transitioning to adult system. Refer to “What happens when my child is turning 18 and still needs services?” “Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health,” “Note about Children in Special Education and/or with Developmental Disabilities,” and “Division of Developmental Disabilities Services” handouts.
 - a. Acknowledge members’ concerns about this process and encourage support among group around this.
9. Review “Meditation” handout and ask members to try this exercise a couple of times prior to the next session.
10. Close session.
 - a. Facilitator leads group in sentence completion exercise, “One thing I learned during today’s group is _____. Before the next meeting, what I will try to do differently is _____”.
 - b. Remind participants they will report to the group what they tried over the week that they learned during today’s group.

Materials:

1. Handbooks and handouts. Paper and pens.