



2009 Budget Talking Points

Family Support Services

The Coalition seeks a new funding stream for Family Support Services. The role of families has reached an unprecedented place of importance in treatment planning, service design and service quality in the children's mental health system of care. Around the state, all child caring systems are making a commitment to increase family involvement in the treatment and care decisions of individual children and within organizations and in public policy decisions. The Coalition member agencies are committed to the development of family friendly treatment cultures that focus on the best interests of the child and family members. We can achieve these goals by including Family Support Services and professional parent advocates throughout our programs and services.

As a result of clinic restructuring and ambulatory care restructuring the rate add-ons that support over \$15 million in community family support services will be lost. We seek your support to ensure that trained, credentialed family support workers are available to each new family of a child who requires mental health services. Trained professional parents can advocate within the agency for service plans, home visitation, education plans and treatment plans that reflect the child and family's desires. By providing strong liaison between the child in residential services and the family, family support workers can enhance the treatment process, help family members to become proficient with the most effective behavior management techniques for their child, and assist in evaluating and negotiating educational options for children upon discharge.

These services support better outcomes for the family, the children, the schools and the communities where children reside. Family Support Services enhance recovery and stabilize families. In the past, the Legislature has added funds for Family Support Services to the OMH budget and to the OMRDD budget. However, with difficult fiscal times, creative thinking is required to address the loss of funding for these important services.

What to ask:

Please tell your Legislator that if they create a children's reinvestment plan, they will be creating a future funding stream for the family support movement in New York State. Without identifying a funding stream to replace the CSP and COPS rate add-ons that will be lost by the end of 2013, the role of families in children's mental health treatment and services will be compromised. Please ask your Legislator to send a letter to Assemblyman Peter Rivera, Chairman of the Assembly Mental Hygiene Committee or Senator Shirley Huntley, Chair of the Senate Mental Health Committee, making clear that this a priority budget request.