

**The District of Columbia Department of Behavioral Health
Certified Peer Specialist-Family Training**

**Parents and Caregivers of Youth with
Emotional, Mental or Behavioral Disorders:**

Help other families!

Get a valuable certification!

Use your life experience!

The DC Department of Behavioral Health (DBH - formerly the Department of Mental Health) is recruiting for a new Family Peer Specialist Certification Training.

Family Peer Specialists are people who have had the experience of raising a child/youth with an emotional, mental or behavioral disorder. They know how to navigate through various systems and advocate for their child. They use that experience and their training to help other families of children/youth with these challenges. Some agencies employ Family Peer Specialists, also called Parent Partners, Family Partners, and so forth.

DBH is offering training to certify Family Peer Specialists. To be eligible for the training, you must:

- Be a parent/caregiver who has cared for a child(ren) who has been diagnosed with an emotional, mental and/or behavioral disorder(s). (If you are not the biological parent or legal caregiver, you must be a significant non-paid caregiver).
- Be a parent/caregiver of a child(ren) who is a current or former consumer of services within the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH).
- Have at least two (2) years of experience navigating the various systems of care for children with serious emotional disorders (SED).
- Be willing to disclose that you are a parent/caregiver of a child(ren) who is a current or former consumer of services within the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH).

To be certified as a Family Peer Specialist, you must:

- Complete a total of 90 hours of classroom instruction. Training will take place at 64 New York Avenue, NW, from 9am – noon on Monday – Friday, from June 2, 2014 to July 11, 2014.
- Complete 80 hours of unpaid practicum experience at an agency that serves youth and families with behavioral health needs. DBH will help you arrange for the practicum.
- Score at least 85% on the certification examination.

A stipend of \$200 will be awarded on successful completion of the training, practicum and examination, which is expected to be in early September.

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The District of Columbia implemented Adult Peer Support as a billable service in the Medicaid State Plan. Beginning June 2014, the District will kick-off training for the Certified Peer Specialist- Family and offer the first cohort of applicants the opportunity to become certified.

Applications for the Certified Peer Specialist-Family are available on the DBH website at <http://dmh.dc.gov/node/297502> and due February 28, 2014. Completed applications can be submitted to the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs, Adrienne Lightfoot at 202-671-0344 adrienne.lightfoot@dc.gov or Vivi Smith at (202) 673-4377 vivi.smith@dc.gov Inquiries specific to the curriculum elements outlined for the Family Track can also be directed to Tricia Mills, System of Care Interagency Coordinator, at 202-671-3060 tricia.mills@dc.gov.

Role of the Certified Peer Specialist-Family:

- Provide Peer to Peer Support
- Support families in their efforts to resiliency and empowerment
 - Assist the family identify natural supports
 - Model effective advocacy
- Knowledge of community resources and resource acquisition
 - Use the lived experience to foster hope
 - Bridge between professional and parent

Family Track Module Elements:

- The District of Columbia's System of Care
- Family Centered, Parent Driven and Youth Guided approaches to practice
 - The Teaming Process within the System of Care
 - Unique Role of the Family Certified Peer Specialist
 - The Family Certified Peer Specialist and Education Advocacy
 - The Family Certified Peer Specialist and the Juvenile Justice System
 - How data can be used to impact the System of Care
 - Understanding Childhood Development