


Peer-to-Peer Parent Support

A THEORY OF CHANGE



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Figure 1. Theory of Change for the Parent Connector Program

Educational Challenge	Parents Need	Needs Addressed Through	Outcomes					
Parents of children w/ED need to be engaged in child's education	Knowledge and skill development in order to:	Trained peers (Parent Connectors) will provide:	Mitigate unhelpful social norms	Increased parent empowerment & self efficacy	Increased parent engagement in child's education	Increased use of I/MI services by child	Improved educational outcomes of child	
1. Parents often feel: • Blame/shame • Isolation • Stigma • Ineffective • Overwhelming strain • Actions to support child may not be approved by others (family, friends, social support network)	Help reduce strain by: • Reducing blame, isolation and stigma • Developing strategies to manage strain • Developing strategies to manage feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of control	Emotional support • Someone to share experiences with to reduce isolation and stigma • Expectations about causes of emotional disorders to lessen perception of blame • Approaches to address stress and strategies for taking care of yourself • A discussion of how social norms may provide barriers or facilitators to appropriate action	•	•	•	•	•	
2. Parents often have low expectations of: Self, child, and family: • School & service system / lack efficacy & control • Benefits associated with action	Examine and adjust: • Expectations, attitudes, and beliefs o Self efficacy o Perceived control • Perceived benefits of action	Promotion of benefits of action & positive expectations INSTRUCTIONAL / SKILLS SUPPORT BY PC SHARING EXPERIENCE • Discuss importance of prioritizing & problem solving skills • Discuss importance of positive attitude toward engagement behavior • Discuss perceived control – You can do it!	•	•	•	•	•	
3. Parents may lack knowledge of: • Parent role in education and effective strategies for supporting their child's learning • Etiology of ED • Nature of service systems and how to engage effectively with school and program personnel	Increase understanding of: • Mental health system • Education system • Role in child's academic achievement • Role in services delivered	ADVOACAY SUPPORT • Discuss how the development of the skills, attitudes, & perceived control lead to desired services & outcomes Informational support • Information about related services available at school • Strategies to increase access to related services (primarily mental health) • Information about how parents can affect their child's academic performance • Strategies to be an effective partner with their child's teacher	•	•	•	•	•	
4. Parents sometimes experience: • Economic risk factors • Environmental risk factors • Stressful events and settings	Better cope with external stressors through: • Link to community resources, supports, & faith based services • Development of skills and strategies to manage external stressors and to engage in problem solving	Informational and instrumental support • Links to Community Resources for basic needs and support (e.g. churches) by giving accurate information and eligibility. Examples: housing, job, basic assistance, transportation, link to case manager • Skills in accessing services: (a) how to identify issues; (b) how to prioritize issues; (c) how to generate possible solutions; (d) how to communicate and negotiate; and (e) how to be persistent, follow-up problem solving	•	•	•	•	•	

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