

Documenting Family Peer Support Services

Family Peer Support (FPSS) is a Child and Family Treatment and Support (CFTSS) service in which Family Peer Advocates (FPA) provide an array of peer support services to parents of children and youth with identified behavioral health needs to help them navigate child-serving systems, participate fully in treatment planning, and hone the skills they need to become empowered, effective advocates for their children.

The basics of documenting FPSS are similar to documenting any service; please review all the other workbooks in this series. There are some key differences that will be highlighted in this workbook.

Treatment Planning for Family Peer Support Services



Because FPSS are provided to the parent* directly (and not the child), FPSS treatment plans include goals and objectives **for the parent**. The FPSS goals and objectives must reference how the work with the parent will benefit the child and support the child to achieve their goals and make progress on the concerns outlined in the LPHA recommendation (a recommendation from a licensed practitioner of the health arts, which is required for services).

The services described in the FPSS treatment plan and progress notes should align with allowable FPSS activities in these broad categories:

- ➔ Engagement, Bridging and Transition Support
- ➔ Self-Advocacy, Self-Efficacy and Empowerment
- ➔ Parent Skill Development
- ➔ Community Connections and Natural Supports

Here is an example of part of an FPSS Treatment Plan:

Goal: *Mr. Hadid will learn strategies to help his son, Aman, cope with his diagnosis of anxiety.*

Objective: *Mr. Hadid will implement a plan developed by Aman’s psychologist for Aman to try out two new coping strategies for two weeks and record how they work to address Aman’s anxiety and reluctance to go to school.*

Services: *FPA will work with Mr. Hadid twice a week for 2 months to support him to implement and adapt the plan as needed and keep track of what is helping/not helping. FPA will support Mr. Hadid to contact Aman’s school to develop a plan to support Aman’s use of strategies in school.*

Note: *The goal is about what Mr. Hadid will do to support Aman. Services describe how FPSS will help Mr. Hadid to support his child.*

**For brevity, we have used the term ‘parent’ to refer to anyone in the primary caregiving role. This could include biological, foster, step and adoptive parents, kinship caregivers, guardians, and others.*

Family Peer Support Services Progress Notes



Reflect the FPA Role and Activities

Progress notes must describe services pertaining to one of the FPSS treatment plan goals/objectives for the parent. Be sure the progress notes reflect how your work with the parent is family-driven, culturally responsive, empowerment-focused, strengths-based, and draws on shared lived experience, when relevant.

Working with the Parent on Behalf of the Child/Youth

In addition to the basic information included in all progress notes (*see What's In and What's Out workbook*), there are some additional requirements for FPSS, including:

- ➔ If there are no formal goals for the child, reference the information about the child's needs as outlined in the LPHA recommendation for FPSS.
- ➔ If the child is receiving other services (e.g. clinical treatment, Psychosocial Rehabilitation), indicate how work with the parent will support the child's attainment of goals in these services.
- ➔ Document the connection between the services provided and the goals in the FPSS treatment plan.
- ➔ Indicate how the work with the parent is intended to impact the child's specific needs as described in the recommendation and/or child's treatment goals.

And, as always....

- ➔ Include information on how the parent was involved and/or reacted to the encounter.
- ➔ Indicate next steps

Example: Rae and Her Son, Noah



During a recent visit with her son Noah's pediatrician, Rae mentioned that she was very concerned about her son's school progress and worried that he was not interested in inviting a friend over or participating in afterschool activities. Noah, age 9, has a diagnosis of ADHD. He started at his current school two years ago when they moved to the area. He loves doing outdoor activities with his parents. However, Rae says they have a lot of conflict at home over homework, electronics use, and other issues. After discussing options, Noah's doctor wrote a recommendation for FPSS and PSR focusing on Noah's need to get involved in peer activities and for Rae to have support navigating school issues and helping Noah socially.

Sample Progress Note:

This was the FPA's first meeting with Rae. The FPA spent time getting to know Rae and together they reviewed the recommendation and identified what they could work on together to help Rae support Noah with his goals. Rae shared that she is frustrated that the "school isn't doing all they can, and the teacher thinks Noah's misbehaving when he is actually having trouble learning and he is lonely." Rae has two priorities: a) helping Noah make friends and b) Noah's need for reading assistance so

he “doesn’t feel like a failure.” We discussed school issues and past services. Rae is not confident that things will change but agreed to call the school together to request a meeting. The FPA offered to attend the meeting and Rae thought that would be helpful so she could learn how the system works to get Noah the services he needs. Rae shared that she did not really know too many people and that was not helping Noah make friends. FPA explained about a support group and how much connecting with other parents could help her feel less isolated and might help her make some connections in the community to support Noah. FPA will meet Rae there next week to introduce her to the facilitator. The PSR provider will be coming by this week to meet Noah. FPA helped Rae think about how to talk with Noah about small steps he could take with help of PSR that he would be comfortable with. Will meet again on Friday 5/1 at 5pm. Rae will pull together school records (based on the list we made) so we can prepare for the meeting. Rae indicated that it was great to be able to talk to someone who understood and could help.

You can see some of the specific elements we discussed in the sample progress note. Let’s review

Elements	Examples
Reference information contained in the LPHA recommendation	<i>After discussing options, Noah’s doctor wrote a recommendation for FPSS and PSR focusing on Noah’s need to get involved in peer activities and for Rae to have support navigating school issues and helping Noah socially</i>
Indicate awareness of other services the child is receiving and their goals	<i>The PSR provider will be coming by this week to meet Noah. FPA helped Rae think about how to talk with Noah about small steps he could take with help of PSR that he would be comfortable with.</i>
Describe FPA services that are consistent with the FPSS goals and objectives for the parent.	<i>This was the FPA’s first meeting with Rae. The FPA spent time getting to know Rae and together they reviewed the recommendation and identified what they could work on together to help Rae support Noah with his goals.</i>
Describe how the work with the parent is expected to help the child.	<p><i>The FPA offered to attend the meeting and Rae thought that would be helpful so she could learn how the system works to get Noah the services he needs.</i></p> <p><i>FPA explained about a support group and how much connecting with other parents could help her feel less isolated and might help her make some connections in the community to support Noah.</i></p>
Include information on how the parent was involved/reacted.	<i>Rae indicated that it was great to be able to talk to someone who understood and could help.</i>

Indicate next steps.

FPA will introduce Rae to the support group, Rae will get all of Noah's records in one place and they will prep for the meeting. Meeting again on Friday 5/1 at 5pm

Practice: Gregory and Sophia and their daughter, Christina



Christina is 16 years old and a sophomore in high school. She is being treated for major depression. She has been participating actively in weekly therapy sessions and sometimes attends a youth peer support group. Her goal is to learn to manage her depression so she can continue to be involved in activities she finds valuable including her part-time job at a restaurant. She goes to a gym regularly and has helped the gym improve their website. She has a couple of good friends who have stuck by her through a rough year. As a young person who identifies as gender non-conforming and because of her learning disabilities, school has been challenging and she recently told her parents she was going to drop out and work full-time. This has caused a lot of tension at home. Some time ago, Christina's therapist recommended FPSS to help Christina's parents better understand her mental health needs and support them to explore educational options.

Progress Note:

The FPA met with Christina's parents, Gregory and Sophia, to talk with them about visits they made to a few alternative schools. Christina agreed to give the GED program a try, but her parents want her to earn a diploma and feel she is "ruining her future and setting a bad example for her younger siblings." They have been supportive of her getting help for her depression and accepting of her gender identity. As first generation immigrants, they feel that education is important. While honoring these feelings, the FPA shared that her own daughter had gotten a GED and later, her associate degree. The FPA also shared some information on community resources for transition age youth. They were also surprised to know that Christina could still be evaluated for a suspected reading disability even at age 16. The FPA and Christina's parents brainstormed ways they can encourage Christina to practice self-care. Christina's parents are going to set aside time each week to talk to Christina. By the end of the meeting, they expressed they were trying to understand how she feels and "perhaps something positive could come out of this." We will meet again on May 18th at 3:30 to see how the family conversations are going and talk about what would be required for an evaluation.

Elements	Examples
Reference information contained in the LPHA recommendation	
Indicate awareness of other services the child is receiving and their goals	

Describe FPA services that are consistent with the FPSS goals and objectives for the parent	
Describe how the work with the parent is expected to help the child	
Include information on how the parent was involved/reacted	
Indicate next steps	

Practice: Alejandro and Claudia and their son, Mateo



A friend referred Alejandro and Claudia to Family Peer Support Services. Their son, Mateo, age 13, has experienced learning challenges since early childhood. He was suspended from school last week for bringing a box cutter to school which he said was to defend himself against bullies. The FPA assisted Mateo’s parents to get a clinic appointment. Therapists there are addressing issues related to traumatic bullying Mateo has kept hidden from his parents to protect them. One of their FPSS Treatment Plan goals is to increase the parents’ understanding of trauma and how they can best support Mateo. There is also a goal to help the parents learn to navigate the school system.

Write a note about a visit from the FPA to discuss their needs for support in terms of supporting Mateo (use your imagination to fill in the details).

Progress Note

Look at Your Own Work



Step 1 Write a progress note for a recent service you provided.

Step 2 Use the checklist for FPSS progress notes to make sure you included all the necessary information.

Step 3 Share your progress note with a supervisor or colleague. Ask this person to review your note and provide you with feedback about the clarity and completeness of your note.

Remember



- Be sure it is clear which of the child’s goals and needs you are addressing through work with the parent.
- Be sure the work you do and your progress notes reflect activities related to FPSS Treatment Plan goals.
- In your progress notes, indicate how the work with the parent will benefit the child.
- Include information on how the parent was involved planning and reacted to the encounter.

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Answer Key



Practice: Gregory and Sophia and their daughter, Christina

Elements	Examples
Reference information contained in the LPHA recommendation	<i>Progress note describes supporting parents with education options and evaluation. References Christina’s goal to manage her mental health and working with parents to support her.</i>
Indicate awareness of other services the child is receiving and their goals	<i>Mentioned Youth Peer Support and clinical mental health services.</i>
Describe FPA services that are consistent with the FPSS goals and objectives for the parent.	<i>FPSS assisting parents to stay engaged, adapt parenting skills, understand their child’s diagnosis, and navigate systems.</i>
Describe how the work with the parent is expected to help the child.	<i>FPA helping the parents support Christina’s mental health by being open to options for how she completes her education in a way that supports her mental health.</i>
Include information on how the parent was involved/reacted.	<i>Parents agreed to visit alternative schools and expressed some optimism.</i>
Indicate next steps.	<i>Parents to engage more with Christina and FPA will provide information on evaluation options.</i>

Practice: Alejandro and Claudia and their son, Mateo Sample Answer

FPA met with Alejandro and Claudia who recently learned that their son Mateo had been bullied and threatened for the past three years. They expressed feeling “angry and helpless.” They also said repeatedly “we should have known” and “what kind of parents wouldn’t know”. FPA acknowledged how powerless they must feel and helped them see how much they had done to support Mateo, including now accepting help in ways that was new for them. FPA asked what they understood about trauma and talked about how some of the behaviors they have seen could be the result of trauma. They had discussed this with Mateo’s therapist, but found it overwhelming. FPS shared some information and links to videos that they can view together and discuss when they are ready. The number one issue for them right now is to figure out how to advocate for Mateo to attend a new school. We set up a meeting Wednesday 4/30 with the Educational Advocacy Center to learn more about Mateo’s rights and options.

Resources



New York State CFTSS Health Record Documentation Guidance

https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/behavioral_health/children/docs/cftss_provider_guide_hlth_rec_doc.pdf

Documentation Best Practices: FPSS Part 1 (2019)

<https://www.ctacny.org/training/documentation-best-practices-family-peer-support-providers-part-1>

Documentation Best Practices: FPSS Part 2 (2019)

<https://www.ctacny.org/training/documentation-best-practices-family-peer-support-providers-part-2>