

What's the Evidence on Family and Youth/ Young Adult Peer Support in Wraparound?

*A TA Tidbit from the
National Wraparound Initiative*



Family peer support

There is no question that families value peer support services and want peer support to be more widely available in Wraparound; however, there are no studies that have specifically examined the impact of family peer support in Wraparound. Outside of Wraparound, there is some evidence that peer support can have positive impacts for parents/caregivers of children with serious mental health challenges, in areas such as improving coping skills; increasing hopefulness; reducing stress; improving mental health and wellness; and increasing social connectedness. Peer support may also increase treatment engagement. This evidence is encouraging but not very strong, and more studies are needed.

For more detail, see NWI's archived review of the research from the Center for Healthcare Strategies at <http://www.nwi.pdx.edu/pdf/Peer-Support-Lit-Review.pdf>

Youth/young adult peer support

Young people are also adamant about wanting peer support for Wraparound; however, as is the case for family peer support, there is no evidence showing the effectiveness of youth/young adult peer support for Wraparound specifically. What is more, the evidence base for youth/young adult peer support in mental

health outside of Wraparound is even sparser than that for family peer support. A single study has examined this issue and found that young people who had access to peer support were more satisfied with their services than young people who did not have access to peer support. The young people who had access to peer support were also more satisfied with their participation in services and the appropriateness of the services received, and they reported better outcomes in some areas of functioning. While these findings are promising, much more research will be needed before there is conclusive evidence that peer support for youth and young adults has a positive impact. There is also some promising evidence of the effectiveness of peer support for youth/young adults in health promotion and education.

For more detail, see Pathways RTC's FAQs on Youth and Young Adult Peer Support at <http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/proj-5-AMP-peer-support-faq.pdf>

For more resources on family and youth/young adult peer support, see the NWI's searchable resource library.

Family support research:

<http://nwi.pdx.edu/publications-and-tools-search/?terms=family+support+research>

Youth support research:

<http://nwi.pdx.edu/publications-and-tools-search/?terms=youth+support+research>