

# Oregon Family Support Network (OFSN) Overview

Governor's Behavioral Health Talent Council

Empowering Families • Strengthening Systems • Inspiring Hope



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# Who We Are

- Peer-run, statewide nonprofit serving all Oregon counties

- Oregon's Family-Run Organization and state chapter of the Federation of Families

- Family Support Specialists (FSS) deliver peer support for parents/caregivers navigating behavioral health and complex systems



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# What We Do

- Develop and sustain the FSS workforce through THW certification and continuing education

- Provide monthly and individual coaching aligned with 43 core competencies

- Deliver co-supervision in clinical settings to support integration of peer practice

- Offer specialized training for environments such as Wraparound, IIBHT, Forensics, and Child Welfare



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# Unique Challenges in Recruiting & Retention

- Requires lived/living experience as a parent/caregiver of a child involved in multiple systems

- Work in child and family serving systems looks different from adult serving systems

- Impacts of trauma, vicarious stress, and system complexity

- Role drift and underutilization of the peer role

- Families' needs demand critical thinking, relational awareness, and cultural responsiveness



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# What Works to Recruit & Retain FSS

- ▶ • Flexibility in work environment honoring lived/living experience
- ▶ • Supervisors who understand and value FSS workforce competencies
- ▶ • Healing-centered environments and peer-informed teams
- ▶ • Hiring a workforce that mirrors the communities served
- ▶ • Systems responsive to family and community needs



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# Innovative Practices

## Multiple workforce access points

- ▶ Key Components:
  - ▶ a. FSS providers available at all acuity levels
  - ▶ b. FSS providers engaged and accessible in community
  - ▶ c. FSS providers that mirror, speak the language and are members of historically marginalized communities
  - ▶ d. Utilization of the statewide Parent Warmline (Reach Out Oregon) as a no barrier access into behavioral health



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# Innovative Practices

**Nationally licensed through FREDLA to provide peer supervision training for clinical providers**

- ▶ Key Components:
  - ▶ a. Supervision as a developmental process
  - ▶ b. Creating a supportive and productive workplace environment
  - ▶ c. Supervision strategies - basics and tools for use in supervision in three core areas (family work, performance, and professional growth)



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# Innovative Practices

**Workforce endorsements for environments such as crisis response, child welfare, and forensics**

- ▶ Key Components:
  - ▶ a. Specialized training for FSS providers to embed competencies in specialized environments
  - ▶ b. FSS provider practical/practice training and ongoing coaching
  - ▶ c. Expansion of lived experience across multiple systems and not duplicating workforce overlap



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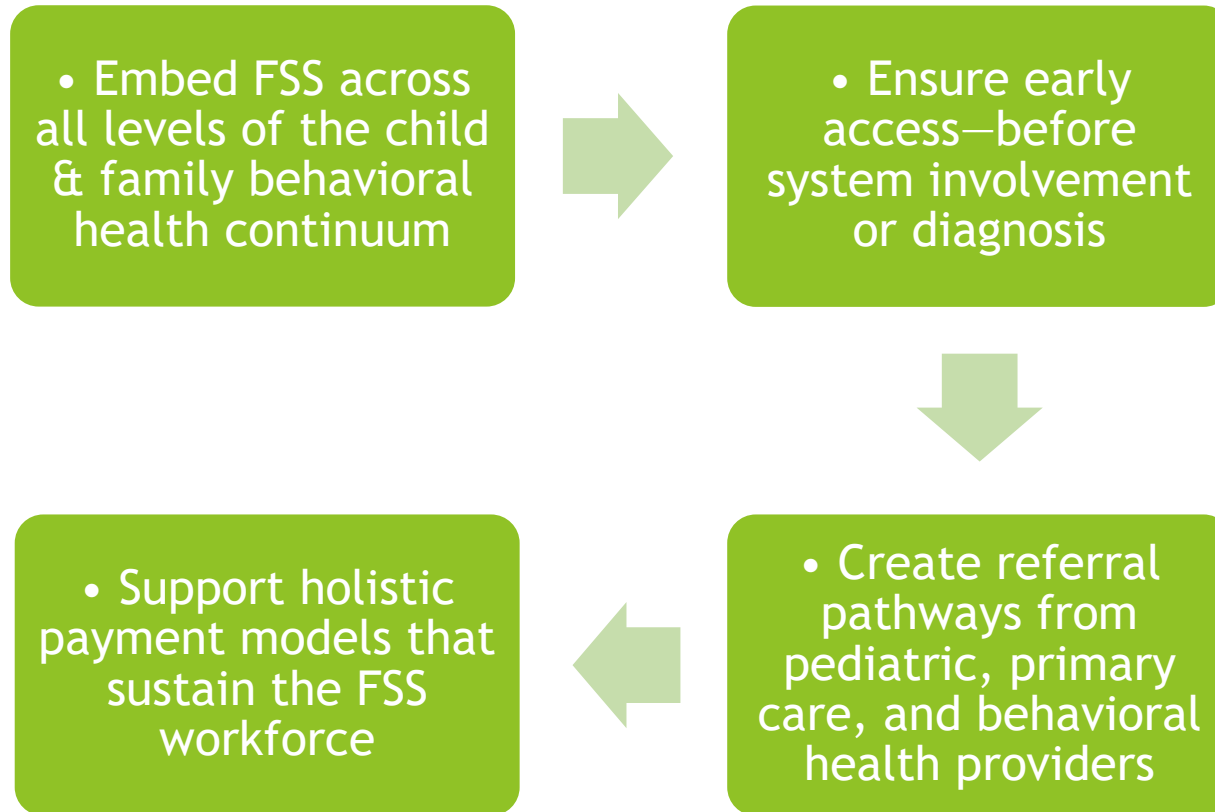
# What We've Learned

- ▶ Employing FSS through family-run organizations yields the best outcomes
- ▶ Payment models for peer-delivered services vary in effectiveness
- ▶ Evidence shows FSS reduce recidivism, increase engagement, and strengthen family-driven care
- ▶ FSS complement—not replace—behavioral health professionals
- ▶ Ongoing professional development is essential to sustaining the workforce
- ▶ Family Support Specialists are required to have lived experience, but that doesn't preclude them from other credentials

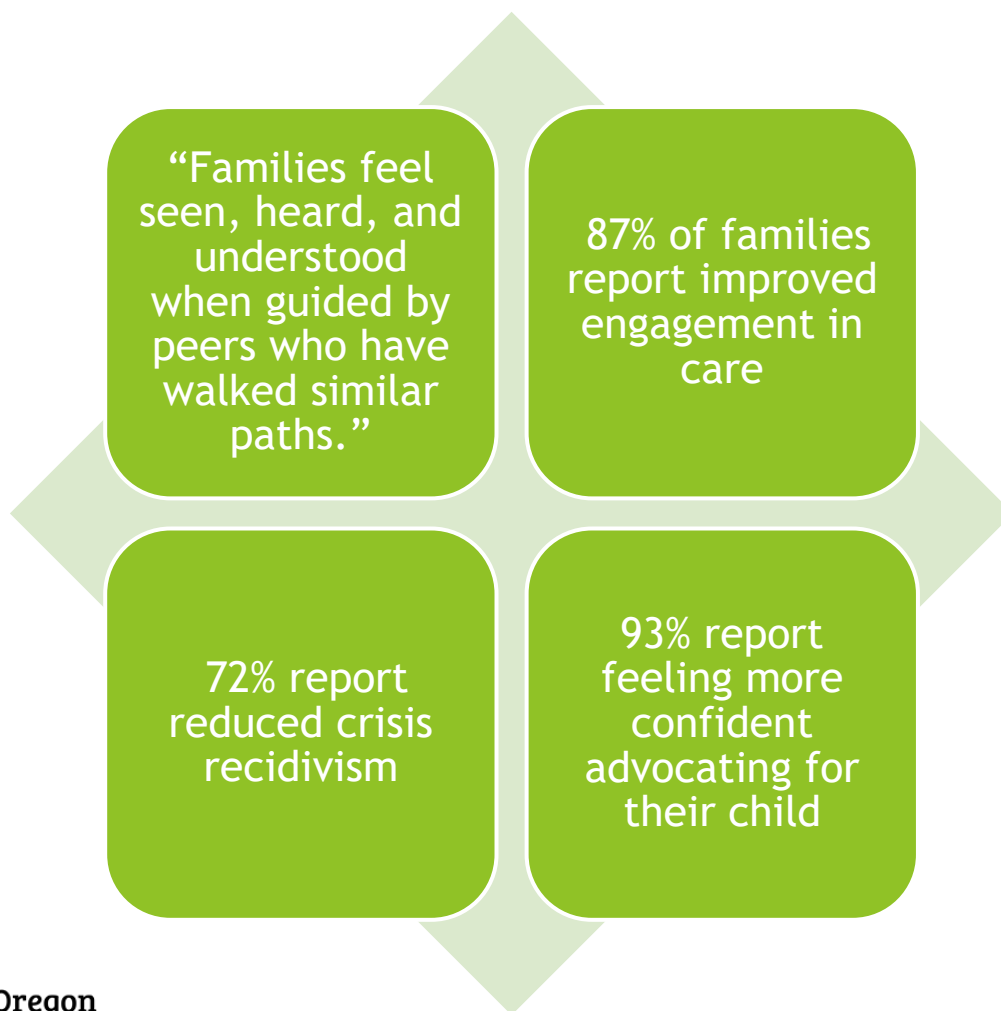


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# Policy Recommendations



# The Human Impact



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# ***Resources and Citations***

*“Family Peer Support Services: Broadening the View”* **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration SAMHSA**

Family Peer Worker Perspectives on the Critical Issues for Family Peer Support in Youth Mental Health Settings, **National Library of Medicine, June 19, 2025**

Youth Crisis and Transition Services (CATS): Incorporating Family Peer Support Specialists to Assist Families During Crisis, **Journal of Family Strengths**

**National Federation of Families (NFF)** [www.ffcmh.org](http://www.ffcmh.org)

- ▶ Together, we can strengthen Oregon's behavioral health system through peer partnership.
- ▶ Thank you for your commitment to Oregon families.
- ▶ #EveryFamilyHeard | #OregonFamilySupportNetwork

# Questions?



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