

September 16, 2014

To: Senate Task Force on DCYF and the Family Care Networks

From: Lisa Conlan, Interim Director Parent Support Network of Rhode Island

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this Senate Taskforce and I have been able to review the Governor's Resource Report and hearing proceedings on August 18<sup>th</sup> and September 2<sup>nd</sup>. I have been involved in building systems of care in Rhode Island and Nationally since 1991 and have substantial history and involvement as a parent receiving services, advocate, Past Executive Director and current Interim Director of the Parent Support Network of Rhode Island, and as a consultant in building systems of care for children and youth and their families at risk and who are formally involved with children's behavioral health, juvenile justice, and child welfare service delivery systems.

Parent Support Network of Rhode Island (PSN) has been a contracted vendor with DCYF since 1991 and has contractual responsibilities to serve as a statewide family run organization providing direct parent peer support, information and referral, family support services including individual and group parent education opportunities, and ongoing family and youth leadership development to provide input and serve in advisory and partnership capacities with the state system of care governance and quality assurance boards. We have been strong advocates in regards to promoting effective and best practices in system of care such as high fidelity wraparound and movement to decrease length of stay in residential treatment and increased capacity for effective home and community based services and supports. Currently PSN is contracted by DCYF and with the Ocean State Network to provide Family Support Partner services. Family Support Partner services have been demonstrated in the Phase I system of care to increase outcomes in the areas of:

**Table 16: Median and Average Length of Time in FCCP by FSP**

	<b>FSP (N=93)</b>	<b>No FSP (N=568)</b>
<b>Median</b>	126.0	56.0
<b>Average</b>	150.6	101.4

Data Source: RIFIS. Data based on families closed to FCCP during January 1 to June 30, 2013.

**Table 17: Top 10 FCCP close reasons by FSP, CY13 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarters**

<b>FCCP Close Reason</b>	<b>FSP (N=93)</b>	<b>No FSP (N=568)</b>
<b>Team agrees Wrap goals were met</b>	58.7%	34.8%
<b>Unable to contact family</b>	10.9%	19.7%
<b>Team agrees Wrap goals were not met</b>	9.8%	5.7%
<b>Other</b>	5.4%	8.1%
<b>Family moved out of area</b>	4.3%	3.5%
<b>Target child opened to DCYF and removed in home</b>	2.2%	2.3%
<b>Family declined service</b>	2.2%	12.0%
<b>Target child opened to DCYF and remained in home</b>	2.2%	3.9%
<b>Change in target child</b>	1.1%	0.2%
<b>Transfer target child to another FCCP</b>	1.1%	1.1%

Data Source: RIFIS. Data based on families closed to FCCP during January 1 to June 30, 2013.

Peer Support is recognized as a national effective practice in empowering and mentoring parents/family caregivers in their self-efficacy or abilities to become confident in their parenting and caring for their child or youth to be safe, healthy, and well in home, school, and community. PSN Family Support Partners work in partnership with the parent/caregiver, assigned DCYF worker or probation, Network Care Coordinators (NCC), and the identified child and family team members. We work to build trust and engagement between the parent and team members and we work directly with the family to ensure their needs and voice is heard in the process and helping to provide direct parent education, transportation, support with educational meetings, medical and clinical appointments, treatment meetings, and family court. Since the start of the Networks PSN Family Support Partners has served over 70 parents and their children or youth formally involved DCYF involvement protective, voluntary, and probation. PSN Family Support Partners work with our partners to outreach and engage families with intensive needs and challenges and that our partners have had a hard time building communication and follow through with. Two measures for tracking the outcomes of our services that PSN has put place as of July 1, 2014 is for Family Support Partners to conduct a Family Empowerment Scale survey and Protective Capacity Checklist. This is completed upon initial engagement with the parent/caregiver and then every six months repeatedly until discharge. Information gained shapes individualized approach with the parent/caregiver and change in parent perception in their empowerment and protective capacities.

**Key Consideration Points for Going Forward:**

- Please continue to seek the input of parents, caregivers, and youth who are formally involved with the Networks on their success and challenges in accessing and receiving services and supports. PSN can be helpful in this area.
- PSN has worked with a high number of voluntary placements in the system due to not being able to access the level of home and community based services in a timely manner through their health insurance providers, CEDARR (EPSDT Medicaid Program-EOHHS/DHS), and the Family

Care Community Partnership funded by DCYF. There are also a very a high number of youth placed due to truancy or attendance concerns.

- High level of trauma experienced by the parents and their children and youth due to domestic violence, sexual abuse, sex trafficking, drug use, and gang involvement. Need for increased community based and effective trauma informed treatment services that will engage parents and youth to heal and change their behavior in these areas that put children and youth risk of being safe and well.
- DCYF should continue to pursue high fidelity wraparound and individualized care planning that ensures family and youth engagement and involved decision-making process.
- Increased access and focus on developing and implementing home and community based services that are effective and produce quality driven outcomes. There needs to be a responsive mobile crisis service that can be utilized by parents/caregivers 24/7.
- PSN Family Support Partners can be extremely helpful within Networks and outside the networks and need to be connected to parents/caregivers as early as possible. PSN will continue to advocate that these positions receive parent referrals assigned by DCYF workers at the same time a parent/caregiver and their youth is assigned to a network.
- PSN values our partnership with the Ocean State Network and we have been able to bring family voice, informed decision making, and peer support services as an added benefit to the wraparound process and we have found it extremely beneficial to work in partnership with clinical supervisors and network care coordinators within the Network.
- PSN has found it challenging to contract with the Ocean State Network based on taking ongoing budget cuts after year one, getting down to month to month contracting in year 2, to even having our contract terminated with 30 day notice. DCYF recognized the importance of our work and kept our funding going so that we would not disrupt our services with the families being served. PSN was able to re-establish our contract with the Ocean State Network as of September 1<sup>st</sup> and is providing direct service to at least 60 parents in addition to 60 parents that DCYF continues to pay directly for us to serve within the Ocean State Network.



06/13/14

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Betsy, and I have a 17 year old daughter that has had problems since she was 3 ½ years old. It's been along ride all these years. I have worked with Newport County Mental Health, Northeast Behavioral, Tides, DCYF, Ocean State Network and many more over the years. Most of the people I dealt with were none parents and never had to deal with child that had psychological problems or Sexual Abuse. It's a whole different story when it's your own child. So, when Ocean State Network came to me and said there was another program that she wants to implement. I was reluctant and said here we go again with another agency. OSN worker asked me to just meet her and give her a chance. I was still reluctant. The Program that OSN wanted to implement was Parent Support Partnership. They explained to me that she and other were parents; they had been through some of the same things that I had been through. It was amazing surprise that they were finally giving me someone that would understand. Listen don't get me wrong I was dealing with a lot of people that were single and no kids; so how were they supposed to understand what my daughter and I were going through. I'm sorry but it doesn't matter how much schooling you have or how much experience you have; you are not going to completely understand until you have been in our shoes. So, when I started working with the Parent Support Partnership it was definitely different. To have someone that understand because they have been through it. Wow big surprise! After all I have been through and now they were giving me someone that could relate to me and I could relate to. Listen, anyone that know me; knows that I'm not very trusting, that I have trouble letting people in or even close, and that all these years have made me very negative. You to I would hope understands but the chances are unlikely. Parent Support Partnership does understand, they do try to instill hope, caring, even better they support you like there supposed to do, and help you to express yourself without flipping out (Anger/language). If you knew my history there is not much for me to be hopeful for, but PSP still tries to instill hope. I have no problem standing up for my daughter's right, but it's hard for me to not lose my temper, swear, and fly off the handle. Especially when it comes to my daughter! If you want to know something; this is a program that should have been implemented a long time ago. If it wasn't for my PSP worker it would be hard for me to control my temper and my patience. See I'm dealing with a placement that doesn't listen, doesn't treat there clients like there supposed to, and ONLY house the kids. So this is why it's hard for me to keep complete control. After the last situation that happened recently; I was down and depressed. If it wasn't for DCYF, Ocean State Network and Parent Support Partnership I would have felt all alone and completely isolated me. This Program should be kept and reinforce, because this program will help people like me. Let this program flourish and grow; you wont be sorry.

I want to give Linda and Kim the credit they deserve. They try keeping me positive and keeping me move forward; even when it was hard for me. So, thank you to



Linda and Kim! Oh, and by the way I have trouble getting my words on paper and/or expressing myself. This is Big for me and I don't usually write my feeling down let alone express it to a stranger. THIS PROGRAM IS AMAZING!!!

Sincerely,  
Betsy

