June 2025

Family Focus

Here for Every Family: Celebrating Pride and the Power of Support

This Pride Month, we celebrate the love, resilience, and diversity of LGBTQIA+ families. If someone in your family is facing behavioral health challenges, it's essential to have care that is inclusive, compassionate, and nonjudgmental.

With Family Peer Support, you can connect with someone who truly understands, because they've been there too. We're here to help you navigate services and support your family every step of the way.

If you've been following along on social media, you know we've been highlighting various LGBTQIA+ resources for families across Maryland. Be sure to check them out here!

GLSEN Maryland

PFLAG Maryland

FreeState Justice

MCF Support

Men's Mental Health Month: Supporting the Men Who Support Their Families

This month, we honor the dads, sons, brothers, husbands, uncles, and grandfathers who stand by their loved ones facing behavioral health challenges. Whether you're a caregiver, advocate, or simply doing your best each day, you're not alone. We're here to support you and your

family, because your well-being matters too.

Looking for support? Request services below.

Request Services Now

Honoring Juneteenth: Reflecting on Freedom and Mental Health

Juneteenth is a time to celebrate freedom, resilience, and the ongoing fight for equality. For many in Black and African American communities, this day also highlights the need for healing, as the effects of historical trauma continue to impact mental health.

This Juneteenth, we acknowledge the importance of culturally sensitive mental health support, especially for families navigating generational trauma. Family peer support and community care are key to healing, and we encourage everyone to prioritize their mental well-being and seek support when needed.

Let's honor this day by working together toward a future where mental health care is accessible, inclusive, and empowering for all!

Exciting News for Maryland Families: Expanded Behavioral Health Services for Children and Youth

We're thrilled to share that Maryland has received approval from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to expand its behavioral health and community-based services for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances. This new approval strengthens Maryland's commitment to providing better access to care for families in need.

These changes will make it easier for families across the state to access critical services, including family and peer support, home-based care, and intensive in-home services. The Maryland Department of Health, in collaboration with providers and stakeholders, will roll out these updates over the next year.

Key Updates:

- Youth Peer Support: Young people with lived experience will now help support

peers facing similar challenges.
- Simplified Access: Easier assessments for services and less paperwork, reducing barriers to care.
- Increased Provider Capacity: The changes will allow providers to serve more children, ensuring faster access to services.

This expansion aims to provide more equitable, community-based care, reducing reliance on institutionalization and offering children the chance to receive care in a supportive, familiar environment.

The Maryland Department of Health is working closely with families to ensure that these updates reflect the needs of children and their families, making the care system more responsive and accessible.

Check out the website below for more information!

Maryland.gov

Mental Health Moments in the Sun: Tips from Our Family Peer Support Team

Summer brings longer days and a natural invitation to step outside, making it the perfect time to weave simple mental health practices into daily family life. "Mental Health Moments in the Sun" is about using nature as a calming, restorative space for both adults and children.

One easy activity is a "5 Senses Walk" - take a short stroll together and pause to notice one thing you can see, hear, smell, touch, and (safely) taste. This grounding practice can help reduce anxiety and increase presence, especially for kids who might feel dysregulated by the shift in summer routines. These walks don't have to be long or structured, just stepping outside for 10 minutes can reset the tone of a tough day.

Another meaningful practice is holding a "Gratitude Picnic." Pick a spot outside, a backyard, local park, or even a sunny spot on the porch, and take turns sharing things each person is grateful for. Bring along favorite snacks, a blanket, and maybe even some calming music. Gratitude is linked to better mental health outcomes, and doing this in a relaxed, sunny setting makes it both fun and restorative. Encouraging family members to reflect on what's going well, even in small ways, fosters resilience and emotional connection. These kinds of low-pressure moments support the whole family's well-being while creating lasting positive memories.

Get Connected! Stay Informed!

Online and In Person Support Groups

Workshops, Trainings & Other Events

MCF offers many support groups to provide a safe space for you to learn, share and receive compassionate help. All are facilitated by trained Family Peer Support Specialists who have dealt with similar challenges in their own families. Groups are free for all participants and are held on different days of the week and different times of day. Find one or more that can work for you and join us soon!

Find a Support Group

MCF offers a wide range of events, trainings and workshops for families who have a loved one with mental health, substance use or problem gambling challenges. Events are held in communities across the state or virtually and are offered at no cost to participants. Visit our website to learn more!

Past and Upcoming Events

MCF
maryland coalition of families

www.mdcoalition.org

Donate