



MCF
maryland coalition of families

Family Focus

Happy New Year from Maryland Coalition of Families!

As we step into 2025, we are filled with excitement and hope for the opportunities ahead. This year, we remain dedicated to supporting caregivers across Maryland who provide love and care to someone facing mental health, substance use, or problem gambling challenges.



Our team of experienced caregivers offers guidance, understanding, and advocacy to support families. Whether through one-on-one emotional support, connecting you with resources, or navigating the behavioral health system, we are honored to be part of your journey.

Together, we can create a year full of connection, growth, and empowerment for caregivers and their families. If your family or someone you know could benefit from our services, please don't hesitate to reach out. Our services are available at **no cost** to any caregiver in Maryland with a loved one facing behavioral health challenges.

Thank you for allowing us to walk alongside you. Wishing you a joyful and meaningful start to 2025!

[Request Services Now](#)

Building a Roadmap for Maryland's Children's Behavioral Health

We're excited to share an update on our recent



collaboration with Manatt Health! Together, we've been working on a comprehensive project to assess Maryland's current landscape for children's behavioral health and substance use services. This includes evaluating the workforce, providers, services, legislation, and funding within the context of the Behavioral Health Continuum of Care and the latest evidence-based practices.

Our work has also focused on identifying key gaps in services—such as crisis response and stabilization, respite care, targeted case management (TCM), emergency department overstay, inpatient substance use disorder (IP SUD) treatment, and legislative needs—and providing actionable recommendations to address these challenges. These recommendations consider service availability, workforce capacity, Medicaid reimbursement options, funding methodologies, and opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.

We're proud of the progress made and are eager to release the finished roadmap soon. Stay tuned for this vital resource, which will help guide efforts to create a stronger, more effective system of care for Maryland's children and families!



We are pleased to announce the speakers for our 2025 Family Day in Annapolis!



Dawn Moore
First Lady of Maryland
Keynote Speaker



Alyssa S. Lord
Deputy Secretary
for Behavioral Health
Maryland Dept. of Health



Jonathan Davis
Executive Director
Baltimore Crisis
Response, Inc.

**Thank you to those who have registered.
We look forward to seeing you on January 30th!**

It's Not too Late to Sponsor a Family or Youth for Family Day in Annapolis

MCF's annual Family Day in Annapolis is a powerful day of action and advocacy for individuals who love someone facing a behavioral health challenge. This event gives families and young people the opportunity to engage directly with lawmakers, share their stories, and advocate for meaningful change in their communities. It's an empowering experience that helps raise awareness and drive positive policy outcomes.



Your sponsorship makes a significant impact by allowing a family or youth to attend and take part in this important day. **For \$100, you can sponsor a family, and for \$50, you can sponsor a youth, ensuring they have the chance to be a part of this transformative event.**

Please consider sponsoring a family or youth to attend Family Day in Annapolis on **January 30, 2025**. Your support helps create a platform for families to advocate for themselves and others, fostering long-term change in the behavioral health landscape.

[Become a Sponsor](#)

Subscribe to MCF's mailing list to stay in the loop on important legislative issues and actions you can take throughout the session.

Click to visit our website and scroll to the bottom of the page to join our mailing list.

[Join our List](#)

A Family's Journey: Overcoming Challenges with Support and Hope



We'd like to share the inspiring story of a family who was referred to MCF for family peer support and has made remarkable progress on their journey.

The Mitchell family came to MCF facing significant challenges with their son Jason's education. Jason, a creative 9-year-old with anxiety and sensory processing issues, struggled to focus in school, often

experiencing outbursts and shutdowns.

Despite his love for science and art, his needs were overlooked, and his Individualized Education Plan (IEP) wasn't being properly implemented. His mother, Rachel, felt overwhelmed by the IEP process and unsure how to advocate for him.

Through MCF, a Family Peer Support Specialist (FPSS) helped Rachel schedule an IEP meeting and prepare to advocate for Jason's needs. The FPSS provided resources like support groups and workshops, while connecting the family with an education advocate and Disability Rights Maryland for added support. With these efforts, Jason's IEP was updated to include sensory breaks, anxiety management strategies, and accommodations for his strengths.

The school began following the IEP, providing regular updates, and Jason began thriving academically and emotionally. Rachel now feels confident navigating the IEP process and is exploring opportunities to nurture Jason's interests. The family is equipped to face future challenges, thanks to their partnership with MCF.



We're here because we've been there too.

Please consider donating to the Maryland Coalition of Families to help us support more families like this one throughout the state.

[Donate Today](#)

Get Connected! Stay Informed!

Online and In Person Support Groups

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

Workshops, Trainings & Other Events

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!

work for you and join us soon!

Find a Support
Group

Past and Upcoming
Events

MCF Employment Opportunities

MCF is growing, and we have employment opportunities that might be perfect for you or someone you know! We currently have openings in many areas of the State. Please check our website for a complete list of openings.

- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Substance Use (Must Live in Calvert County)**
- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Substance Use (Must Live in Allegany or Garrett County)**
- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Cecil County)**
- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in PG County)**
- **Human Resources Coordinator (Central Office)**

Employment Opportunities



www.mdcoalition.org



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