

Connecticut Turning To Youth and Families (CTYF)



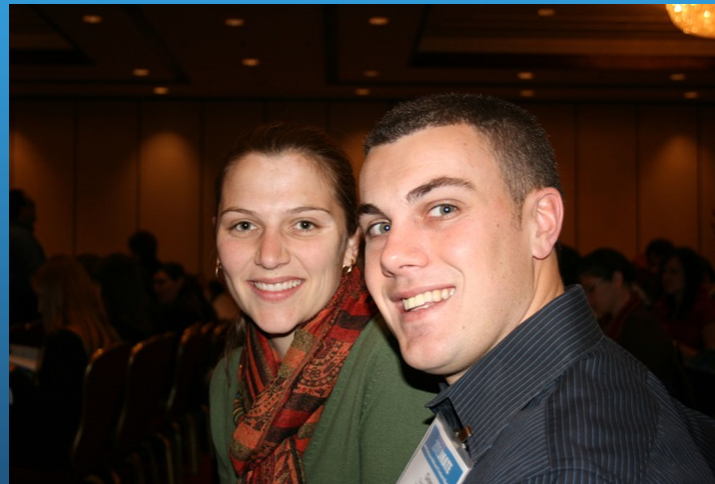
Widening The Door of Entry to Recovery for Young People

Reclaiming Futures Webinar:

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CTYF 101:

*CTYF is an all-volunteer statewide 501(c)3 organization established at the end of 2008. In the past four years CTYF's volunteer programs have mobilized over 30,000 hours of volunteer advocacy and recovery support services.



Our vision is for youth and families to be addiction-free, healthy members of strong families and communities. Working together, we can make youth-guided, family-centered recovery a reality.

Our mission is to help youth and families facing drug and alcohol problems connect with prevention, treatment and recovery services through a statewide network of peer-to-peer supports. We are a unified voice of people who have "been there" working together to strengthen families and communities, improve policies and practices, and, above all, save lives.

The Current Recovery Climate:

*Youth and Families Fall Through
The Cracks in Fragmented Systems*

***Nationally Adult Systems Have Moved Towards a Recovery Paradigm and Begun To Finance Recovery Supports**



**Recovery-oriented
systems of care may have
left the station, but by in
large youth are still
waiting on the Recovery
Platform!**

Youth Recovery Support

“As We Have Experienced It”

○ *What We See Is **Working** for Young People (13-25) In Sustained Recovery:*

- Youth Peer-to-Peer Support
- Early Intervention
- Family Involvement and Support
- Environmental Solutions and Recovery Support Services:
 - Housing, Social Supports, Employment, Education, etc.

○ *Major **Challenges** We Have Experienced For Moving Youth Recovery Support Forward:*

- Under-Studied / Under-Funded
- Fragmented Systems (Mental Health and Addictions) Between Children and Adult (Health Care and Enforcement)
- Advocacy Issue Is Different For Youth Versus Adults (Stigma Issues)
- Youth and Their Families With “Lived Experience” are an Under-Utilized Resource In Our Systems

Peer-To-Peer:

The Power Of “Lived Experience”



Peer-to-Peer Support: *Youth to Youth*



*Families and teachers see the results of Central High Schools Leadership Group. Yale Consultation Center has conducted an evaluation of the peer-to-peer program and has demonstrated that this model is effective in improving school performance, attendance, and behavior.

- Lived recovery experience connects youth to youth using the power of peer leaders to drive open conversations and messages of hope for recovery
- Positive peer support fosters culture change and is contagious for tangible or virtual youth communities
- Sustained recovery is supported and enhanced by peers through social activities, work opportunities, and easier re-engagement should a relapse occur
- Peers groups create the needed sense of belonging that is even more imperative for young people than adults

Peer-to-Peer Support: *Youth and Families Together*



- Youth in successful long-term recovery offer powerful testaments of hope for families struggling with their children (and vice versa)
- Allows earlier intervention to take place as open dialogue creates more awareness
- Recovering young people can open the doors for family-to-family connections
- Working together bubbles up better recovery resources and fosters better results

Young People's Networking Dialogue on Recovery (YPNDR):

- Convened by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) on Dec. 13th, 2010
- 38 young people from 15 states interacted in panel discussions & work groups to give voice to their ideas and creative input for how to improve youth recovery outcomes
- Opportunity for young people in recovery to share creative ideas about developing community-based recovery-oriented systems of care that supports young people in or seeking recovery



Project Advisory Team (PAT)

- Association of Recovery Schools
- Chestnut Health Systems
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
- Connecticut Turning to Youth and Families
- Faces & Voices of Recovery
- MOMSTELL
- National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE)
- Office of National Drug Control Policy
- Peer Assistance Services (Colorado)
- SAMHSA, CSAT
- The Partnership for a Drug-Free America
- Tennessee DMHDD / Div. of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
- Texas Tech University, CASR

Young People's Networking Dialogue on Recovery (YPNDR):

Objectives:

1. To provide a forum for young people to describe the challenges and successes of their own personal recovery that could inform elements of a new recovery-oriented system of care.
2. To identify those services and supports that young people believe are critical to recovery.
3. To provide participants the opportunity to contribute to the conversation about recovery.
4. To instill in participants a sense of optimism about future directions in building a recovery-oriented system of care.
5. To describe creative ways to effectively mobilize community-based resources to support youth recovery.

The Experts Were In The Room:

- 91+ Total Years of Sustained Recovery
- Average Age Was 22.3
- 2.4 Years Average of Sustained Recovery



- 0 of the 38 youth were employed, trained, or credentialed to provide Peer Recovery Support Services to any of our systems

Youth Voices Of Recovery:

- “What is needed to help more young people sustain long-term recovery?”
- “The recovery process is not easy; it’s a really tough road.”
- “I maintain a feeling of serenity through peer support.”
- “Recovery is a way of life, it isn’t just about abstinence.”

Outcomes of YPNDR: *Involving Young People in Recovery*

- Design culturally-competent, developmentally-appropriate services - *“Nothing About Us Without Us!”*
 - *Youth-oriented recovery housing options*
 - *Recovery supports in schools*
 - *Replicate alternative peer groups (APG)*
- Resource and referral systems to facilitate youth and their families with accessing treatment and recovery services
- Develop training and carry the message of what works to other communities to assist with the development and growth of youth and family peer-to-peer support



Create School-Based Recovery Programs:

- Promote the expansion of High School and Collegiate recovery schools
- Integrate recovery support services into public high schools and on college campuses
- Harness the powerful resource of youth with “lived experience” to engage and outreach all support services
- Create Student Assistance Programs on college campuses - similar to Employee Assistance Programs
- Educate school personnel about addiction and recovery
- Support family members as well as the students
- Develop relapse prevention education

Increase Family Engagement:

- Increase access to recovery information for youth and their families
- Educate parents prior to as well as during treatment
- Provide ongoing recovery support to families
- Expand the current paradigm of family
- Increase outreach in rural and low-income communities



Change Public Perception of Addiction & Recovery :

- Make recovery attractive - “It’s cool to be sober”
- Provide a more reality-based definition alcoholism and/or addiction that youth can identify with
- Reframe prevention messaging to include recovery, get away from “Just Say No” or scare tactics
- Develop a youth-oriented educational campaign on recovery for the public to reduce stigma
- Encourage and educate young people about recovery advocacy
- Use modern communication tools (video, internet, social media, etc.) for recovery messages and programs



Develop Youth-Oriented Recovery Community Centers:

- Include them in the continuum of care
- Provide activities, structure, and resources
- Structure the programming to be peer-based
- Assure accessible space - perhaps even virtual spaces or existing community centers with expanding programs
- Provide family support services
- Offer volunteer or employment opportunities
- Promote outreach to reduce stigma
- Support advocacy
- “Not one size fits all”

Outcomes of YPNDR: *Building a Recovery Model for A Community in 2020*

- Design a more “holistic” approach - making the goals of prevention, treatment, and recovery to be about more than abstinence - address co-occurring disorders
- Address gaps in care continuum (i.e. peer recovery coaches)
- Establish linkages among health care professionals to peer recovery support services
- Create formal networks of support for young people and their families
- Offer earlier intervention and more effective prevention programs

Outcomes of YPNDR: *Building a Recovery Model for A Community in 2020*

- Assure person-centered care and recovery management planning
- Include care systems that embrace multiple pathways to recovery
- Work with all community systems
- Provide treatment on demand (i.e. “a young person doesn’t need to be high to access services”)
- Include youth in advocacy and policy change - social norm change

System Change Is Not For The Timid:

The Economic Crisis & Health-Care Reform: Let it be a catalyst for integrating youth and family peer-to-peer recovery-oriented transformational practices that cost less and last longer!

- We must create disequilibrium, abandon old ways to remove barriers and promote positive changes
- Look at technology and social media as an asset not a risk for enhancing service deliveries
- Think about ways to “contaminate” your projects with peer-driven recovery-oriented practices
- Communities have fostered recovery for years without system support, the potential for what could happen if the system truly supported recovery is incredible

Questions?

Additional Resources:

www.ctyouthandfamilies.org

www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org

www.recoveryschools.org

www.recoverymonth.gov

[www.tpronline.org/article.cfm/Youth in Recovery](http://www.tpronline.org/article.cfm/Youth_in_Recovery)

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