

## Organizational Growth: Collaboration for Family and Youth Peer Programs and Organizations Part 1: Video 2



Thank you for viewing this video in our series on organizational growth. We are sharing this information on collaboration to support the growing demand for peer support services and to discuss key practices for organizational peer program expansion.

My name is Rebecca Evansky, I am the Executive Director of the Wellness Collaborative of New York, Independent Practice Association. The WCNY IPA is a collective of peer led organizations from across New York State that leverage their expertise and share best practices, support executive operations and advance the awareness and effectiveness of peer support.

This training and all materials are products created in partnership with the NYS Office of Mental Health Under the NYS System of Care Project and is intended to support the growth of family and youth peer led programs across New York State.

## Introduction

This series will provide an overview of key practices for family and youth peer programs, offering information to support program growth and sustainability practices.

In this video, we will provide information on collaboration among family and youth peer programs with key stakeholders to support the growing demand for peer support services across the state. It will include information to increase your connections and ideas to expand on your referral network.

Additional resources on topics regarding organizational growth and capacity building will be available.

This training and all materials are products created via Cooperative Agreement #H79 SM082962-04 and in partnership with the NYS Office of Mental Health

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This video is part of a series on building organizational and programmatic growth and sustainability for family and youth peer programs.

In the first video of this series we covered key practices of growth and an overview on funding.

In this second video, we will provide information on collaboration among family and youth peer programs with key stakeholders as an important next step to support the growing demand of peer support. This video will include information to increase your connections and ideas to expand on your referral network.

Additional resources on topics regarding organizational growth and capacity building will be available.

## Agenda

- ✓ Identify and define stakeholders that can provide relevant collaborative relationships to family and youth peer led programs and organizations
- ✓ Collaboration methods for connecting with a variety of stakeholders
- ✓ Why collaborations are key for successful funding applications
- ✓ Grant opportunities available among collaborative partnerships

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The goal for this video is to provide information on developing collaborative relationships that will contribute to a successful funding application for family and youth peer led programs. We will review how to identify and partner with stakeholders, collaboration methods, and grant opportunities. When we think about collaboration, we are also thinking about funding and ways that collaboration supports getting funding.

Resources will be provided to support further research of funding opportunities and additional information will be provided in the attached videos.



Stakeholders are the community organizations, individuals, government officials, family, youth and peers who support your current program. They are also the prospective partners who may not yet know about family and youth peer support but could benefit by being connected with your organization.

Stakeholders can be key collaborators when considering a grant funding opportunity. Collaborators are your identified partners in the current work and projects you have, and some may be on this graphic that are not currently in your network. Strategic partnerships are those that you may target to connect with after recognizing that there is potential for increased referral to family and youth peer advocates. They are partnerships that might be non-traditional but can lead to innovative projects for funding applications.

Consider stakeholders for a grant application - it's a good opportunity to consider the tasks and roles of your organization in collaboration. The relationships are combined to achieve the goals of the grant, but also ensure success in providing family and youth peer support and accomplishing the improved wellness of a community as a bigger picture in the long term.

Strengthening your organization’s capacity for collaboration requires a combination of long-term investments—in building relationships and trust, in developing a culture in which other organizations are engaged, roles are defined, and challenges and tasks are articulated.

Within these stakeholder relationships. You want to consider who provides your current referrals and who is the “wish list” of referral organizations. This will be your list of prospective community partners aka stakeholders

Consider who you have strong collaborative relationships with currently and don’t hesitate to ask for community connections to additional wish list partners. This list is not comprehensive of those who can benefit from family and youth peer support, but this is a foundation of those who you can outreach if you are not connected.

## Collaboration: Research



- Identify other projects that have success or experience in doing this work.
- Utilize data from other regions or states that implemented family and youth peer support in unique ways.
- Describe the impact family and youth peer support programs have in those identified regions.
- Explore national resources and network organizations, such as the National Federation of Families and Youth Move National.

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Research is important when you are considering collaboration with other organizations. If you begin with a list of your current collaborations or partners and then create that wish list or non-traditional partners, you will have a better understanding of the assets in your community.

You want to consider other projects that have success or experience in doing this work - both in providing support to individuals through peer or advocacy efforts and those who provide other support such as food/ nutritional services, housing, physical health providers or linkage to health insurance, and social service organizations that offer temporary support, housing, or financial assistance.

Also research programs in other regions or states that implemented Family and Youth Peer Support in unique ways. Gather data on the success they have with various programs and the types of collaborative relationships they have.

Gathering this information isn't just an exercise in better understanding the needs in your region or the success of programs in other states - it will give you an idea of the types of family and youth peer support programs that are being funded and the type

of funding available.

This is important when you hope to expand or build a family or youth peer program and being able to present information to your current organization will support this request.

Consider where family and youth peer support would be most needed and if what you currently offer is available in other regions. If you are interested in collaborating with a new type of community-based organization, inquire if family or youth peers are doing that same work in other states.

Look for data and research the ideas you wish to implement and use their success or barriers when considering new funding opportunities. Explore resources and network organizations, such as the National Federation of Families and Youth Move National – be sure to have a working knowledge of the system you are within.

## Collaboration: Methods



- Start with identified stakeholders with whom you are well connected
- Communicate and share knowledge and expertise
- Describe how the community served will experience increased access to family and youth peer support
- Go where the stakeholders are in the community, such as community service board meetings

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The methodology of collaboration is to ensure your organization is well positioned to do a few things when considering expansion or new funding opportunities.

First, you want to communicate with the identified stakeholders. Reach out if you are not acquainted and offer a presentation or opportunity to connect and share what family and youth peer advocates do for your agency in the community. Share the connections that are successful, give examples of great collaborations and why they could benefit from referring to your organization. Then ask them to do the same - ask to hear more about the work they are doing to support individuals or the resources they offer.

If you have identified a need in your community that individuals can benefit from, ask your newly identified stakeholders if they have any connections with that organization. Consider asking family and youth that you are connected with where they usually go to get needed resources or needs in the community as well. It's important to stress the "Why" you are looking to collaborate with them and why they were identified as a stakeholder and highlight the value they bring and what you can offer them... Explain Why should they connect with YOU.



Describe the experience that someone who works with a family or youth peer advocate will have when they connect with you. Share the impact of your organization on the community and that you wish to expand. Building a buy in to these collaborations are the first step in identifying who may be a potential support when a funding opportunity arises. This is building your infrastructure of stakeholders.

Go where the identified stakeholders are - begin by introducing yourself and get comfortable with being a part of an existing network, such as task force collaborations, community service board meetings, and county meetings that are relevant to youth and family peer support.

## Collaboration: Funding Opportunities



- Federal Grants
- New York State Grant Opportunities
- Foundations
- County/ Local Funding
- Fundraising

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Collaborations and building a stakeholder network is key when you wish to apply for a new funding opportunity. Many grants require both letters of support from various organizations and they require collaboration to ensure a variety of support is covered.

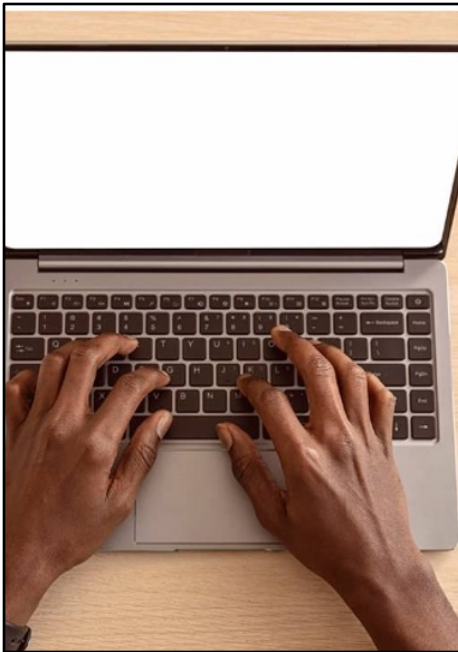
There are different funding sources available for family and youth peer programs. You can search for available federal and state grants through the website [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). You can set up alerts to notify you via email of applicable funding opportunities that become available.

You can collaborate with county community service boards and get involved in regional or county based mental health and substance use disorder task forces or coalitions. These connections will inform you of opportunities for local funding. There may be opportunities for intentional collaboration that leads to contracting for peer services in your region.

There are several health foundations across NYS that offer annual grant opportunities. Many times, foundation grants will offer the unique opportunity to cover pilot projects, support tangibles or workforce and professional training. Searching online with key words such as “NYS Foundation” will give you an idea of the

many funding opportunities available.

Always consider smaller fundraising for family and youth peer support programs. Research what events are hosted locally by non-profits to get an idea of what is offered in your area and what might be a new and original idea for hosting an event. Many local for-profit organizations and business are willing to sponsor and support fundraising and this is also an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of family and youth peer support that is available.



## Collaboration: Grant Writing Readiness

- Identify needs and budget
- Gather organizational documents
- Defer to the experts
- Additional considerations

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If you have identified your collaborators and have identified a relevant funding opportunity, considering your readiness to apply for any type of grant has a few high-level considerations before beginning.

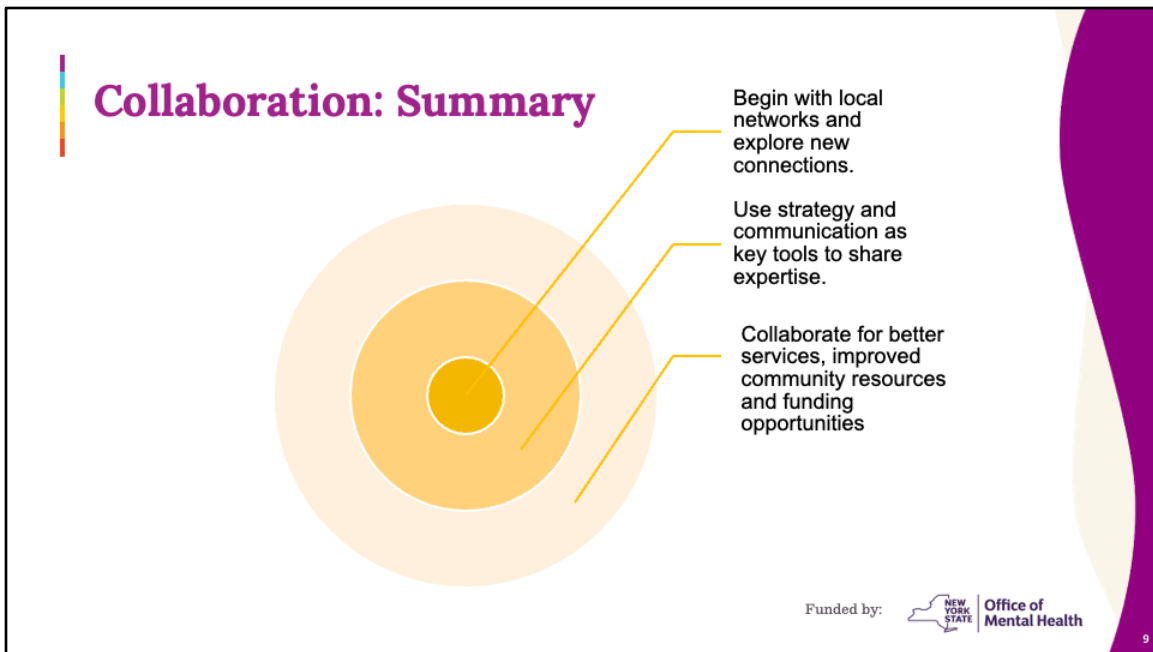
**Identify needs and budget** - know what you are applying for - a few simple items that have been identified and are the basis of your request for funding. Know an amount you are going to ask for based on those needs. If you are asking for staffing, be prepared with an understanding of how many hours it might take to fulfill the needs. Consider salary for staff and any ancillary costs such as fringe and other staffing costs.

**Gather necessary documents** - make yourself a checklist of relevant information needed for any funding applications. A LIST OF ITEMS WILL BE SHARED IN THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCE PAGES. Things such as your tax identification/ 501c3 status, mission statement, organizational budget, or board member listing will be needed before you prepare an application.

**Defer to the experts** - You may quickly realize that you need a grant writer to help with your funding application. Talk to your organization's leaders and organize a summary of needs, costs and possible collaborative partners who would support the

funding application. You can reach out to possible grant writers and seek a proposal and cost without a formal commitment to utilize the grant writer. Ask for referrals from other non profits for whom they utilize in your region.

Before you contract with a grant writer, you will want to identify what your organization needs help with. Grant narratives are discussed in additional videos in this series and are needed for grant applications. You will also need an action plan, and a strategic plan may be required. It may benefit you to have demographic data on the region you hope to cover and a project timeline. These considerations are just a few of the key steps required to be prepared for both funding opportunities and to gain support from key collaborative partnerships.



Collaboration is intentional. When you use a targeted approach to collaboration you can build upon the foundational work of family and youth peer providers. You should start with who your strongest partners are within your organization and region.

Consider and identify those who you hope to build a partnership with - those organizations who can also support family and youth in your community. Reach out and share knowledge and expertise. Begin with education on family and youth peer program goals and expand on ideas for how to work together.

These collaborations can build a program that offers additional community support, improves the wellness of the community and can lead to future funding opportunities to better support your program.

## More Information

Check out additional videos and handouts from this series on [www.peertac.org](http://www.peertac.org).

Email us at [info@peertac.org](mailto:info@peertac.org) with any questions.

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<https://wcnypa.com>

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This video provided a high-level overview of collaborative relationships and how meaningful connections can lead to possible funding opportunities.

Please see the other videos and handouts in this series for more information on organizational growth and capacity building.

Thank you for listening to our series. Questions can be emailed to [info@peertac.org](mailto:info@peertac.org).