

Know someone who would like to receive CARF's free BH / CYS / OTP Promising Practices e-newsletter?
Friends and colleagues can [subscribe here](#)

PROMISING PRACTICES



Parent Support Partner program helps reduce out-of-home treatments for youths

The goal of [Easter Seals Michigan](#) (ESM) Family Behavioral Health Services for Youth and Adolescents is to support families in their homes while building resiliency in youths. The division serves 1,000 individuals each year, of whom 99 percent receive behavioral health services in their homes.

When ESM set a goal of reducing the number of children who receive residential treatment, the youths' average length of stay out of home was almost a full year. Costs were steadily escalating and had reached 8 percent of ESM's total operating budget.

ESM identified several themes that prompted the use of residential services within the course of family treatment:

- Extensive history of treatment with many providers.
- High-risk behaviors that were escalating.
- Frequent hospitalizations.
- Parents who had declined specialized treatment interventions, such as evidence-based practices, community living services, and respite.

The last bullet point became the foundation of ESM's action plan to reduce the numbers and costs of placing children in residential treatment facilities.

When staff members considered the parents' point of view, they

Brought to you by the
Behavioral Health,
Child and Youth Services, and
Opioid Treatment Program
customer service units at

carf

Volume 4, Issue 3
September 2013

Regional trainings

For information or to register for CARF trainings and events, visit www.carf.org/events

Back issues

To read past and current issues of the Promising Practices newsletter from CARF, please open www.carf.org/bhpromisingpractices

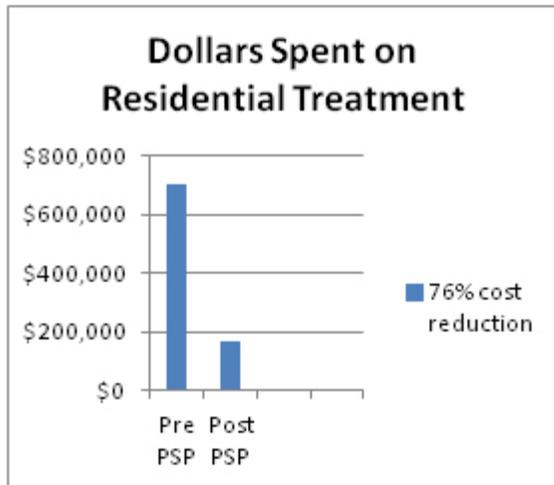
understood the parents' reluctance to participate in treatment; in the past, parents had received a multitude of treatment recommendations from various providers that had proved unsuccessful. As a result, parents' trust in professionals had eroded.

ESM finds a new way to engage families

ESM contracted with the Association for Children's Mental Health, a local parent advocacy organization that trains individuals to become Parent Support Partners (PSPs). A PSP is a member of the treatment team who uses his or her personal knowledge and experiences to expand opportunities for family choice and voice in treatment. In tandem with the behavioral health clinician, a PSP assists in the development of the family-centered course of treatment.

In the most recent [CARE](#) survey report, ESM was recognized for exemplary conformance to standards for the organization's outstanding commitment to the PSP role in the intensive family-based services program and the innovation of using the PSP to further develop the engagement of families in treatment and its subsequent impact in reducing out-of-home treatments.

Able to identify with the PSP, families began to establish the trust that is necessary to achieve treatment objectives. Partnering the PSP with the behavioral health clinician was an immediate success, and the positive outcomes were significant.



In the first year following the implementation of the PSP program, fewer children were authorized for residential services, and, for those who were, their average length of stay out of home decreased from 352 days to 101 days—a 71-percent reduction. By the next year, the total cost of out-of-home treatment had dropped from \$703,116 to \$167,773—a 76-percent reduction.

Most importantly, ESM staff members found the PSP program



[Find us on Facebook](#)



[Follow us on LinkedIn](#)



[Circle us on Google+](#)



[Subscribe to us on YouTube](#)

brought a marked improvement in outcomes that achieve the organization's core value to support families in their homes while building resiliency in youths.

For more information on PSPs, please contact Susan Styf, LMSW, CAADC, director of Family Services, Easter Seals Michigan, at sstyf@essmichigan.org or (248) 475-6306. The Easter Seals Michigan website is at <http://mi.easterseals.com>.

www.carf.org