Volunteer Recruitment, Training, Supervision, and Retention

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Presentation Overview

- Telephone Support Volunteer Role and Qualifications
- Recruitment
- Training
- Supervision
- Retention
- Benefits to the Volunteers, Youth, and Families
Telephone Support Volunteer Role

- Listen
- Encourage
- Be aware of boundaries
Telephone Support Volunteer Qualifications

- Have minimum of 1 year clean and sober (if recovering)
- Commit to a schedule
- Adhere to confidentiality
- Maintain records of telephone support activity
  - Audio files
  - Paper documentation
  - Web data entry
Telephone Support Volunteer Qualifications

- Incorporate feedback
- Be open to multiple pathways to recovery
- Maintain positive attitude with youth and families
Recruitment

- **Strategies**
  - Professional, personal, and volunteer connections
  - Tabling events at relevant events, hosting info sessions, sending emails, writing newsletter articles, and posting flyers
- Application, background, and reference checks
Recruitment: Seeking Diversity

- Male and female
- Individuals in recovery and those impacted by substance abuse addiction
- Bilingual/Bicultural
- Youthful (at least at heart)
Training

- Initial training
  - Expectations and roles of telephone support volunteers
  - Telephone support protocol and procedures
  - Feedback process
  - Self-care
  - Shadow current volunteer
- In-service trainings
Supervision

- Listen to the recorded telephone support calls and provide timely feedback to volunteers
  - Using the Telephone Support Quality Assurance checklist, rate and comment on the volunteer’s adherence to the telephone support protocol and his/her general skills
  - Meet regularly with volunteers to review feedback, reinforce new skills, and support efforts
- To address challenges, utilize weekly coaching calls with other supervisors
Retention

- Give opportunities for new roles
  - Volunteer-led trainings
  - Volunteer-developed project tools

- Nurture the volunteer team
  - Recognize volunteer efforts and milestones
  - Connect the volunteers to the bigger picture
  - Highlight the benefits to the volunteer, youth, and families
Benefits: Volunteers

- Giving back to the community and helping others
  - “Four years ago, I could have been one of the youth on the other end of the phone. My motivation for volunteering is to give back to my community.”
  - “I have a very important person in my life that is in recovery himself and I am better able to support him because of this experience.”
Benefits: Volunteers

- Personal satisfaction
  - “I’m so glad that I came [to make calls] today. I was having a really bad day, but talking with [a youth] and helping him problem solve has really made my day.”
  - “It is great to hear the positive things going on in the youth’s lives and to celebrate those things with them.”
Benefits: Volunteers

- **Skill building**
  - “Participating in this project is a good experience, especially as I embark on my own research within the counseling field.”
  - “I love how we are trained to have more of a conversation than an interrogation.”

- **Connecting to like-minded people**
  - “Volunteering has allowed me to meet some cool people – people, who like myself, are interested in helping youth.”
Benefits: Youth and Families

- Weekly check-ins
  - Parent: “It gives me some more peace of mind that other people are also looking out for [my son]. He can use all the help he can get.”

- Opportunity for reflection and referrals
  - Youth: “When [the telephone support volunteer] calls, we talk about what’s going on in my life, and then we work together to figure out what to do.”
Benefits: Youth and Families

- Receive support and encouragement
  - Youth: “I like to talk to [the telephone support volunteers] because they make me feel good.”
  - Youth: “Thanks for the call and for the support.”
  - Parent: “It’s just so hard… I appreciate you guys being there [for my son]. Thank you so much.”
Special thanks to the telephone support volunteers who contribute their time and creative energy to the youth and families that we serve.