

## 3.0 Certified Family Support Partner (CFSP) Standards

### 3.1. Definitions

*Rationale: A Certified Family Support Partner (CFSP) is a parent or adult caregiver who, through lived experience and specialized training, has acquired an understanding of another parent's situation via the shared emotional and psychological challenges of raising a child living with a behavioral health diagnosis. The relationship between the CFSP and the family being served is mutual, built on a connection and trust not obtainable through other service relationships (e.g. counselor, psychologist, minister) or someone without the shared experience. The CFSP partners with other agencies which serve the child and his/her family to improve the quality of life and opportunities of recovery for the child in the home, school and community.*

- 3.1.1. CFSP has at least one year of lived experience as a parent or an adult caregiver who is raising a child or has raised a child who lives with a behavioral health disorder diagnosis (mental illness or co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder) and has successfully navigated the various systems of care.
- 3.1.2. CFSP has gained appropriate knowledge, experience and skill via Idaho's approved certification process.
- 3.1.3. CFSP understands and lives by a prescribed code of ethics.
- 3.1.4. CFSP engages, educates, guides and supports family members to help them make successful life changes necessary for recovery. These changes are determined by the family being served.
- 3.1.5. Lived experience comes from raising a child before his/her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and the lessons learned from raising this child.

**Special considerations:** Raising a child who has lived with a substance use disorder only (without presence of mental illness) does not qualify the parent or caregiver as a CFSP.

### 3.2. Qualifications

*Rationale: Because raising a child who is living with a behavioral health diagnosis is a unique parenting experience shared by those who have parented a child who lives with emotional or behavioral concerns, certain qualifications are needed to understand and know how to navigate the systems involved in raising the child. It is only ethical that the CFSP meets certain criteria when working with children and their families.*

- 3.2.1. CFSP candidate has experience raising a child who lives with mental illness, behavioral or emotional disorders.
- 3.2.2. CFSP candidate writes a personal Lived Experience Essay which includes challenges, triumphs, problem-solving methods, personal support system, and strategies for living with stressors.
- 3.2.3. CFSP candidate has completed 40 contact hours of training specifically designated for Idaho CFSPs and approved by the State Behavioral Health Authority.
- 3.2.4. CFSP candidate passes a post-training assessment established by the training entity and approved by the State Behavioral Health Authority.

- 3.2.5. A Letter of Completion is mailed to the CFSP candidate. The letter states either approval for the individual to take the certification exam or it provides individualized recommendations for the candidate to complete before moving forward with the certification exam.
- 3.2.6. Work Experience and Education:
  - 3.2.6.1. If the CFSP candidate holds a bachelor's degree in human services (e.g. social work, psychology, education, sociology, social sciences), he/she documents 100 hours of work experience in the human services field within a year of completing the training. If the 100 hours of work experience are not completed within a year, a review is required by the certifying body.
  - 3.2.6.2. If the CFSP candidate does not hold a bachelor's degree in human services (e.g., social work, psychology, education, sociology, social sciences), he/she must have a high school diploma or GED and documents 200 hours of work experience in the human services field within a year of completing the training. If the 200 hours of work experience are not completed within a year, a review is required by the certifying body.
- 3.2.7. CFSP candidate completes 20 supervision hours with a designated Idaho CFSP Supervisor within a year of completing the training.
- 3.2.8. CFSP candidate passes the Idaho Certified Family Support Partner Exam with a score that meets the standard set by the certifying body authorized by the State Behavioral Health Authority.
- 3.2.9. Accommodations for the exam are provided as deemed necessary by the individual taking the exam. Examples of accommodations include, but are not limited to, extra time, a separate room, and use of a computer.
- 3.2.10. CFSP Supervisor is a degreed professional in the field of human services who has supervisory capacity within the agency and is designated as a CFSP Supervisor by the certifying body.
- 3.2.11. The CFSP Supervisor obtains such designation by applying to the approved certifying body and following the approved process for said designation. The certifying body maintains a current list of approved Supervisors.
- 3.2.12. CFSP maintains a working knowledge of current trends and developments in the fields of children's mental health, substance use disorders, child and adolescent brain development, education/special education, child welfare regulations, juvenile justice regulations, wellness and recovery, ethical practices and peer support services by reading current journals, books, etc., attending webinars, workshops and conferences as they relate to these fields, and sharing with other CFSPs.
- 3.2.13. CFSP must be at least 18 years old.
- 3.2.14. To avoid role ambiguity and conflict, CFSP does not fulfill other service roles (therapist, counselor, case manager, nurse, physician, clergy, etc.) to participants they are providing peer services to.

**Special considerations:** A clinician or professional person may hold certification as a CFSP; however, a CFSP working with a particular family or child as a CFSP provider cannot also be the clinician or professional person who is providing any other services to that same child or family. In other words, an individual cannot be the CFSP provider and the clinical/professional provider of the same child or family.

Safety is an important concern, therefore background checks may be required by law and rule, but are the responsibility of the agency or place of employment, and are not part of the certification process.

### **3.3. Training**

*Rationale: Although lived experience equips the CFSP with knowledge and understanding of family issues and concerns, there are areas in which the CFSP needs to be trained to verify certain skill sets. This training adds to the families' confidence and trust in the CFSP's abilities with whom they are working.*

- 3.3.1. CFSP training includes, at a minimum, the following competency areas:
  - 3.3.1.1. mental illness and substance use disorders and their effects on the brain;
  - 3.3.1.2. advocacy skills used in multiple systems (children's behavioral health system, education and special education systems, child welfare system and juvenile court system);
  - 3.3.1.3. ethics (boundaries, confidentiality, HIPAA, etc.);
  - 3.3.1.4. the awareness of risk factors in participants' behaviors and the ability to access appropriate services;
  - 3.3.1.5. communication skills (interpersonal and professional);
  - 3.3.1.6. effecting change;
  - 3.3.1.7. empowerment;
  - 3.3.1.8. parenting special needs children and family dynamics;
  - 3.3.1.9. the recovery process;
  - 3.3.1.10. the effects of trauma;
  - 3.3.1.11. wellness and natural supports;
  - 3.3.1.12. family-centered planning;
  - 3.3.1.13. maintaining one's wellness;
  - 3.3.1.14. cultural sensitivity;
  - 3.3.1.15. recovery plans; and
  - 3.3.1.16. local, state and national resources.
- 3.3.2. Training is 40 hours of face-to-face instruction that is conducted by an IDHW DBH approved training entity. The training entity is separate from the certifying body. The certifying body is responsible for verifying competencies.
- 3.3.3. Curriculum includes all types of learning methods, including role-playing scenarios as a key element of building skills.

**Special considerations:** Any exceptions to the training as outlined here are reviewed by the certifying body.

### **3.4. Certification and Renewal**

*Rationale: Professional certifications are widely found in a variety of professional fields in the United States today. In the field of behavioral health, employers have a general obligation to perform due diligence in ensuring competency to the best of one's ability of the personnel providing services to other human beings. Certification provides employers and participants with evidence and documentation that the certificate holder has demonstrated a certain level of job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and practical experience. Certification also empowers the holder via the knowledge and skills obtained, as well as by the fact that he/she has successfully accomplished the completion of all requirements.*

- 3.4.1. CFSP meets the qualifications as stated in section 3.2.

- 3.4.2. Professionals claiming to hold certification status as a CFSP maintain documentation of said certification.
- 3.4.3. CFSP certification is valid for one year.
- 3.4.4. CFSP professional renews his/her certification annually by:
  - 3.4.4.1. completing at least 10 hours of approved continuing education (e.g. trainings, workshops, webinars) per year and documenting said education. Continuing education topics can be from any of the competencies listed in the training competencies section in 3.3; AND
  - 3.4.4.2. completing a renewal application; AND
  - 3.4.4.3. maintaining a no-violations record regarding the CFSP Code of Ethics
- 3.4.5. CFSP follows the Certification Renewal Procedure put forth by the certifying body for Idaho's CFSPs.
- 3.4.6. CFSP is responsible for ensuring that the certifying body has all current documentation necessary for satisfying the certification criteria.
- 3.4.7. Employers of CFSPs are responsible to check with the centralized certification agency to ensure that the CFSP which they wish to hire has current certification status as a certified CFSP in Idaho.
- 3.4.8. The state's approved certifying agency tracks certifications and continuing education status of Idaho's CFSPs.

### **3.5. Termination, Inactive Status & Reactivation**

*Rationale: Certification reveals to others that a person has reached a particular level of competency. If these levels are not maintained, a person's certification may be terminated or revoked. Termination can be due to deficient documentation or a Code of Ethics violation.*

- 3.5.1. Deficient documentation is the failure to submit on time requested documentation and application for certification and renewal, or any other requested materials from the certifying entity
- 3.5.2. A Code of Ethics Violation is the failure to abide by the CFSP Code of Ethics and/or providing false information on documents
- 3.5.3. Inactive Status is when a CFSP in good-standing requests such status because he/she is unable to meet the requirements for recertification due to a decline in physical or mental health or an extenuating circumstance; such as, a death of a close relative, divorce or marriage, long-term illness of family member, loss of employment, birth of a child, military deployment, or other circumstance that is approved by the certifying body.
- 3.5.4. Reactivation is accomplished by submitting all required documentation, including a new application packet and verification of CEUs earned within one year of resubmission.
  - 3.5.4.1. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all documentation is completed and submitted.
  - 3.5.4.2. If application is incomplete, a deficiency letter is sent to the applicant and applicant has 30 calendar days to mail all required documents. If 30 days go by and documents are not received by the certifying body, the applicant's certification expires and applicant will need to re-apply, submitting all certification documentation and a new application.
- 3.5.5. Applicants who have violated the Code of Ethics will, in addition to the documentation in 3.5.4, submit a report that details the nature of the violation,

admission of the violation, corrective actions taken and insurance that the violation will not recur. The CFSP Peer Review Board, which is defined by the certifying entity, will determine re-instatement based on the seriousness of the violation, applicant's report and the corrective actions taken.

**Special considerations:** Inactive status is not granted for the failure to comply with continuing education requirements or a reported Code of Ethics violation.

### **3.6. Reciprocity**

*Rationale: The time and effort that a person expends obtaining a CFSP certification is valued. Idaho also values its certification process and therefore, reciprocity from another state's certifying board is permitted as long as certain conditions are met.*

- 3.6.1. Applicant submits a CFSP application along with a copy of his/her certification and either a copy of the certifying state's requirements or a website where these can be found.
- 3.6.2. If applicant is deficient in any of Idaho's requirements, a letter explaining needed documentation will be sent to the applicant. The applicant has 30 calendar days to respond with an explanation as to how the requirements will be completed and 60 days to complete said requirements.

### **3.7. Reporting Changes**

*Rationale: Idaho values its CFSPs and wants to maintain communication with each one. The best way to do this is to know how to reach each CFSP to report CFSP news, events and any changes to the certification requirements. It also aids in networking with all CFSPs in the state. In addition, this allows IDHW to know how many CFSPs are available in different parts of the state and who they are.*

- 3.7.1. Certified Family Support Partner (CFSP) reports changes in name, address, telephone number and email address.
- 3.7.2. CFSP reports a change in supervisor's name.
- 3.7.3. CFSP reports a change in employment status.
- 3.7.4. CFSP reports a violation in Code of Ethics

### **Special considerations:**

Failure to report changes may result in termination of certification or other disciplinary measure as determined by the certifying body.

### **3.8. Grievance Procedures**

*Rationale: There are times when applicants will not agree with decisions made the certifying board. To be properly and fairly heard, a procedure has been identified for the applicant to voice his/her grievance.*

- 3.8.1. Applicant may file a grievance when there is a valid factual reason to do so, such as: being denied certification, questioning the outcome of the review board, or applicant is subject to an action by the certifying board that he/she deems unjustified.
- 3.8.2. Applicant must file said grievance within 30 days of notice or action deemed unjustified.
- 3.8.3. Peer Review Board reviews the grievance, but the certifying body has authority to make the final decision regarding any remedy to be made.

### **3.9. Provision of Family Support Services**

*Rationale: Depending on the scope of work of the agency in which the CFSP is employed, the tasks carried out by the CFSP can vary. Generally speaking, the services that a CFSP provides should be child-centered, family-driven, youth-guided, community-based with the child's rights protected and culturally sensitive. These services broaden the continuum of care provided in the typical treatment setting. They are not in lieu of other treatment practices; rather they enhance other practices. The purpose for these services is to help the family feel less isolated and more empowered within the recovery process and engaged in the community.*

3.9.1. CFSP services may be provided to all participants who are in need of such services.

3.9.2. Participant and/or family member outcomes expected during and after a CFSP works with the family include, but are not limited to:

- 3.9.2.1. ability to identify and use wellness tools;
- 3.9.2.2. increased social skills;
- 3.9.2.3. demonstrated ability to live more independently;
- 3.9.2.4. re-engaging with support systems that may have been lost;
- 3.9.2.5. improvement in child's educational goals;
- 3.9.2.6. improved quality of life;
- 3.9.2.7. less stress;
- 3.9.2.8. sense of purpose;
- 3.9.2.9. increased empowerment;
- 3.9.2.10. belief that recovery is possible;
- 3.9.2.11. increased self-esteem;
- 3.9.2.12. demonstrated ability to self-advocate; and
- 3.9.2.13. increased participation in community, school and positive recreational activities.

3.9.3. Services provided by the CFSP include, but are not limited to:

- 3.9.3.1. advocating for the needs of the family;
- 3.9.3.2. teaching family members and participant how to develop self-advocacy and problem-solving skills;
- 3.9.3.3. mentoring the participant and family members to instill a sense of hope;
- 3.9.3.4. role modeling behaviors, attitudes and thinking skills needed for resiliency and coping;
- 3.9.3.5. helping family members identify and utilize their strengths;
- 3.9.3.6. role modeling the facilitation of collaborative relationships;
- 3.9.3.7. teaching participant and family about causes of disorders and importance to adhering to treatment; utilizing evidence-based interventions that assist in meeting goals;
- 3.9.3.8. assist family members in identifying and connecting to services and community resources;
- 3.9.3.9. assist family members in articulating their needs and goals in preparing for meetings as well as service plans;

- 3.9.3.10. provide family-based programs such as classes on parenting special needs children;
- 3.9.3.11. teach caregivers how to document all activities that pertain to the child's appointments, meetings, needs, goals, and strengths; and
- 3.9.3.12. assist in preparing for the child's transition to adulthood.
- 3.9.4. These services shall be delivered primarily face-to-face, and secondarily by telephone or social media.
- 3.9.5. CFSP shares his/her personal story when appropriate for the benefit of the family with whom he/she is working, keeping in mind that this is but one experience and it does not mean that other families will have the same experience or needs.
- 3.9.6. CFSP, in collaboration with the family, and any other professionals for which the family gives consent (i.e. the child's behavioral health provider, the child's primary care physician, and any other agency professional that is involved with the child's care), assists in developing an individualized family-centered service plan that includes a description of the family's goals, timeframes for meeting these goals, and the interventions that will assist in meeting the goals.
- 3.9.7. Frequency and Length of Service:
  - 3.9.7.1. The frequency by which a CFSP meets and works with the family and the length of this service is determined by the child's mental health team (i.e. clinician, parents/caregivers, child [if child is an adolescent], and CFSP) and evidence-based practices.
  - 3.9.7.2. The frequency and length of service are periodically re-evaluated depending on the intensity of the CFSP services needed. The higher the intensity and frequency of the services, the more often a re-evaluation occurs.
- 3.9.8. CFSP performs activities *with* an individual, and not *for* or *to* the individual so that the child and the family can regain control over their own lives.
- 3.9.9. CFSP is under the direct supervision of a designated CFSP Supervisor.

**Special considerations:** CFSP services augment other professional treatment services. Services that a CFSP does not perform include: counseling/therapy, drug testing, diagnosing of symptoms and disorders, prescribing, acting as a legal representative, participating in the determination of competence, and providing legal advice.

### **3.10. Organizational Readiness & Responsibilities**

*Rationale: Organizational readiness is essential to ensure that CFSPs have a place of employment that understands their purpose and in order for families to receive the care and support they need.*

- 3.10.1. Organizational Readiness is preparing an organization or agency for the employment of a CFSP, ensuring that staff members understand the purpose of CFSPs and how CFSP duties enhance the organization's mission.
- 3.10.2. Agency establishes a readiness plan that includes criteria by which the agency hires, supervises, and works to maintain CFSPs.
- 3.10.3. Agency adheres to Idaho's standard of Certified Family Support Partners and all other agency-related standards.
- 3.10.4. Agency trains staff members in the purpose and value added by CFSPs.

- 3.10.5. Agency ensures that all CFSPs are supervised by a licensed mental health provider and that the services rendered by the CFSP are under a comprehensive, individualized, child-centered and family-driven plan.
- 3.10.6. CFSP Supervisors are designated by each agency that employs CFSPs and the Supervisor is approved by the certifying body. A list of approved CFSP Supervisors is maintained by the certifying body.
- 3.10.7. Agency utilizes trauma-informed care principles when employing CFSPs.
- 3.10.8. The state's approved certifying agency tracks certifications and continuing education status of Idaho's Certified Peer Specialists.

### **3.11. Ethics**

*Rationale: A code of ethics in any profession guides the professional in areas of role-function, relationships, levels of responsibilities and liability.*

- 3.11.1. Certified Family Support Partner (CFSP) adheres to the Idaho CFSP Code of Ethics while performing duties of a CFSP.
- 3.11.2. CFSP completes at least annual ethics training, provided by either an employer or via other avenues approved by the certifying body.
- 3.11.3. Agencies that employ CFSPs provide accessible opportunities for ethics training to all service- providing staff members, including CFSPs, at least annually.
- 3.11.4. Provider organizations document completion of ethics training in each employee's file, including each CFSP's file.
- 3.11.5. CFSP keeps personal documentation of completed ethics training as required by the certifying body.

**Special considerations:** A clinician or professional person may hold certification as a CFSP; however, a CFSP working with a particular family or child as a CFSP provider cannot also be the clinician or professional person who is providing any other services to that same child or family. In other words, an individual cannot be the CFSP provider and the clinical/professional provider of the same child or family.

**Additional Considerations:** *Agencies that employ Certified Family Support Partners adhere to this standard and all of the Core Standards put forth by the State Behavioral Health Authority.*

#### References for Standard 3.0:

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