

IN THE LOOP

The official newsletter of the Family Satisfaction Team (FST) at HopeWorx Inc.



WELCOME!

We are the Family Satisfaction Team (FST). We hope you enjoy our fifth issue of *In the Loop*. In this issue you will find an article written by a parent, Black History Month event information and activities, community resources, information regarding future projects and an article highlighting IM4Q at HopeWorx Inc. If you would like to be featured in our next issue, please email us at familysatisfactionteam@hopeworxinc.org We would love to feature you.



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WHO WE ARE

What is a Family Satisfaction Team?

The Family Satisfaction Team (FST) is a state-mandated survey team that is responsible for gathering feedback from families regarding their experiences using behavioral health services that are provided by the county through PA HealthChoices in Montgomery County. We want to make sure your voice is heard by the county and providers so that services reflect families' needs in the county. Montgomery County's FST is housed within HopeWorx Inc. HopeWorx Inc. also houses the adult survey team, Community Satisfaction Team (CST).

Under Your Scars

Written by Dawn M. Sites

I love my music. I have so many styles that range anywhere from Frank Sinatra to Godsmack with even The Nutcracker in the mix. I am a firm believer that music does heal the soul. I find it more therapeutic than therapy at times, I guess that's the dancer in me just letting the music flow through me and I don't have to talk. But, yes there is a but, there are times where I feel like I'm falling off the edge and no one to grab me.

Sully Erna and Godsmack use their platform in the industry to promote **The Scars Foundation**. The Scars Foundation fights mental health stigma by bringing awareness to mental health struggles that millions across the globe face, mostly in quiet. Which I know all too well and understand.

The Scars Foundation uses money raised to educate the public, help organizations receive resources, and save lives. Everyone has scars. Whether they are invisible or physical, we all have them. We all get them, we all have a story whether it's our own struggles or keeping a loved one's memory alive by wearing our scars out loud. It's ok to have the scars, it's ok to talk about them, and it's ok to get help. There is nothing wrong with getting help. Having Sully Erna talk about the importance of mental health during a concert goes beyond Rock Star Status. They [Godsmack] are truly there for their fans. It's reassuring that you are not alone in the struggle. You're not crazy, either. We all want the same thing: a better mental health care system.



“No matter what your role is, everyone is vulnerable, and can get help. Our goal is simple: to help to make people’s lives better and to help save lives”

- Sully Erna of Godsmack & Naomi Fabricant, The Scars Foundation.



CLICK HERE

THE SCARS FOUNDATION PROVIDES:

- RESOURCES**
- ENCOURAGEMENT TO SEEK HELP**
- A PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUP
(IT'S A JUDGMENT FREE ZONE)**

**MENTAL
health
MATTERS**

Please note: We are grateful for the contributions and point of view provided by the writer of this article. Please note that the author's opinions are their own, and are not intended to be an endorsement by FST of any other programs or services.

Black History Month

click the links for...

BHM Activities in MontCo

Montgomery
County's
Black History
Month
EVENTS

BHM Activities in Philly.

Black
History.
Trivia



**Children's Books
to Celebrate
Black Culture**
[Click HERE](#)



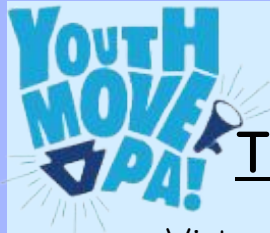
**FEBRUARY 16TH
11:00AM - 12:30PM**

In honor of Black History Month, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is hosting a virtual roundtable featuring speakers with lived experience, community leaders, and practitioners to discuss behavioral health challenges in Black communities.

[Register HERE](#)

Family Resources

click the links for more info 



Youth MOVE PA

Thrive for Hope

Virtual support group for youth/youth adults ages 16-29

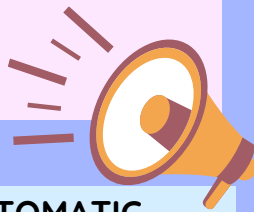
Every Thursday 4-5pm on Zoom

Mental Health Needs Assessment Survey

Let the MontCo. Office of Mental Health know how to prioritize funds allocated to MontCo. from the PA Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS).

TAKE THE SURVEY HERE

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 15TH 2023



The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is now:

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline



Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA)

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline

24/7, Free, Confidential Hotline for Pregnant and New Moms English & Spanish

Call or text **1-833-9-HELP4MOMS** (1-833-943-5746)

AUTOMATIC RENEWAL OF MA BENEFITS UNDER THE FEDERAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ENDS ON APRIL 1ST 2023

All MA and CHIP recipients must complete an annual renewal to see if they are still eligible for coverage. MA and CHIP recipients should watch for their renewal and complete it as soon as they can to avoid a loss of coverage.

For more information:

CLICK HERE

UPCOMING PROJECTS



Currently Surveying:

Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

Families are eligible if they began MST anytime after April 2021 and ended anytime before October 2022. Youth 14+ are also eligible to complete their own survey.

Data collection closes February 28

In Development:

Youth Psychiatric
Inpatient
Hospitalization



Residential Treatment
Facility
(RTF)

More Details:

All data shared with FST by families is de-identified to protect families. All surveys are conducted via telephone, online, and in-person (where permitted). All of our survey respondents receive a \$10 Amazon e-gift card via email or mail. Eligibility criteria varies. If you are interested in responding to a survey or if you have suggestions for survey questions, please contact familysatisfactionteam@hopeworxinc.org



2022 PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION PROGRAM SURVEY

The Family Satisfaction Team (FST) conducts satisfaction surveys with youth aged 14-18 (and their parents/caregivers) about their experience with mental health services provided in Montgomery County. Partial Hospitalization services (PHP) are short-term intensive behavioral health services for youth experiencing severe distress. The aim of PHP is to serve as a non-residential treatment modality as either a step-down from or as an alternative to out-of-home placement.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

307
ELIGIBLE FAMILIES

2
ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS

Montgomery County youth (and their parents) with PA HealthChoices as either their primary or secondary insurance who received PHP services from Horsham or Explorations between January 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022 were invited to participate in this survey.

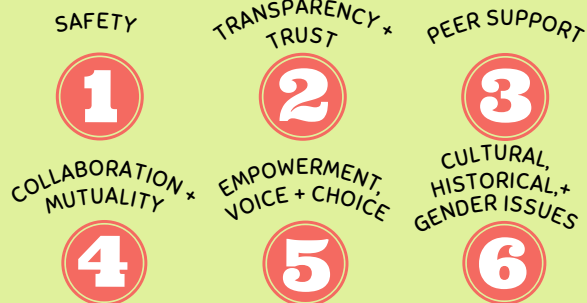
99 PARENTS/
CAREGIVERS

24 YOUTH
(AGED 14-18)

Detailed sample demographic data are available upon request.

FINDINGS

FST analyzes survey responses under the guiding framework of SAMHSA'S Trauma-Informed Care Principles (listed below). We're not only interested in family satisfaction, but also to what degree families felt the service delivery model reflected trauma-informed care principles.



CULTURAL COMPETENCY

87%

Youth felt staff respected their identity.

89%

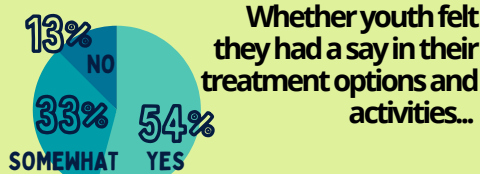
Parents felt staff treated child with dignity + respect.



EMPOWERMENT, VOICE, + CHOICE

82%

Parents felt staff respected their input & insight.



COPING SKILLS

35%

Youth said "Yes" they felt they developed appropriate coping skills.

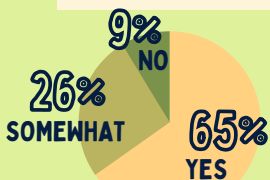
41%

Parents said "Yes" PHP helped their child to develop appropriate coping skills.

PEER SUPPORT



Whether youth would find it helpful to be supported by a peer...



"Good peer groups with relatable problems. We supported each other."

-Youth on "What was helpful during PHP"



TRANSPARENCY + TRUST

84%

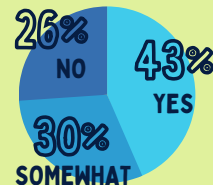
Parents said "Yes" their child's medication was discussed with the family and child.

EDUCATION

55%

Parents "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" their child received adequate education during partial hospitalization.

Whether youth felt they received enough educational support during partial hospitalization...



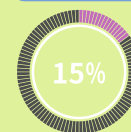
SAFETY



94%

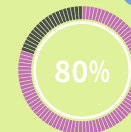
Parents said "Yes" they felt the facility provided a safe environment.

OUT OF HOME PLACEMENTS



Parents indicated their child was admitted to a more restrictive treatment setting during PHP.

CRISIS PLANNING



Parents said "Yes" a crisis plan was developed.

92%

Parents said "Yes" their crisis plan was adequate.

DISCHARGE /AFTERCARE

71%

Parents said "Yes" their child was prepared to integrate to a less restrictive treatment setting.

OVERALL

70% Parents satisfied overall

71% Youth satisfied overall

WE ASKED FAMILIES ABOUT COMMUNITY SUPPORTS, DISCHARGE PLANNING, AND WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN MORE HELPFUL DURING PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION.

WHAT FAMILIES SAID...

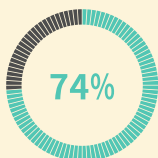


COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

The most common selected community supports families wanted to be connected with to help the transition out of PHP were:

- peer support (family, youth)
- support groups (parent, youth)
- academic/educational support

74% of parents indicated "Yes" (n = 41) or "Somewhat" (n = 24) to whether they would have found it helpful to be connected to family peer support DURING their child's treatment.



"It would've been helpful for us to have been connected to supports and resources for family/parents."

-Parent

HOWEVER...

Despite asking families about supports available in the community, most families identified wanting "support" in the form of accessible mental/behavioral health services.

COMMUNICATION

FAMILIES WANT:

- More communication with the facility regarding BOTH treatment AND discharge/aftercare planning.
- Follow up, transparency, and more detailed daily updates about their child.

YOUTH WANT:

- Staff to be more understanding, empathic, and to listen to youth when communicating.

"I would have liked to hear more about her day there. I called to get answers, but it was hard to get people on the phone. More communication. They would send notes home on how she did, but I would like to talk to somebody and find out this is what we did this is and this is what we need to work on. There was none of that"

-Parent/Caregiver

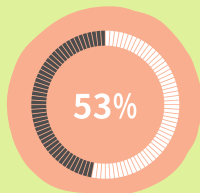
"Listening more. Some staff didn't let me give input, the people who ran groups listened more."

-Youth

SMOOTHER TRANSITIONS

- Parents identified warm hand offs did not occur due to waitlists
- Parents identified concerns about how to renew prescriptions in the interim between services.
- Parents also identified a need for more support, resources, and better crisis planning to help after discharge.

ONLY 53% of parents said "Yes" they felt they had the appropriate support systems in place for themselves and family for their child to transition out of PHP.



"I would have preferred more individual therapy time instead of constant group therapy."

-Youth

The most common identified barriers in the discharge process were:

- waitlists
- no warm hand off
- poor transition planning
- duration of the program

DESPITE UNDERSTANDING MANY OF THESE BARRIERS ARE PRESENT ACROSS THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FIELD, FAMILIES FEEL STUCK NAVIGATING WAITLISTS, LACK OF SERVICES, AND LACK OF SUPPORTS ALONE.

PROGRAM FEEDBACK

- Youth identified more opportunities for individual therapy would have been helpful during partial.
- Parents identified having a partial program of a longer duration would have been more helpful.
- Some parents identified educational needs of their child were not met.
- Families also identified wanting check-ins from the facility after discharge.

THIS FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS A DISCONNECT BETWEEN THE SCOPE OF THE SERVICE AND FAMILIES NEEDS. MANY PARENTS IDENTIFIED KNOWING THAT PHP IS A SHORT-TERM PROGRAM, BUT STILL FELT THE PROGRAM DIDN'T MEET THEIR FAMILIES' NEEDS IN SOME AREAS.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FAMILIES

Recommendations below are inspired by what families shared. Recommendations are advanced under guidance of SAMHSA'S Trauma Informed Care Principles and the PA CASSP Principles.

RECOMMENDATION

Share Feedback with Staff

HIGHLIGHT STAFF.

Families highlighted several areas where staff were respectful, culturally competent, and transparent with families. Incorporating positive feedback with staff can help to reinforce the good work staff are doing.

DISCUSS SCOPE.

It may be beneficial to hold space to discuss the scope of partial hospitalization, as some families' expectations of the service fell outside of what PHP could offer.

UNDERSTAND FAMILIES' PERSPECTIVE.

There were several parents who understood the scope of PHP, but still felt their family would benefit from a different treatment model (e.g., longer duration, more individual therapy, etc.). Sharing this feedback with staff can help staff understand where families expectations lie. It may be beneficial for staff to devote time to discussing this with families during treatment.



RECOMMENDATION

Address Communication Barriers

MEDICATION.

Facility staff did a great job at communicating medication/medication management during treatment. However, many families reported feeling anxious about what to do if a prescription refill is needed during the interim between discharge and admittance to a lower level of care. While facilities cannot change waitlist durations, if a prescription refill is an option, communicating that to parents up front may ease their anxiety during the waiting period.

DETAILS.

Parents reported wanting more detailed feedback about their child's day. They felt this would help the family prepare for their child's return home that day.

LISTEN TO YOUTH.

Youth reported wanting staff to be more empathic, to listen to them, and to be more understanding of their situation. Some youth highlighted it would be helpful to discuss the "future" or "outside world". More specifically, they wanted to know how to use coping skills to handle situations in the future.



RECOMMENDATION

Foster Community Partnerships

ACKNOWLEDGE WAITLISTS.

Families are navigating waitlists for services across the behavioral health system. While providers cannot shorten waitlists, they can connect families to supports within the community to help families feel less isolated during this time.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT CONNECTIONS.

Families identified peer support as one kind of community support they were interested in being connected to both during and after PHP. Connecting families to supports within the community can help build a network of resources/supports for families to utilize to keep children in the home and community.

PARTNER WITH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

Families also identified wanting educational and academic support. Some anxiety associated with returning to school may be eased if families and providers develop a partnership that allows a smooth transition back to school.



Family Satisfaction Team

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) Satisfaction Survey

Our team is independently contracted by Montgomery County to gather feedback regarding families' experience with behavioral health services. With this feedback, the county can provide services in the community that are driven by the needs of families. Our goal is to advocate for families and to amplify the family voice.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your name will not be attached to your responses. Anything you share may be shared with the county, providers, and community stakeholders.



Who Can Complete the Survey?

Montgomery County youth up to age 18 & their parents/caregivers

- + Magellan Behavioral Health as either primary or secondary insurance
- + **Began** Multisystemic Therapy (MST) anytime after April 2021 & **ended** MST prior to October 2022

Surveys may be completed over the phone or online.

Participants
receive
\$10 Amazon
e-gift card

Questions? Please do not hesitate to contact:
Caitlin Kelley, FST Program Supervisor
ckelley@hopeworxinc.org
(610)-618-6540



**Family
Satisfaction
Team**
HopeWorx Inc.

Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q)

Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) is an information-gathering method the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) uses to improve the lives of individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability. Independent teams monitor the satisfaction and outcomes of a random sample of individuals receiving services statewide. Information is used to ensure that people are healthy and safe and to offer services that promote choice and control in their everyday lives.

Get Connected:



Call

(267)-218-3266



Email

Sharon Beck, Program Director
Montgomery County IM4Q
sharonbeck22@gmail.com

- parents/caregivers may also participate
- interviews can be conducted via Zoom, telephone, or in-person



How it Works:

Individuals who are receiving services are asked if an IM4Q team can interview them. Interviewer teams have at least one member who is an individual with a disability or a family member of an individual with a disability. Interviews are conducted in the community (e.g., at someone's home, day program, etc).

Question areas include:

- satisfaction
- dignity, respect, and rights
- emergency preparation
- employment
- relationships
- inclusion
- choice and control

DID YOU KNOW?

- IM4Q teams are independent. This means they are NOT from ODP, the county OR an individual's provider.
- There are 32 IM4Q teams across Pennsylvania

Where Does the Data Go?

After gaining consent, the IM4Q team shares responses with the county & state for consideration. Recommendations for actions are submitted to ODP's Information Sharing and Advisory Committee (ISAC). ODP & ISAC implement, monitor, and evaluate changes to achieve system improvements.

Data is also entered into a statewide database where data is tracked for trends. Some data goes into a national database coordinated with the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI).

For more on how IM4Q data is used to make policy changes statewide, [click here](#)

For permission to cite or copy please contact familysatisfactionteam@hopeworxinc.org

The Future of Montgomery County IM4Q

We asked Montgomery County IM4Q what their hopes for the future of IM4Q are. Here's what they mentioned.

Sharon, *Montgomery County IM4Q Program Director at HopeWorx Inc.*, mentioned:

- Attract more people who receive services to join interview IM4Q teams
- To eliminate the use of the "R" word

Camilla, *Montgomery County IM4Q Program Assistant at HopeWorx Inc.*, mentioned:

- Make a difference in people's lives by interacting with family members of individuals using services
- See the interview instrument adapt to changing scenarios of the people IM4Q interviews
- See more family members as IM4Q staff

Paul, *Montgomery County IM4Q Lead Monitor at HopeWorx Inc.*, mentioned:

- Serve as a resource for families



DATA INTO POLICY CHANGE:

Examples of how IM4Q data has led ODP to institute policy changes to improve service delivery and satisfaction:

ID CARDS: IM4Q data indicated that many people served did not have a valid form of identification. ODP issued a memorandum that all people served in the ODP system are required to have identification cards.

VOTING: IM4Q data indicated many people wanting to vote were not able to do so. Supports coordinators are now directed to regularly ask people if they want to vote and if not registered, they will be provided the necessary assistance to register to vote.

PRIVACY: IM4Q data indicated that many people served were having their mail read without being asked. An ODP memorandum to providers states that a person's privacy with regard to receiving mail must be protected.

Montgomery County Community Support Program (CSP)

Montgomery County's Community Support Program (CSP) Committee brings together individuals that receive mental health services, their family members, providers and the Department of Behavioral Health in an equal partnership to promote recovery and excellence in the delivery of community-based mental health services.

Meetings: 3rd Thursday of every month 1-2:30pm
Online via Zoom and in-person at the Norristown Public Library
For more info contact: pjohnson@hopeworxinc.org or lpetriello@hopeworxinc.org

CSP Webpage

CLICK HERE



Chocolate Mousse

This creamy, delicious chocolate mousse is the perfect dessert for Valentine's Day. It's easy to make and doesn't use raw eggs, making it a safe and tasty treat for the whole family!

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup hot water
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 8 oz quality semi-sweet chocolate bars, finely chopped
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 2 tbsp confectioners' sugar
- 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract



Instructions

1. Whisk the hot water and cocoa powder together.
2. Melt the chopped chocolate bars in a double boiler.
3. Pour hot water/cocoa mixture into melted chocolate and stir until thick and smooth.
4. Using a hand mixer or stand mixer with a whisk attachment, whip the heavy cream, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla extract together on medium-high speed until medium peaks form, about 3-4 minutes.
5. Pour in the chocolate mixture and using a spoon or rubber spatula, gently fold together. Avoid over-mixing which can deflate the mousse.
6. Divide the mousse between individual glasses/ramekins, cover, and chill until set, at least 2 hours. Top with whipped cream and/or fruit and enjoy!

Parent/Caregiver Virtual Support Group

Sponsored by FamilyWorx Family Peer Support & Advocacy Program

Parents and caregivers, you are not alone! Please join us for a virtual family support group for parents/caregivers of children (pre-school to young adult) with behavioral health concerns. There you can connect with other parents who share similar experiences, learn about resources, receive non-judgmental support, and share stories of hope and strength.

All support groups are co-facilitated by Family Peer Support Partners

WHEN:

2nd and 4th Thursday of every month

(excluding holidays)

7:00-8:00 pm

WHERE:

Join us via Zoom from the comfort of your home

* A one-time pre-registration is required for sessions. A Zoom link will be provided in the confirmation email

For more information, please contact:

Lori Warren

Senior Family Peer Support Partner

lwarren@hopeworxinc.org

484-672-1610



Registration is required:

[CLICK HERE](#)

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZckcOqorzkpHdMKz6O_r0XpVjyi9SAEkNCG



HOPEWORX TEAMS

Family Satisfaction Team (FST)

-family & youth survey team

FamilyWorx

-family peer support & advocacy team

AdvocacyWorx

-adult peer support & advocacy team

Community Satisfaction Team (CST)

-adult survey team

CommunityWorx

-micro community at HopeWorx

Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q)

-developmental disabilities survey team

Click on the link
to learn more

COMMUNITY RESOURCES



[Montgomery County Children's Behavioral Health Guide](#)



[Student Assistance Program \(SAP\)](#)



[Mobile Crisis provided by Access Services](#)

1-855-634-HOPE(4673)



[Teen Talk Line provided by Access Services](#)

**call 866-825-5856, text 215-703-8411 or email
teentalkline@accessservices.org**