Dear Stakeholders,

This letter is to encourage you to participate in a demonstration project to use the National Certification process for Parent Support Providers. Since its inception, family involvement has been a core value of systems of care, and a core component of family involvement is the ability for parents who have experience navigating services and systems to help other parents (i.e., parent to parent support). With the support of the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the National Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health collaborated with families, family organizations, researchers, and treatment providers to identify and catalog the role and outcomes of parent to parent support services. “A Job and Task Analysis for Certified Parent Support Providers” brief can be found on the National Federation’s website at www.ffcmh.org or www.ffcmh.org/sites/default/files/psp/documents/PSP%20Job%20and%20Task%20Analysis.pdf

The Parent Support Provider role is quickly evolving and becoming more complex and sophisticated. The National Federation has initiated a national certification program for peer parent support. The Certified Parent Support Provider™ (CPSP) certification defines the uniform standards and title of parents helping other parents who have children (Birth-26) experiencing emotional, behavioral (including substance use) or mental health concerns. Certification promotes ethical practice and creates mobility of workers across states. Certification also helps parents with lived experience gain access to the workforce and increases the acceptance of this effective practice. The May 7, 2013 joint CMS and SAMHSA Informational Bulletin “Coverage of Behavioral Health Services for Children, youth and Young Adults with Significant Mental Health Conditions” (www.ffcmh.org/sites/default/files/psp/documents/CMS-SAMHSABulletin.pdf) supports the inclusion of families in the workforce as peer support providers and identifies strategies to reimburse their services.

In an effort to develop statewide utilization of national certification and the CPSP national exam, the National Federation will select two states or territories who have demonstrated the desire, capacity, and stakeholder support to establish a
Parent Peer Support service. The selected states will create, enhance or augment existing processes to incorporate CPSP’s into the workforce and will utilize the national certification process as the mechanism to reimburse the services.

The goals of this demonstration project are to:

- Promote statewide utilization of parent peer support
- Support states to augment existing peer support models with a parent peer support component
- Create a promising practice guide that endorses reciprocity of statewide and national certification
- Inform the National Federation to enhance and improve the National Certified Parent Support Provider Initiative

The National Federation will provide support and technical assistance to the selected states to create policies and procedures necessary to implement the national CPSP program. The National Federation will also provide five CPSP scholarships to the selected states to individuals with the lived experience of parenting a child who experiences social, emotional, or behavioral challenges to take the national exam.

If you are interested in being a part of this demonstration project, please complete the application by May 15 and return it to the National Federation. If you have any questions, please contact Lynda Gargan at 240-406-1490 or lrichard@ffcmh.org. Please return all applications by May 15, 2014 to:

Lynda Gargan at lrichard@ffcmh.org or

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