

## Breaking Barriers

Youth Peer Support Services breaks barriers related to feelings of loneliness, shame, stigma and low self-esteem through positive role modeling, wellness and recovery.

## Engaging

YPSS is a great tool to engage youth in their treatment because the YPSS understand the feelings associated with mental health challenges and have the ability to share experiences.

## Preventative Care

Youth who participate in YPSS acquire tools to set them up for success.



## Youth Peer Support Services

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# Youth Peer Support

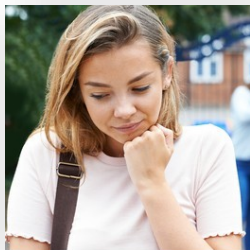


A Statewide Partnership  
between the Michigan  
Department of Health and  
Human Services &  
Association for Children's  
Mental Health



"Anything is possible  
when you have the  
right people there to  
support you."

- Misty Copeland



## What is Youth Peer Support (YPS)?

Youth Peer Support is a new service available to support youth who are receiving mental health services. Youth Peer Support Specialists (YPSS) offer support and resources for youth with serious emotional disturbances (SED) who are receiving services in the community mental health system. The YPSS acts as a key member of the treatment team by working with youth one on one or in a group, supporting them in achieving goals through shared activities and interventions. The YPSS encourages youth empowerment by sharing their personal story of resiliency and recovery, assisting youth in developing skills to improve their functioning and quality of life and working collaboratively with others involved in delivering the youth's services.

## Youth Peer Support Activities May Include:

- Building and fostering relationships with the youth and their family and others working with the youth.
- Preparing the youth to fully participate in their own meetings and treatment planning process.
- Teaching self -advocacy, problem solving and independent living skills.
- Interrupting bias and promoting acceptance while reducing stigma about mental health.
- In collaboration with the youth, working with other internal and external partners to develop natural supports to eliminate barriers to services, or enhance existing community services.
- Serving as a role model and active participant in supporting youth in meeting their treatment plan goals.

## How Long will the YPSS be part of the Treatment Team?

The amount of time a YPSS will support youth will vary due to the goals set and how long it takes youth to reach those goals.

Remember — it is the YPSS job to support youth so that they can successfully build in their resiliency and navigate systems on their own!

## What a YPSS is Not

The role of a YPSS is to partner with youth and their family to support the direction they wish to take in the youth's mental health treatment and care.

## A YPSS is NOT ...

- A friend
- A taxi service
- A therapist
- An advocate
- A case-manager