

Developing a Sustainable Youth-Led Peer Support Program

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2:15 pm ET / 11:15 am PT

Young adults have unique needs that the current mental health system doesn't always meet. Often times, the best ideas about effective mental health supports for youth come from the youth themselves. The SPARK (Students Providing and Receiving Knowledge) Program focuses on empowering young adults and giving them the tools they need to become Certified Peer Counselors in Washington state. Program co-founder Carolyn Cox and the Development Team, Maria Nunez and Kevin Galicia (both SPARK Program graduates), will discuss how they created and launched this innovative program and how they plan to replicate it across the state and nation.

Join us for this 60-minute webinar to explore how to:

- Develop an engaging youth program
- Create a system of care surrounding your program
- Effectively replicate a successful program

Meet the Presenters:

Carolyn Cox has worked as a Peer Support Specialist for over 15 years, with an emphasis in working with families and youth. She runs her own consulting business, Family First Consulting, and sits on a number of local and state boards in Washington state. Currently, Carolyn works with youth in the SPARK Program at New Horizons Alternative High School in Pasco, Washington. After realizing how helpful peer support would have been to her as she was growing up, she co-founded the SPARK Program, which she considers to be one of her biggest accomplishments.

Maria Nunez is a graduate of the SPARK Program and currently works on the SPARK Development Team. She is also a Peer Counselor at Comprehensive Health Care for their New Journeys program. Maria is the first Latina youth appointed to the Behavioral Health Advisory Council by the Governor. She is passionate about helping and being an advocate for youth and is determined to see her dreams and visions for the future become reality – for herself and other youth nationwide.

Kevin Galicia was introduced to the SPARK Program during a difficult time in his recovery. He saw it as a sign of hope and was able to learn more about behavioral health and using his lived experience to support others. He fell in love with the field of peer support. After becoming a Certified Peer Counselor, Kevin took a role in developing the future of the SPARK Program. He also works with his region’s Family Youth System Partner Round Table (FYSPRT), a Juvenile Justice Systems Diversion Program, and the International Association of Peer Supporters.

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