

Winter 2025 | Vol. 11

IN THE LOOP

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



We are the Family Satisfaction Team (FST). We hope you enjoy our issue of In the Loop. In this issue you will find upcoming family community events, Black History Month resources, MontCo Mental Health Awards nomination information, as well as other events, opportunities, and resources. Email us any suggestions to familysatisfactionteam@hopeworxinc.org

Inside this issue:

Welcome.....	1
Upcoming Events.....	2
Sweetheart Dance.....	3
Zoo Events.....	4
MH Awards.....	5
Black History Month.....	6
Podcast & Art Competition.....	7
Youth Gaming Group.....	8
Outpatient Survey Results.....	9
Recipe Corner.....	11
FST Surveys.....	12
Support Group.....	13
Help Resources.....	14
Program Contacts.....	15

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).

FREE

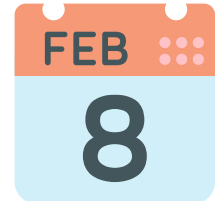
UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS



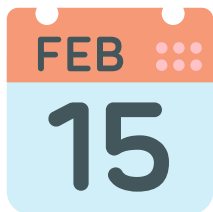
click links for more info!

VALENTINE CRAFT WORKSHOP FOR KIDS

Valentine Craft Workshop for Kids! Let's get crafty! At this free, drop-in workshop, kids will make themed crafts at their own pace. All materials provided. Workshop will be held in the classroom building at Pennypacker Mills.



10 AM-1 PM



12-3 PM

"ART TO HEART" FAMILY DAY

Celebrate all things love and art! Make valentines and gifts for your loved ones, explore love and hearts in the collection, and enjoy refreshments. Get creative by crafting a classic valentine, a vintage puzzle purse, or a felt bouquet! Held at Frances M. Maguire Art Museum.

STUFFED ANIMAL SLEEPOVER AT POTTS GROVE MANOR

Bring your lovies and snuggle buddies for their very own night at the museum! Watch as they discover history and have fun frolicking through the Manor with special pictures and videos delivered to your email inbox. Reunite with your stuffed animal the following day at 1pm and take a tour of their special hiding spaces! Registration required for ages 3-10



3 PM



10 AM-1 PM

SPRING CRAFT WORKSHOP FOR KIDS

Spring Craft Workshop for Kids! Let's get crafty! At this free, drop-in workshop, kids will make themed crafts at their own pace. All materials provided. Workshop will be held in the classroom building at Pennypacker Mills.

Pre-registration preferred.



HAVE FUN AND CREATE MEMORIES

FAMILY SWEETHEART DANCE

SAT FEB 15 | 6:00-8:00 PM

(Open to all family member dynamics)

INDIAN VALLEY YMCA

- \$25 per COUPLE
(One Adult/One Child)
- \$5 for each additional child
(children ages 3-10 yrs old)
- \$10 for each additional adult



Registration at our Membership Desk or Online (Members Only)

DJ ♥ DANCING ♥ FACE PAINTING ♥ GAMES

Hot dogs and snacks will be served.

Confetti Balloon Sticks for sale

All proceeds benefit North Penn YMCA's Annual Gifts Campaign.

For more information, please contact:

Dominique Lanza at DominiqueL@northpennymca.org

Alex LaRosa at AlexL@northpennymca.org

INDIAN VALLEY FAMILY YMCA

890 Maple Ave. Harleysville, PA 19438 | 215.723.3569 | NorthPennYMCA.org



ELMWOOD PARK
ZOO



click links for more event info!

Free Admission for Norristown Borough Residents

Elmwood Park Zoo extends our gratitude to our loyal Norristown residents by offering FREE zoo admission to residents the last Saturday and Sunday of every month.

Quiet Mornings

Join us for a tranquil morning at the Zoo!

The last Thursday of every month the zoo will open an hour early for Quiet Mornings. This is a great opportunity for our guests with special needs and their families to enjoy a more relaxing visit to the zoo. Quiet Mornings offer a less-crowded setting before the zoo opens to the general public.*

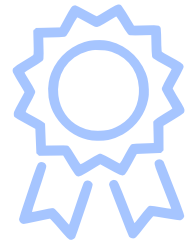
Winterfest Weekend

Feb 15 & 16!

*Join us for Elmwood Park Zoo's Winterfest Weekend!
We're embracing the chilly weather with winter-themed entertainment and fun activities, including a big ice slide!*



Montgomery County 47th Annual MH Awards Nominations



Nominations are open for the 12th Annual CSP Conference & 47th Annual Mental Health Awards Reception!

*The **Recovery and Resiliency Awards** are intended to recognize individuals, children, families, programs, and organizations that exemplify Recovery and/or Resiliency Principles. These awards recognize effort and accomplishment of significant quality that extends beyond the typical expectations of job description, typical role or position.*

*The **Innovation Award** recognizes an individual whose passion for innovation and excellence in service delivery goes above and beyond the high standards that have already been set by Montgomery County mental health community. This award is presented to an individual who has engaged in incredible trailblazing and community altering work, demonstrated ingenious use of creativity, and who continues to exemplify an enduring spirit of hope and recovery.*

You may submit nominations in all categories, or pick and choose. Multiple nominations are welcome.

Please complete nominations by Friday, April 4, 2025.

Online Nomination Form



African Americans and



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

2025

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Weekly virtual panel discussions with community leaders about the impact of African Americans in the labor movement through insightful conversations with community leaders.

<p>FEB 05 WEEK 1 Challenges in the Black American Labor Force</p>	<p>FEB 12 WEEK 2 Black Wealth and Financial Literacy: Building a Stronger Future</p>	<p>FEB 19 WEEK 3 Black Women in Leadership</p>
--	---	---

IN-PERSON PROGRAM

Join us for a celebration with music, singing, dancing, etc.

Lunch will be served after event.

Where:

DeKalb Center Norristown,
Community Room, 1st Floor
1430 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401

When:

February 26, 2025
Wednesday
11:30AM - 1:00PM

REGISTER AT

WWW.MONTGOMERYCOUNTYPA.GOV/BLACKHISTORYMONTH



Tangled Routes



A Storytelling Podcast
Navigating Youth & Family Systems

Journey through systems that shape the lives of youth, young adults, and families living with mental health needs. Each episode shares real-life experiences, as told by the very people who lived them.

LISTEN



IN HONOR OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR,
POTTSTOWN NAACP PRESENTS

THE DREAM IS ALIVE

YOUTH ART COMPETITION

ARTWORK DUE MARCH 3RD

- ARTWORK MUST BE ORIGINAL
- ARTWORK SHOULD REPRESENT THIS YEAR'S THEME: THE DREAM IS ALIVE AND WHAT THAT MEANS TO YOU
- SIZE REQUIREMENTS: POSTERBOARD 22" BY 28"



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND FOR ART SUPPLIES, PLEASE CONTACT MARIE AT
TOPOTTSTOWNARTS@GMAIL.COM OR ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM AS
POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY ARTS



GAME TOGETHER

THRIVE TOGETHER

LEVEL_UP_YOUTH!

Join us for an epic experience!
Connect with Youth MOVE PA staff and fellow gamers while enjoying some fun games. It's a great opportunity to receive and offer support to others in a thriving community!

Fridays 7:00-8:30 pm



https://www.twitch.tv/level_up_youth





2024 OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES 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. Outpatient therapy services include assessment, psychiatric evaluation, psychotherapy, and medication management. Frequency, duration, and modality (individual, group, family therapy) may vary dependent on the individual's needs.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

1098 ELIGIBLE FAMILIES

508 ELIGIBLE YOUTH 14+

Montgomery County youth (aged 14-18) with PA HealthChoices as either their primary or secondary insurance who were currently receiving Outpatient Therapy services for at least 6 months from any county-designated provider were eligible. Parents and caregivers (of children aged up to 18) of those meeting the above criteria were also eligible to participate.

235 PARENTS/ CAREGIVERS **50 YOUTH**

Detailed sample demographic data are available upon request.

6 ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS

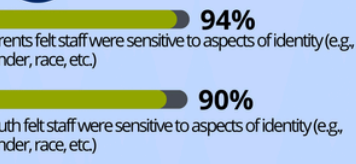
FINDINGS

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.

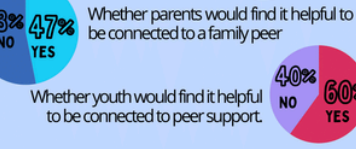


1 SAFETY

CULTURAL HISTORICAL + GENDER ISSUES



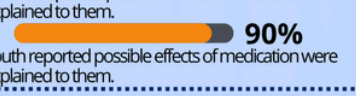
3 PEER SUPPORT



4 COLLABORATION + MUTUALITY



MEDICATION MANAGEMENT



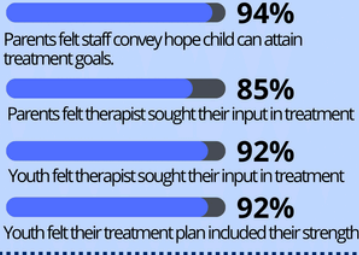
OVERALL SATISFACTION



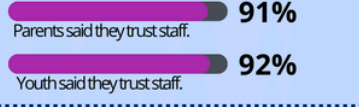
"It gives me an outlet every week. I'm satisfied with where I am. We address issues when they occur."
-Youth on "What was helpful during OP"

"She can learn new coping skills that she uses in the community. She can vocalize her emotions better."
-Parent on "What was helpful during OP"

5 EMPOWERMENT, VOICE, + CHOICE



2 TRANSPARENCY + TRUST



SAFETY Several families commented on how therapy was a safe space for their child/ them.

"She had a **safe place** to be heard where the focus was just her."
-Parent Voice

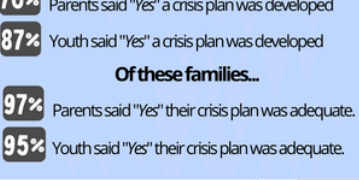
"It gave a **safe place** to talk without being judged."
-Parent Voice

"It gives me a **safe space** to let out my feelings and emotions and I can **trust** my therapist to listen and support me through whatever I'm going through or dealing with..."
-Youth Voice

"It helps me feel comforted and be able to say things in a **safe way**. I have the freedom to speak my mind."
-Youth Voice

"My therapist is very flexible with my schedule and creates a **safe space** during our telehealth sessions."
-Youth Voice

CRISIS PLANNING



WHAT FAMILIES SAID...



COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

Community supports families identified being interested in:

- Activities in the community (e.g., sports, clubs, events)
- Mental/Behavioral Health Resources (e.g., NAMI)
- Peer support for youth (e.g., Teen Talk Line)
- Educational Support

62% of parents said it would be helpful if their therapist connected their family to additional community supports.

"I ask if there are any low-cost sports that I could put them in to help burn off some energy, but they don't have anything."

"I don't know what to ask for because I don't know what's out there. They don't really give us any resources."

WHAT WENT WELL...

FEELING SUPPORTED

Parents and youth highlighted how supportive outpatient therapy was. More specifically, they highlighted how outpatient therapy allowed for youth to open up and trust their therapist.

"They give a lot of support. They commend her achievements. They also have an open ear to issues she may have whether it's an overload of schoolwork or whatever is stressing her out at the time. They get her to interact socially."

"The therapist was amazing. He was awesome. I would recommend him to anybody. The way he ran his sessions, he connected to him. If we had to reschedule an appointment, he was very open and helped us. He was very supportive. I would sometimes contact him outside of therapy sessions and he would immediately get back to me."

"It's helpful because her therapist also reaches out to us and takes our opinions as well to better incorporate the right treatment."



"Great therapist and psychiatrist. Make sure us as parents understand what's going on, and she can understand in a way that she can comprehend what is being said. I really like that they break that down for both sides to understand."

AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION...

CONSISTENCY & EXPECTATIONS

Comments made by families suggest that some clarification around objectives and what to expect may be helpful.

"... It is difficult to get in touch with a live person when medication pre-authorizations and refills are needed immediately. I wish there was better planning around these medication situations."

FLEXIBILITY

When asked how Outpatient Therapy could be more helpful, some families mentioned greater flexibility regarding modality, frequency, duration, and/or scheduling of treatment.

"It could provide weekend and evening appointments to working parents."



"One session in-person per month instead of all telehealth."

"Family therapy would be helpful."

TURNOVER

Families highlighted how turnover impacted progress and connection. Families also highlighted the role systemic barriers play in staffing and retention.

"Consistency and retention rate has been challenging for us. With planning, meeting times, and SMART goals treatment planning is lacking because of the constant turnover. Making progress has been stagnant. Consistency would be great to make progress."

"Continuity of care [high turnover]. We haven't received the same service from the same person. We're in a constant state of change for kids that don't originally adapt well. As soon as they get settled, ding they're gone. They do much better with a long-term relationship. As soon as they get into the meat and potatoes, we switch. That is what's frustrating. I like the provider, I don't like the system."

COMPLAINTS/ GRIEVANCES

Families were not always informed of how to file a complaint or grievance.



RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FAMILY FEEDBACK

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

RECOMMENDATION

Fostering Consistent, Trusting Relationships with Families

CONTINUE PROVIDING A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH

- Share positive feedback with staff, acknowledging how trauma-informed service delivery was.
- Families emphasized how important it was that therapy provided a safe and supportive space.

CONTINUE FAMILY-FOCUSED SERVICE DELIVERY WITH CONSISTENT AND PERSONALIZED CARE

- Ensure consistent, personalized care to build trust.
- As much as possible, maintain therapist consistency and flexible scheduling.



Everyone is very nice and understanding. They take their time to listen and get to know me.

RECOMMENDATION

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

CONTINUE A COMMITMENT TO FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

- Involve families through open communication and collaborative planning.

EXPLORE WHAT PARENT INCLUSION MEANS TO STAFF

- Review comments related to satisfaction with medication management.
- Clarify what family inclusion means to staff, especially regarding medication management.
- For some families, inclusion in medication management looks like being informed of scheduling changes, medication changes, etc. While for other families, inclusion also incorporates thoughts and concerns related to medication. In these scenarios, families are more collaborative partners in treatment.

CLARIFYING TREATMENT EXPECTATIONS

- Ensure understanding for both staff and parents of mental health consent and family engagement as it relates to ACT 65.



He didn't feel like he was heard. He said he didn't like how the medication made him feel but she [Psychiatrist] told him to keep taking it.

RECOMMENDATION

Community Partnerships

CONTINUE FOSTERING AND STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS

- Strengthen connections to community supports, expanding resources where needed.
- Maintain partnerships with schools, stakeholders, and peer networks.
- Encourage families to engage with community resources where possible.

FAMILIES EXPRESSED INTEREST IN:

- Activities in the community (e.g., sports, clubs, events)
- Mental/Behavioral Health Resources (e.g., NAMI)
- Peer Support for Youth (e.g., Teen Talk Line)



RECIPE CORNER

Valentine's Day Cookies

These simple Valentine's Day cookies are irresistibly delicious and come together in under 20 minutes! Soft, chewy, and packed with chocolate in every bite.

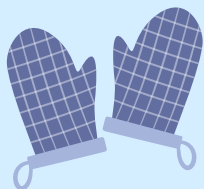
INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup butter *softened
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups flour *all purpose
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 10 oz bag M&M's (Cupid Mix)



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a medium bowl, cream the the butter, white sugar, brown sugar, egg, and vanilla together.
3. Add in the flour, cornstarch, baking soda, and salt.
4. Mix in the M&M's
5. Scoop dough into balls and place on cookie sheet
6. Bake 10-11 minutes.
7. Remove cookie sheet from oven and allow to cool. Enjoy!



[click here for more recipes](#)



FAMILY SATISFACTION SURVEYS



Currently Surveying: >>

Residential Treatment (RTF)

Youth age 14+ & their parents/caregivers may be surveyed after discharge.

Data collection closes
September 2025

Upcoming Surveying: >>

Mobile Crisis

Youth age 14+ & parents/caregivers of children up to age 18 are eligible.

Data collection period pending

Partial Hospitalization

Youth age 14-18 & parents/caregivers of children up to age 18 are eligible.

Data collection period pending

WHAT HAPPENS TO FST SURVEYS?

Below is a brief overview of the process FST follows to share survey feedback with providers, the county, and community stakeholders.

1

2

3

4

STORING DATA

Your survey responses are stored securely until data collection closes. FST checks to make sure no identifying information (names, descriptions, locations) are included in comments. We do this to make sure that no one can identify a family by their responses.

ANALYZING

FST looks for themes across families' comments. Calculates percentages & averages in quantitative data. FST compares data across providers, across parents and youth, and across previous years' survey data (if available).

MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary infographic is prepared. An report of findings across all providers for that particular service is shared with the county. FST prepares individual provider reports highlighting strengths and improvement. FST also prepares presentations for providers with recommendations based on YOUR feedback as well as state and national guidelines for behavioral health services.

CLOSING THE LOOP

FST devotes a part of provider presentations to the final step in the county's QI process called "Closing the Loop". Providers have two weeks to fill out a form identifying what they did well, AND a goal plan to incorporate family feedback from the survey. Providers identify how long it will take for them to achieve this goal & the county and FST stay updated on progress.

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

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



RESOURCES

**Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
988**

**ANAD Eating Disorders Helpline:
1 (888)-375-7767**

**RAINN Sexual Assault Hotline:
1 (800)-656-4673**

The Steve Fund:
Support for Students of Color
Text "STEVE" to 741741

The Trevor Project:
Support for LGBTQ+ Youth
1-866-488-7386 [trevorspace.org](https://www.trevorspace.org)

Montgomery County Mobile Crisis:
by Access Services
1-855-634-4673

Montgomery County Teen Talk Line:
by Access Services
call 866-825-5856 // text 215-703-8411

HOPEWORX TEAMS



click links below to learn more!

Family Satisfaction Team (FST)

-family & youth survey team

Community Satisfaction Team (CST)

-adult survey team

FamilyWorx

-family peer support & advocacy team

AdvocacyWorx

-adult peer support & advocacy team

CommunityWorx

-community & market, Street Medicine, etc.

Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q)

-developmental disabilities survey team

Ferns Peer Respite

-peer-run respite space, now open

COMMUNITY RESOURCES



Montgomery County
Department of
Health and Human Services



**Montgomery County Children's
Behavioral Health Guide**



Student Assistance Program (SAP)