

Part I: Understanding the Challenges Families Face and the Benefits Available to Them

Stabilizing Housing for Families of Children Who Experience Mental Health and/or Substance Use Challenges

September 30, 2:00-3:00 pm ET



Series Description

Families who have children of any age living with them who experience mental health and/or substance use challenges are more likely than others to experience homelessness. Additionally, during times of stress or crisis, children are less likely to be engaged in mental health and substance use support services - times when they and their families need help the most. Often, these children act out loudly or engage in destructive behavior on the property where their families live. These behaviors may result in families facing eviction and homelessness.

In this 2-part series presented by the Homeless and Housing Resource Center (HHRC) and National Family Support Technical Assistance Center (NFSTAC), we will share important information about family homelessness and the supports available to help families regain housing stability.

Learning Objectives

- To better understand homelessness among families whose children experience mental health and/or substance use challenges
- To hear about the real-life challenges families face in navigating housing when children who live at home struggle with mental health and/or substance use challenges
- To learn about programs, such as SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery), that support families who experience housing instability
- To equip Family Peer Specialists with knowledge and techniques to help families access the housing benefits available

Register for Part 1

Meet the Presenters

Clarissa McGee

Clarissa is the mother of five children, four of whom are now adults. Several of her children were diagnosed with mental health challenges that began at a very early age. She was working as a Property Manager with the Housing Authority, when faced with the daunting task of navigating systems she knew nothing of, like Child Protective Services, the education system, and mental health services. Clarissa secured a job working with children as a special education assistant and then went on to support families navigating those same systems. Clarissa is passionate about peer support, advocacy, and empowering families. As a single parent, survivor of domestic violence and childhood trauma, she knows what it's like to feel alone and like no one understands. She believes in the power of peer support, in helping families find their voice and the realization that they are not alone.



Abigail Kirkman, M.A.

Abby is an Assistant Director for the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center. She is the SOAR subject matter expert on American Indian and Alaska Native populations and has expertise with implementing SOAR in rural communities. She serves as the SOAR TA Center liaison to 9 states including CO, CT, DE, IL, MT, NY, PA, VA, and VT. Prior to joining Policy Research Associates she worked as a case manager and employment specialist where she managed programs to retrain and employ youth and individuals with disabilities. She also coordinated a housing and employment program for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Abigail has a B.A. from the College of William & Mary, an M.A. from the State University of New York at Albany, and has received comprehensive SSI/SSDI benefits training through Cornell University.



Register for Part 1

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www.hhrctraining.org



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This co-branded webinar is presented by The National Family Support Technical Assistance Center (NFSTAC), Grant# 1H79F6000160, and the Homeless and Housing Resource Center (HHRC) Grant# 1H79SM083003-01, which are funded by SAMHSA.