



Northwest (HHS Region 10)

**MHTTC**

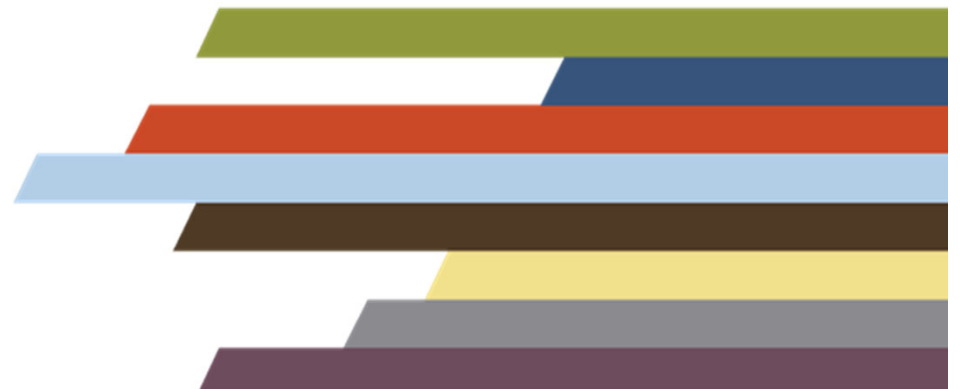
Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# Retaining and Growing the Youth Peer Support Workforce

## Youth Peer Support Webinar Series

***SAMHSA***  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

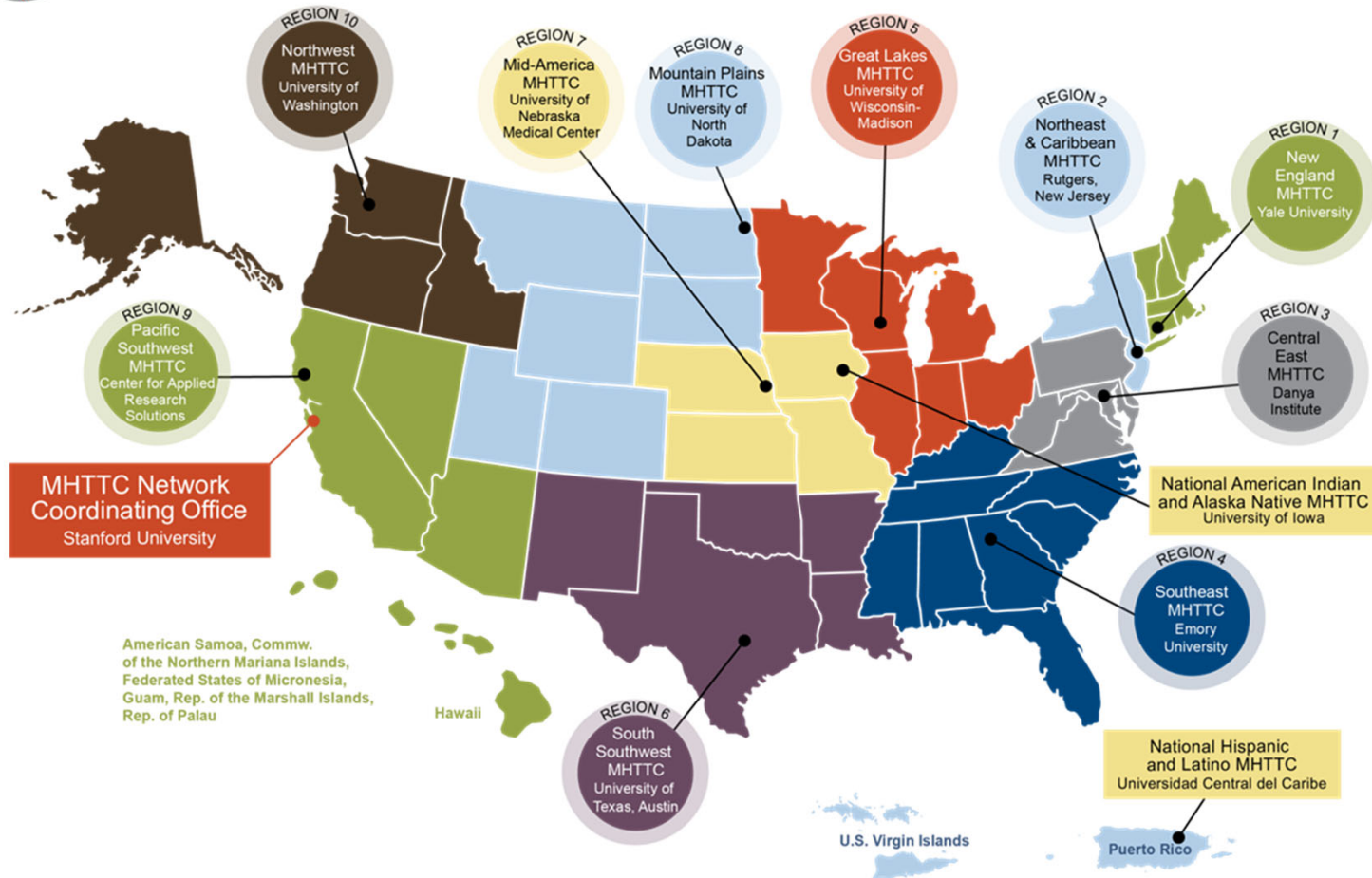




**MHTTC**

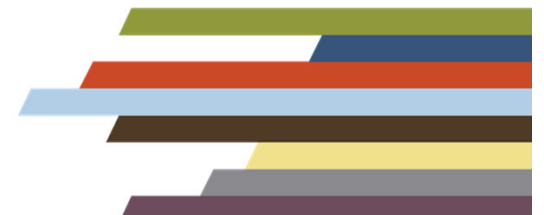
**Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network**  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

**MHTTC Network**



**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

This work is supported by grant SM 081721 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



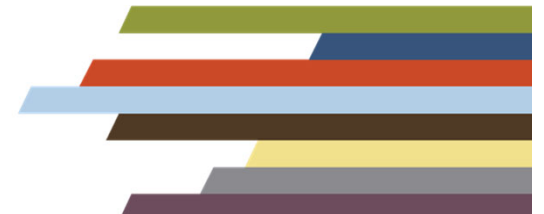
# Northwest Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

## Our Role

Provide training and technical assistance (TA) in evidence-based practices (EBP) to behavioral health and primary care providers, and school and social service staff whose work has the potential to improve behavioral health outcomes for individuals with or at risk of developing serious mental illness in SAMHSA's Region 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington).

## Our Goals

- Heighten awareness, knowledge, and skills of the workforce addressing the needs of individuals with mental illness
- Accelerate adoption and implementation of mental health-related EBPs across Region 10
- Foster alliances among culturally diverse mental health providers, policy makers, family members, and clients



The use of affirming language inspires hope and advances recovery.

---

LANGUAGE MATTERS.

---

**Words have power.**

A graphic consisting of five horizontal blue lines of equal length, stacked vertically.

**PEOPLE FIRST.**

A graphic consisting of five horizontal blue lines of equal length, stacked vertically.

The MHTTC uses affirming language to promote the promises of recovery by advancing evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

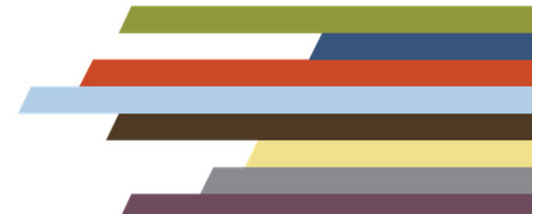
# Today's Trainers



Caitlin Baird is a Project Manager and Trainer with Pathways RTC at Portland State University. Caitlin has experience working directly with transition-aged youth and young adults as a peer support specialist and as a supervisor for peer support specialists in wraparound and other mental health settings.



Maria Hermesen-Kritz is a Research Assistant with Pathways RTC at Portland State University. She has experience providing peer support for transition-aged youth, supervising youth peer support specialists, and managing a youth drop-in center program.



# Agenda

1. Understanding Peerness
2. Creating a friendly agency culture
3. Peer-to-peer connection
4. Peer workforce ladder

# Learning Objectives

After today you will:

- Better understand how to create and uphold a peer culture within your agency
- Better understand why hiring a team of diverse peers is important
- Better understand how to help peers grow into supervisor (or other) roles

# Poll

Who do we have with us today?

Hello  
my name is



# Understanding Peerness

- “Peerness” is built upon YPSSs proximity in age to and shared lived experience with the youth they support
  - By also being young people, YPSSs distinguish themselves from most professionals youth have worked with, or are currently working with
  - YPSSs likely look different, dress different, and have knowledge of youth culture that connects them to young people
  - YPSSs also might use technology, like texting, Facebook, Instagram, etc., to connect with the young people they support



This man is not a Youth Peer Support Specialist

# Understanding Peerness

- Youth peer support specialists are professional providers, but their interactions with youth may look different because of shared lived experience.
- Often times relationships are more informal and conversational.
- The youth peer support specialists primary role is to help youth advocate for themselves, guide their treatment plans, and de-stigmatize the youth's experience.

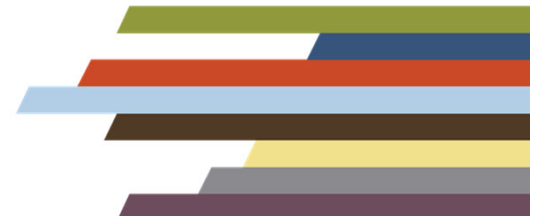
# Example



# Understanding Peerness

- Due to the unique nature of the youth peer's role, the youth peer and other treatment providers may not always be on the same page.
- The youth peer is not tasked with telling the youth what to do, sharing what the youth has said with other team members, nor representing the voice of other treatment providers.

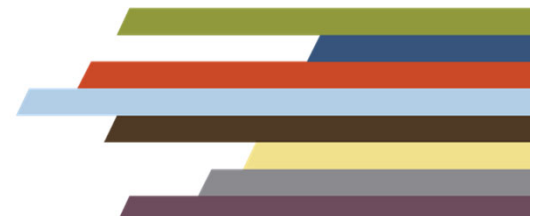
# Creating a Friendly Agency Culture



# Mission and Vision

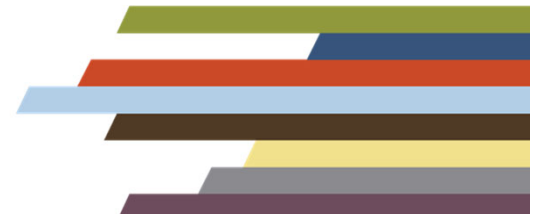
The first step in ensuring that your agency is ready to accept youth peer support specialists is ensuring that your mission and vision statement share the values of peerness, and clearly express such.

Example: *“[Insert agency name here] values and listens to the voices of those who have experienced mental health challenges, trauma, and systemic oppression, and let these voices of experience guide our work.”*



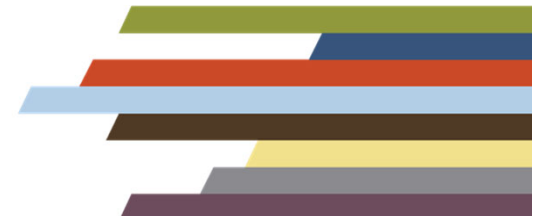
# Policies and Practices

- Agencies that house peers should have policies that support health, wellness and self-care.
- Youth peers should have the option to take mental health days.
- Youth peers should be paid equitably with other staff.



# Policies and Practices

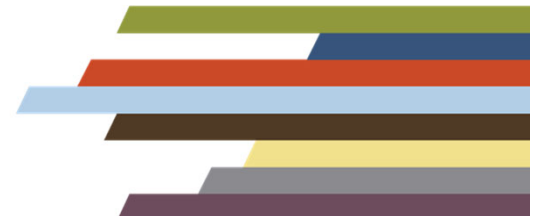
- Youth peers should have the ability to maintain a flexible work schedule in order to better meet the needs of their youth.
- In order to effectively do their job, youth peers may need to text their youth.
- Social media (in a supervised fashion) will also allow youth peers to effectively communicate with youth.





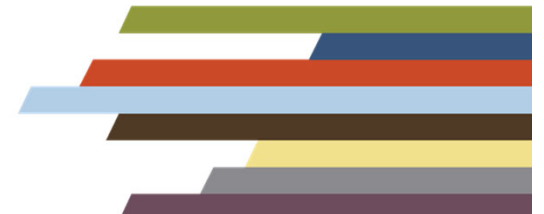
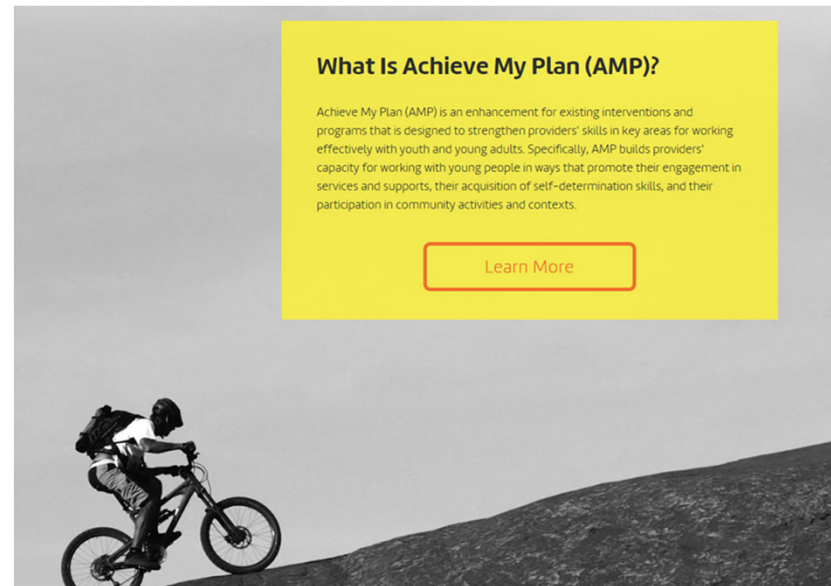
# Training and Coaching

- Staff members at your agency should receive training about the youth peer support role prior to working with youth peer support specialists.
- Youth peer support specialists should receive a 40 certification training (that is exclusive just for youth peers).
- Youth peer support specialists should have the opportunity to co-lead trainings that focus on the role.



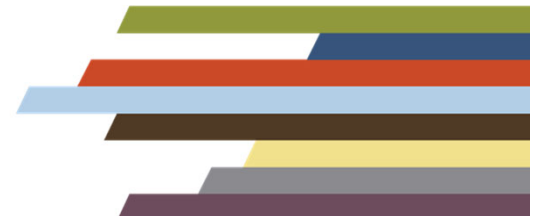
# Training and Coaching

- Other trainings that youth peers might attend:
  - ASIST: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
  - AMP+: Achieve My Plan +
  - Collaborative Problem Solving

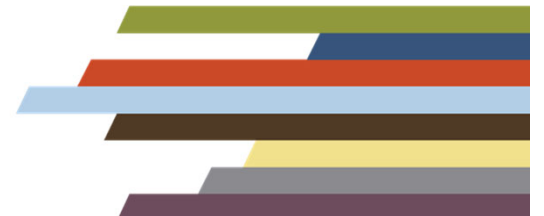


# Supervision

- Ideally, youth peers should be supervised by other youth peers.
- If this is not the case, try to ensure that youth peers receive some sort of group coaching or supervision.
- Youth peers should have regular and consistent supervision.
  - Supervision should focus on self-care, be trauma informed, and focus on growth.
  - If punitive action needs to be taken, the youth peer support specialist should know ahead of time!

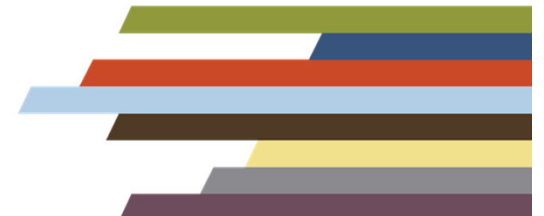


# Peer-to-Peer Connection



# Peer-to-Peer Connection

- 1
  - Youth peer support is a relatively new role, so often times there are not many youth peer support specialists within one agency.
  - Youth peer support specialists are also often working out in the community and so may rarely get to connect with one another.
  - Even if there is a strong bond within your agency it is imperative that youth peer support specialists have opportunities to connect with others who share their role.



## Slide 21

---

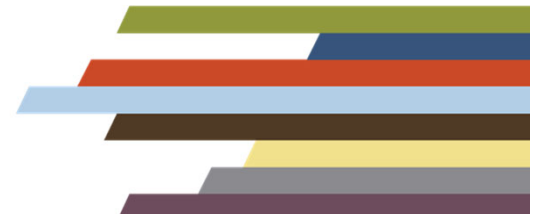
1

+mhermsen@pdx.edu do you want to take on this bad boy?

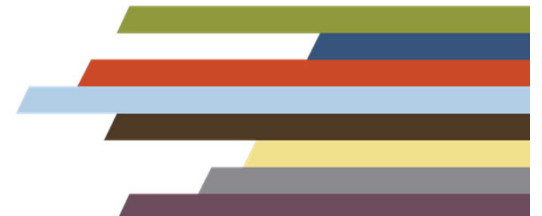
Caitlin Baird, 2/1/2020

# Peer-to-Peer Connection

- If your agency does not have a robust staff of youth peers:
  - Partner with other agencies in your area so that peers might be able to attend training/coaching together.
  - Research community of practice groups for youth peer support specialists.
  - Contract with youth peer agencies to provide coaching and support.
  - Prioritize the hiring of youth peer support specialists!



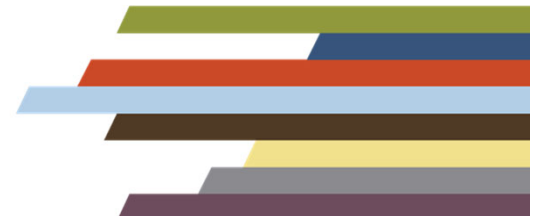
# Creating a Career Ladder





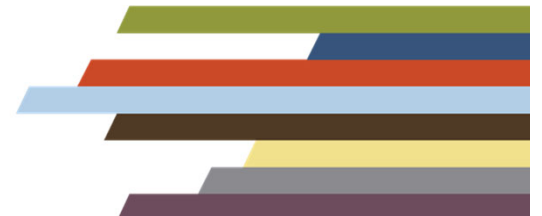
# Creating a Career Ladder

- For many youth peer support specialists this is their first professional job, and they may not have an idea of what they would like to do in the future.
- Supervisors should work with youth peer support staff to outline their goals related to career and education.
  - It is best if this is done without “leading” or telling the youth peer support specialist what to do.

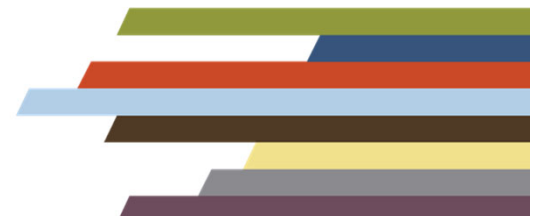


# Creating a Career Ladder

- This is a unique role where not everyone can do it forever, as youth peers should usually be young adults.
- Youth peers generally feel more secure if they see that there are opportunities for improvement in their agencies.
- Youth peer support specialists should be considered for supervisory positions when it comes to supervising other youth peers.



# Discussion



# Let us know what you think!

## Post-event surveys are *critical* to our work!

- Please complete the evaluation by following the link in the chat box.
- Evaluation data is necessary for continued funding to offer programs like this!

**MHCT Network - GPA Post-Event Form - Training**

Please print clearly in the boxes below using blue or black ink. Print only one number or letter in each square. Upper case letters only.

Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Code: 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Form Approved  
 OMB NO. 0930-0216  
 Date 09/30/2019  
(See burden estimate on next page)

---

**Personal Code (please use upper case letters):**

First letter in Mother's first name:		First letter in Mother's maiden name:	
First Digit of Social Security Number:		Last Digit of Social Security Number:	

---

**PLEASE BASE YOUR ANSWERS ON HOW YOU FELT ABOUT THE SESSION NOW.**

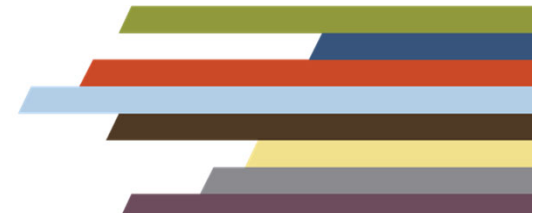
	DisSatisfied	dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1. How satisfied are you with the overall quality of this training?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. How satisfied are you with the quality of the information/instruction from this training?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. How satisfied are you with the quality of the training materials?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Overall, how satisfied are you with your training experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

**PLEASE INDICATE YOUR AGREEMENT WITH THESE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE TRAINING.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5. The training was well organized.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. The material presented in the training will be useful to me in dealing with mental health.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. The instructor was knowledgeable about the subject matter.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. The instructor was well prepared for the course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. The instructor was receptive to participant comments and questions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I am currently effective when working in this topic area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. The training enhanced my skills in this topic area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. The training was relevant to my career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Every survey we receive helps us to improve and develop our programing.  
We greatly appreciate your feedback!**



# Get in Touch!



**Visit us online:**

**[www.mhttcnetwork.org/northwest](http://www.mhttcnetwork.org/northwest)**



**Follow us on social media:**

**[@NorthwestMHTTC](https://twitter.com/NorthwestMHTTC)**

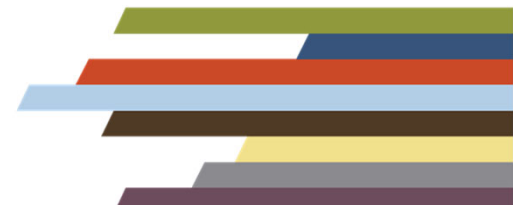


**Email us:**

**[northwest@mhttcnetwork.org](mailto:northwest@mhttcnetwork.org)**

## **Find out about:**

- Upcoming trainings
- New online trainings
- Resources and Research Updates



# Thank you!



Northwest (HHS Region 10)

**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

