

# Youth Peer Support

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# Who We Are

The CT Support Group is an online platform funded by the state that provides connection, peer support, and community for teens and young adults in Connecticut. Our goal is to provide an inclusive, trauma-informed space that prioritizes consent, choice, and mutual respect for young people to share their experiences and build a supportive community.

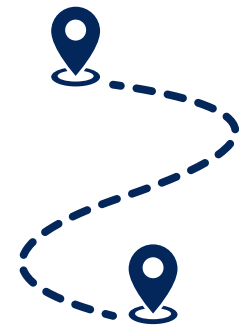


# Our Offerings



## CONNECTION

Website & Discord server providing blogs, personal stories, a service locator map, and other resources by topic



## PEER SUPPORT

Virtual and in-person peer support for teens and young adults in Connecticut, connections to peer supporters & peer support groups throughout the state.



## COMMUNITY

Discord server for young people to connect with one another, build community, and share their creative expressions



# Peer Support

What it is,  
what it isn't,  
and why it's important.

## Peer support is:

- Collaborative and mutual
- Rooted in curiosity, consent, and choice, not fear
- Non-hierarchical
- About conversation, giving and taking, and moving towards self defined goals

# Peer Support

What it is,  
what it isn't,  
and why it's important.

## Peer support is not:

- Starting with the assumption of a problem
- Having a paid friend
- Taking care of someone
- Doing for or taking responsibility for or over another individual

# Peer Support

What it is,  
what it isn't,  
and why it's important.

## Importance of Peer Support:

- Source of validation and understanding from someone who "gets it"
- Improves mental health and recovery outcomes for participants
- Provides participants with relevant and timely resources
- Offered by trained and certified peer support specialists in CT

# Testimonial

**My name is Ery, I am a freshman in college, and I have been meeting with Quinn as a participant for the past two and a half years, since I was 17. Throughout this time, Quinn has been there to talk with me about whatever has been going on in my life, and they have supported me through the ups and downs I have experienced. Overall, having Quinn as a mentor and a supporter has been an awesome experience, as they have been there to talk with me and have offered insight and guidance when I needed it. I think every teenager/young adult should be able to have someone like that!**

# Current Barriers

Lack of peer support availability to young people in CT, especially those not engaged in a state run or funded clinical program

Lack of awareness of peer support offerings statewide

No insurance reimbursement for peer support services in the state

# Policy Options

Expand peer support availability to individuals under 18 years old

Have State Department of Education require school systems to share digital peer support fliers with students and families

Support making peer support services reimbursable by insurance while maintaining the integrity of the peer support model



# Current Barriers

Little funding for peer support organizations and projects

Few employment opportunities for certified Recovery Support Specialists

No existing peer support supervision pathway leaving peer supporters to be supervised by clinicians

# Policy Options

Allocate additional funding for peer support projects like the CT Support Group, Join Rise Be's Young Adult Warmline, NAMI CT, SMART Recovery, etc.

Increase the number of peer support specialist roles in state run and funded programs

Develop and implement a supervision model for peer support specialist roles



# Access Points



## Social Media



Instagram, Facebook,  
YouTube, TikTok, and our website

## Community Connections

Schools, libraries, mental health  
providers, nonprofits, DCF, DMHAS  
Young Adult Services

## Events

Band2Gether 4 Mental Health, Young  
Adult Leadership Summit, NorWALK  
for Mental Health, Get Real Day,  
Fresh Check Day

# Resources

- [SAMHSA Peer Support Services in Crisis Care June 2022 - Research Overview of Peer Support Outcomes & Cost Effectiveness](#)
- [Expanding Peer Support and Supporting the Peer Workforce in Mental Health SAMHSA 2024 - How States Can Support the Inclusion of Peer Support in the Behavioral Health Continuum](#)
- [Intentional Peer Support Approach by Shery Mead](#) - Framework of Peer Support referenced throughout CT's Recovery Support Specialist Trainings
- [CHDI Students Helping Students Issue Brief December 2023](#) - Integrating Peer Support in CT's Schools to Enhance Student Wellbeing
- [CT Office of Legislative Research Report Medicaid Coverage for Adult Behavioral Health Peer Support Services](#) - CT among only 10 states that do not cover peer support services
- [Digital Peer Support Mental Health Interventions for People With a Lived Experience of a Serious Mental Illness](#) - Digital Peer Support for Mental Health shows promise in review of 30 studies