

Family Support for Behavioral Health Across the Lifespan: A 3-Part Learning Series

Session 2: How to Support Children Who Experience Mental Health and/or Substance Use Challenges



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Disclaimer

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Co-occurring Diagnoses

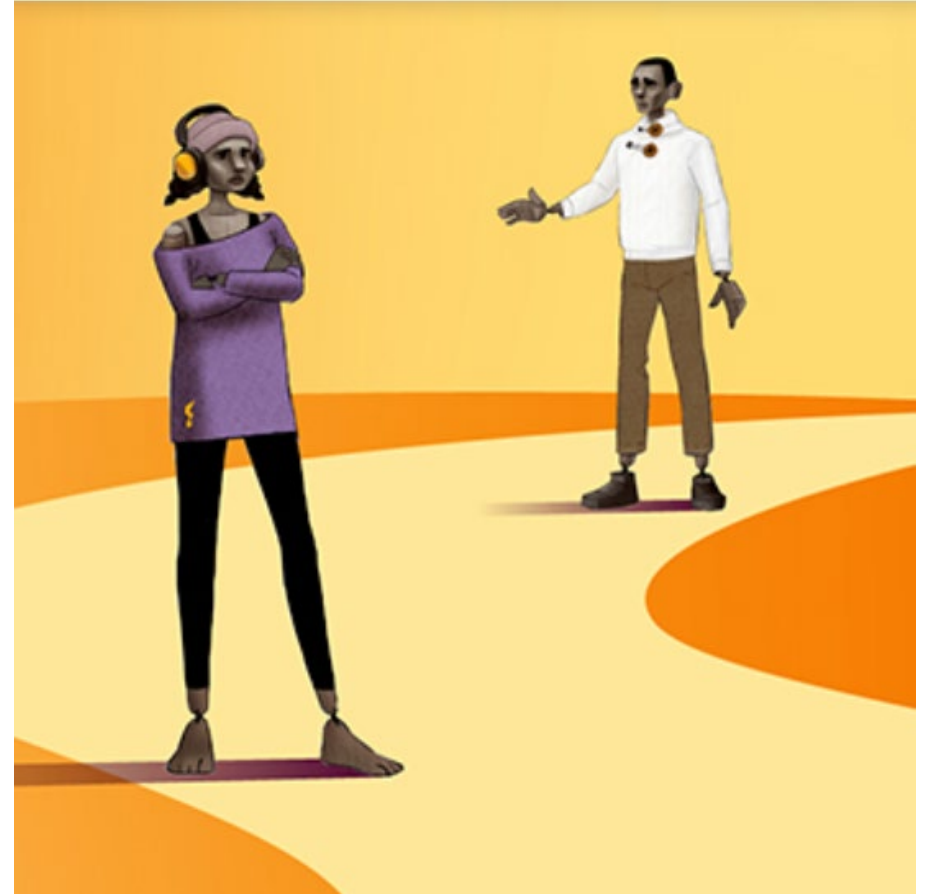
How do caregivers navigate co-occurring diagnoses across their child's lifespan?

- Co-occurring disorders: having a substance use and mental health disorder at the same time (i.e., dual diagnosis, comorbid)
- 30-45% of adolescents and young adults with a mental health disorder have a co-occurring substance use disorder
- 65% or more youth with a substance use disorder also have a mental health disorder



Refresher on 3-part framework: My Roles As a Caregiver

- **How do I recognize what my child needs?**
 - The Observing Caregiver
- **How do I stay connected to my child?**
 - The Relational Caregiver
- **How do I take care of myself too?**
 - The Self-Caring Caregiver



Grieving: What it means to receive a diagnosis for your child

- In the present moment, what burdens and limitations might a child's diagnosis bring up?
- Looking towards the future, what concerns/anxieties emerge related to potentially foreclosed possibilities?
- How can the stages of grief inform how a caregiver navigates the new and ongoing nature of a diagnosis?



Management and Treatment: How to get needs met on multiple diagnoses



- The two diagnoses are likely to reinforce and exacerbate one another
- It can be helpful to seek out providers who can treat both diagnoses or who are willing to help coordinate services across providers/systems
- Depending on the situation, you may have to juggle decisions about medication vs. behavioral treatments, or a combination of both

Breakout Rooms

Ages 0-11 Years:

- When you find out (as a caregiver) that you have a child being officially diagnosed, what comes up? How can you manage any sense of loss that you may imagine based on hopes/milestones in your child's future?
- How have you experienced gender having an impact on your child's diagnosis?

Ages 12-18 Years:

- How can you maintain connection with your child so that you're able to recognize symptoms of anxiety, depression, and/or potential self-medication?
- How much time spent alone in one's room or playing video games is too much? When might it indicate depression or something else going on?
- How can you navigate the treatment system as your child gets older and they may not require your consent?

Ages 19-25 Years:

- How do caregivers manage a child's transition from adolescence to adulthood, when they may no longer have access to details of care (treatment progress, medication, etc.)
- How can you allow your young adult to have space and autonomy, while also staying connected in a meaningful way?

Ages 26 & Older:

- How do HIPAA laws impact caregivers as they attempt to remain supportive to adult children?

Let's Talk

- What were the major takeaways from breakout rooms?
- What is developmentally unique across age groups?
- What are core elements of the caregiver experience that cut across the entire lifespan?



Follow Up and Next Steps

In our follow up email, within 3 – 5 business days, look for:

- A link to the recording of today's presentation
- Today's presentation slides
- Invitations to upcoming events
- Additional resources
- Ways to stay connected with us
- A letter of participation for your records

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