

Partnering with Family Members in IPS

This article was written by Family Advocates for IPS, a committee of family members in the International IPS Learning Community.

Many of our loved ones have used IPS services. We understand the value of employment in recovery from behavioral health disorders. One of our members described the benefits of employment this way: “Now that my son is working, he has more structure in his days. He has something to be proud about and has people to socialize with at work. There are so many ways that his job has contributed to his recovery. My husband and I talk to him about his job regularly because we want to support what he is doing.”

We want to thank each IPS practitioner for all they do for our family members. This evidence-based practice significantly impacts individual’s sense of self and well-being. When people work, they become active members in their communities.

People don’t exist in a vacuum. “Family members” may be biological family members, good friends, life partners, AA sponsors, clergy members or other support people. Please ask each person who he is close to, and who he would like to include in his employment plan. Suggest including family members in a meeting to talk about his strengths, possible good job matches, career planning, and job supports. Families may have unique perspectives on the job seeker’s strengths, talents, and interests. They also can share information, along with their loved one, about past job and school experiences that can guide how the IPS program supports the person. Families were present prior to the person’s involvement in IPS and will likely be there long after. We want our family members to succeed and build a meaningful life.

In short, many family members would like to be allies with IPS specialists and their loved ones. IPS specialists, job seekers, and family members all have a similar goal--for people to move forward in a life of their choosing that includes meaningful employment. IPS and family members, let’s get to work!