

## FAMILIES UNITED NETWORK

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Parsons Child & Family Center's Families United Network (FUN) provides family support services to families whose children may range from age 4 to 18, are at risk of developing or have emotional and/or behavioral challenges, and live at home in Albany County or in one of Parsons Office of Mental Health (OMH) licensed residential facilities. Services are provided by family peer advocates, who are parents or caregivers who have experienced living with a child with emotional and/or behavioral challenges and have been involved in multiple child serving systems.

### AVAILABLE SERVICES

- Peer-to-peer emotional support
- A warm line
- Referral and information services
- Individual advocacy within the educational, juvenile justice, mental health, and child protective arenas to help families access needed services
- Outreach
- Social and recreational activities
- Consultation services for providers
- Educational programs for parents
- Training regarding the parent-provider relationships
- Home visits as requested
- The HopeBook: A Resource Manual for Parents

### BENEFITS

- Provides advocacy to help families be able to access the needed appropriate services for their child and family
- Provides education so that families are better able to cope with difficult behaviors and able to care for their children at home or when they return home from residential programs
- Teaches skills so that parents become advocates for their own children
- Develops a parent to parent network so that families feel less isolated and begin to develop a natural support system in their own community
- Helps providers gain a better understanding of the parent/caregiver "experience"
- Provides a safe place for families to recreational activities together

**Who can access services?** Albany County families caring for a child at risk of or experiencing emotional and/or behavioral challenges or families whose children are living in one of the OMH licensed facilities at Parsons.

**How are services accessed?** Call 518.426.2619 for referral or information. Families may self-refer or be referred by a service provider, friend, or school staff.

**When are services available?** Services are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or by appointment.