



DMH Connections

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GOOD Mental Health.
It starts with a conversation.

Children's Behavioral Health Worker Certificate Program



On October 24, the Urban College of Boston hosted the graduation celebration of nineteen children's behavioral health workers from the first class in the CBH Worker Certificate Program. The Certificate Program is a free, college-credit certificate program for students who are interested in or already employed as Family Partners or Therapeutic Mentors. Students earn nine college credits and a Certificate as Community Health Worker specializing in Children's Behavioral Health. The 120-hour internship has a \$10/hour stipend for students not yet employed. Deborah Fauntleroy and Martha Kingsbury led curriculum development and the course itself. The tremendous gratitude and respect of their students was evident at the graduation celebration.

Over the next two years, the CBH Worker Certificate Program will be delivered 12 times to a total of 240 current and potential new employees at employer worksites across Greater Boston, Greater Springfield, New Bedford, Lawrence and Chelsea. Springfield Technical Community College will be joining Urban College in delivering the courses, with articulation agreements to other local community colleges and BA programs across the state.

CBH Workers are behavioral health professionals who bring community knowledge and life experience to engage, educate, coach, and teach self-advocacy skills to parents and youth. Their purpose is to increase patient-centered care and improve the quality and efficiency of care. They are a specialized subset of the broader Community Health Worker workforce. CBH Workers play a critical role in reducing health disparities. They engage families who might distrust the healthcare system or with linguistic or cultural barriers to accessing care; provide a vital communication bridge between families and clinicians, psychiatrists, primary care doctor and others; help families to communicate their values and beliefs that may impact their adherence to treatment plans; and help healthcare professionals to convey critical health information to linguistically and racially diverse youth and families.

The Certificate Program is a project of the CBH Workforce Collaborative, a coalition of children's behavioral health providers and educational non-profits working to reduce mental health disparities and increase quality of care in racial, ethnic, and underserved communities through workforce development. The Collaborative's work on this and other projects is facilitated by Jackie Gelb.

Training partners: the Black Mental Health Alliance of Massachusetts, the Center for Multicultural Mental Health, the Parent Professional Advocacy League, and the Urban College of Boston.

Employer partners: Children's Services of Roxbury, Children's Friend and Family, Gandara Center, The Guidance Center of Riverside Community Care, Home for Little Wanderers, Justice Resource Institute, North Suffolk Mental Health, Wayside Youth and Family.

The Department of Mental Health and its Children's Behavioral Health Knowledge Center and the Commonwealth Corporation provided funding for the first class of the Certificate Program. DMH is also funding the next class, which begins on January 26, 2015. The Commonwealth Corporation recently awarded two \$250,000 grants to expand this training, along with clinician training, through two regional collaboratives in racially and ethnically diverse cities across the state.



Graduates pictured, from left to right: Tia Washington, Sumayte Magwood, Ceol Miguel Soto, Chantell Albert, Rochelle Chance, Cheryl Thompson, Roy Lynch, Iranya Rivera, Joshua Roe, Nidia Santiago, Deborah Fauntleroy (Instructor), Deryl Walker.

Graduates not pictured: Felicia Walker, Teresa Claud, Syreeta Alves.



Pictured from left to right: Marty Kingsbury, Jackie Gelb, Deb Fauntleroy