

Parallels between recovery for mentally ill adults and families of children with emotional disorders

While typically, the term “recovery” is used in the context of adults with mental illness, we believe that it applies to families of children with emotional disorders as well. Families desire for their children to achieve the same things – a satisfying life and valued community niche. For children with emotional disorders and their families, recovery services work to create system of care, where services are person-centered and wrapped around the child and family. The overall goals are the same: safety, stability and hope for the future.

Goals	Adults with Mental Illness	Children with Emotional Disorders
Hope	People have hope for the future and meaning and purpose in their lives.	Families have hope that their child will achieve what s/he wants in life. The child has hope that s/he can have a satisfying life.
Safety	People live, work and play in a safe environment.	Children are protected from abuse and neglect.
Services	The person chooses services that s/he needs to be successful in the community.	Services are wrapped around the child and the family. Services are not provided in isolation, but in the context of family.
Skill Development	People develop skills for independence.	Children develop age appropriate skills with peers, school mates, and family.
Skills	People have the skills they need to achieve their chosen goals.	Families have the skills they need to provide for their children's needs.
Social Outcomes	People develop a satisfying life with meaning and purpose	Children learn to make friends at school and at play.
Stability	People have a stable living situation in an environment they choose.	Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible/appropriate; they have permanency and stability in their living situations.
Strength	Services and goals focus on the person's strengths and how to develop them, not on pathology and symptoms.	Services and goals focus on the family's strength and resiliency, not on family dysfunction.
Vocational Outcomes	People choose, get and keep a vocational goal. They receive the services and supports to help them to achieve their chosen goal.	Children receive the services and support to help them succeed in school.