



# Family Focus

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## MCF's Year in Review: The 2024 Impact Report Has Arrived!

The Maryland Coalition of Families is proud to share our annual Impact Report highlighting all the ways we helped ease the journey for Maryland families who love someone with a mental health, substance use, or problem gambling challenge.

In fiscal year 2024, we served almost 5,000 families - more than ever before in our 25-year history! This increase is consistent with trends we're seeing across the state as the need for behavioral health services grows.

Using their lived experience, our Family Peer Support Specialists provided more than 15,000 hours of support to Maryland families, offering emotional support, connection to resources, and assistance navigating complex systems of care.

As we embark on our 25th year, MCF is committed to continuing to be Maryland's premier provider of family peer support. We understand what it's like to love someone who lives with a behavioral health disorder. We recognize the fear, anxiety, isolation, grief, and confusion our families experience as they try to help their loved one. Our Family Peer Support Specialists have the expertise to ease the path forward. **No family has to walk this path alone. We here because we've been there too.**

We hope you will take a moment to learn more about the impact MCF had in your community last year. Please consider making a donation to help MCF continue to meet the ever-increasing demand for family peer support across Maryland.



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## Family Day in Annapolis: Registration is open!



You're invited to join us on **January 30, 2025** for a day of crucial conversations with behavioral health leaders, policymakers, and elected officials. This empowering day of advocacy is a way to bring family voice to the people who need to hear it most - those in the position of making policy or passing legislation that impact people with behavioral health challenges and those who love and care for them.

There is no cost for participants to attend Family Day because MCF believes in the power and importance of family voice. We strive to reduce all obstacles to families attending this important event. MCF will provide transportation from various points across Maryland and lunch will be provided.

If you are interested, however, in helping us offset the costs associated with Family Day, please consider becoming a Bus Sponsor, a Family Voice Advocate, or sponsor a family or young person. Please visit our sponsorship page to learn more!

[Register Here](#)[Sponsor the Event](#)

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## Giving Tuesday is December 3rd!

As we look forward to the season of giving, we invite you to consider supporting Maryland Coalition of Families on Giving Tuesday! Your generosity allows us to continue connecting families with the resources, guidance, and community they need to navigate their loved ones' behavioral health journeys.



Every donation—no matter the size—helps us make a lasting difference in the lives of caregivers and their families. This Giving Tuesday, be part of our mission to bring hope and support to families.

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## The Holidays Are Coming: Consider These Mindful Gift Ideas

When choosing gifts for those navigating problem gambling, SUD, or mental health

challenges, it's essential to be mindful of what may be supportive or potentially emotionally overwhelming. Here's a helpful guide:



### Supportive Options

- **Books:** Choose novels, self-help books, or biographies that inspire growth and positivity.
- **Jigsaw Puzzles:** Great for engaging the mind and promoting relaxation without screens.
- **Gift Cards to Restaurants or Physical Activity Venues:** Encourage healthy socializing and physical activity with gift cards to places like SkyZone or local fitness centers.
- **New Clothing Items:** Thoughtful clothing can promote self-esteem and provide practical support.
- **Creative Workshops or Classes:** Classes in art, cooking, or other hobbies can foster personal growth and social connection.

### Gifts to Avoid

- **Scratch-Off Lottery Tickets:** These can trigger compulsive gambling behaviors.
- **High Violence/High Adult Content Video Games:** Can negatively affect mental health and may be overwhelming for trauma survivors.
- **Access to Sports Betting Accounts:** Gifting access to betting platforms increases the risk of relapse.
- **Access to Gambling Environments:** Tickets to places like horse tracks or bingo halls expose individuals to temptation.
- **Games with Gambling Themes:** Board games, video games, or apps that involve betting mechanics or gambling simulations can reinforce addictive behavior patterns.
- **Items That Promote Substance Use:** Gifts that glamorize or make light of substance use (e.g., novelty beer mugs, smoking accessories) can reinforce harmful habits.

### Tips for Thoughtful Gift-Giving

- **Consider Interests:** Choose gifts aligned with positive mental health and well-being.
- **Offer Experiences:** Focus on experiences like events or classes that encourage connection.
- **Promote Wellness:** Gifts like yoga mats, calming teas, or self-care kits encourage relaxation.
- **Ask Directly:** If unsure, ask the recipient what they would appreciate.

Being intentional with your gift choices shows you care about the recipient's well-being and supports their journey toward healing.

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## Get Connected! Stay Informed!

Online and In Person

Workshops, Trainings &

## Support Groups

MCF offers many support groups to provide a safe space for you to learn, share and receive compassionate help. All are facilitated by trained Family Peer Support Specialists who have dealt with similar challenges in their own families. Groups are free for all participants and are held on different days of the week and different times of day. Find one or more that can work for you and join us soon!

[Find a Support Group](#)

## Other Events

MCF offers a wide range of events, trainings and workshops for families who have a loved one with mental health, substance use or problem gambling challenges. Events are held in communities across the state or virtually and are offered at no cost to participants. Visit our website to learn more!

[Past and Upcoming Events](#)

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## MCF Employment Opportunities

MCF is growing, and we have employment opportunities that might be perfect for you or someone you know! We currently have openings in many areas of the State. Please check our website for a complete list of openings.

- **Family Peer Support Specialist (Remote Worker - Must Live in Allegany or Garrett County)**
- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Calvert County)**
- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Substance Use (Remote Worker - Must Live in Baltimore City)**
- **Youth Engagement Specialist (Remote Worker - Must Live in PG County)**

[Employment Opportunities](#)



[www.mdcoalition.org](http://www.mdcoalition.org)



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