

OUTCOMES

People who are **RESILIENT** communicate positively, experience good physical and mental health, and feel accepted and included in life. Resilient children and adolescents develop age-appropriate competencies (emotional and cognitive), master skills, and improve self-esteem through positive interpersonal interactions, and develop self-efficacy as a coping strategy. They learn to interact appropriately with others and participate in community activities. Resilient people accept illness as an adversity that can be overcome, use humor as a way to cope, develop appropriate social skills and resources, feel hopeful about the future, and work to fulfill their dreams.

In **RECOVERY**, the individual defines the role of family and significant others. Recovery-oriented services and supports encourage reconciliation and forgiveness. Individuals experience good physical and mental health and feel accepted and included in life. They develop skills and competencies according to their own plans; build confidence and self-esteem through work, relationships, power, choice, hope, and control; and develop self-efficacy and self-management skills. Adults focus on being productive members of the community. Individuals learn to accept and understand their illness, take inventory of their strengths, develop empathy for others, and develop behaviors to manage symptoms and cope with life's stressors. Individuals develop the skills and abilities to nurture supportive relationships. Individuals feel hopeful about the future and work to fulfill their dreams.

INDICATORS

People who are **RESILIENT** understand the challenges presented by illness and adversity and that discomfort is part of life. They establish independence and develop supportive relationships. Children have strong family bonds and attachments to caring adults and develop positive self-concepts and values.

People in **RECOVERY** accept illness and challenging life circumstances and tolerate discomfort as part of life. Individuals establish independence, develop supportive relationships and community connections, experience self-empowerment with humility, and take control of their own lives.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Families of **RESILIENT** children have treatment goals appropriate to the developmental age of the child, access to individualized and evidence-based services, and a choice of providers. Treatment plans are individualized, respect the child/family/community culture, help maximize financial resources, prevent abuse and neglect, and focus on quality early care and education.

Individuals in the **RECOVERY** process receive services and treatment through approaches that support recovery, choose their type of treatment and supports, and set manageable goals. Services are person-centered, individualized, and respect the child/family/community culture. Services emphasize working to achieve financial independence and the importance of supportive relationships.

RESILIENCY

&

RECOVERY

From The
Allegheny County
Coalition for Recovery (ACCR)
Child and Family Committee



Although the term “recovery” may be understood in many ways, the concept of recovery is the catalyst for development and change in behavioral health services.

In child and adolescent systems, another term commonly used is “resiliency” which describes both innate and developed abilities to withstand stress and adversity. Services promoting resiliency are focused on strengths, providing hope and developing potential. Both resiliency and recovery-oriented services reject the idea that illnesses are permanent or defining or that they cannot be overcome.

An attempt to identify the common elements of recovery and resiliency follows. Despite some similarities, these terms should not be used interchangeably. Resiliency may occur with or without an antecedent illness and might be considered as an element of recovery.

While it may never be possible to define terms in a way that everyone is comfortable with, it is clear that there are important concepts or principles that are held in common regardless of age or disability. These principles move people toward hope, productivity, autonomy, and interactivity.

For more information about recovery and resiliency, please visit the ACCR website at www.coalitionforrecovery.org.

DEFINING CONCEPTS

RESILIENCY is a dynamic process in which people adapt positively within the context of significant adversity. The concept of resiliency recognizes that children have a wider range of challenges, not all related to mental illness.

RECOVERY is a process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities. For some individuals, this means the ability to live despite adversity. For others, recovery implies the reduction or complete remission of symptoms. Recovery also recognizes that individuals may need to recover from bad experiences with the “system.”

TIME FRAME

RESILIENCY is an ongoing developmental process.

RECOVERY is an ongoing, individualized, lifelong process.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

RESILIENCY occurs in the context of peer, school and community supports when there is a strong bond within a family and a significant attachment to a caring adult. It also occurs in an environment where there is an awareness of the presence and impact of violence and social disruption on the family and child.

RECOVERY occurs within a social context that encourages individuals to take on new roles and/or re-establish connections to a community, and when they develop reciprocal relationships with hopeful, caring others. Overcoming social stigma is part of the recovery process.

LOCUS OF CONTROL

RESILIENCY recognizes the family or primary caregivers as the primary decision-makers for the child’s care. Resiliency involves the family learning about their child’s illness/disability and ways to treat and support their child. As adolescents approach adulthood, decision making is transferred to them.

RECOVERY sees the individual as the informed decision-maker—capable of making decisions about treatment options and planning for possible future times of incapacity (Advance Directives). The individual is in the driver’s seat and has control of his or her life’s journey with an emphasis on personal responsibility. Recovery emphasizes the importance of the individual understanding and managing his or her own illness. Family and significant others are encouraged to provide support.

The Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery (ACCR) was created by consumers, family members, and providers in response to users of recovery services who felt that they were not being heard by providers and that they seldom had opportunities to participate in their treatment. In Allegheny County, ACCR strives to transform systems of care so that they are supportive of people who have mental health or substance use problems. Hope, autonomy, choice, and affiliation are the organizing concepts of ACCR’s efforts.