

**Kathy Birmingham, Executive Director**  
**Elizabel Lopez, Family Partner Coordinator**  
**Gina Terry, Senior Family Partner**  
**Alison Torres, Part-Time, Family Partner**  
**Mandi Aviles, Community Outreach/QI**  
**Maria Haas, Office Manager**  
**Peter Burgos, Youth Partnership  
Coordinator**

## CCFSO

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Camden County Family Support Organization is to assist families with children who have behavioral or mental health issues in the Child's Behavioral Health Systems. We will ensure the family voice is heard in all planning, coordination and delivery of services. As parents who have experienced these issues with our own children, we will work with families by providing face to face support, offer appropriate education and promote self-advocacy.

## Camden County Family Support Organization

23 West Park Avenue  
Suites 103-104  
Merchantville, NJ 08109

Phone: 856-662-2600

Fax: 856-662-2242

kbirmingham@camdenfso.org

www.camdenfso.org

### Training Opportunities and Support Meetings

We can link you with educational and supportive opportunities that will be helpful in dealing with your child. We provide for our families several different support groups to assist in the challenges of raising a child with emotional, behavioral or mental challenges. Below is a list of groups currently at our Merchantville location:

#### Support Groups

##### *Parents Empowering Parents*

Parent to parent support through education and advocacy. Family members have an opportunity to share their experiences, discover new resources, meet others with similar situations and establish friendships..

“Keeping Kids at Home, At School,  
and Out of Trouble”

##### *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*

Support group for caregivers for their children's children who are affected with behavioral, emotional or mental challenges. Hosted by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church,  
325 S. White Horse Pike, Audubon, NJ 08106

##### *Youth Partnership*

**Thursday Evenings 6:30pm to 8:30pm**

A youth group that is supervised by a youth coach and run by teens for teens with mental, emotional or behavioral challenges.

## Camden County Family Support Organization



**“We ensure that the Family  
Voice is Heard”**

**856-662-2600  
www.camdenfso.org**

## Our History

*The Children's Initiative was designed in 1995 by a team of family members of challenged children. In their opinion, the current system of care was not proving successful for the most difficult children and their families. They found that children were entering the system and staying involved in the system for a long period of time. They also discovered that families did not have the opportunity to participate in the care and services their children received. The plan was to design a children's initiative unique to New Jersey and our population.*

*In its full operational stage, there will be a total of fifteen family support organizations in the state. Each area, ours being Camden County, has a Family Support Organization and a Care Management Organization. Although the roles and responsibilities of the Family Support Organizations and the Care Management Organization are unique, we work as a team to meet the immediate and long-term needs of families as we support, educate and empower.*

### FAMILIES FIRST!

Camden County Family Support Organization, Inc. is an organization designed, built, and run by Family Members of emotionally and/or behaviorally challenged children. CCFSO was established to provide support, education, and advocacy for families with emotionally and/or behaviorally challenged children in Camden County. CCFSO works in conjunction with the Camden County Partnership for Children to carry out the philosophies and objectives of the Child's Initiative of New Jersey.

## Responsibilities of the Organization

**Support:** We provide intensive Face-to-Face support to families and caregivers at the place and time that is most convenient for them. We also provide support by phone, in case a face-to face visit is not convenient for the family. We attend Child-Family Team Meetings, Individual Education Plan meetings and other pertinent meetings regarding the family and the child. We also assist families in critical situations, such as entering a hospital or detention facility. We will facilitate Family-Run Support Groups throughout Camden County.



**Education:** We provide education to our families and communities. We educate families on an individual basis as needed. For example, a family may request information on a certain medication or type of treatment. We will coordinate lectures given by our staff or other professionals for our families. In addition, we provide education forums for the community. We address the needs of our families and the children.

**Advocacy:** We provide advocacy in many forums. On an individual basis, we advocate for our families' needs. In addition, we advocate for families as a whole within the various systems which include Juvenile Justice, DYFS, Mental Health, Education, and Medicaid. We also advocate at the State and Federal levels. We attend pertinent meetings and hearings. We ensure that the "Family Voice" is heard at all levels.

## Peer to Peer Support

What could be more reassuring than finding someone who has been through the same situation as yourself? Here is where you find parents, grandparents and other family members who have experienced the same challenges or taken such pride in the small successes of a child such as ours.

Families who are receiving care management services through CBHS (Child's Behavioral Health Services of the State of New Jersey) have the option to receiving peer support on a one to one basis to help get through a difficult time of transition.

We will link you with another family member who has "walked in your shoes". Someone who can help you navigate the mental health, juvenile justice/courts, or educational system, or just listen and understand.



## Youth Partnership

The Youth Partnership is a group of dynamic young people who want their voices to be heard by the mental health system. Our Youth Partnership is active in weekly meetings, projects and events. They meet every Thursday night from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. To learn more about our Youth Partnership call Peter Burgos at 856-662-