

California Women's Mental Health Policy Council

Position Statement: Family Centered Services

Services provided to adults must consider family history, the multiple roles women hold in the family, the role and significance of the family in the woman's life and the role that the family plays in her need for support, encouragement and empowerment. The family, including its role/needs/influence is an essential part of assessment and treatment of women.

Family centered services are services which:

- Recognize "family" as those who a woman identifies as significant individuals in her life.
- Support a woman's multiple roles in her family as she defines it.
- Demonstrate an understanding that the culture, beliefs and family traditions consistent with the woman's view of herself in her family and her community must be the basis for services.
- Recognize a woman's rights and needs as well as that of her family and work toward increasing the capacity of her family to provide needed support and encouragement.
- Explore past and current abuse and violence in her family and address those issues in services.
- Recognize the impact of mental illness on the multiple roles a woman plays in her life.
- Ensure sensitivity to a woman's changing needs as she moves through the developmental stages of her life.
- Recognize unique issues such as pregnancy, motherhood, relationships and caretaking roles as having impact on a woman's health, self-concept, responsibilities, economic resources plus her time and energy.
- Recognize both the positive and negative impact families can and do have on a woman.
- Recognize the competing demands a woman experiences between their own needs and that of their family.