What is Supported Parenting?

Supported Parenting is a culturally sensitive approach to helping families headed by a parent/s with cognitive challenges. It involves working long-term, building on a family’s strength, to promote competence and sustain independence. The model is based on:

- Respect for parents and the strong emotional bond between parents and their children.
- Regarding parents as a resource, not a problem.
- Support directed to the family as a whole rather than to individual members.
- Enabling parents to feel in control and experience being competent.
- Supporting families in the context of their own extended families, neighborhoods, and communities.
- Engaging parents as active partners in service planning and as equals in choices and decisions affecting their family.

Sherlock Center Family Support Specialists (FSS):

Mitzie Johnson              Iraida Williams
mjohnson@ric.edu           iwilliams@ric.edu
(401) 456-2817              (401) 456-4790
Main line:     (401) 456-8072
7-1-1 or 1-800-745-5555 RI Relay TTY
7-1-1 or 1-866-355-9214 RI Relay Español
Website: www.sherlockcenter.org

Mitzie and Iraida are available to provide technical assistance and offer professional development workshops to agencies supporting parents with cognitive challenges. Call or email for more information and applicable fees.

As FSS, Mitzie and Iraida help individuals to gain personal control and self-direction through the utilization of Person-Centered Planning and a self help plan. They are experienced at coaching parents with cognitive challenges related to multiple life stressors. Iraida is bilingual in English and Spanish.

Family Support Specialist

How Does a Family Support Specialist Support Families?

Central to the Sherlock Center’s Supported Parenting model is support from a Family Support Specialist.

Through regular meetings with the parent and family, the Family Support Specialist:

- Helps the parent consider ways to take more personal control in their lives.
- Assists the parent in developing a “self-help plan.”
- Helps the parent identify strategies and supports to achieve the goals identified.
- Assists in developing a network of trusted allies.
- Helps individuals, families and teams identify and access natural supports, community resources, and more formalized supports when necessary.

The Family Support Specialist provides guidance and coaching in the following areas:

- Basic parenting skills
- Children’s medical supports
- Children’s school supports
- Low literacy challenges
- Natural supports & community membership
- Housing / household management
- Financial management
- Transportation & related resources
- Employment & related resources
- Conflict resolution and family relationships