

## Here's what Families and Caregivers tell us:

### 8 Tips for Successful Mental Health and/or Substance Use System Navigation

- 1 Start early:** Get connected to resources and community services as soon as possible by talking to your primary care provider, state or local family-run organization. Visit <https://www.ffcmh.org/our-affiliates> to find help in your state.
- 2 Plan ahead:** Before crisis occurs, prepare the groundwork today for the services you may need tomorrow.
- 3 Don't do it all yourself:** Let family members and friends help.
- 4 Turn to your healthcare workforce:** This can include mental health and/or substance use providers, family peer specialists and other people in your network.
- 5 When you feel comfortable, keep all your helpers included and updated:** It's best when everyone knows who's working with you. "One Plan, One Family".
- 6 Ask, ask and ask:** The more you ask questions, the more you know about your choices/options. Then you can make better decisions for yourself and your loved one.
- 7 Use your resources and social support when possible:** Nonpaid natural supports are a great benefit to your team. These can include a special teacher, friend, pastor, babysitter, and more.
- 8 Keep an organized binder or file on your computer:** Include all documents and assessments to bring with you to appointments (medical history, meds, etc.) There are templates in this toolkit to help.