

Mental Health Impact



June 2026

◆ **Partners in Mental Health Quarterly Impact Brief** ◆

About Family Service Association of Greater Elgin

We are a private, not-for-profit agency offering services to children, adolescents, and adults of all ages. The goal of Family Service Association is to strengthen individuals and families so that they can meet the challenges of modern life in positive and constructive ways. Founded in 1931, the organization has grown to a multi-service agency currently serving more than 2,000 clients annually.

BRIEF OVERVIEW



Client Needs

Our clients continue to face challenges around Medicaid and SNAP benefits along with supports for father figures.



Legislative Support

HB4189: Strengthening Fathers and Families Act



Call to Action

Mental Health First Aid Trainings
FSA's 95th Anniversary on July 30th
Referrals for Compassionate Parenting Program group

HB4189: STRENGTHENING FATHERS AND FAMILIES ACT

Representative Curtis J. Tarver introduced HB 4819, Strengthening Fathers and Families, to promote policies and initiatives that strengthen the involvement of fathers.

The Act will launch initiatives to

- Raise awareness about challenges children face without an involved father
- Identify and promote strategies to help fathers stay actively engaged
- Encourage positive relationships with mothers, fathers, and children

The act will establish a state commission to :

- Develop a statewide plan to increase father involvement
- Review existing programs and policies related to families
- Advise state leaders on improvements in father involvement.

This will be done through support from Department of Human Services (DHS) and the creation of a dedicated Fatherhood and Family Strengthening Fund to finance efforts

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FATHERS AS CAREGIVERS

This story highlights the need for increasing additional supports for fathers and other male caregivers. June is also Men's Mental Health Awareness Month.

A Licensed Clinical Social Worker at FSA has been utilizing the Family-Based Treatment (FBT) model with a middle school aged client. FBT involves using a team approach to nourish the client back to health. It is imperative that the team be on the same page from the beginning because we are racing against the clock. Eating disorders do not discriminate against gender, race, economic status, religion, etc., if left untreated, they can be fatal. If a client has more than one caregiver, it's important for them to be on same page regarding treatment goals and everyone's role in FBT. With this client, there were signs and symptoms of an eating disorder or disordered eating that were continuing to impact the client's functioning. The client lived with their mother, father, and one older sibling.



The clinician recognized that the parents had differing views about the seriousness of the eating disorder. It took time for the parents to learn more about eating disorders, and its impact on physical health, mental health, and family dynamics. There was one session in particular where the father understood how serious eating disorders can be when talking about lethality of eating disorders. It was at this moment that the father understood the urgency, the importance of his role in FBT, and the value he brings to the team in restoring his child's health.

After this conversation, the client's father took on several roles to support their child's treatment. He would act as a **Distracter** by taking his child outside for a short walk so his wife could prepare and cook the nutritious food. He would be the **Cheerleader**-providing encouragement alongside his wife to help their child take "just a few more bites." He was the **Eating Disorder Challenger** that helped his child explore what other foods can be added to their plate until they reached a more complete and nutritious meal instead of letting the eating disorder choose.

The father supported the team by seeing how his involvement was vital to his child's health and taking on his roles in FBT fully. With the positive support from both parents, the client successfully completed treatment and parents can continue to use what they've learned to support their child's growth and development together.

WHY IT MATTERS...

Based on data from NAMI in 2023, Men ages 18 and older are 4x more likely to die by suicide than women and only 45.9% of men with mental illness received treatment. This can be due to beliefs that men are weak for experiencing symptoms of mental health and are less likely to reach out for help.

Fathers can also experience depression and anxiety following the birth of a child. Per the Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance, 1 in 10 fathers will experience depression and anxiety within the first year with peak onset between 3-6 month following the birth. Fathers who do not receive treatment are more likely to be irritable, angry, aggressive and frustrated which can lead to isolation, risk-taking behaviors, avoidance and substance use.

The benefits of having a healthy and active father figure leads to children having better self-esteem, supports child development, increases emotional regulation, and decreases behavioral issues.

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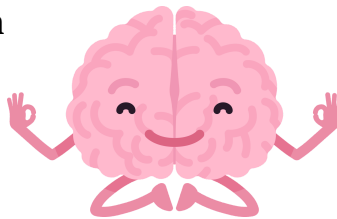
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CALL TO ACTION

Men in Mental Health

Interested in a presentation on Men
in Mental Health?

FSA can attend school groups to
talk about careers in mental health.
Please reach out to Adam Kurczak
at akurczak@fsaelgin.org



Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

Are you interested in hosting a
MHFA training or attending a pre-
existing MHFA training?
Reach out to Ashley Kellenberger
at akellenberger@fsaelgin.org



Family
Service
Association
OF GREATER ELGIN

Save the Date
95TH Year
Celebration

Thursday, July 30, 2026
Serving Heavy Hors D'oeuvres
The Haight
166 Symphony Way
Elgin, IL 60120
Featuring Dueling Pianos
JOIN US FOR A DECADES-THEMED EVENT

[Click here to purchase your
ticket!](#)

If interested in being a sponsor,
please contact:
Bernadette May: BMay@fsaelgin.org