[insert organisation name/logo]

Principles of Family Inclusive Practice[1]

- Working with family and supporters is an essential part of a comprehensive response to working with people experiencing mental health problems and entrenched family difficulties.
- Working in an open, respectful and collaborative fashion with supporters, families and individuals is likely to promote and enhance recovery.

- Being open, respectful and collaborative is highly complex and does not always fit well with traditional clinical practices.

- The impact of mental health problems may be similar to major trauma in the sense that trauma puts extreme pressure on individuals, families and supporters and on their relationships with each other. The effect on families is often hidden and not acknowledged.

- Blame, guilt, grief, shame and frustration are natural companions of the trauma that may be associated with mental health problems and major family difficulties in our culture.

- Most of the personal, professional and organisational responses to mental health problems are shaped by complex emotional responses. Some of these responses are helpful; others are not.

- Families and supporters have needs in their own right and have a right to have their needs acknowledged.

- By and large, family, supporters, individuals and workers have a personal and social intention mainly directed to personal and social survival rather than malevolence. Put simply, people usually do the best they can given their situation, history and personal style.

- Approaching families in a generous way, empathising with their hardship and acknowledging their strengths, will in return tend to generate good responses to individuals and to workers.

- The distinction between intention (which is usually good) and effect of action is important in understanding why family and supporters, individuals and workers, at times, all act in extremely unhelpful ways.

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[1] Adapted from NADA Family Inclusive Practice Policy

- Establishing a trusting relationship with family and supporters puts workers in a better position to assist families and supporters to overcome crises and problems. This often means time efficiencies in the long term.

- On the few occasions when family and supporters behave in destructive ways, an appreciation of the family situation can help workers address this destructiveness more effectively.

- All workers are capable of generating practical ideas for the way the service operates that will improve the quality of life for family and supporters, individuals and other workers.

- Organisations, whilst often valuing and supporting family inclusive initiatives, will always find it difficult to change. Organisational change is complex and needs to be approached thoughtfully and with planning.

- It is important to understand these family inclusive assumptions at a personal level in order to be able to make a professional commitment to them.

Reference

NADA Family Inclusive Practice Policy.
http://www.nada.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=236&Itemid=44