

# **FRIENDS IN ACTION**

*A Program of Interfaith Works*

## **Eligibility Requirements**

**To be eligible for Friends In Action (FIA) assistance, family members must:**

- \* Be Montgomery County residents.
- \* Not engage in illegal activity or substance abuse.
- \* Be drug- and alcohol-free for at least one year and a graduate of a treatment program if there is history of substance abuse.
- \* Acknowledge their needs and problems.
- \* Desire help from a mentoring team.
- \* Willingness to comply with case management.
- \* Demonstrate **motivation** to plan and work towards stability and change with support of team.
- \* Be appropriate for further education, training or employment.
- \* Be considered working-poor.
- \* Be referred by a county agency, school or congregation.
- \* Subscribe to the terms of the Friends In Action Agreement.

Note: FIA mentors are not trained to serve chronically mentally ill adults.

## **Process for Linking the Family with the FIA Team**

After receiving a referral, FIA staff contacts the referring agent to ask any additional questions and then arranges an assessment with the selected family to provide details about the FIA program.

During the assessment, three simple goals will be set that the family is interested in accomplishing in the next month or two to determine the family's level of commitment to help itself, to gauge the family's receptivity to volunteer outreach, and to answer questions. At this time, the family signs a release of information agreement and works solely with case management.

After two months, FIA staff presents the family assessment to the FIA team. FIA staff arranges a linking to be attended by the entire family, the referring caseworker, an FIA staff member, and two FIA team mentors. This meeting occurs in the family's home. The linking is an informal gathering in which the family-mentor team relationship is initiated.

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