**8.4. Discuss legal and societal concerns from a mental health consumer’s vantage point.**

*Instructors are encouraged to provide a mental health consumer to speak to the officers about their experiences with the legal and mental health systems. The goal of this section is to sensitize the officer to the lives, feelings, and thoughts of a person with a mental illness and their perspective on communication with law enforcement.*

*\*\*If speaker resources are unavailable, contact the local office of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI).*

**8.5. Participate in a discussion of the family member perspective on mental illness.**

*Instructors are encouraged to invite family members of mental health consumers to speak on their experiences with mental illness and the “system.” The goal is to acquaint the officer to the experiences and difficulties families face on a daily basis. Speakers can be obtained by contacting your local office of the Alliance for the Mentally Ill (AMI), or by contacting the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.*

*\*\*In lieu of speakers a video could be used. A resource for obtaining subject matter videos is The Mental Illness Education Project at www.miepvideos.org.*

*Instructor Note: The following information is taken from the ‘Public Safety Net’ publication titled "Psychiatric Crisis System-Jail Diversion." Refer to it for expanded information.*

*Instructor Note: refer to www.solutionfortexas.info/id257.html for an example of a jail diversion model. See also the PowerPoint presentation titled “Bexar County Jail Diversion-Bridging the Gaps in Mental Health” and “Diversion Components of Harris County” By Monalisa Jiles, M.Ed., NCC, LPC, LNFT, SWA.*

***Instructor Note: Refer to “The Scope of Mental Illness and Criminal Justice Involvement in Texas” By Dave Wanser, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner for behavioral and Community Health Services. See also “ Austin Travis County Mental Health and Mental Retardation Center, Executive Summary for Jail Diversion Initiative,” prepared by Susan Stone and Associates, in conjunction with ATCMHMR Jail Diversion Workgroup and Community Forum Participants.***