What is a “System of Care” based on?

- Theory of change that is agreed upon by key stakeholders and includes:
  - Set of principles and values
  - Clear definition of population to be served and analysis of needs of that population
  - Best available research and knowledge about effective supports, services, and systems
  - Participatory and inclusive decision-making process

Key Principles/Values of a System of Care

- Services are based on needs and strengths of child and family;
- Promotes collaboration between families and professionals;
- Involves provision of individualized supports and services;
- Promotes culturally responsive supports and services;
- Involves collaboration between multiple agencies and service sectors;
- Includes system of ongoing evaluation and accountability.

What system conditions led to development of systems of care?

- Inadequate range of services and supports;
- Failure to individualize services;
- Fragmentation of system when children and families had multi-system needs;
- Children with special needs are in many systems;
- Lack of clear values/principles for system;
- Lack of clarity about population of concern;
- Inadequate accountability;
- Lack of adequate responsiveness to cultural differences.

How have systems of care changed over time?

- From primary outpatient and inpatient/residential services to expanded continuum of services;
- From almost exclusively funding programs to creating flexible funds to support individualized care;
- From small percentage of funds being kept flexible to creation of care management entities with expanded flexible funds to purchase individualized services;
How have systems of care changed over time? (cont.)

- From a focus on children with serious emotional disturbances and their families to a focus on other populations of concern;
- From an emphasis on replication to an emphasis on community-developed and community-owned systems based on locally developed values, theories of change, and accountability systems.

Resilience and Promotion of Wellness in Systems of Care

- Promotion of attachments and connections;
- Promotion of age-appropriate competencies;
- Promotion of hope, optimism, and belief in control over one’s future;
- Promotion of opportunities to assume responsibility and give to others.

What makes for successful systems of care?

1. Clear definition of the population to be served;
2. Sound understanding of the needs of the population and of the services and supports that are likely to be helpful;
3. Sound understanding of the current flow of the population through the system, and the desired flow of the population through the system;
4. Identification of who needs to be involved in system development and creation of participatory process of system development;
5. Use of experiences of service providers and recipients in developing system;
6. Clear statement of values/principles;
7. Clear theory of change, including statement of goals for children and family, and for entire system;
8. Strong emphasis on what is needed at the system, administrative/management and practice levels and understanding of the relationship between the levels;
9. Translation of theory of change into practice – use of resources in a manner that is consistent with values and principles, and theories of change;
10. Identification of training/team-building needs of system and development of plan to address them;
11. Development and implementation of procedures to tell you how well you are implementing your strategies, how well you are achieving your desired outcomes, and to guide you in making mid-course adjustments:
   - system of care performance reviews;
   - ongoing assessment of stakeholder perspectives;
   - analysis of flow through system;
   - analysis of outcomes;
12. Continual use of data to make improvements in system.