Creating a System of Care Tailored to Meet the Needs of the Early Childhood Population

Presenters: Robin Orlando, Director of Quality Assurance & Liz Masten, Early Childhood Evaluation Coordinator

Presentation Objectives
- Provide overview of SOC in Allegheny County
- Highlight critical components of strategic planning process for Early Childhood grant
- Emphasize importance of evaluation in strategic planning process
- Discuss strategies for replication

Overview of Allegheny County System of Care Initiative

Early Childhood Grant Strategic Planning Process

Introduction
Goal
- To engage a diverse group of stakeholders, including family members of children with mental health needs and system partners, in a collaborative planning process to complete the following tasks:
  - Assess the current state of children’s mental health within Allegheny County
  - Determine guiding vision for EC grant
  - Within provided context, inform SOC structure and outcomes via the creation of a strategic plan

Strategic Planning Process
Planning Participants
Overview

Strategic Planning Process
Overview of System Partners

N=59
Strategic Planning Process
Planning Operations
Overview

- Invitations
  - Clearly defined purpose
- 6 evening meetings
  - One hour family pre-meetings
  - 1.5 hour meetings
  - Central location
- Incentives for families
  - On-site childcare, food, and stipends
- Independently contracted facilitator was a family member
- Meeting Agendas
- Grouping Strategies
- Process Evaluation
  - Surveys given after 1st, 3rd, and 6th meeting

Strategic Planning Process
Outcomes

- Increased Buy-In
  - System partners and family members
  - Final survey results
- Creation of Guiding Vision
  - All stakeholders contributed to common vision
- Creation of Strategic Plan
  - Informed Logic Model and local outcomes

Strategic Planning Process
Local Outcomes

- Caregiver Depression
  - Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale
- Exposure to Trauma
  - Traumatic Events Screening Inventory
- Family Empowerment
  - Family Empowerment Scale
- Social/Emotional (children 1-5)
  - BITSEA and DECA
- Parental Stress
  - Parenting Stress Index

Strategic Planning Process
Strengths

- Pre-existing belief in System of Care’s values and principles
- Clearly defined purpose of formal meetings
- Family involvement
- Great facilitator
- Recommendations were accurately captured
- Process evaluation

Strategic Planning Process
And the Survey Said...

Participants Felt Respected, Fully Engaged, and Optimistic
All values are based on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The following chart displays key aggregate data from the three surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant's Perspective on the Planning Process</th>
<th>N=110</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am able to participate</td>
<td>4.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand my role</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the goals</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator respects offering viewpoints</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategic Planning Process
Areas for Improvement

- Detailed review of grant summary
- Audacious goals given time constraints
- Creating opportunities for long term meaningful engagement
- Developing meaningful family/professional relationships
- Defining purposeful youth involvement
- Creating more feedback opportunities
Strategic Planning Process
Ideas for Replication

- Hold family pre-meetings
- Provide incentives for families
- Conduct process evaluation
  - Invaluable data to course-correct if needed
- Use an independent facilitator
- Create subcommittees to sustain long term engagement

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