**System of Care Definition**

A system of care[^1] (SOC) is an adaptive network of structures, processes, and relationships grounded in system of care values and principles that effectively provides children and youth with serious emotional disturbance and their families with access to and availability of services and supports across administrative and funding boundaries.

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<tr>
<th>Elements of the SOC Definition</th>
<th>Shared Understanding of Concepts</th>
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<td>An adaptive network of structures, processes, and relationships grounded in SOC values and principles</td>
<td>As defined by Stroul and Friedman (1994) and Hernandez, Worthington, &amp; Davis (2005) that effectively provides services for children and youth with serious emotional disturbance and their families with access to and availability of services and supports across administrative &amp; funding boundaries</td>
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<td>Incorporating action, reaction, and learning over time (Holland, 1995)</td>
<td>Ability to enter, navigate, and exit appropriate services and supports as needed (CMHS, 2003, 2004; Farmer et al., 2003)</td>
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<td>A set of linkages across people, organizations or communities (Capra, 2002; Schensul, LeCompte, Trotter, Cromley, &amp; Singer, 1999)</td>
<td>Services and supports in sufficient range and capacity (Stroul, Lourie, Goldman, &amp; Katz-Leavy, 1992; U.S. DHHS, 2003)</td>
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<td>Specified roles, responsibilities, and authorities that define organizational boundaries and enable an organization to perform its functions (Bolman &amp; Deal, 1997; Plsek, 2003; Theirry, Koopman, &amp; de Gilder, 1998)</td>
<td>Formal and informal, traditional and non-traditional assistance (Burchard, Bruns, &amp; Burchard, 2002; Hernandez, Worthington &amp; Davis, 2005)</td>
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<td>Methods of carrying out organizational activities often involving sequences or a set of interrelated activities that enable an organization to perform its functions (Bolman &amp; Deal, 1997; Plsek, 2003; Theirry, Koopman, &amp; de Gilder, 1998)</td>
<td>Unrestricted by categorical administrative and funding boundaries (Pires, 2002; President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003; Stroul and Friedman, 1994)</td>
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<td>Trust-based links creating connectedness across people and organizations (Folke, Hahn, Olsson, &amp; Norberg, 2005)</td>
<td>Data that demonstrate progress toward goals or desired effect (Hernandez &amp; Hodges, 2001; Hodges, Woodbridge, &amp; Huang, 2001)</td>
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[^1]: Original System of Care Definition: “A system of care is a comprehensive spectrum of mental health and other necessary services which are organized into a coordinated network to meet the multiple and changing needs of children and adolescents with severe emotional disturbances and their families.” (Stroul & Friedman, 1986).
REFERENCES


