

Central Vermont Local System of Care for Children & Adolescents & their Families

Purpose: We're committed to developing, maintaining and nurturing our local system of care for children, adolescents and their families who fall within the purview of the Expanded Agreement between the Agency of Human Services and the Dept of Education, and to work together to build on our strengths, seek solutions to problems and support one another in the journey to move our "Principles to Action". (*adopted 1/8/08*)

Goals & Objectives (approved April 8, 2008):

1. Recommendations to state leaders about system operations.
 - a. Identify system barriers & potential solutions to those problems.
 - b. Reduce amount of paperwork attached to the Coordinated Service Plan (CSP) process.
 - c. Request financial assistance to develop training opportunities for professionals & families.
 - d. Recommend solutions should our local system experience a significant increase in Coordinated Services Plans.

2. Navigating the Interagency Agreement *as a local system of care*.
 - a. Seek or create opportunities to inform the public & partners about the work we're doing & how to connect families to services & supports.
 - b. Engage with 2-1-1 to assist in identifying resources available to families who meet the criteria of the Interagency Agreement.
 - c. Design a "Flow Chart" to assist colleagues in navigating the Interagency Agreement.
 - d. Coalesce all information at the Barre AHS website & use the site as a portal for the local system of care and the Interagency Agreement (<http://humanservices.vermont/barre>).
 - e. Develop a shared commitment & a forum to solving interagency problems as they arise.

3. Family Outreach
 - a. Develop & deliver materials for parents regarding the ACT 264 process & the Interagency Agreement

Central Vermont Commitment to Principles in Action

The following Principles to Action were prepared by a committee from our LIT and presented at a 2006 LIT-sponsored training event. They're adapted from *The Wraparound Process User's Guide Handbook for Families*, a product of the National Wraparound Initiative

- 1. Family voice and choice.** Family and youth/child perspectives are intentionally elicited and prioritized during all phases of the planning process. Planning is grounded in family members' perspectives and the team strives to provide options and choices such that the plan reflects child/youth and family values and preferences.
 - Team meetings are scheduled with consideration for days/times that are convenient for families.
 - At the beginning of team meetings, the primary child/youth and family are given the opportunity to speak first.
 - Family perspectives and priorities are heard and acknowledged.
 - Important discussions and decisions about the youth and family are made when the family and team are present.
 - Plans are written in consideration of the family's perspectives and priorities.

- 2. Team based.** The child/youth and family team consists of individuals agreed upon by the family and committed to them through informal, formal, and community support and service relationships.
 - The child/youth and family are actively encouraged to participate in the team process.
 - Family members are encouraged and supported in bringing a support person to meetings.
 - Family members are asked about whom else they would like to have included on the team.
 - Teams develop ground rules that outline positive behaviors associated with successful team meetings.

- 3. Natural supports.** The team actively seeks out and encourages the full participation of team members drawn from family members' networks of interpersonal and community relationships. The individualized child and family plan reflects activities and interventions that draw on sources of natural support.
 - Families are asked to identify people who are important to them (extended family and friends) and then encouraged to consider these individuals as resources toward meeting family needs.

- Teams strive to create a plan that includes individuals who are not paid professionals, eg. clergy, friend, neighbor as well as natural resources (non-paid services) in the community.

4. Collaboration. Team members work cooperatively and share responsibility for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating a single individualized child/youth and family plan. The plan reflects a blending of team members' perspectives, mandates, and resources. The plan guides and coordinates each team member's work towards meeting the team's goals.

- Individuals identified as team members attend the meetings. Team members bring their calendars to meetings so that subsequent meetings can be scheduled.
- Team members attempt to learn about the mandates and policies of each other's agencies in order to prevent false assumptions or expectations.
- Teams respect individual member's decisions about the use of his/her agency resources and interpretations of the agency's rules and mandates.
- Decisions about coordination are made through a consensus-building process.
- Team members are accountable to one another and take responsibility for following through on commitments.

5. Community-based. The child/youth and family team implements service and support strategies that take place in the most inclusive, most responsive, most accessible, and least restrictive settings possible; and that safely promote child and family integration into home and community life.

- A team's primary goal is to help the child/youth be successful within his/her own home, school and community.
- Teams assist families in identifying community-based resources such as activities with family members, civic organizations, recreation programs, churches and clubs.

6. Culturally competent. The child/youth and family planning process demonstrates respect for and builds on the values, preferences, beliefs, culture, and identity of the child/youth and family, and their community.

- Team members seek opportunities from the family to learn about their beliefs and traditions.
- The team assists others in understanding individual differences presented by child/youth and family, including the cultural aspects of socio-economic differences.

7. **Individualized.** To achieve the goals laid out in the child/youth and family plan, the team develops and implements a customized set of strategies, supports and services.
 - Team members get to know the child/youth and family well enough to develop an effective plan.
 - Team members talk with families first about what the child/youth and family needs rather than focusing on specific programs that may be available.

8. **Strengths based.** The child and family planning process and the plan identify, build on, and enhance the capabilities, knowledge, skills, and assets of the child/youth and family, their community, and other team members.
 - Team members ask about strengths and interests, resources or activities that build on what the youth likes or does well.
 - Teams focus on what's working well instead of what problems there are.

9. **Persistence.** Despite challenges, the team persists in working toward the goals included in the plan until the team reaches agreement that a formal individualized planning process is no longer required.
 - There is a commitment among team members to participate throughout the entire planning process.
 - The team agrees to revise, update and change directions with the planning process, if needed.

10. **Outcome based.** The team ties the goals and strategies of the plan to observable or measurable indicators of success, monitors progress in terms of these indicators, and revises the plan accordingly.
 - Teams acknowledge and celebrate the incremental steps toward achieving the goals.
 - Teams use data such as satisfaction and progress toward goals to make decisions at meetings.

Collaboration Principles -

1. A respect for each agency & organization's individuality while sharing an agreed upon mission, set of values, goals & measurable outcomes

2. A relationship that is characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness & commitment

3. A relationship that builds on our strengths & assets, but also addresses the areas in which we all need to improve
4. A balance of power amongst agencies, organizations & families making it a continual priority to listen to one another & our needs, to develop a common language & to clarify the meaning of terms, policies & procedures
5. The establishment of agreed upon roles, norms & processes at all levels, including the individual family or treatment teams, our local interagency groupings or at the policy or political level
6. A flow of feedback within the team with the sole purpose of strengthening the collaborative & supporting the individual or family
7. Sharing equally in the success of the collaborative as well as sharing equally the responsibility & accountability when the collaborative is not successful
8. Recognition that collaboration takes time to develop and evolve, & requires nurturance, patience, listening, respect & commitment

R-4/8/08

Central VT System of Care – Purpose, Goals, Principles