

A partnership empowering children and families –

## The System of Care is about change.



- The system of care is about agencies, families, and communities interacting intentionally to create the best possible access to care for children and their families.
- It is about changing the way that agencies in communities regard the families with children who face emotional, social, developmental and/or behavioral challenges.
- It is about changing the way that schools, juvenile courts, child welfare programs, and mental health agencies work together, in concert with children and their families, to ensure that there is no “wrong door” through which they may pass in order to receive needed service.
- It is about changing the way that agencies and individuals provide the money to pay for the needed services so that the process appears “seamless” to parents and their children.

Moving from institution-based to community-based care for West Virginia’s most vulnerable children will require something different than traditional “bricks and mortar” construction. Piece by piece, building the statewide “infrastructure” to support care that

exemplifies System of Care values, has been the overarching goal of a unique statewide partnership.

Building a system of care requires strategic change among all West Virginia’s interdependent child serving systems, from child welfare and mental health, to the education and justice systems, and beyond. A dedicated partnership of community, regional and statewide stakeholders have started building the foundational elements that will lead to the changes West Virginia seeks. Here is a brief summary of progress to date.



### “PREPARING THE GROUND” - Readiness

Helping people get ready to move forward on the System of Care journey means:

- Identifying key professional and family partners at the state, regional and community levels.
- Educating people on the elements and the “how-to” of building a successful community based System of Care for West Virginia. **Over 1,655 public agency, service provider and family representatives took part in System of Care learning opportunities from July 2006-June 2007.**
- Listening to everyone, and **identifying areas of greatest need, potential challenges, as well as community and partner strengths, for sound long-term planning.**

### “LAYING THE FOUNDATION” - Governance

In 2005 House Bill 2334 passed the West Virginia Legislature, resulting in Section 49-7-34 of the state code. As a result, a **West Virginia System of Care State Implementation Team was created in July 2006 through a memorandum of understanding with the West Virginia Commission to Study Residential Placement of Children.** The State Implementation Team has developed its mission, operational guidelines and prioritized target populations as part of a long-term development plan.



### “ASSEMBLING THE FRAMEWORK” - Four Mutually-Supporting Efforts

**1 - Regional Clinical Coordination - Because Every West Virginia Child Deserves the Best Treatment, as Close to Home as Possible...**



- **Regional Clinical Coordinators are hired in each of the four human service Regions.**
- **Highly qualified review teams have been recruited and trained.**
- **A standardized clinical review process began statewide in Fall 2007, to serve as an unprecedented resource to individual multi-disciplinary teams (MDT’s) of youth at risk of, or returning from, out-of-state residential placements.**

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## 2 - Family Involvement - *Authentic Partnership with and Accountability to Parents and Youth*

Parents currently provide assistance to other families in need in parts of the state, with the availability of organizations that provide training, referral and support. The growing role of families and youth is revealed in the developing System of Care:



- Families are represented on the State Implementation Team and Commission-charged task teams.
- Each Regional Clinical Review Team includes a West Virginia family representative as a fully-trained, standing team member.
- Parents have co-trainer roles in System of Care learning opportunities.



## 3 - Workforce & Service Development - *Assessing and Improving the Capacity of Communities to Meet the Individualized Needs of Children, Youth & Families*

The WV System of Care Implementation Team and the state's 13 Community Collaboratives are taking steps toward **creating state and community Service Array Steering Committees, with the help of the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement.** With free training and support through March 2008, each Collaborative will be able to:

- Assess current capacity to meet the needs of children and families;
- Create a comprehensive service directory for their counties; and
- Prepare and implement a Resource Development Plan that meets unique community needs.

The Service Array Process will help communities determine what services and supports are available for their families, as well as what additional services might be needed. In 2008 the Community Collaboratives' Resource Development Plans will be assembled and merged at the regional and state levels. The resulting State Resource Development Plan will lead to statewide service development, service delivery and funding strategies to improve outcomes of well-being, safety and permanency for West Virginia children and families.

## 4 - Evaluation - *Measuring Shared Outcomes for Better Allocation of Resources, and Better Lives for Children & Families*

Work is underway on a **statewide evaluation plan for the System of Care, as well as a data management system for the targeted population.** The benchmarks and outcomes that West Virginia establishes for the long term should support the work and shared outcomes of child-serving efforts across agencies and systems, including the Child & Family Service Review, the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Commission, Reducing Juvenile Crime in WV, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA).



*The West Virginia System of Care is a public/private/consumer partnership dedicated to building the foundation for an effective continuum of care that empowers children at risk of out-of-home care and their families.*



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