

Practices for Increasing the Effectiveness of Wraparound Teams  
Compiled from participants' comments during two training sessions at the System of  
Care Community Meeting:

Effective Strategies for Building and Sustaining Systems of Care  
San Antonio, Texas,  
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- *Sue from Montgomery County family organization*: Does strengths from everyone as well as the family and youth.
- Each meeting, return to strengths, including all partners and may do it in two languages.
- *Leslie Tremain from Colorado*: Much around food so would have gatherings that were pot luck—everyone having something to contribute that is valuable.
- *Perhaha from Washington DC*: Family getting services. Care coordinator always asking what is it that you want us to do for you? Hook up each family member with a community support group.
- *Crystal from MN*: Mini-training to each team member on why its important; these are the things that make you successful.
- *Mike from Suzuki from Guam*: Whole team would come up with rules that we would revisit every time we come in. Have ground rules that say you have to focus on the positive and strengths in the course of conducting the team meeting.
- Go one on one with each team member to get them used to the idea prior to each meeting.
- Add each meeting—helps people to be in that mind frame who might not otherwise be thinking in terms of strengths.
- Have strengths based assessments including forms—e.g. training for providers on how to integrate into the goals. Use as reinforcers.
- Look for functional strengths—some times strengths can be superficial. Usable strengths—what are these good for, what carry over into other areas.
- *John McKnight*: Look at how strengths can help to build communities—how can these contribute to the place that you live.
- Always thinking in terms of finding out what the family would want rather than trying to use your imagination to try to figure out what they might like if you were in their shoes.
- Do cultural competence exercise at each meeting at the higher levels of implementation—NH
- Do searches for extended families and find “lost” family members to utilize their strengths.
- Exercise:
  - bafa bafa, create two different cultures with two rules and Chris from MN;
  - Give everyone a task;
  - Understand eachother's limits/mandates; do cross trainings
  - Switch roles in a role play—can you see if you could speak for the other
- Advocate for other people's potential
- “Value checks”—is it your personal value that is interfering with your perspective.

- Have the “strengths-based cop” to “police”
- Charge a quarter each time a professional uses a term that isn’t understood.
- Meet the needs of teams themselves; resolve needs at higher levels.
- Have team assume that everyone is trying to do their best.
- Agenda.
- Template that lists multiple life domains—that has time frames that allow you to track the goals, who’s assigned. Treatment plan that’s user friendly—same plan that’s accepted across agency.
- Big pages, sticky notes, have people write on it, this becomes the basis for strengths planning. Are available to “haul out” again when stuck. *Julia, Austin.*
- Also make sure it’s in the family’s words when you write it down and not “translated” into professional-speak. Also family may not feel that they have any strengths, have to prime the pump sometimes. What’s right with your child. Using language that is more accessible.
- Having someone in the role of observer to look at body language, who’s looking perplexed—ask that person about their reaction.
- Do strengths of whole team not just family.
- Return to the mission when people are in disagreement, put it out visibly every time.
- Spending time to identify the underlying needs so that people don’t just get stuck on their solution. What is that solution needing—how do you get at the needs? Specific kinds of questioning “If you had that, what would that be like for you” Getting people off their positions.
- Share some personal information/disclosure
- For getting to needs: use in Cleveland: what do you think is going to be accomplished by that (specific questions)—then after getting to the needs go back and think of a variety of ways to get there.
- Practice re: foster families, being sure that the family is there but substitute caregivers also on the team.
- Changing team composition
- Basic family search to bring in other supports
- Facilitator that can listen—listening for what succeeds and building on that.
- Cultural competence: having family voice.
- Family service coordinator goes to home before any meeting, do strength exploration and work with families to identify formal and informal supports to participate on the team.
- These are people from the community
- Supervision that focuses on the skills? How to do that?
- Promote traditional activities like berry picking to help people feel more comfortable (*Alaska*)
- Try to use family coordinators who live in the community, also recruit people who speak the languages of the community.
- NC has a strengths based curriculum for supervisors (*Terry*)
- Make school a key partner. Special ed is a deficit based model—school is always there—have started three system of care schools with whole schools based on the philosophy. In the Dawn project.

- Need to consider languages within organizations and agencies. Make a commitment within the agency not to family-bash, not just to be that way when you are in a room with families.
- Practice not to use diagnostic labels but person first language.
- Family members don't like to be called "mom"—what would you like to be called?
- Also ask, what can you do with that money in the community or home, eg with the 300 you would spend on out of home.
- Provide respite, also intensive respite, people that would go to the school to support the child. Also during holidays, we have respite camps for the kids (also to help maintain employment)
- Regular meetings to bring parents together can build natural support among the group.
- How to keep enthusiasm—give people a copy of the plan to take home so people can refer to that.
- Coordinator writes down tasks for everyone to do between team meeting—everyone has tasks, then check in and celebrate successes.
- Use email outside of team meetings—develop trust across agencies that can help get over agencies.
- Getting back to needs again, including agency needs, also stating the non-negotiable things at the beginning. Also being creative in the non-negotiables—can you do 24 hour supervision while keeping the kid in the community.
- Start meetings with ground rules and to orient people before meetings.
- Change the venue of the meeting—eg a principle who wants to control meetings in the school.
- No decision made without the family present.
- When a part of the plan is written engage each professional partner eg in providing respite
- Reducing staff turnover
- Creating a written family narrative to give to new team members.
- Considering options
- Preplanning stages to give you a sense of what the issues really are and bringing in people from the community with
- Ask question “who's not here?” Need to ask the questions in the way that's in tune with the culture about who should be here.
- An evaluation tool that goes out to each team meeting—are all the people here. Esp community based people.
- Prioritize the needs to work on and only focus on those, look back over and see how you're doing on a specific goal.
- Make sure that people are there who can commit resources.
- Who has the authority to commit resources—can have more authority vested in the team members or have the people there who control the purse strings
- Send out agenda to people beforehand. A note of explanation.