



**System of Care
Initiative**

Partnering with Youth In Evaluation:

Engagement, Energy, Innovation, and Outcomes

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Presentation Outline



- ▣ Group Activity - Icebreaker**
- ▣ Allegheny County System of Care Initiative**
- ▣ Best Practices for Evaluation**
- ▣ Consumer/Family Involvement in Evaluation:**
 - Evaluation Staff**
 - Focus Groups**
 - Assessment Development**
 - Community Evaluation Team (CET)**

System of Care Initiative



Department of Human Services



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graph TD; DHS[Department of Human Services] --- OBH[Office of Behavioral Health]; OBH --- SCIS[System of Care Initiative]; SCIS --- CCFF[Community Connections for Families]; SCIS --- PYT[Partnership for Youth Transition]; SCIS --- SET[Starting Early Together];
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Office of Behavioral Health

System of Care Initiative

Community Connections for Families

Partnership for Youth Transition

Starting Early Together

Something to think about...

Halcolm asks...

*What are the
five key elements
that are
absolutely crucial
in evaluation?*



Something to think about...



Answer...

People

People

People 📣

People

People

Evaluation Best Practices



- Involve Consumers and Families in Evaluation**
- Include Evaluation from the Beginning**
- Integrate Data into Program Operations**
- Create a Feedback Loop**
- Report & Discuss Data Regularly**

What are your best practices?

Implementing Best Practices: *Staffing*



- **Program Evaluators Trained in the SOCI mission and values**
- **Multi-Skilled Evaluation Staff**
 - **Data Analysis**
 - **Facilitation / Training**
 - **Data Collection**
 - **Data Management**
 - **Report Writing**
 - **Presenting**

Implementing Best Practices: *Staffing*




Family Evaluator Position

- **Need to Provide Training**
- **Consider Job Qualifications; Hire for Family Expertise**
- **Raises Questions / Family Voice**
- **Interprets Data**
- **Ensure Family Friendly Materials and Reports**
- **Communicates How to Use Data as Advocacy**

Evaluation: *Tools of the Trade*



- Outcomes Data
 - Operations Data
 - Program Quality
 - **Strengths-based Needs Assessment**
 - Consumer/Family Hopes and Dreams
 - Flex Fund Data
- 
- Surveys/Assessments
 - Observation Forms
 - Interviews
 - **Focus Groups**
 - Record Review Tools
 - **Community Evaluation Team (CET)**

Focus Groups



Six (6) Focus Groups:

- Two by geographic location
- Three by organization
- One At-Large – Across Allegheny County

Young Adult Participants

- Ages 18 - 24
- Personal experience receiving mental health services
- Diverse experiences transitioning to independence

Information gained was used to:

- Guide the SOCI expansion process
- Set the framework for the PYT evaluation component
- Ensure a strong consumer voice during the planning phase

Results – Youth Goals



 **Education**

 **Employment**

 **Personal**

- **Family**
- **Relationships**
- **Living Situation**

"I don't want my baby to think mommy is a dummy!"

"I want to be the first in my family to graduate college."

"I want a place to live, to earn it."

Results – Transition Needs

- Structure
- Affordable housing
- Health insurance
- Education & Employment
- Supportive allies
- Information and assistance in order to:
 - Have healthy relationships
 - Meet financial goals
 - Locate needed resources

"I Never Had Structure."

"Getting that first opportunity..."

"I can't raise a child without any money."

Focus Groups: Issues for Replication



- ▀ **Population of Focus ~ What to Consider??**
- ▀ **Focus Group Structure**
- ▀ **Location is Key ~ Connect to Your Community**
- ▀ **Recruitment ~ Know Your Audience!!**
- ▀ **Incentives**
- ▀ **Facilitation**
- ▀ **Question Development**

Strengths-Based Needs Assessments



 **Child & Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)**

 **Young Adult Needs & Strengths Assessment (YANSA)**

 **Used in:**

- **Screening for Eligibility**
- **Service Planning**
- **Outcomes Evaluation**
- **Quality Assurance**

Why the YANSA?



- Family & Youth Input**
- Administered as a “Conversation”**
- Youth / Family Friendly**
- Good Engagement = Better Planning & Data**
- Youth / Family also “Own” Tool**
- Tie Tool into Program Values**
- Excellent “Map” for Service Planning**

YANSA: Issues for Replication



- ▀ Tool Development Process
- ▀ Adapted from the CANS
- ▀ “Youth Think Tank” (3-4 Meetings)
- ▀ Location, Stipend, Food
- ▀ Expanded Life Domains
- ▀ Creative, Open Process
- ▀ Discussion and Brainstorming
- ▀ Confirmed the values, needs and strengths discussed with focus groups

Community Evaluation Team (CET)

The mission of the Allegheny County Community Evaluation Team is to bridge the gap between consumers/families, evaluators and professionals and to use data and outcomes to improve the quality of services and supports in the system of care.



What is a CET?



Forum for Discussion

- Evaluation & Quality Improvement

Diverse Make-Up:

- System Partners, Family members, Youth, & Community Members

Data

- Utilization-Based
- Personal Experiences

Why Be Part of a CET?



Professional Perspective

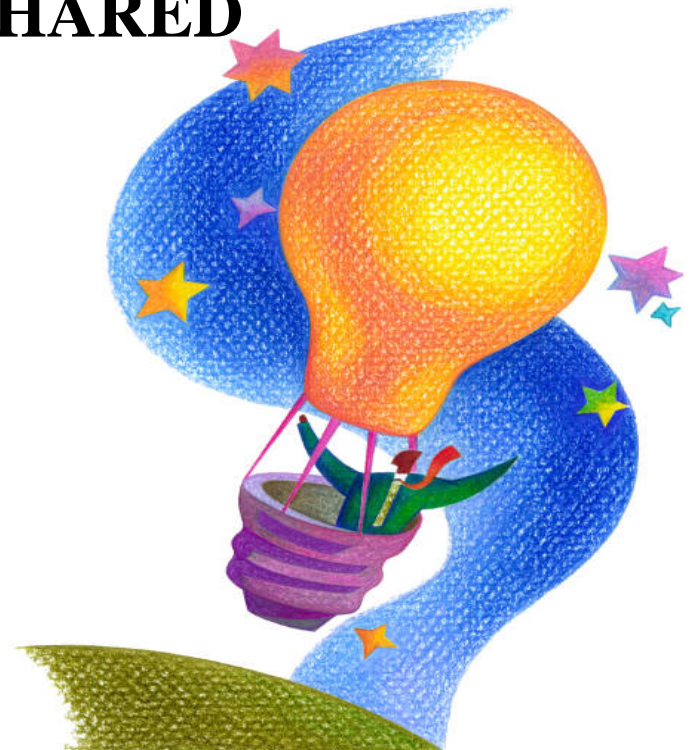
- **Mutual Learning**
- **Partnerships and Collaborations**
- **Expands Knowledge**
- **Deepens Understanding of Data**
- **Enriches Data Collection & Analysis**

Consumer Perspective

- **Empowerment**
- **Vehicle for Communication**
- **Creates Partnerships**
- **Makes Data Useful**
- **Ensures a Consumer/Family Voice**

What I Know For Sure...

- ▮ Consumers and Families are the **EXPERTS**
- ▮ Building Trust and Relationships are Key
- ▮ Consumer/Family Voice is essential in Evaluation
- ▮ Data should be **USEFUL** and **SHARED**
- ▮ Data is a **TOOL**
- ▮ Education & Information is **POWER** – Share it!
- ▮ Time Intensive – It's Worth It



Questions & Answers



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