

CHILDREN'S SYSTEM ADVISORY COUNCIL ISSUE BRIEF:
UNIFORM SUGGESTION/CONCERN/~~GRIEVANCE~~ FORM

Issue	During focus groups prior to implementation of the Children's System Change Initiative, family members expressed the desire for a uniform method of expressing grievances. Such a document has not been created to date.
Background	<p>Consumers and family members are often hesitant to file a grievance, because the word implies a very serious concern, possibly warranting a lawsuit. Also, different agencies have different grievance policies which can be confusing. Discussions amongst consumers and family members have revealed the need for suggestions and minor concerns to be raised as well. If concerns are addressed sooner, it is to be hoped that the number of grievances will decrease. Also, consumer and family members would like to be able to share the suggestions they have which could improve the services and experiences for others. <u>Finally family members and consumers would also appreciate the opportunity to offer positive feedback. The existence of a uniform form for suggestions and more minor concerns can strengthen parent-professional partnerships by affording family members a standardized approach for addressing their perceptions without having to go to the more formal and elaborate grievance process.</u></p> <p>Consumers and family members would like <u>organizations to maintain copies of such a form for review by OMHAS</u>, or some other outside agency-agency to receive a copy, also. It has been noted that when an outside agency, such as OMHAS, an MHO, or a caseworker has been is aware informed of a grievance concerns, as well as the involved agency, improved satisfaction in <u>grievance issue</u> resolution often occurs.</p>
Policy Recommendation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt a uniform suggestion/concern/grievance form to be used throughout the state. <u>Attached is a slightly modified form developed by Benton County to be used by all service providers as a proposed form.</u> 2. The form should be in triplicate. The person filling out the form, the agency, and OMHAS (or other third party) should all have a copy. Copies should be kept on file in the organization for review and quality improvement purposes. 3. OMHAS (or other third party) will be informed of the successful resolution or if an appeal is being made. 4.3. Attached is a slightly modified form developed by Benton County to be used by all service providers. We recommend that this form be adopted to be used throughout the state.